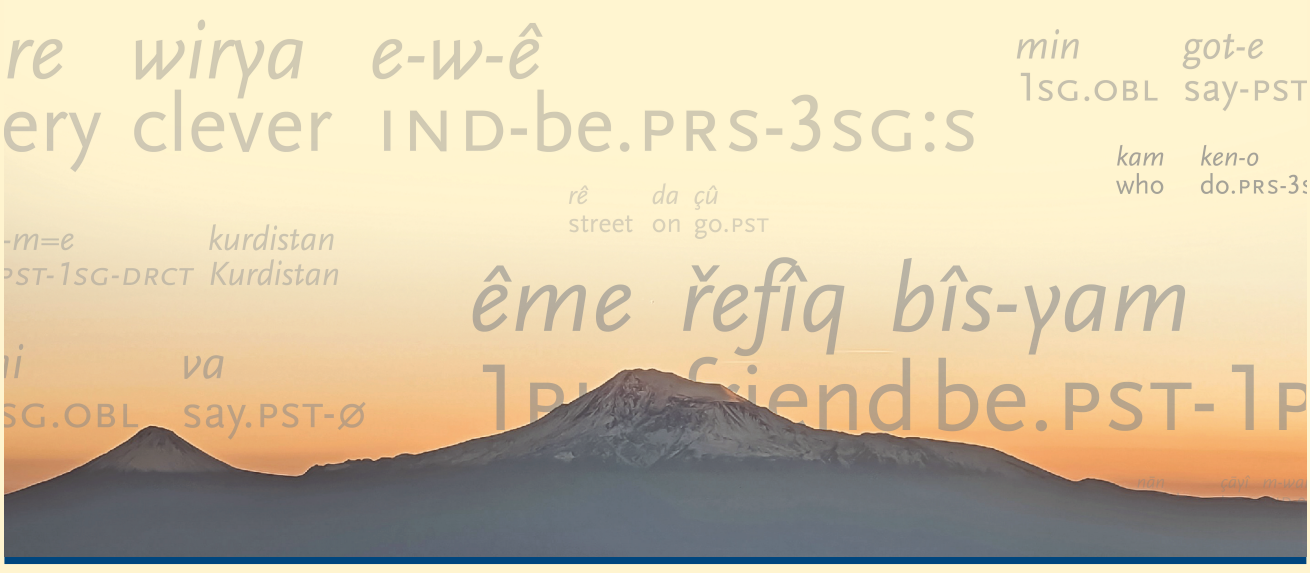
Universität Bamberg



Abstract Booklet

ICKL-7

7th International Conference on Kurdish Linguistics

28–29 August 2025

Otto-Friedrich-Universität Bamberg

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General Information

The ICKL is a biennial international conference serving as a platform for scholarly exchange among linguists working on any aspect of Kurdish varieties, including the interactions with neighboring languages. The conference features contributions which address these issues from the perspectives of various subdomains of linguistics, such as sociolinguistics, descriptive and typologically-oriented analyses of phonology and morphosyntax, grammaticalization and historical development, formal approaches to grammar, pragmatics, language acquisition, language contact, and corpus linguistics. It provides a collaborative space to present research, exchange ideas, and foster interdisciplinary dialogue for scholars at all career stages. By bringing together researchers from diverse fields, the ICKL aims to advance the study and preservation of Kurdish languages.

After the first conference of Kurdish Linguistics – then titled "International Workshop on Variation and Change in Kurdish" – was initiated by Prof. Geoffrey Haig in Bamberg in 2013, we are happy to organize the 2025 edition again at the Section of General Linguistics in Bamberg 'in honour of Prof. em. Geoffrey Haig'.

We thereby gratefully acknowledge financial support by the Elite Network of Bavaria and the University of Cambridge.

For further information such as the conference program and poster, see the ICKL website: https://ickl-conference.org/.

We wish us all a fruitful and inspiring conference!

Local Organizers
Dr. Laurentia Schreiber (Otto-Friedrich-Universität Bamberg)
Mahîr Dogan (Otto-Friedrich-Universität Bamberg)

Scientific Committee
Dr. Masoud Mohammadirad (University of Cambridge)
Dr. Songül Gündoğdu (Muş Alparslan University)
Dr. Sara Belleli (University of Tuscia, Viterbo)

Conference Venue

ICKL-7 will be held at the ground floor of the Institute of Oriental Studies at the University of Bamberg at **Schillerplatz 17**, 96047 Bamberg, Germany.

Directions:

- If you are staying in Bamberg: You can either walk to the venue or take a bus to **Schillerplatz** or the nearby central bus station (**ZOB**), which is just a 5-minute walk from the venue.
- If you are coming to Bamberg by train: You can walk to the venue from the train station which takes around 25 minutes. Alternatively, you can take one of the many buses (almost) directly across the main entrance of the train station to the central bus station (**ZOB**) and walk from there, or take the bus number 901, which will take you across the street of the venue (see picture below).
- If you are arriving by car: A public parking space (with parking fees) is available right in front of the building.

The building can be easy to miss: if you are coming from Richard-Wagner-Straße or Schillerplatz, you have to walk past the bus station and the Italian restaurant 'Salino' (see picture below). You will find the entry of the building right behind the parking space.

Keynote Speeches

Kurdish for All: Some Recent Developments in the Area of Education, Multilingualism and Voice

Katharina Brizić (University of Freiburg)

In my talk I will introduce three empirical examples from schools in Germany and Austria, each of them providing a snapshot of stigmatised languages and their speakers in everyday classroom interaction. Starting with an example from primary school, I will show how languages with a history of persecution can remain unheard even in settings of multilingual pedagogies (Fürstenau & Brizić 2024). I will then proceed to the teachers and their perception – or "hearing" – of multilingual students. On an example from Austria I will ask whether the teachers know about their students' stigmatised linguistic repertoires, and whether they are equipped for counterbalancing exclusion, non-participation and further stigmatisation (Brizić, Şimşek & Bulut 2021). Finally, I will give an example of the successful inclusion of stigmatised languages into classroom interaction (Brizić & Konopatsch, forthc.). The context is a German school programme for the remembrance of the Holocaust as well as contemporary mass violence, such as the genocide against the Ezidi population of North Iraq, exerted by the "Islamic State" in 2014 and thereafter (Ferman, in prep.; Brizić & Ferman, unpubl.). Although not directed towards the inclusion of the students' languages but towards their participation in democratic remembrance cultures (cf. Foroutan 2019), the programme has brought about impressive examples also for multilingual voices being heard in class.

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Differential Object Marking (DOM) in Kurdish?

Geoffrey Haig (University of Bamberg)

Ever since Bossong (1985), data from Iranian languages has continued to inform research on DOM, for example claims regarding the (non-)universality of prominence-based hierarchies in DOM (e.g. Filiminova (2005), Bickel et al (2015)), or the controversy surrounding the interpretation of DOM in Persian (e.g. Karimi (2018), Faghiri & Samvelian (2014), among many others). Research on DOM in Kurdish, however, has been surprisingly thin on the ground. Bossong (1985), based on the grammatical descriptions available to him at the time, considered that Northern, Central, and Southern Kurdish (NK, CK, SK) lack DOM, but he duly notes its presence in Zazaki and Gorani/Hewramî. While this is fairly uncontroversially true for SK and (most of) CK, recent research on Northern Kurdish yields a mixed picture: DOM effects are noted by Dorleijn (1996) and Gündogdu (2022), who also emphasize dialectal differences, while Atlamaz & Baker (2018: 221) state that DOM is absent in "Adıyaman Kurmanji". But to date there has been no systematic research either on the areal distribution of DOM within NK (though anecdotally, southeastern dialects of NK are considered least likely to exhibit DOM), nor on the factors that condition it. This presentation attempts to summarize existing research on DOM in Kurdish, and proposes a preliminary framework for investigating DOM, focussing on the nature of the object marker itself, the interaction of DOM with alignment, and the conditioning factors behind DOM. Time permitting, I will also discuss the methodological pitfalls that confound research on DOM in NK, and discuss how recent advances in corpus, variationist, and experimental methodologies could be leveraged to overcome them.

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Conference Papers

The Berferatî Dialect of Kurmancî Kurdish: A Phonological and Lexical Analysis

Murat Baran (University of Göttingen)

Up to date there has been no internal classification of the Berferatî dialect of Kurmancî Kurdish. As literature on Kurdish dialectology is still scarce, a large part of existing research focuses on standardization of the written language and lexicography (Öpengin & Haig, 2014). This paper presents a lexical and phonological classification of the Berferatî dialect of Kurmancî Kurdish, spoken in parts of Turkey, Syria, and Iran, and thus seeks to contribute to the knowledge base on regional variations in Kurmancî dialects. This also serves as an attempt at the replication and elaboration on similar studies by Öpengin and Haig (2014) and Matras (2017).

The original 100 items from the Leipzig-Jakarta List were used to gather language data and 45 culturally relevant items (e.g. *xweng* 'sister', *kebanî* 'housewife', *gustîl* 'ring') were added to further test the consistency of certain observed phonological phenomena. Translations and audio recordings of these items were obtained online from 14 native speakers from different locations in the Euphrates (Berferatî) and Khorasan region. Lexical and phonological features served as indicators to classify variations. In interpreting phonological phenomena, hypotheses about the direction of the alterations were avoided, as knowledge on the diachronic background of Standard Kurmancî and Berferatî variations is missing. The dialect data was compared to Standard Kurmancî. Thus, a classification was drawn up using phonological phenomena, a linguistic distance matrix (c.f. Blaha Pfeiler & Skopeteas, 2022) and cluster analysis.

Based on the lexical cluster analysis, two main dialectal groups within Berferatî were found: a western one, including a central and Kurd Dagh subgroup plus a single branch with the variation from Qulek, and secondly a group consisting of a Khorasan and an eastern Euphrates side subgroup – the latter including northern and southern branches. The southern one includes a single branch with the Kolik variation. A transitional variation between the Khorasan and northern branch appears to be that of Pêrtag, as it exhibits strong similarities and shares key features with both.

The exploration of phonological features within the different Berferatî variations showed two main candidates for somewhat typical features of Berferatî. The first is the insertion of an initial /h/, which can be found in all but two variations. The second is lenition of the pre-vocalic /b/, which occurs in ten out of 14 variations. A main feature that differentiated between the eastern and western groups appeared to be the vowel backing and rounding: The western variations all displayed this feature, whereas none of the eastern ones did. These two main groups are partially linked through vowel raising and fronting, which was attested in some variations on each side. Specific to only the central subgroup of western Berferatî (based on the lexical cluster analysis), which engage in vowel fronting like some other variations from the east and west, is the phonetic feature of an epenthetic vowel /ɨ/ change (fronting). Phonetically, the influence of the external language contact with Arabic in the southern parts of the Berferatî zone becomes visible with the feature of pharyngealization. However, the far western variation of Qulek also showed this feature, despite the absence of Arabic in their region. Potentially, pharyngealization in this variation predates the migration into Central Anatolia.

Regarding further external language influences, it became apparent that Efrîn, Arxewan, Îslahiye and Qulek variations have the most Turkish loan words. Albistan, Qûçan and Qulek have some words in common with Soranî Kurdish, which do not exist in other Kurmancî varieties. This may be indicative of previous migration - however, it is also possible that it reflects a "Kurmancîfication" of the Soranî speakers who emigrated to these regions. Furthermore, the northern branch of the eastern Berferatî variation shares some lexical and phonological commonalities with Zazakî Kurdish.

Thus, these findings contribute to the classification of the Berferatî dialect within Kurmancî Kurdish and expand on previous research, aiming to enrich the limited literature on Kurmancî dialectology.

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Laki and Gorani Revisited

Sara Belelli (University of Tuscia, Viterbo)

Recent scholarship (Karim & Gholami 2024; Mohammadirad 2024) has revitalised the long-standing debate regarding the influence of broadly defined Gorani on the linguistic evolution of Western Iranian languages – including Central-Southern Kurdish, Laki, the northernmost varieties of the Lori *continuum* – and beyond (Khan & Mohammadirad 2023). While the historical relationship between many of these languages remains debated, new perspectives from contact theory and sociolinguistic frameworks offer fresh insights into the complexities of their interaction in the Zagros region. This contribution reconsiders, in particular, the debated relationship between Laki (see Belelli 2021; in press) and varieties of the Gorani/Hawrami group.

Positions in this regard are often conflicting, ranging from hypotheses of close genetic relatedness to ideas of extensive cross-contact. As an example, Karami & Gholami (2024) attribute the presence of *-n* infinitives vs. Hawrami *-y* infinitives, *m*-imperfectives, and the "erosion of certain conservative linguistic features" of Hawrami in Literary Gorani to the influence of local spoken languages, quoting Laki among possible sources. Concerning *m*-imperfective formants shared by Gorani and Laki, Karim (2024, same volume) proposes a radically different scenario, arguing that they are inherited in Gorani and superimposed onto the original Kurdish-like imperfective marking system of Laki through convergence with Gorani in an unspecified contact ecology. Neither of them mentions competing hypotheses, including shared retention of Gorani/Hawrami *ma-* and Laki *=a ma*, or secondary effects of other types of contact (e.g. influence of Classical Persian on the use of *ma-* in the Gorani literary vernacular), that may have played a role in the stabilisation of *m*-markers in either language.

