Kurmanji Kurdish in Turkey: structure, varieties, and status

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1.   Introduction

"Kurdish" is a cover term for a cluster of northwest Iranian languages and dialects spoken by between 20 and 30 million speakers in a contiguous area of West Iran, North Iraq, eastern Turkey and eastern Syria. The geographic center of this region roughly corresponds to the intersection point of the Turkish, Iranian and Iraqi borders. Outside of this region, Kurdish is also spoken in enclaves in Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Khorasan and Gilan (Iran), Konya, Haymana, Kırşehir (Central Anatolia, Turkey), and in diaspora communities in several large cities of the Near and Middle East, and in Western Europe and Scandinavia. In terms of numbers of speakers, Northern Kurdish or Kurmanji is the largest variety of Kurdish. The traditional homeland of most Kurmanji speakers lies within southeastern Turkey; it extends approximately southeastward from a line beginning from Sivas in Anatolia, and overlaps into Syria, North Iraq and West Iran (see Figure 1). Kurmanji Kurdish is by far the largest minority language in modern Turkey. Various estimates put the number of Kurmanji speakers in Turkey at between 8 and 15 million, but any figures must be treated with caution, due to differences in definitions and methodologies used.

Contrary to what is sometimes claimed, Kurmanji is comparatively homogenous; levels of variation do not exceed what could be expected from any natural language spread across such a large territory, and levels of mutual intelligibility even across hundreds of kilometers is generally high. Consider the comments of Major Noel, a British officer on service in the Ottoman Empire after the First World War, who had considerable first-hand experience among the Kurds. On the occasion of visiting the Sinemili confederation near Malatya in the summer of 1919, Noel wrote:

> (...) [I]t is untrue to say that the variations of Kermanji show very fundamental differences. I have with me men from the Boutan, Diarbekir and Hakkiari. All of them can well understand and make themselves clearly understood in this extreme West of Kurdistan (...)[1]

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[1] *Diary of Major Noel on special duty in Kurdistan, 1919.* Oriental and India Office Collections, the British Library, London; quoted from Meiselas (2008:59).

Despite being by far the largest variety of Kurdish, Kurmanji as a natural spoken language has been sorely neglected, even within Kurdish studies. Research on Kurdish in Turkey itself was hampered for decades by exclusory language politics directed at "non-Turkish" languages (see Haig 2004, Öpengin 2012; 2015, and Section 5 below). In the late 1950's, David MacKenzie was denied permission for fieldwork among Turkey's Kurds, with the result that his groundbreaking study of Kurdish dialects (1961a, 1962) treats Sorani in considerable detail, but only touches relatively briefly on the Kurmanji of Iraq. As far as we are aware, in the decades between around 1920 and 1990, the only moderately accessible and serious linguistic publications on Kurdish spoken in Turkey are Jastrow's sketch of the phonology of the Van dialect (1977), and Ritter's rich (and largely ignored) collection of spoken Kurdish narratives from the Midyat region (1971 and 1976). The general neglect of Kurmanji is perpetuated in a recent 45-page overview of "Kurdish" by McCarus (2009), which deals almost exclusively with Sorani, devoting just two pages to Kurmanji.

Since around 2002, the Turkish authorities have acquiesced to a belated acknowledgement of Kurdish as a distinct language within the state's borders, and prospects for research on the language have brightened correspondingly. There already exists a good deal of scholarship on Kurmanji as it is spoken in the Ex-Soviet Union (Celil and Celil 1978), and in Iraq (MacKenzie 1961a and 1962; Blau 1975), while a number of earlier studies provide information on Kurdish in pre-republican Turkey (see Haig and Matras 2002 for a summary bibliography, Chyet 1998 for a rich compilation of linguistic sources on Kurmanji, and Haig and Öpengin 2014, for more recent coverage). Some work on sociolinguistics, language planning and language attitudes has also been published (see e.g. Scalbert-Yücel 2006; Öpengin 2012; Coşkun et al. 2011). There is now also a considerable body of scholarship on Kurdish undertaken by speakers of the language, but it has generally focused on standardization of the written language, and lexicography; serious investigations of the actual spoken language and its regional variation remain conspicuously absent. A preliminary overview of dialectal variation in Kurmanji is now available in Öpengin and Haig (2014).

In this chapter we provide a synopsis of the main linguistic features of Northern Kurdish, as it is spoken in Turkey. Section 2 summarizes the history and presents the situation of the speakers. Section 3 provides a grammar sketch of the standard variety of Kurmanji, and in, and in Section 4, we present a preliminary account of major dialect divisions. Finally, Section 5 investigates the status of Kurdish within the Turkish state.

2. The place of Kurmanji within "Kurdish"

Kurmanji is uncontroversially considered to be a variety of "Kurdish", but exactly what constitutes Kurdish itself remains a matter of some debate. The ramifications of this issue go beyond the scope of this paper – we refer to more detailed discussion in Haig and Öpengin

(2014). The map in Figure 1 provides a basic overview and serves as a point of orientation for the following discussion.

Figure 1. Map of language varieties spoken by the Kurds
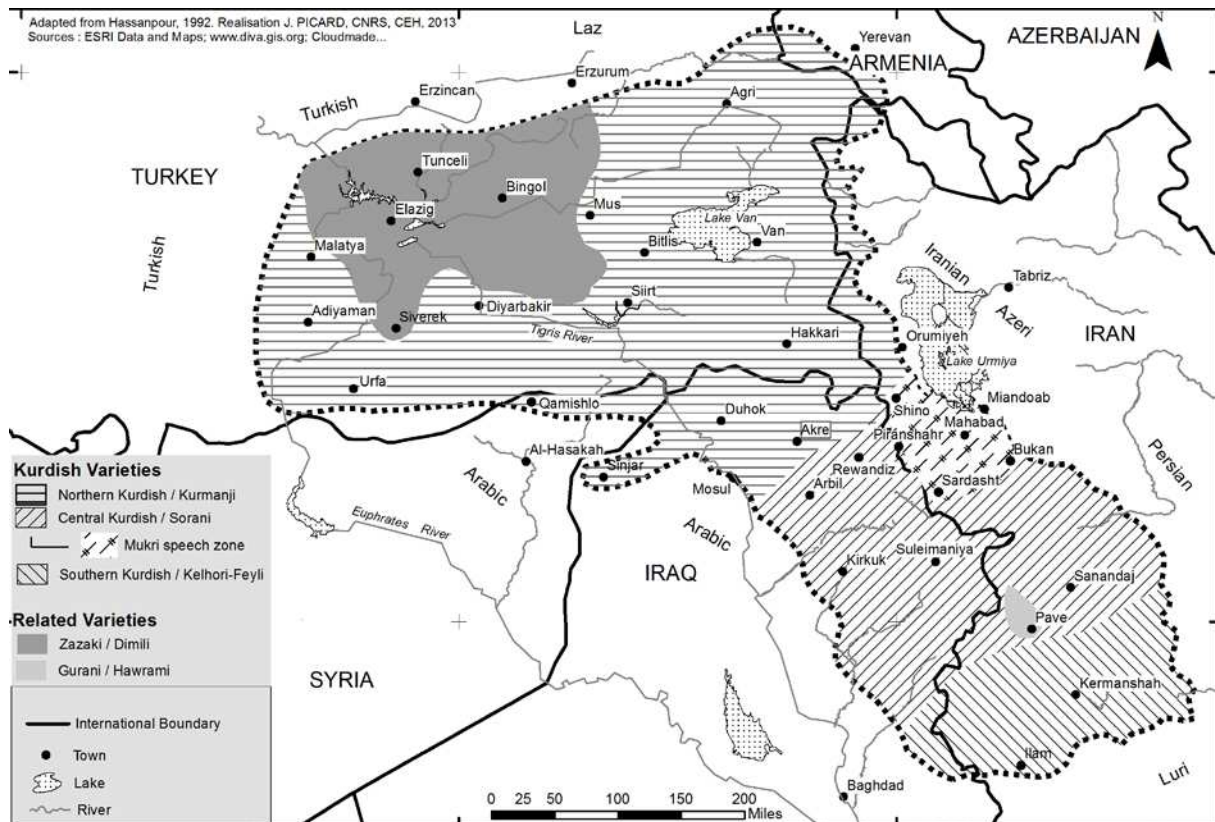
Besides Kurmanji, two additional varieties are spoken in Turkey which are often considered Kurdish, but for considerations of space are not covered in this chapter. The first are so-called Şêx Bizinî dialects, the language of the descendants of southern Kurdish tribes re-settled in various parts of Anatolia in the 16th century. With the exception of short descriptions in Lewendî (1997), which demonstrate beyond doubt the southern Kurdish origins of the dialects, further data on these varieties are unavailable to us. The second is Zazaki, spoken in several locations in central Anatolia (cf. Fig. 1). In the context of Kurmanji in Turkey, it is necessary to address the relationship of Kurmanji to Zazaki,[2] as this is one of the most intensely-discussed and controversial issues in the discourse on Kurdish in Turkey.

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[2] The issue of language names is an additional complicating factor in connection with the term "Zazaki". According to the author and editor Deniz Gündüz (p.c.), different speakers use four different names to refer to this language: Kird/Kirdki (used by Sunnite Zazaki speakers in the region of Bingöl); Kirmanj/Kirmanjki (Alevite speakers from the Dersim region); Zaza/Zazakī (Sunnite speakers from the Palu-Diyarbakir region); and Dimili or Dimilki (Sunnite speakers from the Siverek region). We choose "Zazaki" here as the label most widely used in recent literature, while

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2.1 Kurmanji and Zazaki

There are two distinct facets to this issue, which need to be carefully distinguished: first, there are the speakers' own perceptions of identity and group membership. For speakers of Zazaki, it is an undeniable fact that the predominant majority (though not all) of them identify themselves as 'Kurds'. This is not a matter on which a linguist (or any other social scientist) can pass judgment; rather, such expressions of identity need to be respected, and the reasons for them (e.g. shared historical-cultural past) objectively investigated. The second issue concerns the linguistic differences between Kurmanji and Zazaki in terms of phonology, morphology, lexicon and syntax. A linguist can assess these differences and on this basis advance a hypothesis regarding the degree of relatedness between the two varieties. These two issues are logically distinct; it is perfectly conceivable that a Zazaki speaker claims Kurdish identity, although the linguist may reach the conclusion that Zazaki and Kurmanji are only distantly related, or vice versa.

No one doubts that Zazaki and Kurmanji are west Iranian languages, hence related to one another. The question is: how closely related are they, that is, how far back in time is their common ancestor? In popular writing, this issue is generally (and misleadingly) reduced to the question of 'two different languages' vs. 'dialects of the same language'. But for a scientific classification, the terms 'language' and 'dialect' have no objective basis. Sometimes the pseudo-scientific criterion of 'mutual intelligibility' is invoked to justify the distinction, but it cannot be applied with any degree of reliability or objectivity (see Haig and Öpengin 2014, and below on Kurmanji and Sorani).

With regard to the linguistic differences between Zazaki and Kurmanji, the single most striking feature is the formation of present indicative verb forms. In Zazaki, the present tenses of verbs are created with a suffixal augment, containing the nasal [-n]: *we-n-o* eat-PRES.AUGM-3S.MASC. 'he eats' (cf. Paul 1998: 74–76 for details). In Kurmanji, on the other hand, no additional stem-final augment is possible in the present tense. Instead, present stems are preceded by certain prefixes: *di-xw-e* 'IND-eat:PRES-3s' (cf. Section 3 below). Although this is but one feature of morphology, it carries particular significance when assessing the degree of relatedness, because (i) it affects verbal morphology, generally considered to be the most resistant to external influence; (ii) it concerns an inner layer of morphology, rather than the most outward layer of affixes. It also turns out to have remarkably close parallels in some Iranian languages of the Caspian region, e.g. Mazanderani (Haig, to appear). A number of other linguistic features distinguish Zazaki from Kurmanji, which we will not deal with here (cf. Korn 2003; Keskin 2010 for a summary and references). The conclusion that most scholars of Iranian languages draw is

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acknowledging that this usage does not faithfully reflect the practice of all speakers in referring to their own language.

that Zazaki must have split from the language group containing Kurmanji and Sorani at a fairly early date, i.e. it is only comparatively distantly related to Kurmanji.

Note that this tentative conclusion says very little about perceptions of group membership among today's speakers, or degrees of mutual intelligibility, or the (ultimately meaningless) issue of dialect vs. language. It is simply a reasonably well-founded hypothesis regarding the origins of Zazaki and its historical links to Kurmanji. As mentioned, the issue of whether Zazaki is 'Kurdish' or not can only meaningfully be addressed in the context of a more comprehensive discussion on the concept of Kurdish, which we take up elsewhere (Haig and Öpengin 2014).

2.2 Kurmanji and Sorani: key differences

Two groups universally considered "Kurdish" are Kurmanji (or Northern) and Sorani (or Central) Kurdish. Although they show heavy overlaps in terms of historical phonology and basic lexicon, in their morphology there are quite radical differences. The main ones are displayed in Table 1 below:

Table 1. Differences in the morphosyntax of Sorani and Kurmanji

Sorani	Kurmanji
1. presence of a definiteness suffix *-aka*	absence of definiteness marker
2. generalized plural marker *-ān*	plural marking only on obliques (cf. Section 3)
3. presence of clitic pronouns	absence of clitic pronouns
4. loss of direct form *ez* of the first singular personal pronouns (all dialects); lack of distinct case forms for all other independent person pronouns (though maintained in the third person singular in some dialects, e.g. Mukri, cf. Öpengin forthc.)	maintenance of *ez / min* distinction in the first person, maintenance of obl/direct case distinction on all other personal pronouns (syncretism in the second person singular in some dialects)
5. loss of gender distinctions in most environments (maintained in certain dialects, e.g. Mukri)	maintenance of gender distinctions
6. presence of a morphological passive	no morphological passive, analytical passive with auxiliary *hatin* 'come'
7. no free, or demonstrative forms of the *ezafe*	free, or demonstrative *ezafes* (cf. Section 3)
8. open compound type of ezafe (cf. MacKenzie 1961a: 83)	lack of open compound ezafe construction (though restricted usage in some dialects close to Sorani region, e.g. Şemzinan, cf. Section 4)

9.	loss of case marking on nouns and all personal pronouns (though marginally retained in some dialects, e.g. Mukri)	retention of case marking on all pronouns and nouns (lost in some dialects on masculine singular nouns, cf. Section 4)

These differences raise the following question: How could two supposedly closely-related dialects, spoken in a contiguous region, have developed such radically different morpho-syntax? The striking observation here is that the line of demarcation between Sorani and Kurmanji is a relatively narrow ribbon, rather than being spread across the entirety of the Kurdish speech zone. Thus a fictive Kurdish speaker from Erzurum in eastern Turkey who decided to walk southeast towards North Iraq would initially pass through 400-500 kilometers of Kurmanji-speaking territory in which he would have little difficulty in making himself understood. But somewhere around the Great Zab river, heading towards Suleimaniya he would encounter varieties of Kurdish which he almost certainly would not understand.[3] There are in fact transitional dialects of Kurmanji in the southeastern tip of Turkey, such as Şemzinan (cf. 4.1), which exhibits typical Sorani features such as clitic pronouns in certain contexts, the post-verbal clitic *-awa* or the definiteness suffix *-aka*. In North Iraq, MacKenzie (1961a) pointed out the Surči dialect, which exhibits features of both Sorani and Kurmanji and which MacKenzie considered neither one nor the other. But these transitional varieties represent a relatively narrow strip when seen in the context of the entirety of the Kurdish-speaking zone. For the vast majority of varieties, there is little difficulty in assigning them to either Sorani or Kurmanji. Thus what we find is not a typical dialect continuum situation resulting from the gradual spread from a common geographic source; rather it would be more readily compatible with a scenario of two initially distinct groups speaking closely-related varieties, with a relatively narrow band of regional overlap characterized by mutual contact influence.