Engaging with the theoretical framework of vernacularisation (Pollock 2000; Leezenberg 2023), diglossia (Jeremiás 1984; Ferguson 2020), language hybridisation (Aikhenvald 2006; Mufwene 2023), and, most relevantly, with theories of language transfer between genetically related languages (Bowern 2013; Pat-El 2013), this contribution aims to clarify the mechanisms through which Gorani-like traits may have been transferred into Laki, or vice versa. By paradigmatically assessing a range of commonalities against different modes of transmission (i.e. high-low variety interaction, as per the "prestige borrowing" hypothesis in Leezenberg 1996 vs. primary direct contact with spoken Gorani, as per the "substrate" hypothesis in MacKenzie 1961 and the "pattern borrowing" model in Karim 2024), we will determine the likelihood of a contact-mediated transfer of selected features between Laki and Gorani/Hawrami. Additionally, we will consider whether factors other than contact – including shared inheritance and external influence from different regional languages – could also account for observed cross-linguistic parallelisms.

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Legally Permissible but Practically Prohibited: Turkey's Dual Policy on the Kurdish Language

Savaş Dede (İstanbul Bilgi University)

This study examines how the Turkish government obstructs the use of the Kurdish language, despite the formal lifting of legal prohibitions in 1991. Over the past three decades, initiatives such as introducing Kurdish as an elective subject in primary schools and broadcasting in Kurdish on the state-run TRT channel have suggested progress. However, the state continues to impose indirect restrictions, which have intensified since the resumption of conflict between the PKK and the Turkish state in 2015.

Drawing on data from a focus group discussion involving 14 representatives from eight civil society organisations in Diyarbekir, this research identifies three key practices that have been implemented by the government:

- Terrorisation: The Turkish government associates Kurdish-language activities (such as theatres concerts, etc.) with terrorism propaganda to justify prohibitions.
- Criminalisation: The government tolerate attacks on the everyday use of Kurdish, fostering an environment where its use is socially criminalised.
- De-prestiging and Disorganising: Undermining the prestige of Kurdish through political and social marginalisation, while exerting pressure on institutions to hinder collective action and discourage individual engagement.

This study investigates the consequences of these *de facto* restrictions on the Kurdish language from 2015 onwards and considers whether these practices constitute linguistic genocide (linguicide). The findings contribute to broader discussions on state policies, language rights, and cultural preservation in conflict-affected regions.

The Eastern Zazakî Dialects: A Preliminary Survey

Mahîr Dogan (University of Bamberg)
Ugur Sermîyan (University of Bamberg)

Although scholarly interest in Zazakî has increased in recent years, the language remains under-researched in many respects. In terms of dialectology, initial classifications have been proposed by Paul (2024) and Keskin (2010), later complemented by studies focusing on individual varieties (Todd 2008; Kurdo 1986; Selcan 1998; Yildiz 2023, to name a few) and geographically restricted isoglosses (Aratemür 2024). The prevailing classification divides Zazakî into Northern, Central, and Southern dialects, while acknowledging peripheral varieties that fall outside this tripartite model.

As more and more previously under-documented varieties come into focus, the broader picture of Zazakî dialectology is becoming increasingly nuanced. One such peripheral cluster comprises varieties spoken on the eastern fringes of the Zazakî speech area, notably around the regions of Modan (Bitlis), Hewêl (Siirt), and Hezo (Batman). While aspects of these dialects have been noted in works by Eroğlu (2019), Akkuş (2020), Öpengin & Anuk (2015), and most recently by Yildiz (2023), they have not been systematically analyzed.

Drawing on these accounts and our own fieldwork with speakers from Hezo – a undocumented variety – his paper argues for the recognition of an Eastern branch of Zazakî. These varieties display distinctive lexical, phonological, morphological, and syntactic features that cannot be fully captured by the established division into Northern, Central, and Southern Zazakî. Most notably, both pronominal and verbal morphology reveal patterns that warrant the tentative classification of these dialects as a separate group, which we provisionally name *Eastern Zazakî*.

One prominent feature is the loss of the direct–oblique case distinction in personal pronouns. With the exception of the first and second person singular, all pronoun forms are identical in both cases. Some varieties, particularly those spoken in Modan, show syncretism in the singular as well, allowing sentences such as (1a), which would be ungrammatical in other dialects (cf. 1b).

(1a) Zazakî of Modan (Yildiz 2023: 248)

Ti	*goşt-Ø*	*we*
2SG.DIR	meat-DIR	eat.PST

'You ate meat'

(1b) Zazakî of Hezo (own fieldwork)

To	*goşt-Ø*	*werd*
2SG.OBL	meat-DIR	eat.PST

'You ate meat'

In verbal morphology, we observe more conservative forms in present tense stems. While many Zazakî dialects have lost the /r/ in many past stems (2b), the eastern varieties retain it in the present tense (2a).

(2a) Zazakî of Hezo (own fieldwork)

Ti	*çi*	***keren-ê***
2SG.DIR	what	do.PRS-2SG.M

'What are you doing?'

(2b) Other dialects (own fieldwork)

Ti	*se*	***ken-ê***
2SG.DIR	what	do.PRS-2SG.M

'What are you doing?'

Interestingly, with complex verbs, the stem typically used for the subjunctive appears in the present tense (2c).

(2c) Modan (Yildiz 2023: 410)

E	*goşt*	*qet*	***ker-a***
1SG	meat	cut	do.SBJV-1SG

'I cut meat'

Another, rather unique feature of the Hezo variety is the use of the particle *de, di,* or *do* in adjectival copula sentences (3). Although this is attested for some varieties of Northern Kurdish (Kurmancî), no similar pattern has been observed in Zazakî so far.

(3) Zazakî of Hezo (own fieldwork)

Ez	***de***	*baş*	*=ane*
1SG.DIR	PTKL	good	COP-1SG

'I am good'

These are just some examples of several features that call for a more fine-grained classification. This paper presents preliminary findings from ongoing fieldwork in the Eastern Zazakî-speaking communities, offering new insights into the broader typology and classification of Zazakî dialects.

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Negative Concord Items in Kurdish

Songül Gündoğdu (Muş Alparslan University)
Ayşe Büşra Yakut Kubaş (Ankara University)

Intro: The nature of polarity sensitive items in Northern Kurdish (NK) has not been studied before. This paper aims to investigate the internal syntax of *tu*-marked items which are formed by light nouns such as *kes* 'person', *tişt* 'thing', *car* 'time and *cîh* 'place' in this language. Based on the identificational criteria given in the related literature, we claim that NK is a strict negative concord language, as *tu*-marked items do not give rise to double negation readings and they serve as fragment answers (Watanabe 2004, Giannakidou 2006, Kuno 2008, Giannakidou and Zeijlstra 2017, Kuhn 2022). Furthermore, we discuss that the nominal parts inside these items are light nouns based on their distributional differences from content nouns (Kayne, 2005, 2010; Moltmann, 2022). They cannot stand on their own, requiring "licensing" by numerals/quantifiers and adjectives/relative clauses. When they are marked with the indefinite suffix *-ek* (e.g. *kes-ek*, *tişt-ek*, *cîh-ek*), the nouns behave as a negative polarity item in negative sentences.
Data: NK has a series of *tu*-marked items, as shown in Table-1, which are built on the light nouns that are mostly used with the indefinite marker (*-ek*), as demonstrated in the following table.

Table-1: *Light nouns and* tu*-marked items in NK*

LIGHT NOUNS		*TU*-MARKED ITEMS
PERSON	*kes*	*tukes* (+indef) 'nobody'
THING	*tişt*	*tutişt* (+indef) 'nothing'
TIME	*car*	*tucar* (+ plural *-an*) 'no time/never'
PLACE	*cîh*	*tucîh* (+indef) 'nowhere'
		tu+noun (+indef) (e.g. *tu merik-ekî* 'no man')

The most widely accepted and broadly tested diagnostics in the literature identify two key properties of NCIs: (i) their ability to appear as fragment answers, and (ii) their clause-based locality restriction with the licensing negation. The sentences in (1) establish that *tu*-marked items are licensed by sentential negation with their possibility of being subjects. Note that we follow Kahnemuyipour (2022) in his claim on Persian that subject position is lower than NegP, which is above the VoiceP, thus subject-NCIs are c-commanded by negation:

(1)

a. **Tukes *(ne-)çû serxweşi-yê.*
nobody NEG-go.PST.3SG funeral-OBL
'Nobody went to the funeral.'

b. *Tukes ji tukes-î hez na-k-e.*
nobody P nobody-OBL love NEG-go.PRS.3SG
'Nobody loves anyone.' (It cannot mean 'Nobody loves no one.')

Compare the light noun counterparts which are marked with indefinite *-ek* as they can be used in negative and non-negative sentences (2a, 2b, respectively).

(2)

a. *Ez-ê* *tişt-ek-î* *bi-xwi-m.*
1SG.DIR-FUT thing-INDEF-OBL SBJV-eat.PRS-1SG
'I will eat something.'

b. *Ewî* *tişt-ek* *ne-xwar-î-ye.*
3SG.OBL body-INDF NEG-eat.PST-3SG-PERF
'He ate nothing.'

Next, (3) shows that *tu*-marked items can appear as negative fragment answers to constituent questions in the absence of sentential negation whereas light nouns cannot.

(3)

A: *Te* *kî* *dît?* *B:* *Tukes / *Kes*
2SG.OBL who eat.PST.3SG nobody / anybody
'Who did you see?' 'Nobody.'

As regards to locality restriction, these elements cannot be licensed in the scope of a neg-raising verb when they are used in a non-negative embedded clause. However, the indefinite counterparts can be licensed in this context, indicating that *tu*-marked items show locality restrictions while indefinite-marked light nouns do not.

(4)

Bav-ê *min* *na-xwaz-e* *ku* *??tukes/kes-ek* *li* *vir* *be*
dad-EZ.M 1SG.OBL NEG-want.PRS-3SG that anybody P here COP.3SG
'My dad does not want anybody to be here'

Note that *tu*-marked items can also be used in polar questions (5).

(5)

Tukes *hat-îy-e?*
nobody come.PST-3SG-PERF
'Did anyone come?'

In contrast, light nouns have a wider distribution as long as they cooccur with quantifiers such as *her* 'every', *çend/hin* 'some/several', *hemu* 'all', *gelek* 'many', *tu-* being one of them (see (1)). In addition, these nominal elements are licensed by adjectives/relative clauses in a range of sentences with the possibility of definite and generic interpretation.

(6)

a. *Herkes* *behs-a* *wan* *di-k-e*
everybody mention-EZ.F 3PL.OBL PROG-do.PRS-3SG
'Everybody talks about them.'

b. *Ji sifrê hinekî bi dûr agirekî gur vêketiye û çend kes bi êzingan agir geş dikin.*
'A fire has flared up a short distance from the table, and some people are stoking it with sticks.' (*M. Uzun/Bîra Qederê*)

(7)

a. *Kes-ên* *ku* *tê-n,* *bêtir* *rojnamevan* *û* *nivîskar* *in.*
person-EZ.PL that PROG-come.PRS-PL more journalist and writer COP.PL
'The people who are coming are mostly journalists and writers.'

b. *Ewî* *dîsan* *tişt-ên.* *balkêş* *di-got-in.*
3SG.OBL once.again ting -EZ.PL interesting PROG-say.PST-PL
'He was talking about the interesting things again.'

Analysis: Light nouns co-occur with the indefinite marker [-ek], quantifiers or numerals, and can also be modified by adjectives or relative clauses. The negative concord interpretation arises in constructions with [tu-], where the presence of [-ek] is optional. Adapting Déprez (2000, 2011), we suggest that NCIs in NK project a DP, [*tu*-] being the D-quantifier head (SDP in Zamparelli's (2005) terms) which bears a valued [*u*Neg] feature. We accept that negative concord is syntactic agreement (Zeijlstra, 2008; Kuno, 2008; Haegeman & Lohndal, 2010, a.o.) and thus *tu*-marked items enter an agreement relationship with the c-commanding negation which bears an unvalued [*i*Neg] feature (see Pesetsky & Torrego, 2004). The quantifier *tu*- requires either an IndefP or an NP, w.r.t light nouns and content nouns, as [*-ek*] is optional in both contexts. We argue that [*ek*-] occupies the Indef^0 taking an NP complement. As light nouns are semantically light ontological categories, they are licensed by modification (Kishimoto, 2000; Hiraiwa, 2012). To explain the NPI readings with the indefinite marker, we suggest that D head is occupied by a variable which is externally bound by a downward-entailing operator (*ala* Déprez, 2011). We propose that the landing site for the light noun is the the Indef head in the absence of modification therefore they do not have specific readings [∃ >¬] with respect to negation. In contrast, modified light nouns might have generic/definite readings as they move to the Spec,D position (*ala* Kahnemuyipour 2014), because the null D might host generic/definite operators, generating specific readings under negation. The fact that [*-ek*] is only optional with *kes* in NPI functions can be accounted for by its historical origin as a wh-item meaning 'who'. Following Kayne (2010), we assume that *wh*-items behave like determiners with a silent noun counterpart [PERSON], therefore *kes* comes with a silent light noun [PERSON], together projecting the NP. The projected NP moves to the Spec, IndefP position to yield the NPI reading. The optional [*-ek*] marking is licensed by *kes* in the specifier position, in line with Holmberg (1993) which assumes that in a spec-head agreement relation, α or ß but not both can be empty.

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Written versus Spoken Academic Kurmanji Kurdish: Nominal versus Verbal Style

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This paper contrasts written with spoken academic language in two Kurmanji Kurdish sets of data: some 1,500 sentences or 43,000 words taken from academic publications, and a comparable amount of material transcribed from recordings of oral presentations. Academic language as a genre has cross-linguistically been characterised as being concise and deagentized (Hohenstein 2012, Kameyama 2012). Erk Emeksiz' (2015: 1029f) idea of 'reduced agents' suggests a handful of roles that writers/researchers perform in the background; their presence (as well as that of other agents and experiencers) implicitly continues in the text. While deagentisation can be achieved by means of a variety of grammatical strategies (Siewierska 2008), it is particularly in nominal style (Hennig 2016) that the effects of deagentisation and concision combine, due to reduction in argument structure by comparison with verbal/clausal alternatives (Szabolcsi 1990, 1994, Czicza 2015).

In the written data, we find some 0.75 deverbal nominals per sentence, typically ending in *-(i)n* (infinitive) (661 findings), but also, with lesser frequencies, in *-î*, *-kar-î*, *-ker*, or *-(y)ar*; see example (1), from a sociolinguistic publication:

(1) *Lewma, bi armanca **dagirtina** wê **valahiyê** û **pêşvebirina** asta heta niha **bidestketî**, û bi vî rengî **peydakirina** bersivên hinek ji wan **pirsyarên** kel, di vê xebatê de...*
'Therefore, in order to fill that gap and take further the insight obtained so far, and in this way to find answers to some of those unanswered questions, in this study...'

These two effects of nominal style may be felt to be less adequate in oral settings, where online processing of information may require a less dense packaging of information, and a more personal level of interaction may be perceived as more accessible. The present study tests this assumption by comparing the written with oral data. The passage shown in example (2), from a meeting with a theologian, is characterised by a verbal, more personal and less concise, style, with more verbs unfolding an argument structure that projects agents:

(2)

Cih [v]	*Ew ya ku mirov hev û du **dicivin***	*tişteke pir hêja **e**.*
Cih [eng]	The fact that people meet each other	is something very nice.

Cih [v]	*((1.4s))*	*Tişteke pir hêja. Çima?*	*((1.1s))*	*Mesela peyvek **heye** bi kurdî, em*
Cih [eng]		Something very nice. Why?		For instance, there is a saying in

Cih [v]	***dibêjin**, her*	*((0.4s))*	*seriyekî de aqilek **heye**.*	*((0.5s))*	*Çaxê mirov hev û du*
Cih [eng]	Kurdish, in every		head there's a mind.		When people get together

Cih [v]	***dicivin**,*	*((1.1s))*	*û ji bo zanistiyê yanî ji bo ku tişteke ji hev û du v/ **hîn bibin**,*
Cih [eng]			and for knowledge, that is for each other/ for learning something,

Cih [v]	*((0.5s))*	*ji bo ku civîna xwe,*	*((0.5s))*	*û wekî ser geran yanî ceddî*
Cih [eng]		in order for their meeting		and take it importantly that is seriously,

Cih [v]	***wergirin*** *tiştekî ji hev û du* ***hîn bibin****,*	*((0.9s))*	*li hev civîn pir pir qenc e.*	*Ji ber ku asa*
Cih [eng]	that they learn from each other,		meeting is very good.	Because

Cih [v]	*hingekî hinge…*	*Her (yekî) tiştekî (jî yê) din* ***hîn bibe****.*	*((0.6s))*	*Her gav*	*((1.1s))*
Cih [eng]	((xxx))…	That everyone learns something different.		Each time	

Cih [v]	*em* ***hewce ne*** *ku tiştekî ji hevalê xwe* ***hîn bibin****.*	*Hevalê me jî* ***hewce ye*** *tiştekî ji me*
Cih [eng]	we have to learn something from our friend.	And our friend has to learn

Cih [v]	***hîn dibe****.*	*Û bi vî yekî mirov*	*((0.4s))*	***digihîjin***	*((0.5s))*	*encamek qenc.*
Cih [eng]	something from us.	And in this way, people		reach		a good result.

Findings will include a quantitative picture regarding the frequencies of nominalised versus verbal constructions, types of nominalisations, as well as functional-semantic types of agents, contrasting the two types of data.

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The Role of Zero in Morphological Analogy in Kurdish, Goranî and Zazakî

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A driving force in language change is Morphological Analogy, a process where one form in a language becomes the exemplar, motivating a change in another. This differs from "Sound Change", the physiological process where all instances of a phone in a language systematically shift to another in a specific context without exception. Once the Sound Changes of a language are identified along with their relative chronology, it is possible to predict the expected reflex of every form in the proto-language, and there are systematic heuristics with which to do so. In contrast, Morphological Analogy is a psychological process where the idiosyncracies created by Sound Change are eliminated by the leveling of allomorphy within a paradigm and the extension of the forms from one paradigm to another. Identifying the various analogies that a language went through requires a scholar to recognize where a form has developed in an unexpected manner and find the analogical exemplar for the development. This process of reconstruction does not rely on systematic heuristics but rather echos the words of Sir Author Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes: "Once you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth." Scholars have identified laws of analogy and reoccurring tendencies to aid in this reconstruction (e.g., Kuryłowicz 1945; Mańczak 1957). Based on my work with Kurdish, Goranî, and Zazakî, I have identified a new law of analogy:

(1) "Whenever a morphologically unmarked form bears cumulative exponence, Ø can be reanalysed as marking only the most salient exponent. A morphologically marked (non-zero) formative sharing the salient exponent, will be understood as marking the value not shared by both."

Iranian languages are particularly rich in zeros. As such, there copious examples of this law in Kurdish, Goranî, and Zazakî. One zero is found in the third-person singular of past-tense verbs. Already by the Middle Iranian period, the past tense in most attested Iranian languages was formed by the so-called past-passive participle (agreeing with the S/O argument in number and gender in varieties that preserve those forms in the direct case) and the copula agreeing with the S/O argument in person and number. In the third-person singular, the copula could be dropped in this construction.

(ōy) dīd ham/hēm	'(they(SG)) saw me'	*(ōy) dīd hēm*	'(they(SG)) saw us'
(ōy) dīd hē	'(they(SG)) saw you(SG)'	*(ōy) dīd hēd*	'(they(SG)) saw you(PL)'
(ōy) dīd ***(ast)***	'(they(SG)) saw (them(SG))'	*(ōy) dīd hand*	'(they(SG)) saw them(PL)'

Table 1: Middle Persian Preterit based on (Skjærvø 2009)

In a hypothetical common/proto-Kurdish, following the analysis of (Mohammadirad & Karim 2025), the inherited past-tense S/O verbal endings would have been those represented in Table 2.[1] Notice that the zero marker represents the exponents third-person and singular. Typologically speaking, singular can be understood as syntactically unmarked in comparison with plural. In a sense, so can third-person, hence Watkins' Law, the related phenomenon where an inflected third-person singular form is reanalyzed as the verbal stem with a -Ø suffix.

	SG	PL
1	**-m*	**-îm*
2	**-î*	**-îd*
3	**-Ø*	**-n*

Table 2: Common Kurdish PST person number affixes

[1] All forms are attested in some Kurdish varieties including the second person plural *-îd in Southern Kurdish and the Laki-Kermanṣay group. For debates on the inclusion of Laki-Kermanṣay in Kurdish, see (Fattah 2000; Belelli 2019; 2022).

Using the Law I propose in 2, the zero marker may be reanalyzed as marking the non-default value third-person at the expense of the unmarked value singular. Compare the two parsings in 2.

(2) *-Ø* and *-n* vs. *-Ø* and *-Ø-n*
-3SG -3PL -3(SG) -3-PL

The well-known lention of post-vocallic *d caused the second-person forms *-î singular and *-îd plural to merge as *-î in all but the Laki-Kermanṣay group (see (McCarus 2009: 597) for more on the Zagros *d* lenition), cf. CK çû vs. Persian *šod*; SK *dî* Persian *dīd*, etc. This Sound Change eliminated the number distinction in the second person. In analogy with -\O-*n* [-3-PL], the plural marker *-n* was extended to second-person plural eliminating the ambiguity; see (3).

(3) *-î and *-îd > *-î and *-î > *-î and *-î-n
-2SG -2PL -2 -2 -2(SG) -2-PL

This system is preserved in SK Gilan, Serpol, Îwan, etc.; see Table 3. Just as the second-person forms merged due to regular sound changes, the first-person forms merged in certain contexts. After î-final verbs, the vowel of î-initial suffixes is neutralized, preserved in SK Xanaqîn, Kelhor Ṣahabad, and Sehene; see Table 4. Other varieties resolve this ambiguity by adding *-n* [-PL] to the first-person plural, e.g., Qesra Ṣîrîn, Kolyay, Senjebî; see Table 4. Other varieties have generalized this pattern to all verbs even when there was no ambiguity to resolve, e.g., Wermizyar, Dûṣeyx, Mendilî; see Table 5.

	SG	PL
1	*-m*	*-îm*
2	*-î*	*-în*
3	*-Ø*	*-n*

Table 3: SK Serpol PST person number affixes

	SG	PL
1	*bîm*	*bîm*
2	*bîd*	*Bîn*
3	*bî*	*bîn*

Table 4: SK Kelhor Ṣahabad PST 'to be'

	SG	PL
1	*bîm/kirdim*	*bîmin/kirdîm*
2	*bîd/kirdî*	*bîn/kirdîn*
3	*bî/kird*	*bîn/kirdin*

Table 4: SK Senjebî PST 'to be/do'

	SG	PL
1	*bîm/kirdim*	*bîmin/kirdîmin*
2	*bîd/kirdî*	*bîn/kirdîn*
3	*bî/kird*	*bîn/kirdin*

Table 5: SK Wermizyar PST 'to be/do'

The reanalysis of *-n* as [-PL] due to the juxtaposition with *-Ø* [-3(SG)] is but one of many examples of this Law found in Kurdish. The ambiguity avoidance described above is an interesting phenomenon attested synchronically in SK. However, it is not a prerequisite for this law to take effect. In Goranî varieties, like Kurdish, the past-tense third-person singular (masculine) is unmarked. e.g., *kerd-Ø*} [do.M.SG-3SG], *kerde-Ø* [do.f.sg-3sg], and *kerd-ê*} [do-3PL]. The endings *-Ø* [-3SG] and *-ê* [-3PL] could alternatively be parsed as -Ø [-3(SG)] and -Ø-ê [-3-PL]. In Hewramî varieties, the formative *-ê* has spread throughout the plural paradigm, e.g., *-m-ê* [-1PL-PL], -d-ê [-2PL-PL], and *-ê* [-(3)PL]. I present this and further examples of the role of Zero in morphological analogy in Kurdish, Goranî, and Zazakî.

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Scribal Influence and Linguistic Variation in Shānāma Style Gorani Texts

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This paper investigates the role of scribal intervention, oral performance, and dialect contact in shaping *Shānāma*-style Gorani poetic texts—heroic narratives that differ in certain respects from the composed works of known Gorani poets. Gorani literature as preserved in manuscripts encompasses three broad categories: lyric, religious, and heroic texts. While lyric and religious compositions, including the Kalām of the Yārsān, tend to preserve Gorani's grammatical and lexical core, heroic epics rooted in oral performance, especially those referred to as *Shānāma*, display marked variation. These works, performed predominantly by Southern Kurdish speaking *naqqāls*, were often transcribed by scribes whose linguistic background influenced the resulting text.

Through analysis of manuscripts, recorded performances, and mixed-language adaptations, this study focuses on the variation in transitive past constructions and the use or omission of enclitic pronouns. While such omissions occur in composed poetry for metrical or stylistic reasons, their frequency in *Shānāma*-style epics points to additional causes: dialectal interference and transcriptional adaptation to the narrator's speech. Comparative data show that manuscripts from Gorani-speaking regions such as Hawramān exhibit far less interference and remain closer to Gorani linguistic norms, whereas versions mediated through non-Gorani-speaking narrators often blend Southern Kurdish, and Gorani forms.