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[3] The extent of mutual intelligibility between Kurmanji and Sorani is a matter of dispute. Our impression is that those adult speakers of Kurmanji who have never been exposed to Sorani (typically many speakers from central Anatolia) cannot understand, for example, Sorani of Suleimaniye (e.g. on television), and it would take considerable exposure and conscious effort before they can. The same applies in the other direction. However, there are numerous factors that can affect this outcome: degree of prior exposure to the other dialect, geographic proximity (speakers of borderline Sorani dialects such as Soran or Rewanduz, for example, will find it easier to understand neighbouring Kurmanji dialects, and vice versa), and subject matter of the discourse. Individual factors that are known to impact on L2 acquisition are also relevant, such as age, aptitude, motivation, and attitudes to the other variety. Hassanpour's statement (1992:24) is probably over-optimistic, while Asatrian's response (2009:10, fn.13) is unduly polemic, and overlooks the subtleties of the issues. Recently more objective methods for gauging mutual intelligibility have been developed (Gooskens and Heeringa 2004); the application of these methods to Kurdish would be a long-overdue corrective to the anecdotal statements that abound.

An early attempt at an explanation for this state of affairs is MacKenzie (1961b). MacKenzie suggested that the development of Sorani was heavily affected by a Gorani substrate. For example, the development of passive morphology in Sorani (feature no. 6 in Table 1 above), clearly an innovation, is modelled on Gorani. The maintenance of clitic pronouns (almost certainly present in the original proto-Kurdish) and the development of a definiteness suffix would likewise have been strengthened by the Gorani example. The assumption that the original territory of Gorani speakers was much larger than it is today is historically well-founded and supported by the existence of scattered pockets of Gorani speakers as far west as Mosul (cf. Mahmoudveysi et al, 2012). This scenario would have involved an expansion of Kurdish speakers westward and southward into Goran territory, leaving their language heavily affected by Gorani (and Gorani speakers may have shifted to Kurdish), while later expansions of Kurds did not undergo this influence and preserved many of the original features of Kurdish (gender and case, for example). Much of this explanation remains speculative, and undoubtedly oversimplified; MacKenzie himself referred to it as simply "a hypothesis in the broadest terms" (1961b:86).[4]

There is, however, another factor that could be invoked in accounting for the difference in the morpho-syntax of Sorani and Kurmanji, namely the massive influence of Armenian on Kurmanji. Given the centuries of shared geographic distribution of the two speech communities, it seems highly likely that the languages affected each other.[5] We can be reasonably certain that the three-way distinction on obstruents in Kurmanji (see 3.1 below, also present in some Zazaki dialects) resulted from Armenian influence, so it is certainly plausible that other grammatical features may have been borrowed as well. For example, the complete loss of clitic pronouns in Kurmanji and Zazaki, which is unusual within the West Iranian languages, may well have been reinforced by the corresponding lack of such clitic pronouns in Armenian, to mention just one possibility. However, the issue of Armenian influence on Kurmanji and Zazaki is something that has been almost entirely neglected in Kurdish linguistics to date; there is urgent need for research on this topic.

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[4] Leezenberg (undated) is a critical assessment of MacKenzie (1961b), but adds little substance to the matter. Leezenberg takes up the distinction between "prestige borrowing" and "substrate influence" introduced in Thomason and Kaufman (1988), suggesting that the Gorani influence on Sorani (which he seems to accept) should be better seen as "prestige borrowing" rather than substrate influence. MacKenzie was obviously not aware of Thomason and Kaufman's work, and it is by no means clear that he meant "substrate" in the manner Leezenberg assumes he did. Leezenberg does not, however, question MacKenzie's main claim, namely that Gorani influence (of whichever type) was in part responsible for the differences between Sorani and Kurmanji.

[5] For example, Bruinessen (1989:223) estimates that as late as the 19th century, around 40% of the inhabitants of the Kurdish principality of Bitlis were Armenian.

2.3   The history of the Kurmanji speaking population in Turkey

Speculations regarding the ancient history of the Kurds are rife; we will refrain from adding to them. As far as the history of the settlement of the Kurmanji regions of what is now Turkey, we refer to the recent account of Asatrian (2009). Asatrian follows MacKenzie in considering the initial formation of Kurdish to have occurred in a southwest Iranian environment, namely the northern areas of Fars in Iran. Northern expansion of the Kurds into what was then Armenia began according to Asatrian, based on the first attestations of Kurds in Armenian texts, between the 8-9 centuries AD and continued over a period of several centuries. Some clues regarding the chronology of these events can be obtained from the dating of Armenian loan words in Kurdish. The point of origin of this northward expansion is considered to be "Northern Iraq, Hakkari, southern shore of Lake Van" (Asatrian 2009:35).

   The notion of a northwestward expansion of the Kurmanji-speaking peoples into a largely Armenian-populated region is plausible for other reasons, not discussed by Asatrian. The first is the above-mentioned comparative homogeneity, and relative simplicity (in terms of morphology) of those Kurmanji dialects further to the northwest. The southeastern varieties of Kurmanji (cf. e.g. Badini in North Iraq and Şemzinan in Turkey, cf. Section 4) show the richest morphology, the most complex syllable structures, the most consistent retention of gender and ergativity, all items that can be considered typically "mature features" (Dahl 2004; Trudgill 2011), of the kind which reflect a comparatively long period of stable settlement. The other varieties, on the other hand, all show, to varying degrees, loss of these features, which would be expected under conditions of mobility and language contact involved in the northwestern expansion of the Kurds (and possible shift to Kurdish among speakers of other languages such as Armenian, Neo-Aramaic or Arabic, cf. Trudgill 2011, and McWhorter 2005 for the role of contact in simplification). At any rate, there must have been a strong Armenian influence on Kurmanji in these formative stages, evidenced in the presence of an additional row of unaspirated voiceless plosives and affricates in Kurmanji, a feature that is characteristic (to varying degrees) of all the dialects (cf. Section 4). This feature is completely lacking in Sorani, and strongest in those regions where levels of Armenian settlement were high.

3.   Modern "Standard" Kurmanji: Grammatical sketch

Today, the most widely-used written variety of Kurmanji Kurdish uses a modified version of the Roman alphabet. It is used in all manner of publications, including journals, newspapers, literature, internet publications, chat-rooms etc. Despite the lack of state support, the orthography used in book publications is relatively uniform, and literate speakers have little difficulty reading the publications from different sources. Today's norms are largely based on the standards established by Celadet Ali Bedir Khan in a series of articles in the journal *Hawar,* published in the 1930's. These conventions were later codified in Bedir-Khan and

Lescot's *Grammaire kurde (dialecte kurmandji)*, which was published in 1970. We will refer to this standard as Standard Kurmanji (Standard K.) and take it as the basis for this section, noting variation where relevant.

Standard Kurmanji itself is based on the spoken dialect of the Botan region (in and around of the city of Cizre in the southeast). However, it is not a pure rendering of this dialect, but also mixes forms from other dialects. Like any other attempt at language standardization, it thus represents something of an artificial norm. Furthermore, the orthography adopted is exceedingly parsimonious. It ignores (a) some phonemic distinctions with a minimal functional load; (b) sounds with regionally restricted distribution; (c) sounds encountered mostly in loanwords. Examples for (a) include the distinction between aspirated and non-aspirated voiceless plosives and affricates (see 3.2), or between trilled and flapped r-sounds, or between voiced and voiceless uvular fricatives. For (b), we could mention the distinction between dark and clear [l], or the front rounded vowel [y], while (c) covers pharyngealized consonants. For these reasons, Standard K. orthography has been eschewed by some scholars (e.g. Chyet 2004 or Jastrow 1977), who use a more detailed transcription. However, as a practical orthography designed for use by native speakers from very different regional backgrounds, it is remarkably efficient. The forms in this section are provided in Standard K. orthography, supplemented with phonetic transcription where necessary. To avoid confusion, we sometimes enclose orthographic forms in brackets like this: <...>. In the sections on dialects, however, we will use a transcription that follows more closely the philological tradition.

3.1 Phonology

3.1.1 Vowels

The basic vowel system consists of eight simple vowel phonemes, five long (or full) vowels, and three short, or weak vowels.

Long, or full vowels: /a/ <a>; /i/ <î>; /e/ <ê>; /o/ <o>; /u/ <û>

Short, or weak vowels: /æ/ <e>, /ʊ/ <u>, /ɨ/ <i>

Figure 2. Pan-dialectal scheme for the vowel phonemes of Kurdish
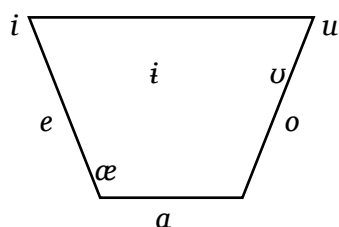
The full vowels

What we refer to as "full vowels" are /i/, /e/, /a/, /u/ and /o/; they are generally realized phonetically long, particularly in open syllables, and indeed, they are the ones that are

stretched in traditional Kurdish songs. However, vowel length by itself is not phonemically distinctive in Kurdish. The full vowels occupy approximately the five positions of a fairly typical 5-term vowel system; the other vowels are more centralized. Examples follow:

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3">/a:/ <a></td><td colspan="3">/e:/ <ê></td></tr>
<tr><td>Orthography</td><td>IPA</td><td>Gloss</td><td>Orthography</td><td>IPA</td><td>Gloss</td></tr>
<tr><td>*agir*</td><td>[a:gɨr]</td><td>fire</td><td>*êvar*</td><td>[e:var]</td><td>evening</td></tr>
<tr><td>*sar*</td><td>[sa:r]</td><td>cold</td><td>*sêv*</td><td>[se:v]</td><td>apple</td></tr>
<tr><td>*mal*</td><td>[ma:l]</td><td>house, home</td><td>*lêv*</td><td>[le:v]</td><td>I say</td></tr>
<tr><td>*mar*</td><td>[ma:r]</td><td>snake</td><td>*tʰêr*</td><td>[te:r]</td><td>satiated</td></tr>
<tr><td>*zava*</td><td>[za:va:]</td><td>bridegroom</td><td>*avê*</td><td>[ave:]</td><td>water(obl)</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3">/i:/ <î></td><td colspan="3">/u:/ <û></td></tr>
<tr><td>Orthography</td><td>IPA</td><td>Gloss</td><td>Orthography</td><td>IPA</td><td>Gloss</td></tr>
<tr><td>*spî*</td><td>[sˤpi:]</td><td>white</td><td>*bûk*</td><td>[bu:k]</td><td>Bride</td></tr>
<tr><td>*bîne*</td><td>[bi:næ]</td><td>bring!</td><td>*zû*</td><td>[zu:]</td><td>soon, fast</td></tr>
<tr><td>*tarî*</td><td>[tari:]</td><td>dark(ness)</td><td>*çû*</td><td>[tʃʰu:]</td><td>s/he went</td></tr>
<tr><td>*nîne*</td><td>[ni:næ]</td><td>there isn't</td><td>*xwesû*</td><td>[xʷæsu:]</td><td>mother-in-law</td></tr>
<tr><td>*dîk*</td><td>[di:k]</td><td>rooster</td><td>*tûj*</td><td>[tu:ʒ]</td><td>sharp</td></tr>
</table>

Note that in some dialects, [u:] tends to move forward to [y:] (e.g. in Şemzînan dialect, see 4.1 below). In Badini of North Iraq and in the southeastern dialects of Kurmanji in Turkey, the fronting process is accompanied by de-rounding, leading to [i:] in a number of lexical items, e.g. [xæsi:] 'mother-in-law', or [di:ɾ] 'far' (Zakho, North Iraq), as opposed to Anatolian [xæsu:] and [du:ɾ].

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3">/o/ <o></td></tr>
<tr><td>Orthography</td><td>IPA</td><td>Gloss</td></tr>
<tr><td>*toz*</td><td>[tʰoz]</td><td>dust</td></tr>
<tr><td>*çok*</td><td>[tʃʰok]</td><td>knee</td></tr>
<tr><td>*got*</td><td>[got]</td><td>said</td></tr>
<tr><td>*zozan*</td><td>[zo:zan]</td><td>alpine summer settlement</td></tr>
<tr><td>*koçer*</td><td>[kotʃʰæɾ]</td><td>nomad</td></tr>
</table>

The centralized vowels /ʊ/ and /æ/
These two are realized somewhat more centrally than the full vowels. They are less prone to lengthening in open syllables, but are not subject to elision under the phonological processes to be discussed below. They may also occur at the end of words.

/æ/ <e>			/ʊ/ <u>		
Orthography	IPA	Gloss	Orthography	IPA	Gloss
em	[æm]	we	*guh*	[gʊ(h)]	Ear
dest	[dæst]	hand	*kuştin*	[kʊʃtɨn]	kill
ser	[sæɾ]	head	*gund*	[gʊnd]	village
dev	[dæv]	mouth	*quling*	[qʊlɨŋ]	crane (bird)
re	[ræʃ]	black	*xurt*	[xʊɾt]	strong, sturdy

In some words, the mid-high, centralized rounded vowel /ʊ/ is difficult to distinguish from the mid-high, unrounded /ɨ/, leading to variation across dialects and in the spelling of some words, e.g. *muhacir ~ mihacir* 'refugee', *tucar ~ ticar* 'trader'.

The central vowel /ɨ/

This vowel is approximately a mid-high, mid-closed, unrounded vowel; it cannot occur word-finally (though there are dialectal exceptions). There are reasons to distinguish two varieties of this vowel, though both are written with the same symbol <i> in the standard orthography, and not traditionally distinguished in accounts of Kurdish phonology. We refer to the first as the lexical central vowel, the second as the epenthetic central vowel.