The findings challenge the view of Literary Gorani as a uniform "standard" intelligible across the Zagros, suggesting instead that it constitutes a spectrum shaped by regional performance traditions, the sociolinguistic profile of narrators, and scribal practices. This typological distinction between orally transmitted epic narratives and non-oral composed poetry highlights the decisive role of oral tradition in shaping epic language and underscores the need to differentiate between the language of performance and that of original Gorani composition.

The Suffix *a:wi:* in Central Kurdish: Make-up and Semantic Contribution, and Productivity

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This paper investigates the semantic contribution of the derivational suffix *a:wi:* in Central Kurdish, as Examples 'bloody' (*xwena:wi*: 'blood' + *a:wi:*). Contra previous studies, which analyse *a:wi:* as the aggregation of two morphemes, i.e., the lexeme *a:w* 'water' and the relational suffix *-i:*), we advocate that in synchrony *a:wi:* is a single suffix, whose has two different semantic values. We also provide a quantitative investigation highlighting the productivity of this suffix. Finally, on the basis of a study on several scientific dictionaries, we show the evolution of *a:wi:* which has acquired a specific status in the formation of scientific vocabulary.

Several studies have investigated the suffix *a:wi:* (Hacî Marf, 1977; Kurdish Academy, 2000; Fatah, 2012). Two views have been suggested. Nûrî Alî Amîn considers *a:wi:* a single suffix in words such as *xwen-a:wi*: 'bloody' and *qu:r-a:wi:* 'muddy'. Hacî Marf (1977), on the other hand, suggests that *a:wi:* is formed by *a:w+i:*.

The semantic contribution of *a:wi*: has also been studied. The Kurdish Academy (2000, p.141) gives two semantic values: 1) 'to be contaminated and spread; 2) 'to possess' (i.e., ownership). Fatah (2012) gives similar values to the suffix: 1) 'covered with' and 2) 'having property'.

Adopting Nûrî Alî Amîn's view in considering *a:w+i:* as a single morpheme, we highlight its semantic contribution based on a corpus-based investigation, within a Construction Morphology framework (Booij 2010). We single out two meanings: 1) 'covered with' or 'impregnated'; 2) and another one that means 'abundance'.

An investigation of scientific dictionaries shows that the highest frequency is observed in medical and biological domains. Notably, in medical terminology, *a:w+i* demonstrates the strongest tendency to attach to new bases to coin neologisms. for example: 'Impregnated with Albumine' (ʔælbu:mi:na:wi: 'Albumine' + *a:wi:*).

The findings on the 131-million-word Aosoft corpus show that the suffix *a:wi:* is attached to 40 different bases, with a cumulative token frequency of 32,850, a hapax legomena frequency of 2, and a productivity potential of 0.00006096, based on Baayen's 1992 formula.

This suffix co-occurs with nouns only and converts them into adjectives. Semantically, the suffix largely attaches to three general categories of bases: 1) Weather/Natural Phenomena and Elements, 2) Physical Materials, Substances and Properties, 3) Emotions/Abstract States and Concepts.

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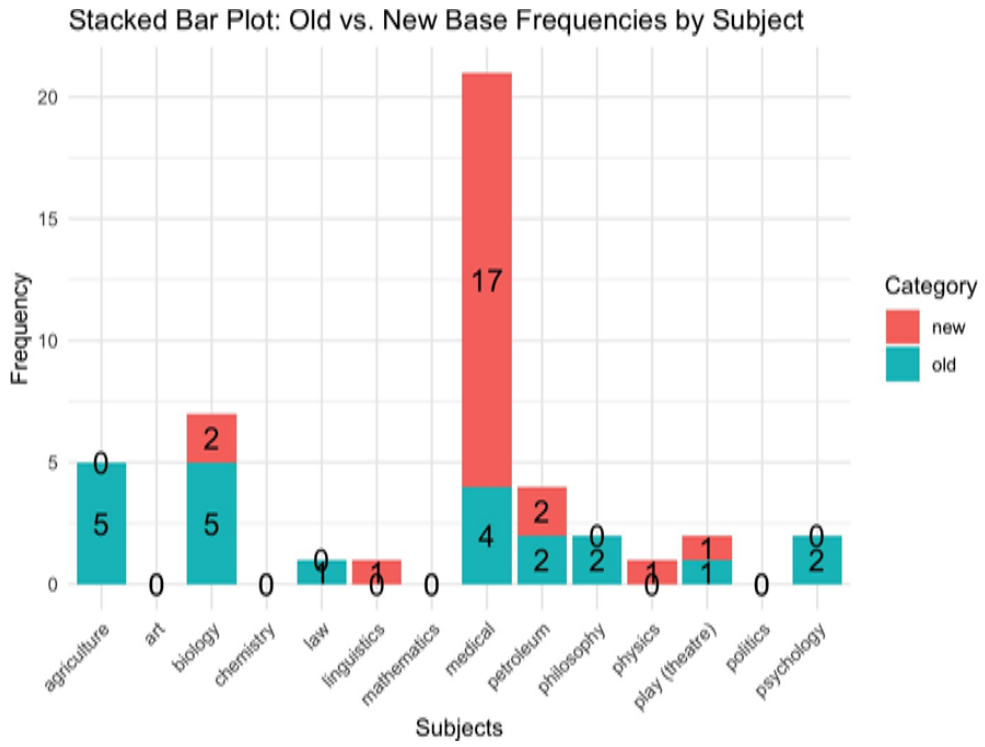

From Phonemes to Clusters: Phonological Loan Adaptation Strategies in Central Kurdish

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The Kurdish language comprises a set of closely related Western Iranian dialects, notably including Northern Kurdish (Kurmanji), Central Kurdish (Sorani), and Southern Kurdish. Owing to its lack of formal standardization, Kurdish speakers have historically been in contact with the official languages of their respective states, often acquiring literacy and formal education in these dominant languages. This study focuses on the phonological adaptations of the loanwords in CK. Irrespective of the motives underlying lexical borrowing or the historical origins of these changes, the modifications observed in loanword phonology are of central importance. Our investigation delineates the factors by which the Kurdish phonological system imposes its structural patterns on loanwords, and it aims to determine whether a single, unified grammatical framework governs both native and borrowed vocabulary, or whether a dual-layered model is more appropriate, one in which a core phonology regulates the indigenous lexicon and a peripheral phonology accounts for the adaptations observed in loanwords. The data, drawn from Central Kurdish as spoken in Mariwan and Suleimani, predominantly consist of words borrowed indirectly from Persian and Arabic, the two dominant formal languages in these regions.

Based on the adaptation of Arabic consonants, it is evident that language contact has significantly influenced Kurdish phonology even from the phonemic inventory. In particular, the adaptation of Arabic dental fricatives (i.e., the underlying forms /θ/ and /ð/) and emphatic consonants (/dˤ, ðˤ, sˤ, tˤ/) illustrates this influence. CK does not permit the dental fricatives /θ/ and /ð/; these are consequently replaced by [s] and [z], respectively. Similarly, the emphatic consonants undergo phonetic adjustments that eliminate their backing features: for instance, /dˤ/ and /ðˤ/ are adapted to [z], while /sˤ/ becomes [s] and /tˤ/ is realized as [t]. In contrast, guttural consonants are borrowed with high faithfulness. This faithful transmission is attributable to the phonemic nature of Kurdish orthography, which maintains a strict one-to-one correspondence between graphemes and phonemes and lacks silent letters or digraphs. Loaned guttural segments, namely, /ʕ, ħ, q, ʁ/, are assigned distinct letters in both the writing system and dictionaries, whereas the dental fricatives and emphatics are represented by letters that approximate their phonetic values. Notably, while native CK lexical items contain very few guttural consonants (restricted primarily to [h] and [ʔ]), loanwords, predominantly from Arabic and occasionally from Turkish and Farsi, frequently incorporate gutturals, including uvular consonants (/q, ʁ/) and pharyngeal consonants (/ħ, ʕ/). Farsi and Kurdish, which share a common ancestral language and similar orthographies, have nearly identical consonant inventories with only slight modifications. For instance, while Farsi renders the underlying segments /k, g/ as palatal [c, ɟ], Kurdish pronounces them as velar [k, g]. Likewise, Farsi's voiceless velar stop /q/ is articulated as a uvular [G] compared to its form in Kurdish. In the vowel domain, Kurdish distinguishes itself by including two high lax vowels ([ɪ] and [ʊ]), even though its other six vowels closely resemble those found in Farsi. In contrast, Iraqi Arabic features a nine-vowel system that is similar to Kurdish's vowel qualities, except for its distinct long [oo] sound.

Our analysis of vowel adaptation reveals a range of systematic modifications. A significant trend is vowel lowering, where mid vowels such as /e/ are modified to become more open ([a]), and similarly, vowels like /u/ may shift to a slightly lower quality ([o]). There is also evidence of vowel heightening, with certain mid vowels taking on a higher quality in their adapted forms. In some instances, multiple processes occur together, for example, a vowel might simultaneously lower and shift its place of

articulation (e.g., /i/ becomes [ɑ]). A particularly common modification is a general laxing or slight centralization of the vowel. Overall, these adjustments indicate that loanword vowels are systematically adapted to become more open, less tense, and more centralized, likely driven by articulatory ease and the inherent constraints of the native vowel system.

Central Kurdish enforces strict rules on consonant clusters. In the onset position, only clusters in which the second member is a glide are allowed. This means that loanwords with prohibited onset clusters must be modified using different repair strategies depending on the regional language influence. For example, clusters like /cl/, /dr/, /cr/, /pl/, /pr/, and /tr/ are typically adjusted through anaptyxis, where an epenthetic vowel is inserted to split the cluster. Most speakers insert [ɪ] in these cases, though some, influenced by less formal speech, prefer [a]. For instance, the underlying form */class/* is nativized as [kɪˈlɑs] or [kaˈlɑs], and */drama/* as [dɪɾɑˈmɑ]. Similarly, */plastic/* is adapted as either [pɪlɑsˈtik] or [palɑsˈtik], */professor/* as [pɪɾofɪˈsoɾ] or [pɪɾofiˈsoɾ], and */tragedy/* as [tɪɾɑʒeˈdi]. In contrast, onset clusters such as /s+voiceless stops/, and /s+sonorants/ are treated differently in various regions. In areas where speakers are in contact with Farsi, these clusters are repaired via prothesis, with a vowel prefixed to the consonant cluster, usually [ɪ], occasionally [e] or [i] (e.g., the underlying form */sponsor/* is rendered as [ʔespɑnˈseɾ] or [ʔisponˈsaɾ]; */steel/* as [ʔesˈtil] or [ʔɪsˈtil]; and */stop/* as [ʔisˈtob] or [ʔisˈtop]). In regions closely associated with Iraqi Arabic, however, these clusters are not repaired using prothesis but through anaptyxis like */sponseɾ/* [sɪ.pon.saɾ]; */slide/* [sɪ.lɑjd] etc., resulting in adaptations that more closely reflect the syllabic structure influenced by Arabic.

When it comes to coda clusters, the repair strategy is consistent across variants. An epenthetic vowel is inserted to divide clusters that violate the Sonority Sequencing Principle, following the same pattern used for native coda clusters. This uniform approach is applied to both native words and loanwords alike, ensuring that words with coda clusters are rendered in an acceptable phonotactic form.

These adaptations demonstrate how the repair of onset clusters varies based on intermediate language influence, while coda clusters are uniformly adjusted, maintaining a consistent phonological pattern in Central Kurdish for both native words and loanwords. For example, /bafɾ/ *'snow'* is repaired as [bafɪɾ]; similarly, loanwords such as /nɑs.jo.nɑ.lism/ *'nationalism'* become [nɑs.jo.nɑ.li.zɪm], /metɾ/ *'meter'* becomes [mitɪɾ], /foɾm/ *'form'* becomes [foɾɪm] or [fɪɾɪm]. Additionally, the stress patterns observed in the loanwords reflect their source languages, predominantly French (either directly or indirectly via Persian), which tend to employ a stress-final system. In the corpus of words used by CK speakers in Iran, many items are borrowed indirectly through Persian and have undergone a degree of nativization; this is evidenced by the adoption of a CVCC syllable structure with stress predominantly assigned to the final syllable. Consequently, minimal changes are required in the adaptation of these forms. Observations further indicate that the same phonological strategies apply to both native and borrowed words, suggesting that a single phonological system governs the entire lexicon. This is exemplified by assimilation processes in native words, such as the adaptation of the underlying form /maħbub/ *'beloved'* to [maʕbub] and /mobseɾ/ *'observer'* to [mʊbsel] or [mʊfsel]. Similar assimilation is observed in other contexts, such as the regressive adaptation of /pɑs.ˈgɑh/ *'outpost'* to [pɑz.ˈgɑ] or its progressive realization [pɑs.ˈjɑ], the adaptation of /dast.ˈgɑh/ to [daz.ˈgɑ] or [das.ˈjɑ], /tanbɑku/ *'tobacco'* to [tamɑko], and /bisiklet/ *'bicycle'* to [bɑsˈkil] or [pɑsˈkil].