The lexical central vowel

The lexical version occurs as a stressed vowel in the stems of lexical items; it is not subject to the deletion processes that affect the epenthetic central vowel.[6] Examples:

Orthography	IPA	Gloss
mij	[mɨʒ]	fog, mist
pirç	[pʰɨrtʃ]	hair (of head)
dil	[dɨl]	heart
diz	[dɨz]	thief
kir-	[kɨɾ]	many, much

The epenthetic central vowel

This vowel arises primarily through the process of vowel epenthesis, required to preserve syllable structure rules constraining the consonant clusters in syllable onsets and codas. The central vowel is simply the default vowel for such purposes. As such, its presence can be predicted by general rule, and the vowel need not be considered actually part of the underlying form of the morpheme concerned. Crucially, such vowels are often elided when

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[6] When the surrounding consonants are sonorants, as in *dimɨrim* 'I die', a lexical vowel may be elided.

syllable boundaries shift, which is the main diagnostic for distinguishing them from the lexical central vowel (see Shokri 2002 for an account of syllable structure in Badini).

Epenthesis in syllable codas

The infinitives of verbs are good examples of vowel epenthesis in syllable codas. The infinitive ending is [-n], attached directly to the past stem of the verb. For example, *kêşa-* is the past stem of 'draw, pull'; the infinitive is *kêşa-n.* Following a consonant-final stem, however, an epenthetic [ɨ] is inserted to avoid non-licensed syllable codas. Following are some examples:

Past stem	Infinitive	Gloss
kêşa-	*kêşa-n*	pull, smoke (cigarettes)
hat-	*hat-in*	come
dît-	*dît-in*	see
nasî-	*nasî-n*	know (a person)
xwend-	*xwend-in*	read, study, recite

Crucially, the epenthetic [ɨ] is optionally deleted if a further vowel follows the infinitive suffix, which permits the sequence to be re-syllabified. This is shown in (b) below:

(a) *hat-*   +   *-n*   > **hatn > hatin* (epenthesis);
       come.PST   +   -INF

(b) *hatin* + *-e* (directional particle) > *hat(i)ne (mal)* '(they) came (home)'

This process contrasts with the behaviour of lexical central vowels, which are not deleted under re-syllabification. For example:

(a) *nadin* '(they) don't give',

(b) *nadine min* '(they) don't give me', but not **nadne min* (with attempted deletion of [ɨ], as in *hatne* above).

The evidence from forms such as *nadin* suggests that the central vowel in these verbs is a lexical vowel within the stem,[7] rather than an epenthetic vowel, and leads to a slightly different analysis of the stems of certain verbs, which is discussed below.

Epenthesis in syllable onsets

Syllable-onset clusters may also be broken by an epenthetic vowel in lexical items, though there is considerable regional variation here:

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[7] Note, however, that the assumed stem-final central vowels in such verbs are generally lost, or assimilated, to any following vowel. Thus the second person singular present of verbs such as *kirin* 'do', assumed present stem *-ki-*, is *di-k-î* (presumably from underlying **di-ki-î*).

bilɨnd ~ blɨnd	'high'	*sɨtraːn ~ straːn*	'song'
biluːɾ ~ bluːɾ	'type of wooden flute'	*bɨraː ~ braː*	'brother'
dɨreːʒ ~ dreːʒ	'long'	*ʃɨkæft ~ ʃkæft*	'cave'
fɨrotɨn ~ frotɨn	'sell'	*zɨmaːn ~ zmaːn*	'tongue, language'
sɨpiː ~ spiː	'white'	*zɨlaːm ~ zlaːm*	'man'

Certain inflectional prefixes, and prepositions, consist of a single consonant plus the central vowel /ɨ/. Examples are:

di-   Indicative present

bi-   Subjunctive

li   'at, in'

bi   through

ji   from

In these formatives, the central vowel can also be considered epenthetic rather than lexical. It tends to be deleted under certain conditions (and in some dialects these vowels are scarcely realized). For example the preposition *ji* [ʒɨ] 'from' undergoes reduction and devoicing in normal connected speech: 'from you' [ʒɨ tæ > ʃtæ]. The preposition *li* may also attach to its complement with weakening or deletion of the vowel, or in some dialects, there is metathesis: *li ber darê ~ lber darê ~ ilber darê* 'in front of the tree'.

When the vowel of these items is deleted, the initial consonant generally undergoes devoicing. With the verbal prefixes *di-* and *bi-*, deletion of the vowel is particularly frequent when the verb occurs after a preceding word with a final vowel. In this environment, we find re-syllabification of the prefix. The morpheme-initial consonant is then realized in the coda of the preceding syllable (where it generally undergoes devoicing). The process is illustrated for these two prefixes in the following:

			Underlying morphemic structure		Phonetic realization
(1)	*em*	*te*	*d-nas-n*		[æm tæt.na.sɨn]
	we	you.OBL	INDIC-know:PRES-1S		
	'We know you'				
(2)	*em*	*či*	*b-ki-n*		[æm cɨp.kɨn]
	we	what	SUBJ-do:PRES-1PL		
	'what should/can we do?'				

If we compare the above examples to a word like *bizin* 'goat', which has a superficial similarity to *bikin* 'do, (subjunctive plural)', we find that *bizin* does not lose its initial vowel in the manner that *bikin* can. Its second vowel, on the other hand, can be elided through re-syllabification: *bizna me* 'our goat'. We could therefore assume the underlying form of *bizin* to be /bɨzn/, while for *bikin* we would assume /bkɨn/. In a similar vein, the so-called

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'diminutive' suffix *-ik*, found as a integral part of many words (e.g. *jinik* 'woman', *mêrik* 'man') regularly loses its vowel when a vowel follows, and is probably best analysed as underlying /-k/.

The process of vowel epenthesis, particularly with inflectional affixes and prepositions, shows considerable dialectal variation, and cannot be dealt with here in detail. In general, however, it is the dialects furthest south which are the most tolerant of complex syllables, hence tend to dispense with the epenthetic central vowels. MacKenzie (1961a:16-18) and McCarus (2009:593) note that in Sorani Kurdish of Suleimaniye, syllable onsets are tolerant of most CC-combinations (e.g. *ktēb* 'book', *tfaŋ* 'rifle', *xrap* 'bad'). Tolerance of complex onsets, rather than vowel-epenthesis, thus appears to be a phenomenon that increases southwards, extending into the Sorani-speaking area.

3.1.2 Consonants

The consonant phonemes of Kurmanji are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. The consonant phonemes of Kurmanji, generalized scheme

	bilab.	lab.-dent.	dent	alveol	post-alv.	pal.	vel.	uvul.	pharyn.	glott.
Plos.	pʰ p b			tʰ t d			kʰ k g	q		ʔ
Fric.		v f	ʃ ʒ			x ɣ	ʁ	ħ ʕ[8]	h
Affr.			t͡ʃʰ t͡ʃ d͡ʒ						
Nas.	m		n			ŋ			
Trill			r						
Flap			ɾ						
Approx.	w				j				
Lateral			l (dialectally also ɫ)						

The most unusual feature of the consonant system is the three-way contrast on the stops and affricates, which emerged most probably through Armenian influence, illustrated with examples in Table 3.

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[8] The status of the pharyngeal sounds in Kurmanji is controversial. First, they are most prominently linked to Semitic loan words. Second, the extent to which they are realized is subject to considerable cross-dialectal variation. Finally, as pointed out by Christiane Bulut (p.c.), in Kurdish as well as other languages of the region, the corresponding segments can be considered to be glottal stops produced with a retracted tongue root, rather than fricatives. However, with respect to the first point, it is also true that pharyngeals have spread to the native lexicon, e.g. most dialects have initial [ħ] in the word for the numeral '7'. Given their prominence in at least some varieties, we include them in Table 2. We also note that pharyngealization may be a feature that permeates over an entire syllable, rather than being localizable on a single segment; see the discussion in §4.2.1 on Southern Kurmanji phonology.

Table 3. Three-way contrast on the stops and affricates

voiceless aspirated:	[pʰoːr]	'hair'	[tʰæv]	'together'
voiceless, unaspirated:	[poːz]	'nose'	[tævɨr]	'hoe, mattock'
voiced:	[boːz]	'grey-white (of horses)'	[dæv]	'mouth'
voiceless aspirated:	[kʰaːr]	'work, matter, concern'	[tʃʰɨmaː]	'why'
voiceless, unaspirated:	[kaːl̪]	'old man'	[tʃæm]	'stream, brook'
voiced:	[gaːv]	'step, time'	[ʤæm]	'by, beside'

Note that Standard K. orthography does not reflect the three-way distinction, rendering both aspirated and unaspirated voiceless members of each set through a single grapheme (p, t, k, ç). There has been some dispute as to how best to analyze the aspirated/unaspirated distinction. Some prefer to see the unaspirated set as ejectives. We do not deny this possibility, but a difference in Voice Onset Time (VOT) is certainly the most easily discernible (and easily measurable) basis for the distinction. The shorter VOT may of course be accompanied by an ejective configuration of the larynx, but we leave that issue open here. The dialects of the Central Anatolia, particularly Karakoçan, Dersim, and Malatya, have the most strikingly "ejective" characteristics in these sets, with what appears to be a gradual fade-out of this feature towards the southeast.

Trilled and flapped /r/

All word-initial <r> sounds are trilled, but in other environments the distribution is not predictable. Examples for trilled and flap <r> are as follows:

Trilled   Flap
[pɨr] 'much, many'   [pɨɾ] 'bridge'
[kær] 'deaf'   [kʰæɾ] 'donkey'
[bɨriːn] 'to cut'   [bɨriːn] 'wound'

Pharyngealized segments

There is considerable cross-dialect variation, treated in section 4 (see Khan 2008 on pharyngealization as a variant feature of pronunciation). Some relatively widespread examples include [ʕeliː] 'Ali'; [teʕm] 'taste'; [pʰeħn] 'flat'.

3.2 Nominal morphology

3.2.1 Gender and case

Nouns have an inherent two-way gender distinction between masculine and feminine. The difference is reflected formally in the form of the ezafe and in the form of the singular Oblique case marker. In the plural, all gender distinctions are neutralized. Gender

assignment is partially semantically motivated: words that refer to human beings and higher animals with a particular sex, such as *mehîn* 'mare' and *ap* 'uncle' are assigned grammatical gender according to their biological sex. Words that refer to persons, but which are usable with reference to either sex (e.g. *heval* 'friend') have no lexically fixed gender. Gender assignment with such words is determined according to the intended reference in a given context (Haig and Öpengin 2015).

For words denoting inanimate objects, or smaller animals, the principles of gender assignment is fairly opaque. There are some morphological regularities accounting for gender, for example nouns created with the derivational suffix *-(y)î* are feminine, as are the infinitives of all verbs. In the dialects of Turkey, with the exception of those close to Badini (cf. Şemzînan, section 4), the default gender for inanimate nouns is feminine; most loanwords with non-human reference take this gender. In Badini, on the other hand, the default gender is masculine. Gender is an area of considerable instability and variation, which we discuss at various points below.

There is a two-way case distinction between Direct (unmarked) and Oblique. Indefiniteness is marked on singular nouns through the suffix *-ek*, while no dedicated definiteness marker exists. A bare noun may thus have either a singular, definite reading, or a generic, sortal reading, depending on the context, illustrated in the following examples:

vērē hirč nīne	'there are no bears here' (generic, as a species)
hirč hat	'the bear came' (definite)
hirč-ek hat	'a bear came' (indefinite)

Paradigms for singular nouns showing their inflectional possibilities are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Case and indefiniteness in Standard K.

Feminine singular				Masculine singular			
Definite		Indefinite		Definite		Indefinite	
Dir.	Obl.	Dir.	Obl.	Dir.	Obl.	Dir.	Obl.
gund	*gund-î*	*gund-ek*	*gund-ek-î*	*jin*	*jin-ê*	*jin-ek*	*jin-ek-ê*

3.2.2 Variation in the marking of gender

Across dialects there is quite a lot of regional variation in gender, and in some dialects, the system seems to be collapsing. This process has proceeded farthest on nouns which carry the indefinite singular suffix *-ek* [-æk], shown in Table 4. In almost all dialects, even among fully competent speakers, there is a tendency to neutralize the difference between standard masc. indef. oblique *-ekî*, and fem. indef. oblique *-ekê*, leading to a uniform oblique indefinite ending [-æki:] or [-æke:]. Similar overlaps occur with the form of the ezafe (see below) when it follows the indefiniteness suffix. MacKenzie (1954: 535-537) had already pointed out the fluctuations in the transcriptions of case and ezafe-endings among the early works on Kurmanji, noting that the works of Bedir Khan and Lescot were the most

consistent. MacKenzie's conclusion is that the dialect of Botan is probably the most conservative and stable in this respect, with those to the North and West showing progressive merging of the gender distinction. Akin (2001) notes that in Kurmanji of Kozluk (a district in Diyarbakir), the gender distinction has been entirely neutralized, even in the ezafe paradigm, leading to a uniform ezafe singular form [-e:], as in *jin-ê min* 'my wife', *bav-ê min* 'my father'. Similarly, complete loss of gender is observed in the Kurmanji dialect of the enclave of Khorasan in Iran. Our own investigations in the Karakoçan region suggest that here too speakers lack consistent intuitions for gender assignment, though two distinct forms of the ezafe seem to still be in existence. The extent and dynamics of gender loss in Kurdish is a topic urgently requiring systematic investigation.

3.2.3   The Oblique case

The forms for case marking on singular nouns were given in Table 4. The expression of the oblique case is suppressed when the noun concerned is followed by the ezafe, and it may be absent with singular masculine nouns (see below). The oblique case is used in the following syntactic functions:

   I.   Object of a present-tense transitive verb (cf. ex. no. 2)

  II.   Goal or Recipient argument immediately following a predicate of motion or transfer (cf. ex. no. 49)

 III.   Complement of any adposition (cf. ex. no. 4) (though dropped in certain combinations)

 IV.   Possessor in an ezafe construction (cf. ex. no. 7)

  V.   Subject of a past-tense transitive verb (cf. ex. no. 58)

The direct case is used elsewhere.

3.2.3.1 The oblique case on definite singular masculine nouns

As noted above, the main area of variation in case marking concerns the oblique case on definite, masculine singular nouns. Three strategies are found: zero (lack of any overt oblique marking), raising, and suffixation.

Zero marking of oblique on masculine singular nouns

Zero is common for proper nouns, and for masculine singular nouns particularly when they have generic reference, in most dialects of Central Anatolia. The following example is from the Kurdish textbook *Hînker*:

(3)   *Ez*   *şîr*   *ve-na-xw-im*

       I   milk(m)   PVB-IND-drink.PRS-1SG

       'I do not drink milk.'

Stem-vowel raising as expression of oblique on masculine singular nouns

Stem-vowel raising is found in many dialects; it only affects the open, non-rounded vowels [a, æ], when they are in stressed syllables, and raises them: [a, æ → e:]. For example:

aş	*êş* 'mill'		*ga*	*gê* 'ox'	
nan	*nên* 'bread'		*ba*	*bê* 'wind'	
baxçe	*bêxçe* 'garden'		*kevir*	*kêvir* 'stone'	
bajar	*bajêr*[9] 'town'		*zilam*	*zilêm* 'man'	
hesp	*hêsp* 'horse'		*xanî*	*xênî* 'house'	
şivan	*şivên* 'shepherd, goatherd'		*lawik*	*lêwik* 'boy, son'	
welat	*welêt* 'state, country'		*ezman*	*ezmên* 'sky'	
ziman	*zimên* 'tongue, language'				

Both the regional distribution of raising, and the extent to which it applies in the nominal lexicon, are topics about which very little is known with certainty. Proper names may also undergo stem-vowel raising: *mal-a Osmên* (oblique of Osman) 'house of Osman' (cf. Blau & Barak 1999:39). Note that the rule which suppresses case marking in the presence of an ezafe is also operative with vowel raising. For example:

(4a) *li welêt kes-ek ne-ma*   (with raising *welat* to *welêt*)
    in homeland person-INDF NEG-remain.PST.3SG
    'There is noone left in the homeland'

(4b) *li welat-ê me kes-ek ne-ma*   (not: **li welêt-ê me kesek nema*)
    in homeland-EZ.M 1PL.OBL person-INDF NEG-remain.PST.3SG
    'There is noone left in our homeland'

Finally, note that expression of the oblique via a suffix is always required when the noun concerned is accompanied by a demonstrative (see below); and this likewise suppresses stem-vowel raising:

(4c) *li vî welat-î ...*   (not: **li vî welêt-î ...* or **li vî welêt ...*)
    in DEM.OBL homeland-OBL.M
    'in this homeland'

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[9] In some dialects where stem-vowel raising is not an option for marking the oblique case, the raised form *bajêr* 'town' has become the unmarked form of the noun, used in all contexts, implying that the rule existed at earlier stages of the language.

Suffixal expression of the Oblique

As noted above, suffixation is regularly and consistently applied to all masculine singular nouns, and across all dialects, when the NP concerned has a determiner such as a demonstrative, or the interrogative *kîjan* 'which?', or carries the indefiniteness suffix *-ek*. Bare masculine singular nouns, on the other hand, only consistently receive a suffixal marking of the oblique in the Badinan dialects of North Iraq, and in the east of the Hekari region in Turkey. Recently, some language activists have attempted to establish suffixation as a norm for written Kurdish, sometimes leading to hypercorrect forms in contexts where oblique is not required. In the vernacular, there is also a tendency to add a redundant *-î* to nouns carrying the indefiniteness suffix *-ek,* even when they are not in an appropriate syntactic environment, also noted by Dorleijn (1996:130). Interestingly, Bedir Khan and Lescot (1970:97) state that the oblique marking of masculine singular nouns (aside from those accompanied by demonstratives, etc.) is in the process of disappearing ("... est en voie de disparition"); however, as just noted, in the southeastern part of the Kurmanji speech region, it is still very much alive, though toward the west of this dialect region, suffixation of masculine proper names diminishes.

3.2.4   Plural number

In Standard K., only nouns in the oblique case are overtly marked for plural, through the suffix *-a(n)* (deletion of *-n* is normal in some dialects), as shown in Table 5:

Table 5. Plural and case marking in Standard Kurdish

Plural (masc. and fem.)			
Definite		Indefinite	
Dir.	Obl.	Dir.	Obl.
jin	*jin-a(n)*	*jin(-in)*	*jin-a(n)*
gund	*gund-a(n)*	*gund(-in)*	*gund-a(n)*

An ending for indefinite direct plural *-in* is regularly cited in pedagogical works and is shown in brackets above, but it is only frequently attested in the dialects of Mardin region, and across the border in Syria. Elsewhere it is rare or lacking completely.

Nouns in the direct case do not inflect for plural. Such nouns are usually subjects, so plurality is generally reflected in number agreement on the verb:

zarok	*hat-in*	'the children came'
zarok	*hat*	'the child came'

There is a tendency in the dialects to the west for the Oblique plural marker to become a general plural marker, which is used on nouns in the direct case, and also on the demonstratives; see below on Mereš dialect.

3.2.5   Pronouns

Personal pronouns

The forms for the personal pronouns are given in Table 6. The 'third person' pronouns are basically the distal demonstratives.

Table 6. Personal pronouns in Standard Kurmanji

		DIRECT	OBLIQUE
SG	1	ez	min
	2	tu	te
	3	ew	wî (m.) /wê (f.)
PL	1	em	me
	2	hûn	we
	3	ew	wan

The reflexive and reciprocal pronouns

In addition to the personal pronouns, Kurdish has an invariant reflexive pronoun *xwe* (dialectally also [xæ], [xo]). It is used for all persons and numbers, both as a personal pronoun and a possessor, when coreference with the subject of same clause is intended (see 3.3.1 on this point). In Standard K., the reciprocal pronoun is *hev* or *hevdû,* again used for all persons. In Badinan Kurdish, the reciprocal pronoun is *êk* [ʔe:k] or *êkûdu.*

Demonstratives and the demonstrative clitic -e/-a (sg.) and -ene/-ana (pl.)

There are two demonstratives, *ew* 'that' and *ev* 'this', with considerable dialectal variation: see Table 7.

Table 7. Demonstratives in Standard Kurmanji

	DIRECT	OBLIQUE		
	(all gender/numbers)	Sg. masc.	Sg. fem.	Plural
PROXIMATE	*ev*	*vî*	*vê*	*van*
DISTAL	*ew*	*wî*	*wê*	*wan*

In addition to the demonstratives, a number of dialects attach an additional suffixal or clitic marker to the nouns preceded by a demonstrative: in the singular *-e/-a* (regional variants, not gender related) and in the plural *-ene / -ana.* According to Bedir Khan and Lescot (1970: 227), they are contractions of deictic particles *he / ha / han.* They only attach to the noun if it is the final element of the NP; if it is followed by a modifier in an ezafe construction, then the proximate marker is not used.

(5)   *Va*   *defter＝na*   *yē*   *min＝in*
          DEM.PROX   notebook＝DEM.PL   EZ.PL   1SG.OBL＝COP.3PL

          'These notebooks are mine' (elicited from a speaker of the Antep-Adiyaman region)

One result of this development is that in dialects with the additional marker, a number distinction is drawn on the independent demonstratives in the direct case. Thus while in Standard K. the proximal demonstrative *ev* is used for both singular and plural direct (cf. Table 7), in these dialects there is a contrast between the singular direct *(e)va*, and the plural direct *(e)vana*, in e.g. Erzurum, or *eve* and *evene* in Badini, or *ewe / ewene* in Şemzinan.

3.3 The structure of the NP

The basic structure of a NP in Kurmanji is the following, where only N(oun) is obligatory:

Dem	Num	N -Ez	Poss	Ez	Adj
ev	*sê*	*kum-ên*	*min*	*yên*	*reš*
these	three	hat-EZ.PL	1S.OBL	EZ.PL	black

        'these three black hats of mine'

Demonstratives have already been illustrated in Table 7. The numerals are given in section 3.4. Possessors and descriptive adjectives follow the head, in that order if both are present, and obligatorily occur with an ezafe (cf. Schroeder 1999 for discussion of the NP in Kurdish).

3.3.1 The ezafe construction

The ezafe construction is well-known from Persian, and is found, with certain variations, in all varieties of Kurdish. It may be either a bound morpheme (suffix or clitic, with as yet poorly researched dialectal variation in stress assignment) or an independent particle. Historically it goes back to an Old Iranian demonstrative/relativizer (cf. Haig 2011). In Standard K., traces of these pronominal origins are evident in the fact that the ezafe still inflects for gender and number, agreeing with its head noun in these categories, and in the fact that it occurs as the "free", or "demonstrative" ezafe, discussed briefly below.

Simple ezafe constructions: Nouns plus a single post-nominal dependent
Any noun that is modified by an adjective, as in ex. no. (6), or with a possessor, as in ex. no. (7), is followed by an ezafe.

(6)   *bajar-ek-î*   *mezin*   'a big town'
         town-INDF-EZ.M   big

(7)   *mal-a*   *me*   'our house'
         house-EZ.F   1PL.OBL

Nouns may also be modified by prepositional phrases, as in ex. no. (8), or by relative clauses as in ex. no. (9) and (10), in which case they also take the ezafe:

(8) *dest-ēn   min   yēn ji   ber   serma-yē   qeliš-ī [...]*
     hand-EZ.PL 1SG.OBL EZ.PL from ADP   cold-OBL.F split-PTCP
     'my hands which are cracked and split because of the cold'   (Husen 21)

(9) *ev   ri-ya   ku   tu   di-d-ī   pēši-ya   me*
     DEM.PROX   road-EZ.F REL 2SG IND-give.PRS-2SG front-EZ.F 1PL.OBL
     'This road that you make us take'   (Sarman 37)

(10) *kur-ē   wī   yē li welat-ēn   xerībī-yē*
     son-EZ.M   3SG.OBL.M EZ.M in country-EZ.PL   foreign.land-OBL.F
     'His son (who) is in foreign countries'   (Husen 22)

Possessors in ezafe constructions take the oblique case, adjectives in ezafe constructions remain uninflected. Compare the difference:

  gel-ê kurd   (people-EZ.M kurdish)   'the Kurdish people'
  welat-ê kurd-an   (country-EZ.M kurd-OBL.PL)   'the country of the Kurds'

If a possessor is coreferent with the same-clause subject, the reflexive pronoun *xwe* is obligatorily used in place of a personal pronoun:

(11) *Ez   li   mal-a   xwe   me   /   mal-a   *min   im*
     1SG in   house-EZ.F REFL COP.1SG /   house-EZ.F 1SG.OBL COP.1SG
     'I am at my house' (lit. I am at self's house / *I am at my house)

The forms of the ezafe in Standard K. are given in Table 8:

Table 8. Ezafe with the nouns *gund* 'village', *bra* 'brother', *jin* 'woman', *çira* 'lamp'

Singular				Plural (masc. and fem.)	
masculine		feminine			
Def	Indef.	Def.	Indef.	Def.	Indef.
gund-ê	*gundek-î*	*jin-a*	*jinek-e*	*gund-ên / -êt*	*gund-in-e*
bra-yê	*brayek-î*	*çira-ya*	*çirayek-e*	*jin-ên / -êt*	*jin-in-e*
				bra-yên / -yêt	*bra-n-e*
				çira-yên / -yêt	*çira-n-e*

The plural forms with *-êt* are found mainly in the Badini (see 4.1). As mentioned above in connection with gender, the gender distinction in the ezafe following the indefinite marker *-ek* tends to weaken, with considerable uncertainty and inconsistency in the forms used (e.g. *ziman-ek-ê qedîm* 'an ancient language', where one would expect the masculine form *ziman-ek-î*). In the spoken language, an ezafe may be omitted completely following nouns with indefinite *-ek*, and this can als be witnessed sporadically in the written language: *li ber derê*

kafeyek internetê 'in front of the door of an internet cafe', with no ezafe following the initial head noun (Dirêj 2011:21).

The presence of an ezafe on any noun suppresses the expression of oblique case on that noun. This is a very crucial fact of Kurmanji syntax: it means that the ezafe itself is impervious to the external case of the entire NP. For example:

(12a) *Gund   di   nav   [çiya-yên   bilind]   da   ye*
      village ADP middle mountan-EZ.PL high   ADP COP.3S
      'The village lies between high mountains.'

(12b) *Li   wê   herêm-ê   [çiya-yên   bilind]   he-ne*
      ADP DEM.OBL.M region-OBL.M mountan-EZ.PL high   existent-COP.PL
      'There are high mountains there.'

The ezafe construction *çiyayên bilind* remains unchanged, regardless of the syntactic function of the entire NP. Thus in ex. no. (13), we would expect an oblique case, because it is the complement of an adposition, while in ex. no. (14) we would expect direct case, because it is the subject of an existential clause. But the presence of the ezafe *-yên* suppresses any overt expression of case on the noun. Overt case is, however, expressed when the ezafe construction is introduced with a demonstrative, which always expresses the case of the entire NP:[10]

(13) *Gund   di nav   [wan   çiya-yên   bilind]   da   ye*
    village in middle those   mountain-EZ.PL high   ADP COP.3S
    'The village is in between those high mountains.'

(14) *[ew   çiya-yên   bilind]   li   ser   sinor   in*
    those mountain-EZ.PL high   ADP ADP border   COP.3PL
    'Those high mountains are on the border.'

Free or demonstrative ezafes
Ezafes may occur separated from their head nouns. There are two possibilities. First, they may be used to add additional dependents to an existing simple ezafe construction. They still agree with the respective head nouns in number and gender:

*bra-yê min **ê** mezin*	'my older brother'
*mehîn-a boz **a** qenc*	'the good grey mare'
*gund-ên Qersê **ên** kevn*	'the old villages of Kars'

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[10] Interestingly, in Şemzînan (and probably Badinan generally) this sometimes does not hold, and the demonstrative may actually remain in the direct case: *tu ew çiyayêt bilind dibînî?* 'Do you see those high mountains', where the demonstrative is in direct case.

Second, they occur as anaphoric elements with the sense of 'the one …'. In such contexts, they are prosodically independent, rather than enclitic, and are preceded by a glide: *yê spî* 'the white one (masc. sg.)'; *ya te* 'your one (fem. sg.)'; *yên mezin* 'the big ones (pl.)'

In Badini Kurdish, and dialects close to it such as Şemzinan (cf. 4.1), the use of ezafes as independent forms has entered the verbal domain, where they accompany certain kinds of predicates, in particular copular elements (cf. Haig 2011 for discussion), as in ex. no. (15).

(15) *… ez   ya   bêdeng   im*

       I   EZ.F   silent   COP.1SG

      'I am remaining silent' (the speaker is a woman)[11]

Something similar may be found in the Elbistan dialect, discussed below in 4.3, though the origins of these forms are somewhat obscure.

3.4 Numerals

The main numbers, given in Standard Orthography (following Bedir Khan & Lescot 1970) are as follows:

1	yek	11	yanzdeh, yazdeh	30	sî
2	didu, du	12	dwanzdeh	40	çel, çil
3	sisê, sê	13	sêzdeh	50	pêncî
4	çar	14	çardeh	60	şêst
5	pênc	15	panzdeh	70	heftê
6	şeş	16	šanzdeh	80	heştê
7	heft [ħæft]	17	hevdeh	90	nod, not
8	heşt [ħæʃt]	18	hejdeh	100	sed
9	neh	19	nozdeh	201	du sed û yek
10	deh	20	bîst	1000	hezar

The short forms of 2 and 3 are used when they are quantifiers in a NP: *sê zarok* 'three children'. In the western parts of the Kurmanji speech zone, the typically Indo-European opaque forms for 11 and 12 have disappeared, and all the numerals 11-19 have been regularized along the lines of '10-and-1', '10-and-2' etc: *dehûyek, dehûdu, dehûsê* (cf. Haig 2006). This would appear to reflect contact influence from Armenian and Turkish, which lack opaque forms for 11 and 12, and instead have regularly-formed '10-1' etc.