Overall, the phonological adaptations of loanwords in Central Kurdish demonstrate a systematic integration of foreign lexical items into the native phonological framework. Both vowel modifications and consonantal repair strategies reflect a dynamic interplay between language contact influences and the inherent phonotactic and articulatory constraints of Central Kurdish.

Differential Case Marking on Non-Core Arguments in Hewramî

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Hewramî features differential case marking on no-core arguments (DRM), in a way that the same syntactic role may get marked in direct case and or oblique case depending on different factors, including type of flagging, the adposition complement being possessed, type of role, animacy, identifiability, etc. The following examples are quick guides to the system.

(1) a. *gêł=o* ***şar-eke-ne***
wander.PRS.IND-3SG:S town.M-DEF.SG.DIR-POST
'He wandered in town.' [BP.148]

b. *řuwe=m* *kerd-e=we* ***şar-î***
face.F=1SG:A do.PST-3SG:F:O=POST town-OBL.M
'I headed toward the town.' [MP.09]

c. *luwa* ***şar***
go.PST.3SG.M.S town.DIR
'He went into town.' [BB.27]

d. *ber-o=we* ***pey*** ***şar-î***
take.PRS.IND-3SG:A=POST to town-OBL.M
'He took (him) into town.' [PW.41]

The variation seen for marking the goal arguments, e.g. the bare nominal being oblique-marked in (1.b) and direct-marked in (1.c), is treated under differential case marking, which in turn raises several questions, including what is the effect of the type of flagging on DRM? What is the effect of role, animacy, and definiteness on DRM? To investigate these questions, two purpose-built corpora of naturalistic spoken Hewramî have been compiled and annotated. The first corpus is a collection of Hewramî narratives (Mohammadirad, Forthcoming), featuring 10000 words. The second corpus is a collection of oral folktales, comprising 31 narratives and totaling 25,000 words (Mohammadirad, in prep). Overall, the data in the corpus indicate that 65% of the tokens (1113 out of 1718) are marked in the direct case, and 35% (605 out of 1718) are marked in the oblique case. These figures exclude "relnoun" and "circ-rel" for flagging, and "na" for case. Table 1 lists the relevant variables for differential case marking based on the insights from the literature. The paper investigates the effect of individual factors on DRM and additionally offers a multivariate analysis, highlighting how variables interact in shaping DRM.

Variable	Values
1. Case	**Direct**, **Oblique**, na (e.g. for SAP)
2. Flagging	bare, (post)position, (circ)umposition, (prep)osition, (rel)ational (noun) (circ)umposition-(rel)ational noun
3. NP head being possessed	yes, no
4. Role	goal, recipient, addressee, complement of 'become', location, source, beneficiary, instrument, other
5. Animacy	Human, Animate, inanimate
6. Identifiability	Definite, Specific, Non-specific
7. PoS of Head	Noun, Pronoun

Table 1: Variables

Fig. 1 illustrates a decision-making process for the use of direct case (illustrated in grey colour) or oblique case (illustrated in black) on non-core arguments. The predictor variables are represented by nodes. Nodes, in turn, are split based on statistical significance and along the values of a predictor. I used the ctree() function from the party package in R (Hothorn et al., 2006) to construct conditional inference trees. Note that it is the oblique marking that constitutes the differentiality in Hewramî.

According to Fig. 1, the type of flagging is the strongest factor predicting DRM. The model suggests an initial split between prepositional and circumpositional flagging on one hand, and postpositional flagging and no flagging (i.e. bare) on the other. For the first group, the next strong factor is the adposition complement not being possessed, in which case, the role becomes an important predictor of DRM. As for role, there is a distinction in animacy between grammatical roles "becm", "instr", and "loc" expressing humans and those expressing non- humans (nodes 20-22), with the former triggering oblique marking at a larger scale. Similarly, for grammatical roles such as "ablative" (nodes 25-27), there is an animacy distinction but this time between animate (including human) and inanimate. For the second group, with the R argument being postpositional or bare, there is only limited DRM. Here, there is a weak effect of role on DRM, whereby the roles that usually express human (node 5) and animate referents (nodes 10-14) may occasionally get oblique marked.

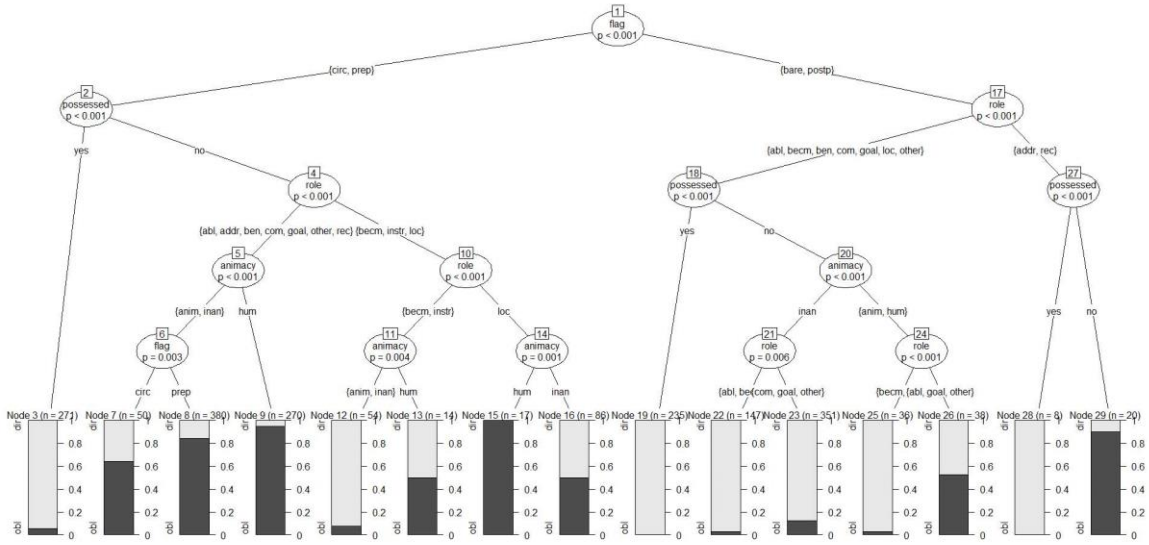

Figure 1: Conditional inference tree with all potential explanatory variables

The Hewramî data point to the broader typological tendencies in differential case marking of non-core arguments. Kittilä (2011) discusses animacy effects on marking goals. In Zazakî, animacy and definiteness have been reported to be crucial in differential case marking of oblique arguments (Dogan, 2022). DRM in Hewramî, while sensitive to animacy, is primarily influenced by structural factors such as the type of flagging and the adpositional complement being possessed.

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Verbal Agreement with Possessed Objects in Hawrami's Unmarked Ergative Constructions: A Minimalist Approach

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This paper investigates the syntactic and morphological behavior of object agreement in possessive constructions in Hawrami (a Gorani variety of Kurdish), with a particular focus on constructions where the object bears a possessive clitic. The study is motivated by a fundamental theoretical question: how does object agreement operate when the object is already morphosyntactically complex, hosting a possessive clitic that encodes a separate pronominal feature?

The empirical data, drawn from elicited examples and naturalistic Hawrami texts, reveal a striking pattern. In Hawrami transitive clauses, direct object agreement on the verb is generally obligatory in the presence of nominal objects, as a normal requirement of unmarked ergative constructions:

1. *to* *čašt-aka=t* *ward –Ø*
   you food-DEF=2SG.OBL eat.PST-3SG
   'You ate the meal.'

2. *Hiwa* *færš-æk-e=š* *bærd-e*
   Hiwa carpet-DEF-PL=3SG take.PST-3PL
   'Hiwa took the carpets.'

However, when the object hosts a possessive clitic, verbal agreement with the possessee becomes systematically blocked and instead the verb agrees with the possessor:

3. *Hiwa* *mašin-ækæ=š* *bærd-ane*
   Hiwa car-DEF=3SG take.PST-1SG
   'Hiwa took my car.'

4. *to* *særæ=t* *mærd-e*
   you head=2SG break.PST-3PL
   'You broke their heads.'

To account for this asymmetry, the paper adopts the framework of dependent case theory and Agree-based syntactic derivation, as developed in Altamaz & Baker (2018). Building on their proposal that agreement is contingent upon case accessibility and phase-based locality, it is argued that the possessive clitic renders the DP a pseudo-complex head, effectively blocking the lower DP (the possessee) from being a viable target for φ-Agree. In Hawrami, the possessive clitic marks a genitive relationship and raises the possessor to a higher syntactic position, causing the object DP as a whole to behave differently with respect to agreement probes on the verb.

The analysis further posits that in Hawrami, the failure of object agreement in such cases is not due to morphological impoverishment or PF deletion, but rather reflects a deeper syntactic opacity induced by the possessive structure. This supports a phase-theoretic approach in which certain possessive DPs act as opaque domains for agreement due to their internal structure and the location of the possessive clitic.

The findings contribute to the typology of agreement in Iranian languages and Kurdish dialects more broadly, suggesting that Hawrami provides robust evidence for the interaction between agreement, possession, and syntactic locality. Moreover, the study adds to our understanding of how possessive

constructions can disrupt otherwise regular patterns of clitic doubling and object agreement, with implications for broader theories of argument structure and agreement domains.

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David N. MacKenzie's Unpublished Work on Mulla Sa'id Shamdinani's Texts

Ergin Öpengin (University of Cambridge)

Mulla Sa'id Shamdinani was an instructor at the sufi convent of Nehri, the center of the Shamdinan *qaza* of the period, for more than ten years during the reign of Sheikh Muhammad Siddiq (d. 1911) and Sayyid Taha II (reign from 1912) when in 1915 he arrived in the Urmia city of Iran along with more than two thousand people of Shamdinan fleeing from Ottoman and Russian confrontations. He was recruited there by the Russian consul Basile Nikitine to help him in delivering aid but also as his Kurdish teacher. As an outcome of their collaboration from 1916 to 1918, Mulla Sa'id wrote a large corpus of texts in Kurdish on the culture and history of Central Kurdistan as well as a separate book in Persian that he named "History of Kurdistan". When the Russian forces retreated from the region after the October 1917 revolution, Basile Nikitine emigrated to France and took with him Mulla Sa'id's manuscripts. Nikitine would publish several of the Kurdish texts in 1920s. In late 1950s he started collaborating with David N. MacKenzie to prepare a complete edition of the texts but he died in 1960 before seeing through the completion of their project. MacKenzie worked on the Kurdish texts in subsequent decades, carefully transcribing and translating all of the texts, but by the time he died he had only published two of the rich collection of texts. Having recently "re-discovered" these manuscripts in MacKenzie's "Nachlass", I will present a profile of Mulla Sa'id based on his own and Nikitine's statements, followed by an account of MacKenzie's work on the edition of Mulla Sa'id's texts in the 20th century, incorporating various documents from MacKenzie's archive, especially correspondence between MacKenzie and Nikitine as well as between MacKenzie and the Russian Iranist Yuri Borshchevsky. I will finalize the talk with some notes on the linguistic and literary importance of Mulla Sa'id's texts as well as the interest of MacKenzie's archive for Kurdish linguistics.

Dialectal Variation in Hawrami Ezafe

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Ezafe (EZ) is a linking element in Iranian languages that appears on a noun and all its dependents in a sequence, except for the final one. This phenomenon has been extensively studied in Iranian languages (Samiian 1994; Ghomeshi 1997; Samvelian 2007; Larson & Yamakido 2008; Kahnemuyipour 2014, among others) and has also been investigated in various Hawrami dialects (MacKenzie 1966; Holmberg & Odden 2008; Tahir 2018; Peters et al. 2023). However, one of the dialects under investigation in this study, Doławi, has not been previously examined in detail. Prior studies have identified two primary Ezafe forms in Hawrami: *-i* for adjectival modification and *-u* for possessive constructions, as shown in (1) and (2) Doławi:

(1) *mašin-i* *sur*
car-EZ red
'the red car'

(2) *mašin-u* *ħasæn-i*
car-EZ Hasan-OBL
'Hassan's car'

Holmberg & Odden (2004) analyze these two forms as morphosyntactically distinct. We challenge this classification and adopt a unified account of these elements (in line with the analysis of Ezafe in Kahnemuyipour 2014 and subsequent work), arguing that the distinct form of the Ezafe in Hawrami possessive constructions is the result of genitive case concord.

Additionally, our research reveals that Doławi exhibits notable differences from other studied dialects with respect to the distribution of Ezafe. One such difference lies in the phonological conditioning of the Ezafe allomorphs in Doławi. In this dialect, *-e/-o* appears when the host of Ezafe, whether a noun or a modifier, ends in a vowel (3)-(4), whereas *-i/-u* is used when the host ends in a consonant (1)-(2):

(3) *tutæ-e* *čærmæ*
dog-EZ white
'the white dog'

(4) *jæbæ-o* *čai*
box-EZ tea
'tea box'

Notably, this type of phonologically driven alternation has not been reported in other Hawrami dialects, as illustrated for *-u* in (5)-(6) from Pawei (Holmberg & Odden 2004). In (6), the form of Ezafe is *-u* despite the preceding vowel.