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[11] From a short story *Hirmîka Xirş* by Mihemed Selim Siwarî, a writer from the Badini-speaking region in North Iraq, published in *Antolojiya çirokên kurmancên başûr*, edited by Xelîl Duhokî (Avesta, 2011).

3.5 Adpositions

Adpositions are an area of considerable variation, which cannot be covered in any depth here. We distinguish three components of the adpositional system, which can be combined in various ways: basic prepositions, locational nouns, and postpositional particles.

Basic prepositions

Standard Kurdish has three basic prepositions, and these are reasonably stable in most dialects (though Şemzinan differs in some respects, cf. 4.1). Each covers a broad and fairly abstract semantic space, with a spatial core: *ji* 'from', *bi* 'by (instrumental)', *li* 'at'.

Recall from the discussion of phonology in 3.1 that no word can end with the short central vowel [ɨ]. From this fact, it is evident that these prepositions do not constitute phonological words in Kurdish, and are probably best seen as proclitics. These three prepositions are also unique in that they fuse with a demonstrative to yield *jê* (*ji* + *wî/wê*), *pê* (*bi* + *wî/wê*) and *lê* (*li* + *wî/wê*) respectively. In some dialects, the compositional form *pê* has been reanalysed as a simple preposition with instrumental meaning, cf. ex. no. (16) from Karakoçan dialect (field notes from Karakoçan):

(16) *ister*   *pê*   *dest-an*   *bi-xw-e*   *ister*   *pê*   *kevčî*
      want   with   hand-OBL.PL   SUBJ-eat:PRES-IMP.2S   want   with   spoon
      'Eat (it) with (your) hands, or with a spoon, as you please'[12]

Basic prepositions may occur alone, but are more common in combination with a postpositional particle, or with locational nouns. In addition to the three mentioned above, there is also one fixed circumposition, consisting of *di ... de* 'inside'. In Standard K., the prepositional element *di*, unlike the three mentioned above, cannot occur by itself, but is always accompanied by the postpositional particle *de*.

In addition to the three "basic prepositions" just discussed, two other prepositions are found throughout the Kurmanji region, though they differ from the three just mentioned in that they end in full vowels, and there is no fusion with the prepositional complement: (a) the preposition *bê* 'without'; (b) the preposition *bo*. In most dialects of Turkey it can be combined with *ji* to express benefactive meanings (*ji bo*). The dialects of the southeast use simply *bo*, which is also extended to cover recipient and goal meanings, where it generally replaces the combination *ji ... re/ra* of Standard K..

Locational nouns

A number of prepositions are evidently the result of the grammaticalization of nouns; they can be used both independently and in combination with the basic prepositions. The commonest are the following:

    nav 'inside'   *di nav ... de*   'inside'

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[12] *ister ... ister* is a modified loan construction from Turkish, based on the Turkish verb *istemek* 'want'.

ber 'front'	*li ber*	'in front of'	
	ji ber	'because of'	
ser 'head'	*li ser*	'on, upon, over'	
bin ‚bottom'	*li bin, di bin ... de*	'beneath, underneath'	
dû 'behind'	*li dû*	'after'	
pişt 'back'	*li pişt*	'behind'	
rex 'side'	*li rex*	'next to, on the side'	
tenişt 'side'	*li tenişt*	'by side'	

Some of these locational nouns also occur in a kind of prepositional stranding construction, occurring without a complement post-verbally:

(17) *min   nan   da   ber   û   hat-im*
1SG.OBL bread   give.PST.3SG   front and   come.PST-1SG
'I put the food in front (of him) and came'

Postpositional particles
These particles are mostly combined with a preposition; they cliticize to the right-edge of the entire prepositional phrase, and provide additional meaning components to the phrase. However, the resultant meanings are not always transparent, for example (cf. Bedir Khan and Lescot 1970: 244-258 for a detailed list):

bi ... re/ra 'accompaniment, together with'
di ... re / ra 'through'
ji ... re/ra 'for, to, benefactive/recipient'
(ber) bi ... de 'towards'

In many dialects of central Anatolia (e.g. Dersim and Karakoçan) and the dialects of Armenia, the benefactive/recipient *ji ... re/ra* and the local *di ... de/da* are reduced to just the respective postpositional element: *mi(n)-ra* 'to/for me', *mal-da* 'at home'.

Spatial meanings are also conveyed through directional adverbs, such as: *jêr* 'down', *jor* 'up', *xwar* 'down (on the ground)'. Another important element is the particle *-de/da* following NPs expressing directionals, when they occur after the predicate.

(18) *hinek   av-ê   bi-xi-yê   da   ji_bo_ku ne-şewit-e*
a.little   water-OBL.F   SUBJ-drop.PRS-3SG.OBL   ADP   so.that   NEG-burn.PRS-3SG
'Put a little more water in it so that it does not burn.'

3.6 Verbal morphology
Verbs exhibit the typical West Iranian characteristic of having two stems, a present and a past stem, but the formation of one from the other is not fully predictable. Certain

regularities can be identified, though a fully accepted classification is not available. Table 10 provides a list of frequent verbs, but makes no attempt at classifying them:

Table 10. Frequent verbs in past and present stems

Infinitive	Past Stem	Present Stem	Meaning
bûn	*bû-*	*-b-*	be
birin	*bir-*	*-bi-*	take
hatin	*hat-*	*-(h)ê-/-wer-*	come
hêlan/hiştin	*hişt-*	*-hêl-*	leave
bihîstin	*bihîst-*	*-bihîz-*	hear
girtin	*girt-*	*-gir-*	grasp, hold
gotin	*got-*	*-bêj-*	say
kuştin	*kuşt-*	*-kuj-*	kill
rûniştin	*rûnişt-*	*-rûn-*	sit
kirin	*kir-*	*-ki-*	do, make
çûn	*çû-*	*-çi-/-her-*	go
jîn/jîyan	*jî-/jiya-*	*-jî-*	live
ketin	*ket-*	*-kev-*	fall
xwarin	*xwar-*	*-xw-*	eat
xwastin	*xwast-*	*-xwaz-*	want, request
avêtin	*avêt-*	*-avêj-*	throw
dîtin	*dît-*	*-bîn-*	see
dan	*da-*	*-di-*	give
mirin	*mir-*	*-mir-*	die
zanîn	*zanî-*	*-zan-*	know
girîn	*girî-*	*-girî-*	cry, weep
ajotin	*ajot-*	*-ajo-*	drive
barîn	*barî-*	*-bar-*	rain
xistin	*xist-*	*-x-/-xîn-*	strike, knock
xwandin	*xwand-*	*-xwîn-*	read, study

Verbs are quite a small, closed word class in Kurmanji (probably no more than 150 simplex verbs in regular usage in most dialects). The only moderately productive derivational process for creating new verbs is a causative suffix, *-and,* used for deriving transitive verbs from intransitive stems: *gerîn* 'walk, stroll' → *gerandin* 'lead', *nivistin* 'sleep' → *nivandin* 'put to sleep'. New verb meanings are usually created using light verb constructions usually based on *kirin, bûn, dan* (see below). Additional verbs may also be derived through the lexicalization of verb plus a dummy prepositional complement, for example *jê birin* 'win', literally 'take from him/her', also 'erase'; *lê xistin* 'beat (a person), lit. 'strike on him/her'; *lê hatin* 'become'. Incorporation of a pre-verbal element may also yield a new verb (see below).

Person marking suffixes

Finite verbs take agreement suffixes, indexing the verb for person and number of a single core argument: the intransitive subject in all tenses, the transitive subject in present tenses, and the transitive object with past tenses. Table 11 shows the two sets of person agreement suffixes, one used with forms based on the present stem, the other for forms based on the past stem. Subjunctive forms based on the past stem have distinct composite endings with considerable cross-dialect variation, beyond the scope of this section (see the dialect sketches below for some discussion). Non-verbal predicates take a (slightly) different set of clitic copular endings given in Table 13.

Table 11. Person agreement suffixes

	Person agreement suffixes	
Person	Present	Past
1SG	*-(i)m*	*-(i)m*
2SG	*-î / -e* (imperative)	*-(y)î*
3SG	*-e*	*-Ø*
1,2,3PL	*-(i)n*	*-(i)n*

TAM and negation prefixes

Verb forms based on the present tense (simple present, subjunctive, imperative, future) obligatorily take a single prefix, either the neutral simple present prefix *di-* (glossed INDicative), or the subjunctive prefix *bi-*, or a negation prefix *na-* (replaces the affirmative)[13] or *ne-* (replaces the subjunctive). In imperative forms, and with preverbal elements combined with light verbs, a prefix may be lacking. In the Badini dialects of North Iraq, the subjunctive present forms used to make the future tense regularly drop the prefix *bi-*.

Verb forms based on the past stem, however, are not necessarily prefixed. The simple past tense is basically thus the past stem of the verb plus the appropriate person agreement markers. In the past tenses, an aspect distinction between progressive (or imperfective) and simple past is available, signalled by the prefix *di-*.

Negation of both simple and progressive pasts[14] is through addition of the prefix *ne-*: *ne-hatin* 'they didn't come', or *ne-di-hatin* 'they weren't coming'. In past tenses, agreement

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[13] Two verbs negate the present stem with *ni-*, *zanîn* 'know' and *karîn* 'be able': *nizanim / nikarim* 'I don't know / I can not'. The verb *šiyan* 'be able', used in Badini and Şemzînan dialects, negates the present stem with *ne: nešêm* 'I can not'.

[14] Negation of progressive past in Western Kurmanji (Adiyaman-Urfa) is *na-*, as in *na-de-kir-in* 'they were not doing it'.

patterns vary according to the transitivity of the verbs (cf. 3.7.2) below). Sample paradigms are given in Table 12.

Table 12. Sample verb conjugations

	simple present (trans./intrans.) *gotin* 'say'	simple past (intrans.) *hatin* 'come'	simple past (trans.) *xwarin* 'eat'	past progressive (intrans.) *hatin* 'come'	past progressive (trans.) *xwarin* 'eat'
1sg	*ez dibêjim*	*ez hatim*	*min xwar* 'I ate (s.thing)'	*ez dihatim*	*min dixwar*
2sg	*tu dibêjî*	*tu hatî*		*tu dihatî*	*te dixwar*
3sg	*ew dibêje*	*ew hat*	*te xwar*	*ew dihat*	*wî (*masc.*) dixwar*
			*wî (*masc.*) xwar*		*wê (*fem.*) dixwar*
1pl	*em dibêjin*	*em hatin*	*wê (*fem.*) xwar*	*em dihatin*	*me dixwar*
2pl	*hûn dibêjin*	*hûn hatin*	*me xwar*	*hûn dihatin*	*we dixwar*
3pl	*ew dibêjin*	*ew hatin*	*we xwar*	*ew dihatin*	*wan dixwar*
			wan xwar		

Non-verbal predicates in the present indicative receive a set of clitic person markers or copula forms, see Table 13.

Table 13. Copular person clitics with non-verbal predicates

	Following a consonant: *kurd* 'Kurdish'	Following a vowel: *birçî* 'hungry'
1sg	*ez kurd-im* 'I am Kurdish'	*ez birçî-me* 'I am hungry'
2sg	*tu kurd-î*	*tu birçî-yî* (reduced to long [i:j])
3sg	*ew kurd-e*	*ew birçî-ye*
1pl	*em kurd-in*	*em birçî-ne*
2pl	*hûn kurd-in*	*hûn birçî-ne*
3pl	*ew kurd-in*	*ew birçî-ne*

In Badini, special constructions are found with non-verbal predicates (cf. 4.1). For non-verbal predicates in the past tenses, or in subjunctive mood, the appropriate form of *bûn* 'be' is required.

The verbs çûn *'go' and* hatin *'come'*

These two verbs have suppletive stems, with regional variation in the choice and forms of the stems.

Table 14. The verbs *çûn* 'go' and *hatin* 'come'

	çûn 'go'	*hatin* 'come'
Present	*-çi-* / *-her-* (imperative)	*-(h)ê-* / *-wer-* (imperative)
Past	*çû*	*hat*

The Standard K. indicative singular 1s form of 'come' is *têm*, resulting from a contraction of **di-hê-m* with the typical devoicing of the *d-* in such contexts (in some dialects the trace of the stem-initial *h-* can still be heard), while the negation is *nayêm*. In many dialects of the northwest, the imperative stem *-her-* of 'go' is also used in the indicative, so for example in Dersim, Erzurum, and Elaziğ, it is used for all forms of the present stem. Thus first person indicative present in these dialects is *terim* (<**di-her-im*) 'I go / am going', while negative indicative present is *narim* (<**na-her-im*). In other dialects, the imperative form is also used to cover subjunctive meanings in the present. The imperative stem of *hatin* is also often used in place of the regular subjunctive (which is *bêm* in the first singular).

Mood

With the present stem, there is a simple distinction between indicative verb forms, marked with *di-*, and subjunctive verb forms, prefixed with *bi-* or zero in some dialects.

The subjunctive of the present stem (cf. ex. no. 19-22) has a wide range of functions, including clauses with irrealis sense (wishes or orders), and subordinate clauses expressing possible or intended outcomes. It is obligatory in the complements of modal predicates such as 'want', 'be able', 'be obliged/must'. Some examples follow (from Bedir Khan and Lescot 1970: 317-321):

(19) *Kafir   jî   b-e*
     unbeliever ADD be.PRS.SUBJ-3S   'even if (he) is an unbeliever'

(20) *Ez   di-tirs-im   şermisarî   û   belengazî*
     1SG   AFF-fear.PRS-1SG disgrace   and   misery
     para   me   b-e
     fate-EZ.F   1PL.OBL be.PRS.SUBJ-3S
     'I am afraid that disgrace and misery will be our fate'

(21) *heke birçî   ne,   bila   bi-xw-in*
     if   hungry   COP.PL   MOD.PRT   SUBJ-eat.PRS-PL
     'If they are hungry, they should eat'

(22) *heke pirs-a   wan   he-b-e,*
     if   question-EZ.F 3PL.OBL existent-be.PRS.SUBJ-3S
     bila   vê   gavê   bêj-in
     MOD.PRT   this   time-OBL   say.PRS.SUBJ-PL
     'If they have a question, they should say so at the time'

Subordinate clauses with verbs of speech or thought may (as in ex. no. (23) and (24)) or may not be in the subjunctive (as in ex. no. 25-26), depending on the degree of certainty of the proposition expressed.

(23) Dît   ko   gotin-a   wî   rast   e
     see.PST(3S)   COMPL   word-EZ.F   3S.M.OBL   right   COP.3S
     'He saw that what he said was right'

(24) De   bêje,   te   çawan   kir
     MOD.PRT   say.PRS:IMP   2S.OBL   how   do.PST.3S
     'go on, say how you did it'

(25) Ni-zanîbû[15]   ko   çawan   bê   pere   ve-ger-e   mal
     NEG-know.PST(3S)   COMPL   how   without money   PRV-return.PRS.SUBJ-3S   home
     'He didn't know how he would return home without any money'

(26) Bi-xwîn-in   da   ko   ho   zana   bi-b-in.
     SUBJ-read.PRS-PL   so   that thus   knowledgeable   SUBJ-be.PRS-PL
     'study, so that you may become knowledgeable'

Past subjunctive

Past subjunctives are primarily used with counterfactual expressions in past tenses. As this is a complex area of syntax with considerable dialectal variation, it cannot be covered in the space of this sketch (see Bedir Khan and Lescot 1970: 317-321; Blau and Barak 1999: 99-102; especially Thackston 2006: 58-69 for details).

The future tense

The future tense is expressed via a particle *(d)ê* or *wē*, combined with a subjunctive form of the verb; see ex. no. (27). It is most frequent in clause-second position, often (but not always) preceded by the subject as in ex. no. (28), though it is also possible clause-initially; see example no. (29) below. The main verb is in the present subjunctive. High-frequency verbs such as *gotin* 'say' generally drop the *bi-* prefix in the future tense, as does the verb *bûn* 'be'.

(27) ji_bo   Xwedē   sal-ek-ē   ez = ē   řožī   bi-gir-im
     for   God   year-INDF-OBL   1SG = FUT   fasting   SUBJ-keep.PRS-1SG
     'For the sake of God I will fast during one year.'   (Sarman 31)

(28) ew   dē   mesel-ē   ji   te   re   bēž-e
     3SG   FUT   issue-OBL.F   from 2SG.OBL   POST   say.PRS-3SG
     'He will tell you the issue.'

(29) wē   čawa   heval-ēn   nexweš   derbas   bi-bi-n
     FUT   how   friend-EZ.PL   ill   NVP.pass   SUBJ-be.PRS-3PL

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[15] The verb *zanîn* 'know' usually takes this form for the negated simple past.

‘How will the wounded friends pass?’ (Yusiv 97)

(30) *ewro   ne,   dē   sibe   či-m*
    today   no,   FUT   tomorrow   come.SUBJ-1SG
    ‘not today, (but) tomorrow I will come’

In Standard K. and contemporary written Kurdish, the future auxiliary can be retained in negative sentences, in which case the negation marker is the subjunctive negation ‘*ne-*’. In Badini, there is no dedicated negative future; the negative indicative is used:

    Standard K.:   *Ez ē sibe bi wan re ne-či-m.*

    Badini: *Ez sibe digel wan na-či-m*   ‘I won’t go with them tomorrow’

The directional –e particle on verbs

A large class of verbs expressing motion (‘go’, ‘come’) or directed action (‘give’, ‘speak’, ‘send’) frequently takes the so-called ‘directional particle’ *-e* (in most dialects [-æ]) after the person marker on the verb. MacKenzie (1961a:197-198) analyses it as a reduced form of a directional preposition, which has cliticized to the preceding verb. It is assimilated to the final vowel of verb forms ending in one of the full vowels (e.g. *čû* ‘went’). For verbs such as *hatin* ‘come’, the use of the directional is almost obligatory (claimed, for example, for Tur Abdin dialect in Turgut 2012). An example from a traditional text is the following (Bedir Khan and Lescot 1970: 352):

(31) *Se   û   zarok-ên   gund   li   gur   hat-in-e   hev ...*
    dog   and   child-EZ.P   village   at   wolf   come.PST-3PL-**DRCT**   together ...
    ‘The dogs and the children of the village gathered together around the wolf ...’

The precise conditions determining its realization remain, however, not fully understood. It needs to be distinguished from the reduced form of a third person singular addressee or recipient, which likewise cliticizes to the verb: *got=ê* ‘said to him/her’, *didin=ê* ‘give to him/her’. If such a clitic goal is present, the directional particle cannot be realized.

Light verb constructions

Like most Iranian languages, Kurdish makes extensive use of complex predicates consisting of a so-called ‘light verb’ plus some non-verbal element. The most commonly used light verbs in Kurmanji are *kirin* ‘do, make’, *bûn* ‘be, become’ and *dan* ‘give’. The following list is a small selection of widely-used light verb constructions involving a nominal non-verb element (Haig 2002:22-23):

ava kirin	‘build, establish’	*xwedî kirin*	‘bring up, raise’
bang kirin	‘call’	*bar kirin*	‘load, move (house)’
alî(karî) kirin	‘help’	*gazî kirin*	‘call’
bawer kirin	‘believe’	*hez kirin*	‘like, love’
fa(h)m/fêm kirin	‘understand’	*dest pê kirin*	‘start, begin’

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şerm kirin	'be ashamed'	*nîşan dan*	'show'
ji bîr kirin	'forget'	*dest avêtin*	'reach for, begin'
guhdarî kirin	'listen'	*dev jê berdan*	'leave alone, cease doing'

The syntax of light verbs is discussed in Haig (2002), and is touched on in the dialect sketches below.

3.7 Syntax of the simple clause

3.7.1 Word order

The word order in pragmatically neutral clauses is SOVG, where "G" stands for 'Goal', here a cover term for spatial goals of verbs of movement, recipients of verbs of transfer, and addressees of verbs of speech. However, word order is not rigidly fixed; direct objects may be fronted for pragmatic purposes, for example. The position and means of marking of goal arguments (in the broad sense just defined) also varies; in those dialects which make extensive use of circumposition *ji … ra* (cf. 3.5) for recipients and benefactives, they generally precede the verb, yielding SGOV. For recipients with *dan* 'give', however, all dialects usually place the recipient argument immediately after the verb, in the oblique case but with no adposition. The dialects such as Badini and Şemzînan, however, differ from the other dialects in that they frequently use the preposition *bo* with such post-predicate recipients and goals (see Haig 2015 on post-predicate goals).

3.7.2 Alignment and related issues

Kurmanji has an ergative construction, used with the past tenses of transitive verbs. Otherwise, the syntax is accusative throughout. The ergative construction associated with past transitive verb forms has attracted a fair bit of attention in recent years (Bynon 1979, Dorleijn 1996, Matras 1997, Haig 1998, Turgut 2012 Haig 2008 for summary discussion), and we will only point out some of the more salient facts here, and some points of variation across the dialects.

In the ergative construction, the transitive subject takes the Oblique case, while the direct object is in the Direct case. The verb agrees with the direct object. However, the order of subject and object remains unchanged. Similarly, the subject, despite its Oblique case, still controls coreference with reflexive *xwe* (cf. 3.2.5). Typical examples (from Thackston 2006: 49) are given in ex. no. (32-34):

(32) *Jinik-ek-ê*   *çay-a*   *me*   *anî*
     woman-INDF-OBL   tea-EZ.F   1PL.OBL   bring.PST.3SG
     'A woman brought our tea'.

(33) *Wî*   *mirov-î*   *çay*   *anî*
     DEM.M.OBL   man-OBL   tea   bring.PST.3SG
     'That man brought tea'

(34) *Gundi-yan*   *tişt-ek*   *ne-got*
     villager-PL.OBL   thing-INDF   NEG-say.PST.3SG
     'The villagers didn't say anything'.

There are two main areas where the morpho-syntax of Kurdish diverges from what would be expected from the rules of ergativity as just outlined, namely the agreement on the verb, and the case of the direct object. With regards verb agreement, when the transitive subject is plural, and not expressed overtly in the clause, there is a strong tendency to add plural agreement to the verb, even when the object is singular. This usage is followed in all varieties of Kurdish, spoken or written, when the clause with the transitive verb is preceded by an intransitive clause with the same subject. Characteristically in ex. no. (35) below, which represents the written language (the poem *Ji Biçukan re*, by Cegerxwîn), an intransitive clause precedes the past transitive verb *gotin* 'say':

(35) *Herdu*   *çû-n-e*   *cem* *rovî* *Doz-a*   *xwe jê_ra* ***got-in***
     the.two go.PST-PL-DRCT to fox case-EZ.F SELF to.him say.PST-PL
     'The two of them **went** to the fox (and) **explained**(PL) their case to him'

The past transitive verb form *gotin* has a plural agreement marker, although its direct object is singular (*doz* 'case'). The plural agreement here reflects the plural number of the subject *herdu*, which is not overtly expressed in the second clause. In fact, in this example (and similar ones), it would be simply not possible for the verb to agree with its singular object *doza xwe* 'their case', yielding a singular verb form *got* 'said'. It is fairly futile to condemn all instances of subject agreement on a past tense transitive verb as "incorrect usage" (e.g. Tan 2005:92-93; Chyet 2004). Instead, they are rule-governed, but the subtlety of the rules concerned have yet to be elucidated (cf. Haig 2008:231-240 for some suggestions). The extent to which past transitive verbs agree with a plural subject varies from dialect to dialect, and according to the semantics of the verb and other syntactic factors; in some dialects, agreement with a plural subject on past transitive verbs is almost the norm, while in others it is more tightly constrained.

    A second tendency, found in the dialects of Central Anatolia to the west, is to put the direct object of a past transitive verb into the Oblique case, rather than the expected Direct case, leading to a double-oblique construction (with both subject and object in the Oblique). In the dialect of Muş, this tendency can be regularly observed:

(36) *ez*   *zarok* *bû-m-e,*   *biçûk* *bû-m-e,*   ***min***   *girt-in-e ...*
     1S   child be.PST-1S-PERF small be.PST-1S-PERF 1S.OBL take.PST-3PL-PERF
     'I was a child, I was young (they) took **me** ...'   (story told by speaker from Muš)

Even in writing such usage is well attested. The following examples come from a Kurdish text book (Dirêj 2011:111), written by a speaker from the Muş region:

(37) *Min   gelek   paşa û   serokwezir-**an**   nas   kir-in*
1SG.OBL many   king and   chief minister-**PL.OBL**   knowing   do.PST-PL
'I knew many kings and their chief ministers'

A similar tendency is also noticeable among speakers who have been exposed to other languages from an early age, e.g. many Kurds growing up in the diaspora, where the first language acquisition of Kurdish may be impoverished. It seems to be the case that the ergative construction is vulnerable in conditions of imperfect first language acquisition (cf. Turgut 2012 for second-generation Kurds in Germany).

3.7.3 Non-canonical subjects
In the dialects of the south and the east (e.g. Şemzînan and Badini), certain predicates take a subject in the Oblique, regardless of tense. Such constructions resemble superficially the ergative construction, but should not be confused with it, because (a) they are not conditioned by the tense of the verb; (b) the predicates concerned can be intransitive. Typically such non-canonical subjects occur with certain predicates of physical sensations , for example *min*(OBL) *sar e* 'I am cold'. However, not all such predicates have non-canonical subjects, cf. *ez*(DIR) *birčî me* 'I am hungry'. The verb *viyan*, expressing necessity / desire, also takes an oblique 'wanter':

(38) *min   d-vê-t   b-çi-m*
1SG.OBL   INDIC-be.necessary.PRS-3SG   SUBJ-go.PRS-1SG
'I want to go'

Finally, in expressions of possession the possessor is often in the oblique:

(39) *min   trimbêl   nîne*
1SG.OBL   car   not.existent.3SG
'I do not have a car.'

In most other dialects, these constructions are not used. Instead, canonical subjects in the Direct case are used, or, in the case of possession, the possessor is the modifier in an ezafe construction. A remnant of this construction may be found in many dialects in the expression *çav ketin* 'eye fall', i.e. 'catch sight of', where the 'possessor' of *çav* occurs clause-initially, rather than via an ezafe-construction. The following example from Ritter's Midyat texts (transcription adapted) is fairly typical:

(40) *waxtê   ku   sofî   çav   pê   ket ...*
time-EZ.M   COMPL   Sufi   eye   with.him   fall.PST.3SG
'When the Sufi caught sight of him ...'

## 4.   Dialectal variation in phonology and morphosyntax

In this section, we will present some aspects of dialectal variation across Kurmanji, focussing on morphosyntax. A preliminary classification of Kurmanji dialects is available in Öpengin and Haig (2014). In the interests of brevity, we provide sample sketches from just three dialect areas, rather than the five distinguished in Öpengin and Haig (2014). The dialect areas considered here are Southeastern, Southern, and Western Kurmanji. Western Kurmanji covers both Southwestern and Northwestern Kurmanji of Öpengin and Haig (2014), while we have no representative of the Northern Kurmanji area identified in Öpengin and Haig (2014). The broad regional extent of these three regional varieties are indicated on the map in Fig. 2. The background to the individual regions is as follows:

Southeastern Kurmanji (abbreviated to SEK): Our data come from the Şemdinli (Kr. Şemzînan) district of Hakkari province. The variety is considered to represent the southeastern Kurmanji or Badini/Behdini, including the Kurmanji spoken in Hakkari province and southern half of Van province in eastern Turkey, in Duhok and Soran provinces in Iraqi Kurdistan, and in the southern half of the Kurdish-inhabited areas of Urmiye province in Iran.

Southern Kurmanji (SK): Our data come from the area between the Midyat (Kr. Midyad) and Nusaybin (Kr. Nisêbîn) districts of Mardin province. Southern Kurmanji includes the Kurmanji spoken in Mardin (Kr. Mêrdîn) and Batman provinces, sections of Şırnak (Kr. Şirnex), Diyarbakır (Kr. Diyarbekir) and Urfa (Kr. Riha) provinces in Turkish Kurdistan as well as in Heseke province of northeast Syria. The Kurmanji spoken further north (called commonly as "Serhed" dialect, and referred to in Öpengin and Haig 2014 as Northern Kurmanji) in localities such as Erzurum, Muş and Ağrı is in fact quite close to this variety, with only gradual differences as one moves north.

Western Kurmanji (WK): The data representing this group comes from the Elbistan district of Maraş (Kr. Meraş) province. Western Kurmanji encompasses the two dialect regions northwest and southwest Kurmanji distinguished in Öpengin and Haig (2014), and comprises primarily the Kurmanji spoken in Maraş, Malatya and Sivas, and secondarily the Kurmanji of Adıyaman, Antep, including parts of Urfa and Aleppo in Syria.