(5) *æsp-u* *Ahmað-i*
horse-EZ Ahmað-OBL
'Ahmað's horse'

(6) *qnič-ækæ-u* *biz-ækæ-i*
tail-DEF-EZ goat-DEF-OBL
'the tail of the goat'

Another significant distinction emerges when both an adjective and a possessor co-occur within the DP. As noted above, in all dialects of Hawrami, distinct forms of Ezafe are used with adjectives and possessors, as in (1)-(6). However, a key distinction arises when both an adjective and a possessor co-occur within the DP. In Doławi, the adjective is linked to the noun via *-i/-e*, while the possessor is linked via *-u/-o*, as shown in (7):

(7) *mašin-i* *čærmæ-o* *ħasan-i*
car-EZ white-EZ Hasan-OBL
'Hassan's white car'

In contrast, in other dialects of Hawrami, the Ezafe forms are neutralized, both appearing as the form used in the context of possessors, as illustrated for Pawei in (8), from Peters et al. (2023):

(8) *mashin-u* *chærmæ-w* *ħasan-i*
car- EZ.GEN white-EZ.GEN Hasan-OBL
'Hasan's white car"

The contrast in (7) and (8) is reminiscent of a similar contrast found in Southern vs. Central/Northern dialects of Zazaki, discussed in Gündoğdu et al. (2024). Southern Zazaki shows a pattern similar to Pawei with both instances of Ezafe being the one used with possessors, while Central/Northern Zazaki exhibits a pattern similar to Doławi with two distinct forms of Ezafe. Following Kahnemuyipour (2014), Gündoğdu et al. take noun phrases to be head final in Ezafe languages, with modifiers occupying specifiers of functional projections above the noun. Under this view, the surface structure of the noun phrase is the result of roll-up movement, with Ezafe realizing the intermediate Agr heads which enable the roll-up derivation. Gündoğdu et al. account for the Southern Zazaki pattern in three steps. First, the Ezafe which introduces the possessor in its specifier enters an Agree relation with it, with its Case feature being valued as Genitive/Oblique. Second, D agrees with the Agr head hosting Ezafe. Third, the Case on D spreads to all other Agr heads in the DP via Concord (Norris 2017a; 2017b). This analysis can be extended to Hawrami dialects such as Pawei. The Doławi pattern can be accounted for via an absence of the Agree relation between D and the Agr head hosting Ezafe (similar to Gündoğdu et al.'s analysis of Central/Northern Zazaki) or an absence of a Concord relation altogether.

Doławi exhibits another novel pattern with respect to the use of Ezafe with eventive nouns. While in other studied dialects of Hawrami, the form of Ezafe shows no sensitivity to the noun type, Doławi seems to exhibit a special pattern with eventive nouns. Our data show that in Doławi, eventive nouns consistently take the Ezafe form *-e/-i,* as in (9), whereas non-eventive nouns exhibit the form *-o/-u*, as in (10).

(9) *ræma-e* *ħasan-i*
escape-EZ Hasan-OBL
'the escape of Hasan'

(10) *ktew-u* *ħasan-i*
book-EZ Hasan-OBL
'Hasan's book'

In contrast, in Pawei, the Ezafe form used with eventive nouns does not distinguish between eventive and non-eventive types; it uniformly appears as *-u* (Peters et al. 2023). This unexpected sensitivity to the noun type raises a interesting question about the conditioning factors for the observed variation, a question we will explore in our talk.
In sum, our investigation of Doławi Ezafe sheds light on previously undocumented variation within Hawrami dialects and advances our understanding of the distribution of Ezafe-like nominal linkers in Iranian languages and beyond.

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The Relatedness of Kurdish Varieties: A Parametric Analysis of Determiner Phrase from Kirdki to Lori

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Introduction

Despite its significant contributions to understanding linguistic diversity, the classical comparative method for investigating linguistic relatedness has revealed inherent limitations at both micro and macro levels. Longobardi (2003) and later Longobardi and Guardiano (2009) proposed that the Parametric Comparison Method (PCM) could address these limitations. The PCM represents a fundamental shift in taxonomic criteria, moving away from phonetic features and word etymologies to focus on abstract grammatical rules. By demonstrating that abstract syntactic properties serve as robust markers of phylogenetic relationships, they argue that parametric analyses of grammatical diversity, rooted in Chomsky's (1981) theoretical framework, can enhance the historical classification of languages. Guardiano et al. (2016) and Guardiano et al. (2020) further applied the PCM to conduct a contrastive analysis and classify linguistically intertwined varieties connected geographically, genealogically, and sociolinguistically. Their findings confirmed the PCM's effectiveness in analyzing microvariation and establishing a quantitative framework for syntactic dialectology.

The classification of Kurdish language varieties remains a subject of scholarly debate. While Kurmanji (Northern Kurdish), Sorani (Central Kurdish), and Kalhori (Southern Kurdish) are widely acknowledged as Kurdish, the linguistic relationship between Gorani, Kırdki (Zazaki), Laki, and both main branches of Lori and other Kurdish dialects remains uncertain and requires further investigation. This study examines the syntactic parameters of the Determiner Phrase (DP) across eight language varieties situated along a geographical continuum; including Siverek (Kırdki), Diyarbakir (Kurmanji), Solaymanieh (Sorani), Pawah (Gorani), Kermanshah (Kalhori), NourAbad (Laki), KhoramAbad (Lori KhoramAbadi), and Lali (Lori Bakhtiari). Using quantitatively measuring syntactic distances, this research aims to elucidate the linguistic relationships among these varieties.

Methodology

This study employs the PCM to analyze syntactic distances across closely related Kurdish varieties, focusing on the Determiner Phrase (DP) to capture microvariation and quantify syntactic differences. Data were collected from contemporary native speakers of the eight varieties. Syntactic features were formalized as binary parameters, encoded as '+' or '-' to represent oppositional settings. The number of differences (d) and identities (i) in parameter settings for each language pair were quantified and expressed as coefficients <i; d>.

Syntactic distances were measured using the Jaccard-Tanimoto distance metric, calculated as:

Δ Jaccard (A, B) = [N-+ + N+-] / [N-+ + N+- + N++] or equivalently, Distance $_{(A, B)} = \frac{d}{d+i}$,

where N-+ and N+- represent mismatches in parameter settings, and N++ represents matches. A distance-based phylogenetic algorithm (UPGMA) was then used to generate evolutionary representations of the language varieties, providing a quantitative framework for inferring historical relationships and syntactic divergence.

Results and Discussions

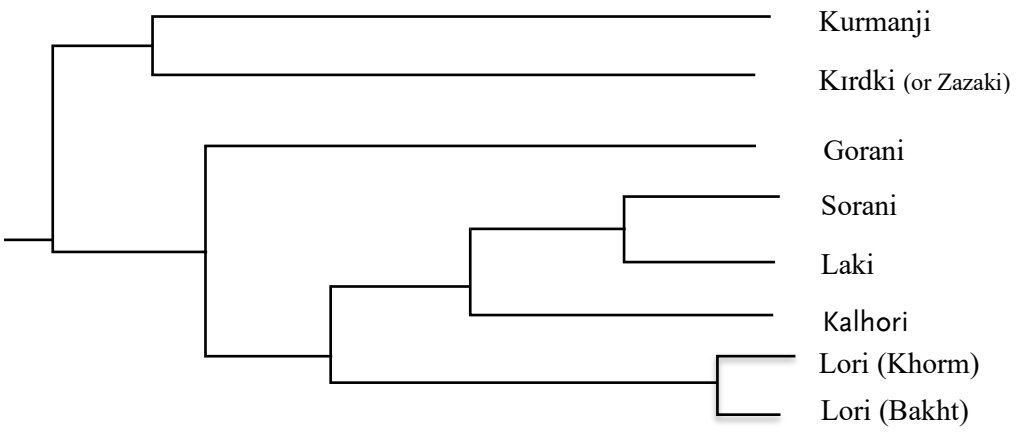
The application of the Phylogenetic PCM to the dataset reveals syntactic distances across eight Kurdish varieties, ranging from Kırdki (a northern variety) to Lori Bakhtiari (a southern variety), as illustrated in Fig. 1. The distance values, ranging from 0 to 1, quantify linguistic divergence, where lower values indicate higher syntactic similarity and higher values reflect greater divergence. The matrix demonstrates that Sorani and Laki exhibit the strongest syntactic affinity (0.02), while the Lori dialects (Khorramabadi and Bakhtiari) are syntactically identical (0 distance). In contrast, Kurmanji and Kırdki display the most substantial divergence from other varieties, whereas Gorani occupies an intermediate position, showing moderate distances from neighboring dialects.

Figure 1. *Parametric (Syntactic) distances across Kurdish varieties*

	Kurmanji							
Kurmanji	0	Sorani						
Sorani	0.47	0	Kalhori					
Kalhori	0.59	0.075	0	Gorani				
Gorani	0.57	0.16	0.22	0	Kırdki			
Kırdki	0.39	0.53	0.55	0.42	0	Laki		
Laki	0.57	0.02	0.075	0.19	0.53	0	Lori (Khorm)	
Lori (Khorm)	0.56	0.075	0.077	0.23	0.52	0.06	0	Lori (Bakht)
Lori (Bakht)	0.56	0.075	0.077	0.23	0.52	0.06	0	0

The distance matrix captures the transitional relationships within this dialect continuum, revealing a tight clustering of Lori varieties. While Kurmanji occupies one end of the spectrum, Gorani assumes an intermediate position, and Lori occupies the other end of the spectrum. The gradational distance values rather than discrete boundaries suggest a smooth linguistic transition across these Kurdish varieties, as visualized in Fig. 2.

Figure 2. *Tree diagram of syntactic distances across Kurdish varieties*



Conclusion

Phylogenetic analysis of eight Kurdish varieties demonstrates a clear syntactic continuum, with Lori dialects positioned at one extreme, Kurmanji at the other, and Gorani occupying a central transitional

position. The gradual syntactic gradation observed across these varieties supports a fluid dialect continuum that challenges traditional discrete classifications. These findings highlight the necessity of adopting continuum-based models to accurately capture the nuanced linguistic variation among closely related Kurdish varieties.

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Dialectal Filtering: Synthesize Text Corpora for Kurdish Varieties by Enriching Datasets with Multi-Labels

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1 Introduction

Kurdish, a low-resource language with extensive dialectal variation, faces significant challenges in NLP due to noisy, mixed-dialect text corpora [4, 12]. This research introduces a dialect-aware text filtering framework to preprocess and enrich Kurdish datasets, synthesizing variety-specific sub-corpora for underrepresented dialects (see Figure 1). By leveraging lexicographic features, this approach generates over 100 sub-corpora from Northern Kurdish data, offering resources for dialect specific NLP tasks but has currently limitations in precision. All code and data will be released publicly[2].

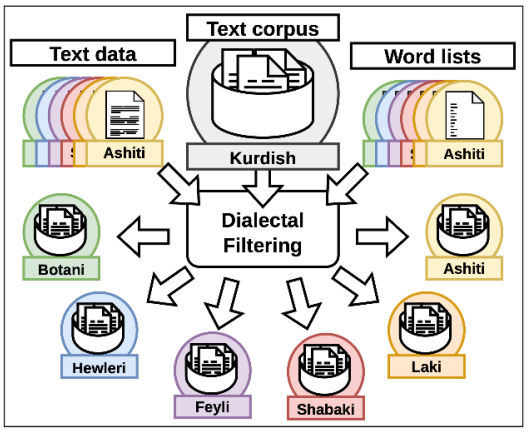

Figure 1: Concept of dialectal filtering.

2 Theoretical Background

Dialect Continua and Language Varieties

In the Kurdish dialect continuum [6], some distanced varieties are not mutually intelligible [20], which, coupled with the use of multiple scripts (Latin, Arabic, Cyrillic) and influences from neighboring languages (e.g., Arabic, Persian, Turkish), complicates language identification and processing, illustrated by work for Central Kurdish [8] and examples of Northern Kurdish in Table 1. The distinction between language and dialect is often arbitrary, influenced by sociopolitical factors but ultimately should suit the scope of the investigation at hand [23].

Northern Kurdish (kmr)	
Standard	*Ez westiyayî me*
Bahdînî	*Ez yê westiyayî me*
Efrînî	*Eri'eti me*
Kobanî	*Ez-î westiyayî me*
Qamişlokî	*Ez te'bî me*
English	I am tired

Table 1: Northern Kurdish dialectal variations.

Challenges in Kurdish NLP

Despite exciting progress in Kurdish NLP [14], Kurdish corpora still suffer from numerous problems. First, a lack of standardization leads to variations in orthography (e.g., diacritics like î, û, ê in Latin script Kurmanji) and inconsistent spelling [9]. Second, mixed varieties, especially in Web scraped data often blend dialects without clear boundaries [1]. Third, weak language identification tools struggle to distinguish Kurdish from similar languages or unrelated content (even Chinese), let alone closely related varieties [3]. These issues result in noisy datasets, hindering NLP progress for Kurdish varieties, especially underrepresented sub-dialects. A promising approach is to build new solutions

[2] https://github.com/christianschuler8989/KurdishDialectFilters.

based on data and tools from related higher resourced languages, as in language identification [19, 7], tokenization [2] and part-of-speech tagging [15, 13].