Figure 2. Approx. locations of the three Kurmanji dialect zones
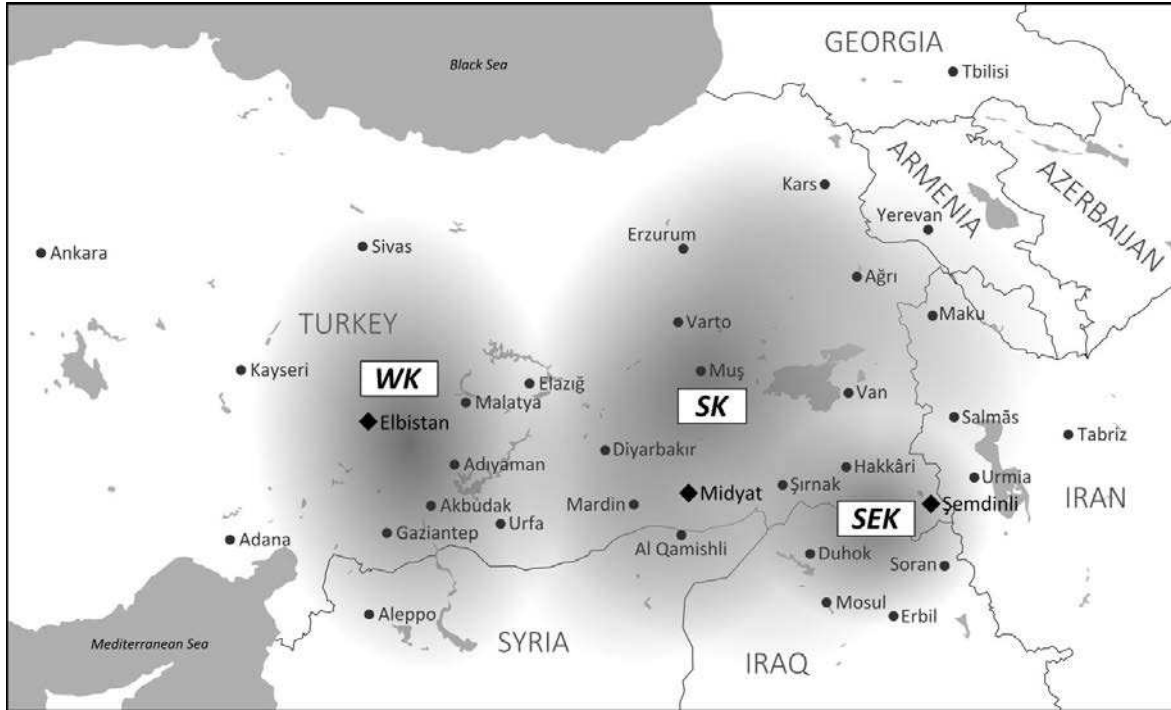
4.1 Şemzînan variety of Southeastern Kurmanji

Şemdinli (Kr. Şemzînan) is a district in the Hakkari (Kr. Hekarî) province of Turkey. Hakkari is both the city on the southeastern edge of East Anatolia and a socio-historical toponym (Khachatrian 2003) covering the region stretching from south of Lake Van in the north, Urmiya in the east, Amêdî and Duhok (in Iraq) in the south and the town of Şırnak (Kr. Şirnex) in the west. The common name for the Kurmanji of this vast area is Badini, which shows subdialectal variation. The Kurdish of this region is briefly described in MacKenzie (1995) and Rhea (1872). The Şemzînan (shortened to Şemz.) variety of SEK analyzed here is representative of the eastern half of the dialect zone.

4.1.1 Phonology

The phoneme inventory of the Şemzînan dialect is mostly parallel to that of Standard K. (see Table 2 and Table 3), though with substantial differences in the realization of some phonemes, discussed here.

Final-vowel centralization: A high front unrounded vowel [i:] is mostly centralized into an [ɨ] in word-final position. The process affects certain function words, and inflected verb forms:

Şemz.			Standard K.	Translation
wi	*mirow-i*		*wī mirovī*	'that man'
that.OBL.M	man-OBL.M			
na-č-i			*na-č-ī*	'Won't you go?'
NEG-go.PRS-2SG				
ya	*me*	*kir-i*	*ya me kir-ī*	'What we have done'
EZ.DEM	1PL.OBL	do.PST-PTCP		

It also affects some lexical items, e.g. *tiji* as opposed to Standard K. *tijî*. However, otherwise a lexical final long [i:] is preserved, as in *spī* 'white', *tarī* 'dark', or *karī* 'a sort of plant'. Certain inflectional morphemes such as the masculine ezafe and the oblique case following the indefiniteness suffix, are not subject to centralization, as seen in the following examples:[16]

mirov-ek-ī baš	(man-INDF-EZ.M good)	'a good man';
xanī-yē mirovekī	(house-EZ.M man-INDF-OBL.M)	'a man's house'

This feature is salient in the eastern half of the dialect zone, but not found in the western section such as in Duhok or Amêdî.

Vowel fronting: A back high round vowel [u:], written <û> in Standard K., generally corresponds to a front vowel [y] in Şemzînan, transcribed here as <ü>, as in the following items:

Şemz.	Standard K.	Gloss
stür	*stūr*	'thick'
mü	*mū*	'hair'
tü	*tū*	'mulberry'
bičük	*bičūk*	'child'
bük	*būk*	'bride'

The only exception known to us is the past stem of the verb 'to go', *čū*, [čʰū] where the Standard K. phoneme remains unchanged; but may be due to the fact that the past stem of the verb is originally *čo-* and as a result of vowel-raising (see below) the stem vowel [o:] has turned into [u:].

This process can be seen as an intermediate stage in a broader sound change, where [u:] not only shifts forward, but undergoes derounding to [i:], i.e. [u: > y > i:]. Dialects further southwest, such as Badini in Duhok, have gone the whole way in many of the relevant words, e.g. [di:r] for Standard K. *dûr* 'far', and [bi:] for Standard K. *bû* 'was'.

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[16] The final [i:] of participles is centralized when the participle is used predicatively (discussed in 4.1.2), as in : *mala wan a soti* 'their house has burnt down'. Otherwise, participles retain the final long vowel.

Vowel-raising: A Standard K. mid back round vowel [o:] is raised to a high back round vowel [u:] in Şemzînan, illustrated below. Though the phenomenon is not seen in the western half of dialect zone.

Şemz.	Standard K.	Gloss
čʰūk	*čʰok*	'knee'
bū	*bo*	'for'
mirū	*mirov*	'man'

This shift can also be viewed in the context of vowel fronting just discussed: The loss of the high back vowel [u:] creates a pull-chain effect, yielding the raising of [o: > u:]. The shifts in this part of the vowel system is also reflected in uncertainties in the orthography, e.g. both *rûvî* and *rovî* can be found as spellings for 'fox', or *morî* and *mûrî* 'ant'.

Bilabialization of the voiced labio-dental fricative: Standard K. [v] is systematically seen as an approximant [w] in Şemzînan, on a par with Central Kurdish, and the opposition between [v] and [w] is neutralized, as shown in the examples below. In Şemzînan even affects loanwords, such as *vazo* 'vase' (from/through Turkish), which is *wazo* in Şemzînan. The few occurrences of [v], as in *vize viz* 'swirling of flies' and *bive ye* 'it's dangerous' in child language, are onomatopoeic words and the speakers are usually not systematic in their pronunciation.

Şemz.	Standard K.	Gloss
aw	*av*	'water'
šew	*šev*	'night'
čaw	*čav*	'eye'

In the Badini dialect of Dohuk, however, lenition of Standard K. [v] is not evident, and in fact the [v] in syllable-final position tends to be devoiced to [f]. Thus in these dialects, an opposition between [v] and [w] is retained.

De-labialization of [xw]: The Standard K. consonant group [xw] or bilabial velar fricative [xʷ] occurs in Şemzînan as a velar fricative [x], as seen below. Note that in the western half of the dialect zone the bilabial velar fricative usually remains the same as in Standard K..

Şemz.	Standard K.	Gloss
xarin	*xwarin*	'to eat'
xezür	*xwezūr*	'father-in-law'
xū	*xwe*	'self'
xē	*xwē*	'salt'

Palatalization of velar stops: The velar stops /g/ and /k/ (aspirated and unaspirated), are palatalized preceding front or central unrounded vowels.

Şemz.	Standard K.	Gloss
[kʲɨra:s]	[kɨra:s]	'robe'

[kʰʲeːrɨk]	*[kʰeːr]*	'knife'
[gʲɨraːn]	*[gɨraːn]*	'heavy'

Retention / insertion of initial [h-]: A number of vowel-initial words as well as the vocalic present stem of verb 'to come', {-ē-}, occur with an initial glottal fricative [h] in Şemzînan. Some are historically retentions, others maybe later insertions.

Şemz.	Standard K.	Gloss
hāwētin	*avētin*	'throw'
hēwar	*ēvar*	'evening'
harī kirin	*arī kirin*	'to help'
hē-	*ē-*	'come.PRS'

4.1.2 Nominal morphology

Oblique case on nouns: The forms of the oblique case suffixes are as follows:

	Masc	Fem	Pl. (masc./fem.)
Definite	*-(y)i*	*-(y)ē*	*-(y)a(n)*
Indefinite	*-ī/(-ē)*	*-ē/(-ī)*	

The masculine oblique form on definite nouns is *–(y)i,* in line with the more general phonological rule of final-vowel centralization in Şemzînan (cf. 4.1.1). Thus the oblique forms are different in definite and indefinite state. Furthemore, the final consonant of plural oblique is regularly elided in Şemzînan, but not in the western half of the dialect zone. In Standard K., the form of the oblique suffix following an indefiniteness marker is differentiated according to the gender of the noun (*-ē* for feminine, *-ī* for masculine). However, this system is not applied consistently in SEK, where various kinds of irregularity can be observed. It seems that the prevalent form in SK is *-ē* for all genders. This can be seen in ex. no. (49), where a masculine-gender noun *ber* 'stone' has the oblique case suffix *-ē* in indefinite state. However, the overgeneralization of the feminine form *-ē* does not seem to apply to human-referent nouns; this is an area of considerable variation and complexity, as yet largely unresearched.

As for the functions, oblique marking in Şemzînan has identical functions with Standard K. (cf. 3.2.3). However, in SEK and Şemzînan, unlike Standard K. and most other dialects, the marking of masculine oblique is quite systematic, seen also on nouns lacking overt determiners, as in the following (the oblique case suffix is in bold face):

(41) *bük-a šēx Bahal-***i**   'the bride of Sheikh Bahal'

    *se pišta hesp-***i**   'on the back of the horse'

    *zahir-***i** *xo di bin landikē pestī* 'Zahir hid himself under the cradle.'

Definiteness suffix: One of the principal distinctions between Northern and Central Kurdish is the absence of a definiteness suffix in the former (see Table 1). However, in Şemzînan, the same Central Kurdish definiteness suffix is present, albeit in fewer functions and less

frequently. Its use is restricted to marking a salient discourse referent which is already well-known to the speech event participants (cf. ex. no. 42a-b-c).

(42) a. *řa-bī*   *kič-eke*   *řewa*
PVB-be.PST.3SG   girl-DEF   kidnap.PST
'(He) set out (and) kidnapped the girl.'

    b. *žin-eke*   *li hesp-i*   *suwar*   *kir-i-bī-n*
woman-DEF   at horse-OBL.M   NVP.mount   do.PST-PTCP-be.PST.3PL
'(They) had mounted the woman on the horse.'

    c. *či kes*   *tē*   *da*   *ne-bī,*   *gund-eke*   *bēxudan*   *bī*
no person in.it in   NEG-be.PST.3SG   village-DEF   abandoned   be.PST.3SG
'There was nobody in it, the village was abandoned.

Ezafe: With definite nouns, the singular ezafe forms are the same as in Standard K., but there are some differences in the plural ezafe and elsewhere, summarized below:

	masc	fem	pl. (masc./fem.)
Definite	*-(y)ē*	*-(y)a*	*-(y)ēd/-(y)ēt*
Indefinite	*-ī/-ē*	*-e/-a*	
Demonstrative ezafe	*yē*	*ya*	*yēt*

MacKenzie (1995) notes the final consonant of the plural ezafe systematically as a voiceless plosive, whereas the voiced consonant is also seen in more careful speech. The singular forms with indefinite nouns are quite unstable; both the Standard K. forms (*-ī, -e*), as well as the Badini forms *-ē* (m.) and *-a* (f.) are seen in Şemzînan. MacKenzie (1995) notes neutralization of gender distinctions on indefinite singular nouns, and examples of both genders with either *-ē* or *-ī* can be found in our data. In ex. no. (43a-b), both masculine (*gund* 'village') and feminine (*řēk* 'road') nouns take *-ī* as the ezafe. In ex. no. (43c-d), on the other hand, both nouns (masculine and feminine respectively) have *-ē*.

(43) a. *gundek**ī** hingo*   'a village of yours'
    b. *řēkek**ī** qahīmtir*   'a safer way'
    c. *žinek**ē** kok*   'an industrious woman'
    d. *mērikek**ē** bāš*   'a good man'

Thus it is not completely clear in which direction the neutralization of the gender distinction on the ezafe after indefinites is going, but we observe that the prevalent tendency to be towards using a generalized *-ē* form. An indefinite plural ezafe marker is not found in Şemzînan or in SEK in general. Finally, demonstrative/anaphoric ezafe forms are always with an initial glide.

The ezafe as a predicative element: One of the features distinguishing Şemzînan (and SEK in general) from Standard K. and the rest of Kurmanji is the use of the ezafe as a predicative element, rather than as part of the noun phrase. This phenomenon is discussed in MacKenzie (1961a:205–208) and in Haig (2011); here we will only briefly outline it for Şemzînan (and SEK). Essentially it involves an ezafe which agrees in number and gender with its antecedent, but does not link that antecedent to some modifier; instead it introduces a verb phrase. Examples of this kind of usage are given below:

In clausal expressions of possession (realized via the copula in Standard K.)

(44) *min   du   bičūk-ēt   he-y*
      1SG.OBL   two child-EZ.PL   existent-NOT.ANALYZED
      'I have two children'

With predicates expressing location (realized via copula in Standard K.)

(45) *pīrežin-ek-ē*   *li   bin   dīwar-i*
      old.woman-INDF.EZ.M   at   under   wall-OBL.M
      'An old woman is at the base of the wall.'

In the present tenses of clauses with a nominal or adjectival predicate

(46) *kuř-eke   yī   zīrek=e*
      boy=DEF   EZ.DEM.M   clever=COP.PRS.SG
      'The boy is clever.'

With finite verbs in the present tense; here the ezafe expresses a progressive aspect

(47) *ber-ē*   *xū   da-yē*   *kičik-a   di-bēž-īt*
      direction-EZ.M   self give.PST-3SG.GOAL   girl-EZ.F   IND-say.PRS-3SG
      '(S/he) looked at her (and saw that) the girl is saying: …'

With past participles as main predicates; here it forms the present perfect tense

(48) *hirč-ē*   *yē*   *xū   lē   da-y*
      bear-OBL.F   EZ.DEM.M   self at.him   give-PTCP
      'The bear has attacked him.'

(49) *pīrežin-ē*   *ser-ē*   *da-na-y-e*   *se   ber-ek-ē*
      old.woman-OBL.F   head-EZ.M PVB-put.PST-PTCP-DRCT   on   stone-INDF-OBL.M
      'The old woman has put her head on a stone.'