3 Experiments and Results

Our work builds on linguistic features from various sources, such as related literature (e.g. description on dialectal variations of Haig Variety Lines Tokens (Unique) Filters and Öpengin [18]), various word lists from Wikipedia pages (e.g. Zimanê kurdî[3]), and Matras [22]'s Database of Kurdish Dialects with its more than 42.000 entries from 109 different locations.

Dataset	Lines (avg. len.)	Words (Unique)
[17]	3.920 (55.37)	217.038 (23.304)
[9]	25.572 (165.29)	4.226.723 (123.832)
[11]	137.873 (17.98)	2.478.473 (124.639)
[21]	30.002 (15.74)	472.258 (50.860)
[16]	1.015.966 (10.06)	10.224.992 (247.034)

Table 2: Statistics of used text corpora.

We cleaned and tokenized text from various Northern Kurdish corpora [17, 9, 11, 21, 16] of various sizes and domains from across two decades (see Table 2). Using variety-specific word lists from 183 Kurdish dialects, we multi-labeled sentences based on unique words, then grouped them into sub-corpora. Lexical ambiguities and uneven feature distribution were notable hurdles. The framework yielded over100 sub-corpora (see Table 3 for a selected subset), e.g., *Beroj* (17,095 lines, 2M words) for which we used 454 words and phrases that were unique to this variety. Unique does not refer to entries that are unique to a variety in the real world, but rather observed to be unique in the scope of our collected data. Due to the currently still limited coverage it can be expected, that later evaluations will reveal some of these entries to overlap across multiple varieties, especially those that are closely related. Lexicographic based filtering can only be the first step, as more linguistic features are required for true disambiguation. The potential of part-of-speech tagging is shown by the word *Bavê*, as in the sentence *Bavêminli malêye* (eng: My father is at home). In a different context, and used as a verb (eng: throwing), it becomes more specific to the Kobani variety of Northern Kurdish. Multi-labeling reduced precision, however these new datasets are a first step to supporting variety specific NLP applications.

Variety	Lines	Tokens	Unique	Filters
Akre	4544	490355	(39950)	523
Beroj	17095	2029376	(76871)	454
Kars	3332	207901	(26794)	134
Kobani	15408	813285	(66825)	642
Mosul	7350	429392	(40112)	715
Siirt	1856	166468	(21173)	250
Suruc	13363	859285	(62697)	435

Table 3: Statistics for variety sub-corpora.

4 Conclusion

This method enhances text corpora with multi language labels by lexicographic filtering. The resulting sub-corpora provide a foundation for linguistic investigation and dialectal NLP tasks [10].

[3] https://ku.wikipedia.org/wiki/ZimanAł_kurdAő

Limitations in lexical disambiguation suggest future use of morphological features and native speaker input [5] for data validation. Once post-processed, these sub-corpora will aid development of dialectal tools and language preservation.

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The Effect of Definiteness, Animacy, and Length on Word Order from a Cross-verb Perspective

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The relative order of direct and oblique objects has been the subject of many usage-based studies cross-linguistically (e.g., Wasow 2002; Bresnan et al. 2007; Bresnan and Ford 2010; Stallings and MacDonald 2011; Faghiri 2016; Faghiri and Samvelian 2020; Zhang and Xu 2023, among many others). However, these studies focused solely on either the preverbal or postverbal domain, as most languages position arguments on one side of the verb depending on their type (OV or VO). According to WALS data (Dryer and Gensler 2013), of the 213 studied VO languages, only three varieties of Chinese allow arguments to be placed on both sides of the verb, including the XVO order. A number of Iranian languages (mixed head, non-rigid OV type), including Persian and Kurdish show a mirror-image placement of arguments on both sides of the verb including OVX (Haig 2015; 2022, Shariatmadari et al. to appear). These fairly rare word orders offer an opportunity to study the effect of previously investigated determinants of word order using data that involves cross-verb domains (pre and postverb).

The present study, investigates the effect of several cognitive-functional factors, including definiteness of the O (definite, indefinite, generic), semantic role and animacy of the X (animate, inanimate), and their relative length (number of words for Kurmanji and Sorani, number of characters for Mandarin), on word order, mainly focusing on the options that involve both pre and postverbal domains (XVO for Mandarin and OVX for Kurdish). We adopt a quantitative approach based on the data for Kurdish (including the Pewan Corpus for Kurmanji (Esmaili et al. 2013) and the AsoSoft Corpus for Sorani (Veisi et al. 2020), and the data from Chinese (The Lancaster Corpus of Mandarin Chinese (McEnery & Xiao 2004)).

I) In our corpus study of Kurdish, we found statistically significant effects of definiteness and animacy corresponding to definite-first and animate-first (involving both pre- and postverbal domains in both dialects). However, in terms of length the two dialects behaved differently: i) we observed a consistent long-first preference in Kurmanji across both domains (the postverbal Xs were typically short NPs) and ii) an end-weight preference for the postverbal domain in Sorani (the postverbal Xs were generally long PPs).

II) For Mandarin data, we found statistically significant effects for the same factors, with definite-first and animate-first preferences across both domains. However, in terms of length, we observed a long-first preference in the preverbal domain and an end-weight preference in the postverbal domain (when both O and X are placed after the verb). Consequently, the preverbal Xs were typically animate (recipient) and long.

By comparing our findings to those of previous studies, we cautiously argue that the definite-first and animate-first preferences are consistent in these three languages regardless of the preverbal or postverbal domains. However, in terms of length, there are two possible scenarios: a language like Kurmanji shows a consistent long-first preference across domains, whereas Mandarin or Sorani have a long-first preference in the preverbal domain and an end-weight preference in the postverbal domain, resulting in a U-shaped length effect. Both of these scenarios align with Hawkins' observations and predictions regarding inconsistent/disharmonic head-ordering languages, which suggest that such languages regularly tend to postpose Xs after the verb, either in their original PP forms or as an NP (Hawkins 2008; 2014).

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A Corpus-based Study on the Motivations of Relative Clause Extraposition in Sorani

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Sorani relative clauses typically integrate within the noun phrase they modify, as in (1). However, they can also be separated from the antecedent by intervening material and occur at the end of the matrix clause, exemplified by (2), which constitutes an extraposed relative.

(1)	***Ew***	***jin-e-[y***	*bînî=man*	*le*	*šar-eke]*	*dewłemen-e*
	That	woman-DEM1-EZ	we saw	in	town-DEF	rich-is

'The woman we saw in the town is rich.' (Matras et al., 2016, S-034)

(2)	***Aw***	***kitēb-a***	*hal*	*gir-a*	*[ka*	*dā=m*	*xist-uwa]*
	DEM	book-DEM	up	grab-2SG	REL	down=1SG	threw-PTCP

'Pick up that book which I have thrown down.' (MacKenzie, 1961, p. 133)

Extraposed relatives are considered to be problematic because they violate the prescriptive rule banning "misplaced modifier" (Trenga, 2006, as cited in Francis, 2010, p. 36). Consequently, they not only complicate the syntax but also presumably increase processing complexity (Wasow, 2002, p. 7). Nonetheless, the seemingly inconvenient construction is widely used across languages, including Sorani. Hence the question naturally arises: what are the motivations of relative clause extraposition?

This research addresses this question in Sorani through a corpus-based quantitative approach. The corpus contains 137 relative clauses drawn from both written and oral texts, comprising 78 embedded relatives and 59 extraposed relatives. Six factors are examined for their influence on relative clause placement. Firstly, grammatical weight is analysed by comparing the ratio of verb phrase to relative clause length between embedded and extraposed relatives. This follows the hypothesis that heavy, complex constructions tend to appear in later positions (Wasow 2002; Hawkins 2004). Secondly, information status is investigated given its documented influence on constituent order (Arnold et al., 2000). Thirdly, predicate type is examined, as it has been shown to affect extraposition in Persian relatives (Mahand et al., 2016). The matrix clause predicates are categorized as unergative, unaccusative, passive, transitive, or copular for this purpose. Fourthly, Guéron and May (1984) suggest that relative clauses can only be extraposed from indefinite or quantified NPs. Therefore, the definiteness of the antecedent is considered. Fifthly, the restrictiveness of relative clause is tested, which is believed to have potential influence on extraposition (Alexiadou et al. 2000: 31). Sixthly, register differences between written and oral usage, a factor that has not been included in existing research, is examined as well. The effect of each factor is evaluated by comparing their frequency distributions in embedded and extraposed relatives.

The results indicate that heavy relative clause (cf. Fig.1), new information status of the antecedent (cf. Fig. 2), copular and unaccusative predicates (cf. Fig. 3), restrictiveness (cf. Fig. 4), indefiniteness of the antecedent (cf. Fig. 5), and written usage (cf. Fig. 6) encourage relative clause extraposition.

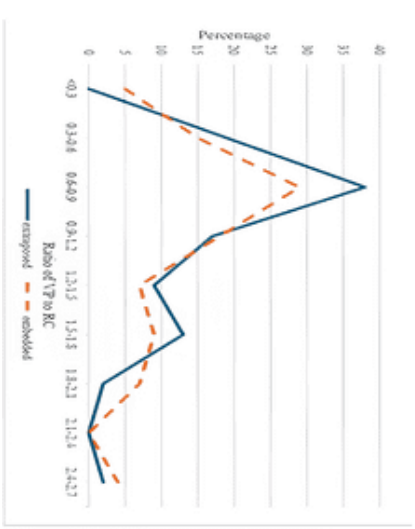

Fig. 1 Percentage of extraposed and embedded relatives by ratio of VP to RC

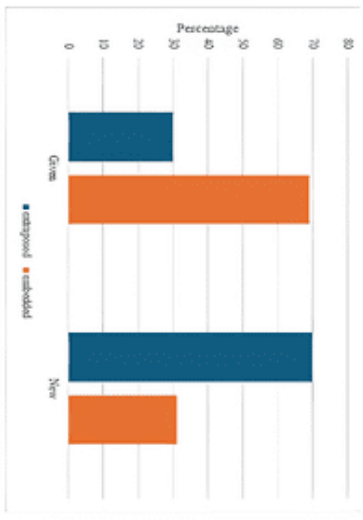

Fig.2 Percentage of extraposed and embedded relatives regarding discourse status

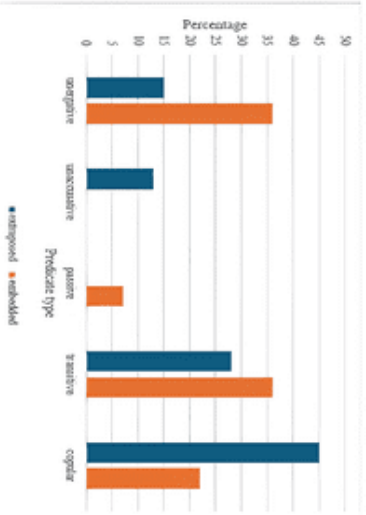

Fig. 3 Percentage of extraposed and embedded relatives in different predicate types

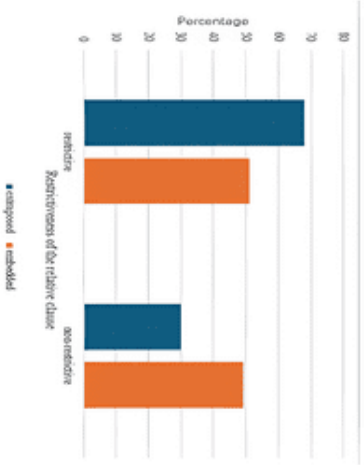

Fig. 4 Percentage of extraposed and embedded relatives by restrictiveness

Fig. 5 Percentage of extraposed and embedded relatives by definiteness

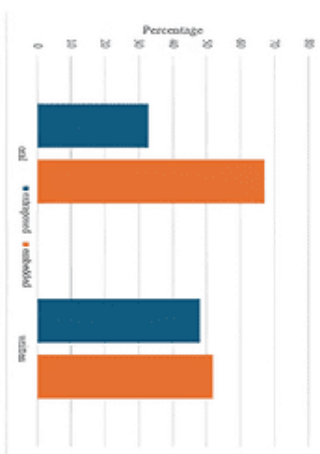

Fig. 6 Percentage of extraposed and embedded relatives in oral and written use

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Poster Presentations

The Ezafe as an Aspectual Marker in Copular Constructions of the Kobani Variety: Stage-Level vs. Individual-Level Predicates

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1 Introduction

This work investigates the use of tense ezafe (**î** for masculine singular, **e** for feminine singular/plural) in copula constructions of Kobani, a Southwestern Kurmanji variety spoken in Rojava [10]. Aligning with other Western Kurmanji dialects like Maraş [4], Kobani's tense ezafe encodes stage-level predicates and subject agreement. Unlike standard Kurmanji, which lacks tense ezafe [4] or some dialects like Afrini, where ezafe reportedly marks verbal predicates (e.g., *ez-î derim* 'I am going'), Kobani restricts this to copular phrases (see Table 1), contributing to our understanding of morphosyntactic diversity within Kurmanji dialects.

2 Theory

Many languages distinguish stage-level (temporary) and individual-level (stable) predicates [3], using copulas (e.g., Spanish ser/estar [2]) or morphological markers. A copula sentence consists of three main components: subject + predicative (adjective, adverb or noun) + copula suffix [11]. In Kurmanji, the copula clauses are constructed using enclitic suffixes, which correspond to the English verb *to be*. These suffixes are closely related to the predicate, but are written as separate words [11] and the form of the copula changes when the predicative ends with a vowel [7]. The copula is conjugated differently depending on the person and plurality of the subject, carrying the gender and number characteristics [6].

In Northern Kurdish, ezafe, historically an Old Iranian demonstrative/relativizer, has evolved into a polyfunctional linker [5]. In dialects like Bahdini and Kobani, tense ezafe marks stage-level predicates and subject phi-features in copular constructions [4, 5], contrasting with its adnominal role in Persian [5] or verbal perfect constructions in some dialects (e.g., Êzîdîya Torê a dialect located in Northern Iraq [5]).

According to our knowledge, there have been only very few investigations of the Kobani variant until now [9, 1].

3 Analysis

This research builds on recorded narratives by native Kobani speakers from several villages [1]. Kobani employs tense ezafe to mark stage- level predicates in copular sentences across tenses, as in *Narîn-e li vir e* (*'Narin is here (now)'* (present)) or *Narîn-e li vir bû* (*'Narin was here'* (past)), vs. unmarked individual-level predicates like *Narîn mamoste ye* (*'Narin is a teacher'*). This pattern, shared with Maraş, contrasts with standard Kurmanji's absence of tense ezafe [4]. The markers **î**/**e** encode both temporality and subject agreement, a distinctive morphosyntactic trait.

1SG		IND-SAY:PRS-1SG	PROG
Ez		di-bê-m/di-bêj-im	-e
'I am saying (right now)'			(Kobani)
1SG	EZ.M/F/PL	IND-SAY:PRS-1SG	
Ez	-î	di-bê-m	
'I am saying (right now)'			(Afrini)
1SG	EZ.M	IND-SAY:PRS-1SG	
Ez	ê	di-bêj-im	
'I am saying (right now)'			(Taken from [5])
1SG	EZ.M	MEAL-OBL	PREV-IND-DO:PRS-1SG
Ez	yê	xwarin-ê	çê-di-k-im
'I am making/preparing a meal (right now)'			(Zakho, [5])

Table 1: Verbal phrases in Kurdish varieties.

Kurdoev [8] notes similar pronoun endings (*ez***î**, *ez***e**; *tu***yî**, *tu***ye**; *ew***î**, *ew***e** (masculine / feminine respectively)), though not tied to stage-level predicates, but instead describes these endings as merely dialectal phenomena. Hasan [6] describes Bahdini gender markers (**yê** (masculine), **ya** (feminine), **yêt** (plural)), distinct from Kobani's **î/e** encoding temporality and gender. In Northern Kurdish, more precisely the Bahdînî variety, these is also a similar phenomenon [6], especially with regard to adjectival predicates. Hasan [6] states that in adjectival predicate constructions, in addition to person and number markers, gender markers are also needed, which stand between subject and predicate: **yê** (masculine), **ya** (feminine), **yêt** (plural). Hasan [6] also states that if the predicate is an adverb, either the gender of the person is marked, but never both at the same time.

1SG	TEZ.F, SG	ADJ.PRED	SG.COP, PRS
Ez	-e	westiyayî	me
'I am tired'			
1SG	TEZ.M, SG	ADJ.PRED	SG.COP, PRS
Ez	-î	westiyayî	me
'I am tired'			
3SG.F	TEZ.F.SG	LOC	3SG.COP, PRS
Narîn	-e	li vir	e
'Narîn is here'			
3SG.F	TEZ.F.SG	LOC	3SG.COP, PST
Narîn	-e	li vir	bû
'Narîn was here'			
3SG.F	F.SG, N.PRED	3SG.COP, PRS	
Narîn	mamoste	ye	
'Narîn is (a) teacher'			
3SG.F	F.SG, N.PRED	3SG.COP, PST	
Narîn	mamoste	bû	
'Narîn was (a) teacher'			

Table 2: Copula clauses in Kobani Kurdish.

Although these analyses show many similarities with the Kobani structure, the endings in Kobani signal the gender of the speaker as well as the temporality of the predicate. This combination of gender and aspect marking expresses several grammatical information in a single morphological unit.

4 Discussion

Kobani's tense ezafe grammaticalizes stage-level vs. individual-level predicates in copular constructions, aligning with Western Kurmanji dialects like Maraş [4] but distinct from Persian's adnominal ezafe or Êzîdiya Torê's verbal perfect constructions [5]. This linker-based strategy is

typologically rare. Further fieldwork with Maraş and other dialects could clarify constraints, enhancing our understanding of Kurmanji's morphosyntactic variation.

In Table 2, the ending **"î"** indicates that the speaker is a man and that the state is temporary (i.e., 'I am hungry right now') and the ending **"e"** indicates that the speaker is a woman and also that the state is currently active. That is, without the ending it remains unclear wether the speaker is male or female and wether the condition is temporary or permanent.

5 Summary

This study demonstrates that Kobani Kurdish employs tense ezafe to grammaticalizes the distinction between stage-level and individual- level predicates, aligning with other Kurmanji dialects. Unlike Persian, where ezafe is restricted to adnominal linking, or some Kurmanji dialects where it extends to the verbal domain [5], Kobani's tense ezafe appears only in copular constructions (see Table 1). Though further research is needed to clarify its semantic and pragmatic constraints compared to other dialects.

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The Role and Importance of Visual Media in Language Acquisition and Learning

Omed Barazan Brzo (University of Garmian)
Yara Qadir Hamad (Koya University)

Psycholinguistics is a branch of functional linguistics that focuses on the study of language and how it is received, used, and understood. In other words, it is one of the branches of linguistics that is concerned with the study of language from a psychological point of view, and tries to explain it in a way that fits the data of the human mind.

Today, with the advancement of information technology, the media play an effective and active role in covering news, disseminating information, social awareness, etc., however, one of the main points that modern societies today focus on learning their children's language It affects them. It also focuses on the appreciation of children's language at different stages of development by analyzing its components, including vocabulary, semantics, and grammatical structures, in addition to cognitive concepts and rules of use that mimic the language of society. Obtaining an accurate description of this language is therefore a fundamental goal pursued by modern linguistic studies in their ongoing efforts to explore the mysteries of this talent, God-given to children, as a means by which they can interact with, influence and be influenced by society.

It is also important to be aware of the role of media in guiding the language of society, especially visual media such as television, given its powerful influence and visual enjoyment, as it presents content in tangible form, which is easier for the audience to absorb than abstract ideas. In addition, attention should be paid to the impact of children's channels on a child's language, whether positively or negatively. These channels, which target children with their media content, play a significant role in shaping their language skills at an early stage, since they are directly influenced by what they hear in their surrounding environment.

The research consists of three parts. The first part deals with (language and visual media), in which language and national identity, the field of language in the causes of visual media, mother tongue and its role in the construction of individual speech.

The second part is devoted to (language acquisition and learning), which discusses the theories of language learning such as (Behavioral theory), cognitive theory, etc., then the stages of language learning and the factors of language learning in children such as: family and society, environment and environment, media, etc.

The third part: Aferin channel is taken as an example of language learning among children, to what extent it has an impact on language learning and teaching in the homes and families as a Kurdish channel.

Topic Marking in Kurdish: A Comparative Analysis of Sorani and Kurmanji

Manijeh Mirmokri (Linguistics Association of Iran)

Topic marking is crucial for structuring discourse and influencing information flow. Kurdish, a Northwestern Iranian language, exhibits significant dialectal variation in topic-marking strategies, particularly between Central Kurdish (Sorani) and Northern Kurdish (Kurmanji). This study employs a Functional-Typological framework (Givón 1983; Lambrecht 1994) to analyze these strategies, examining their interaction with syntax, morphology, and prosody in both dialects. Notably, Kurmanji's split-ergativity pattern impacts topic marking in transitive clauses, contrasting with Sorani's nominative-accusative alignment, which allows for different topicalization strategies. Methodologically, this research utilizes a corpus-based and elicitation-driven approach. Data is drawn from spoken and written corpora, supplemented by controlled elicitation with native speakers to validate syntactic and prosodic patterns. The analysis highlights the role of discourse-pragmatic factors in shaping topic marking, contributing to broader discussions on information structure in Iranian languages. Sorani employs grammaticalized topic markers, such as "ê" and "î," alongside structural reordering. In contrast, Kurmanji primarily relies on syntactic reordering (topic-initial placement), left-dislocation with resumptive pronouns, and prosodic emphasis.

The Role of Language in Identity Formation: A Sociolinguistic Investigation of Kurdish monolinguals and bilinguals

Bahar Zayr Muhamad (Salahaddin University)

This study explores the role of language in identity formation among Kurdish monolinguals and bilinguals in the city of Erbil from a sociolinguistic perspective. Language is a crucial marker of identity, shaping individuals' self-perception and social interactions. This research examines how linguistic choices influence cultural and social identity among Kurdish speakers in Erbil, where both monolingualism and bilingualism are prevalent. The study is aimed to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: How does language use influence identity formation among Kurdish monolinguals and bilinguals in Erbil?

RQ2: What are the sociolinguistic factors that contribute to differences in identity perception between Kurdish monolinguals and bilinguals?

RQ3: How do bilingual individuals navigate their linguistic and cultural identities in a multilingual setting?

The primary aim of this study is to investigate the relationship between language and identity among Kurdish speakers, focusing on the impact of bilingualism on self-identification and social integration. It seeks to analyze the extent to which bilingualism affects cultural identity and whether bilingual speakers perceive their identity differently from monolingual speakers. To achieve these objectives, a questionnaire was administered to 160 participants, including both monolingual and bilingual Kurdish speakers in Erbil. The questionnaire covered aspects such as language use in different domains, attitudes toward Kurdish and other languages, and perceptions of cultural identity.

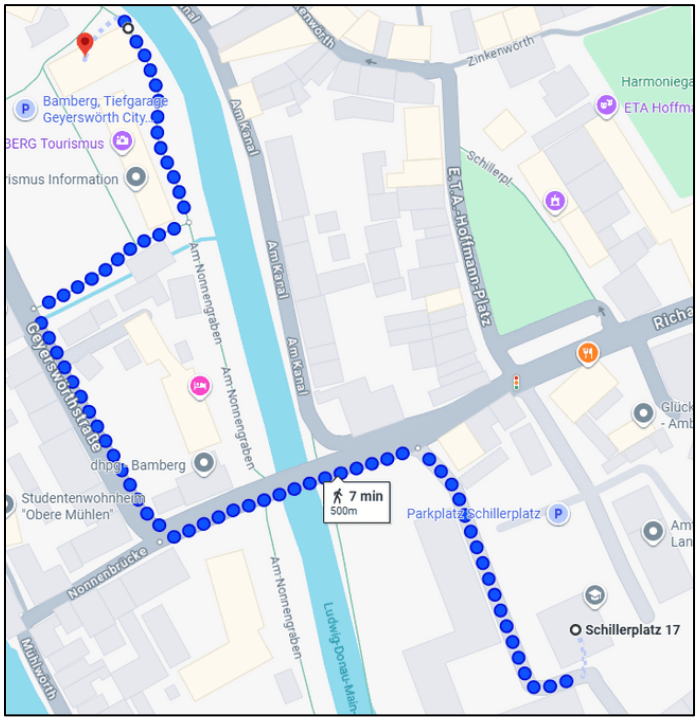
Conference Dinner

The conference dinner takes place on Thursday, 28th August, 19:00 at **Aposto** (Geyerswörthstraße 5a 96047 Bamberg), an Italian-style restaurant with a variety of vegetarian and vegan options. It is within walking distance from the venue (5 minutes): across the Nonnenbrücke and along the river in the direction of the old town, it is located next to the Tourist Information. After the end of the program, there is the option to walk together to the restaurant.

To ensure a smooth procedure at the dinner, we kindly ask you to choose from several meal options (vegetarian, vegan, meat/fish) already on Thursday morning at the registration desk. If you do have any specific dietary requirements (e.g. gluten-free), please let us know.

We are happy to be able to offer the conference dinner for free to all presenters. This offer includes one non-alcoholic beverage, a main dish and a side salad. Any further orders must be paid by yourself.

Website: https://bamberg.aposto.eu



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More information can be found on the conference website: https://ickl-conference.org/

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