Although it is fairly uncontroversial that these particles are etymologically identical with the ezafe, they are in fact not fully identical in form with the adnominal ezafes discussed further above, and there is some inconsistency in the forms used. In general, there seems to be a tendency for overgeneralization of the form *-(y)ē*, regardless of the gender of the antecedent (cf. ex. no. (45) and ex. no. (48) above). In the Yezidī dialects of Tur 'Abdîn discussed in Bailey (2005), there is a similar neutralization of these tense-ezafes, leading to a uniform *-ī*.

Demonstratives and proximal markers: There is one single demonstrative pronoun in Şemzînan, namely *ew*. This is probably because [v] and [w] are no longer phonologically distinct in Şemzînan (cf. 4.1.1), whereas in most dialects, the v/w-distinction is the main carrier of the proximal/distal distinction. In order to express proximate senses, specific proximate morphemes *-e* and *-ene* are added to the demonstrative, yielding *ew-e* 'this' and *ew-ene* 'these'; see Table 15. There is thus, different from the Standard K. system, a further distinction in direct case between singular and plural forms.

Table 15. Demonstrative pronouns and proximal markers in Şemzînan

| | Singular | | | Plural | |
| | Direct | Oblique | | Direct | Oblique |
	(masc/fem)	masc	fem		
Distal	*ew*	*ewi*	*ewē*	*ew*	*ewan*
Proximate	*ewe*	*ewihi*	*ewihē*	*ewene / ewete(ne)*	*ewane / ewa(n)tene*

Table 16 shows the forms of the demonstrative when used as a determiner in a NP. The proximate elements *-e* and *-ene* attach to the final element of the entire NP.

Table 16. Demonstrative adjectives and proximate marking in Şemzînan

| | Singular | | | Plural | |
| | Direct | Oblique | | Direct | Oblique |
	(masc/fem)	masc	fem		
Distal	*ew*	*ewi*	*ewē*	*ew(an)*	*ewan … -an*
Proximate	*ew … **-e***	*ewi … **-e***	*ewē*	*ew … **-ene***	*ew(an) … -an-e*

An interesting consequence of this system is that it permits overt plural marking of simple nouns in the direct case (not possible in Standard K. except if the noun is in ezafe construction), due to the plural proximate particle of SEK.

Person marking: In Şemzînan, as in Standard K., there are free pronouns, verbal affixes and copular endings as person marking forms. The forms are the same as Standard K., with some minor exceptions: 2nd plural pronoun is *hung/hing* in direct case and *hingo* in oblique case.[17] Furthermore, the 3rd singular verbal affix is *-(ï)t* or *-(ï)tin*, and 1st plural verbal affix is *-(ï)n*, a feature shared in the whole SEK. Thus, SEK person marking system distinguishes first person plural from other plural forms, whereas Standard K. does not make any person distinctions in the plural forms of person markers.

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[17] Note that the Mukri and other northern dialects of Central Kurdish also have this pronoun as *engo* (cf. Öpengin, to appear). In Mukri, however, there is no case distinction with this person.

Adpositions: Şemzînan and SEK are remarkably different from Standard K. with respect to adpositions. One of the three basic prepositions of Standard K., *ji* 'from', exists only in some formulaic expressions in Şemzînan. Thus, the preposition *li* expresses both 'from' (i.e. source) and 'in/at' (i.e. location) (cf. ex. no. 50b). In addition to Standard K. *bi* 'with, through', SEK has also *bo* 'for, to', *(li)gel* or *(di)gel* 'with', as well as a further circumpositional *di ... da* 'inside', which is often reduced to the postpositional element (cf. ex. no. 50c).

(50) a. *tu hinde šīrē kīwīya nešēy **bo min** bīni*
        'Can't you bring some goat milk for me?'

      b. *ez dē šīrē kīwīya **li** kē derē īnim*
        'Where shall I bring the goat milk from?'

      c. *du šēx małekē **da** čēnabin*
        'Two sheikhs in one house can't be.'

The prepositions *li, bi* and *di* are never realized as they are cited here; they are reduced to the consonantal element when preceding a vowel, and they show metathesis to *il, ib, id* preceding a consonant. They are thus realized as enclitics on whatever element precedes the prepositional phrase. This could be considered part of a general tendency to tolerate more complex syllable codas in SEK as opposed to dialects to the north and west. However, it also needs to be noted that simple prepositions are often completely elided (shown in parantheses), as seen in this proverb (51):

(51) *čūn*   *(ji/li)*   *mirū=ye,*   *hatin*   *(ji/li)*   *xudē*
      going   (from)   man=COP.3SG   coming   (from)   God
      'Going is (from) man, returning (from) God.'

SEK makes use of simple *'bo X'* construction, as in ex. no. (50a) rather than Standard K. *'ji X re'* for expressing benefactive; *'(li)gel X'* rather than Standard K. *'bi X re'* for comitative. Furthermore, the contracted pronominal preposition *pē* 'with it' is mostly not analysable into *bi + X* for expression of instrument/means of transport, thus it is reanalysed as a simple preposition. Finally, the common Standard K. postpositional particle *ře/řa* exists in SEK only in a circumposition *di ... řa* 'through' or its contracted pronominal form *tē řa* 'through it'.

    As in Standard K., there are also complex prepositions composed of a simple preposition and a local noun (cf. 3.5). In such combinations, the basic preposition is generally dropped, yielding what appears to be a new set of simple prepositions: *(li) se* 'on' (Standard K. *li ser*), *(li) nik* 'beside', *(li) bin* 'under'.

4.1.3 Verbal morphology

Verb Stems: As noted in 3.6, a number of Standard K. verbs have present stems consisting of either a bare consonant, or arguably, a consonant plus the short central vowel. In SEK, these verbs have what we refer to as 'heavy' present stems, consisting of the initial consonant plus a vowel [æ] (orthographically <e>), or in the case of *xwarin*, a [o]. This is a feature shared

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in most of the SEK speech zone as well as in Central Kurdish. Examples of first person present tense forms of such verbs are in ex. no. (52):

(52) *bi-ke-m*   *bi-be-m*
     SUBJ-do.PRS-1SG 'I'll do'   SUBJ-take.PRS-1SG 'I'll take'
     di-de-m   *di-xo-m*
     IND-give.PRS-1SG 'I give'   IND-eat.PRS-1SG 'I eat'

The present and past stem of a number of intransitive verbs (mostly "unaccusative") in SEK have an extension *-(i)yē* (for present) and *-(i)ya* (for past); see Table 17. Furthermore, in a number of verbs, also shown in Table 17, the present and past stems of the verbs in SEK/Şemzînan are different from Standard K. and other dialects.

Table 17. Comparison of some distinctive present/past verb stems in Şemzînan

Past		Infinitive + Gloss	Present		Infinitive + Gloss
Standard K.	Şemz.		Standard K.	Şemz.	
hišt-	hēla-	hēlan 'leave'	-č- / -her-	-č-	čūn 'go'
anī-	īna-	īnan 'bring'	-gih- /-gihīž-	-geh-	gehištin 'reach'
axivī-	axiwt-	axiftin 'speak'	-ē-	-hē-	hatin 'come'
biškivī-	biškiwt-	biškiftin 'spur'	-kišīn-	-kēš-	kēšan 'pull'
ēšīya-	ēša-	ēšan 'hurt'	-řiž-	-řižiyē-	řižiyan 'spill'
kišand-	kēša-	kēšan 'pull'	-řižīn-	-řēž-	řētin 'pour'
řižand-	řēt-	řētin 'spill'	-āvēž-	-howēž-	howētin 'throw'
avēt-	howēt-	howētin 'throw'	-āžo-	-hāžo-	man 'stay'
ajot-	ha(w)jot-	ha(w)jotin 'drive'	-x-	-ēx-	ēxistin 'drop'
xist-	ēxist-	ēxistin 'drop'	-girī-	-girī-/-giriyē-	giriyan 'weep'

Preverb incorporation: In Standard K., there is a set of opaque preverbal particles such as *hil, řā, da,* which combine with verb stems to create new verbs. In the infinitive, they are usually written together with the stem as a single item. However, inflectional prefixes such as negation, or indicative/imperfective, are inserted between the preverb and the stem, as in Standard K. *ra-**di**-keve* 'goes to sleep', from *raketin* 'go to sleep'. In SEK, however, negation and imperfective prefixes will often precede these preverbal particles, indicating full lexicalization of preverb + stem and the creation of a new stem. For example, a present indicative form of the verb *hel-(h)atin* 'preverb-come' (= 'rise') is given in ex. no. (53a) where the indicative prefix precedes the preverbal element, and in ex. no. (53b) both negation and indicative prefixes precede the preverbal element.

(53) a. *řoj   spēdē   zū   di-helē-t*[18]

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[18] The verb form can be analysed as a contraction of *di-hel-hē-t* (IND-PVB-come.PRS-3SG). Cf. the corresponding SK form *hil-t-ê* (PVB-IND-come.PRS.3SG).

sun   morning   quick   IND-rise.PRS-3SG

'The sun rises early in the morning.'

b. *ez   heta hēwari žī   ne-di-řa-westīya-m*

1SG   until evening also   NEG-IPFV-PVB-stand.PST-1SG

'I would not stop (working) until evening.'

Furthermore, in some highly lexicalized and frequent light verb constructions, the negation "prefix" can even occur on the leftmost edge of the verbal complex, preceding the non-verbal elements of the construction, as shown in (54).[19]

(54) *min   ne = ber-ē   xū   da-yē*

1SG.OBL   neg = direction-EZ.M   self   give.PST-3SG.GOAL

'I did not look at (him/her/it).'

Aspectual morpheme -ewe: A postverbal morpheme *-ewe* in Şemzînan usually adds aspectual nuances like 'again, back'. However, sometimes its semantic contribution is opaque. For instance, in a verb such as *xarinewe* 'drink' (based on *xarin* 'eat'), the semantic contribution of the morpheme is not regular ('eat' → 'drink'). Notice that this verbal morpheme has previously been considered to be a distinctive feature of Central Kurdish, separating it from Kurmanji (cf. MacKenzie 1961a:225). Some common verbs in Şemzînan with the verbal aspectual morpheme are provided below:

Infinitive	Imperative	Gloss
birinewe	*bibewe*	'Take it back!'
īnanewe	*bīnewe*	'Bring it again/back!'
čūnewe	*herewe*	'Go back!'
xarinewe	*bixowe*	'Drink (it)!'
mirandinewe	*bimirīnewe*	'Turn (it) off!'
geřyanewe	*bigeřēwe*	'Come back!'
kirinewe	*bikewe*	'Open it!'

Additional tense distinctions: As already discussed under 4.1.2, an analytic "present progressive" can be expressed in SEK by using the ezafe, as illustrated in ex. no. (55).

(55) *ber-ē   xo   da-yē   kičik = a   di-bēž-īt*

direction-EZ.M   self   give.PST-3SG.GOAL   girl = EZ.F   IND-say.PRS-3SG

'(s/he) looked (and saw that) the girl is saying (something).'

Other dialects of Kurmanji in Turkey lack this possibility. Similarly, an alternative present perfect can be created using the ezafe in combination with past participles (cf. 4.1.2). Note that the two tenses, present progressive and present perfect tense, constructed by using the ezafe, are mostly restricted to affirmative and declarative clauses, as they are in Badini (cf.

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[19] In Mêrd. dialect, a similar incorporation of preverbal particles can also be observed, cf. 4.2.

Haig 2011). However, in Şemzînan the present progressive does lend itself to negation, illustrated in ex. no. (56).

(56) *axir   tu   yē   na-xo-y*
     finally 2SG   EZ.M   NEG-eat.PRS-2SG
     'But you are not eating!'

Past conditionals: To express past conditionals, Standard K. has the structure [*bi + past.stem + (a) + PM + a*] (with various types of variation). SEK has a different form, using only the suffix *-ba*,[20] as [*past.stem + (i)ba + PM]*. This is shown in ex. no. (57) and (58) (the *-i* preceding the past conditional suffix is probably originally a past participle suffix).

(57) *bila   li   īraq-ē   deng-ē   kuštin-ē   hat-i-**ba***
     HORT   from   Iraq-OBL.F   sound-EZ.M   killing-OBL.F   come.PST-PTCP-SUBJ.PST.3SG
     'If the news of a killing would come from Iraq,'

Modal particle da: There is a particle *da* in SEK, lacking in Standard K., which has at least three crucial morphosyntactic functions. First, it is used as the auxiliary in the apodosis of an imperfect counterfactual sentence, as in ex; no. (58). The verb following auxiliary *da* is normally conjugated for present subjunctive, though past subjunctive is also possible when the entire event is situated in the past, as in ex. no. (58).

(58) *te   zū   got-i-ba   ez   ži   da   hat-i-ba-m*
     2SG.OBL   early   say.PST-PTCP-SUBJ.PST   1SG   too   AUX   come.PST-PTCP-SUBJ.PST-1SG
     'If you had said earlier, I too would have come / would come.'

Second, the form is used for expressing a repeated or customary action in the past (cf. 19), in a manner roughly equivalent of English 'used to' or 'would' construction. Note that the verb form is again in past subjunctive. However, the form in this function is interchangeable with the future tense auxiliary *dē*; see the examples in ex. no. (62).

(59) *kičkenī   hemi   řoj-ē   em   da   čū-ba-yn-e   se   řŭibar-i*
     childhood all   day-OBL   1PL   AUX   go.PST.SUBJ.PST-1PL-DRCT   on   river-OBL.SG.M
     'In childhood, we used to go to the river everyday.'

Third, the particle expresses intentionality in the past, illustrated in ex. no. (60). In this function, the main verb is the bare present stem:

(60) *wērē   di-zivirī-yewe   da   hē-t-ewe   mil-ē   nawgerdiya*
     there IPFV-turn.PST-PTCL   AUX   come.PRS-3SG-PRTC   side-EZ.SG.M   place.name
     'He was returning from there, he intended to come back to Nawgerdiya (region).'

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[20] The formative *-ba* is probably derived from the contraction of the past stem of *būn* 'be' and the conditional suffix *-(y)a*, as *bū-ya > ba*.

The particle *da* can also be used with the verb conjugated in past subjunctive. In the following example it expresses non-realized past intention:[21]

(61) *čū-bū*   *wī*   *gund-ī,*   *da*   *kušt-i-ba (...).*

      go.PST-PST.PRF.3SG   that   village-OBL   AUX   kill.PST-PTCP-SUBJ.PST

      'He had been to that village, (so that) he would kill kill him, (but he had mercy on him and did not kill him).'

Directional -e: SEK makes extensive use of the directional clitic *-e* (see 3.6), such that all post-verbal goal arguments require the verb to end in with this clitic. Note that the directional clitic is not used when the verb ends with verbal aspectual morpheme *-ewe* (cf. ex. no. 60).

(62) a. *meẋreb dē čin=e małē*   'In the evening we would go home.'

      b. *dē ho kevin=e se befrē*   '(They) would just fall on the snow.'

4.2 Mardin variety of Southern Kurmanji

The dialect material analysed here is from Midyat (Kr. Midyad) and Nusaybin (Kr. Nisêbîn) districts (what is usually called Tur-Abdin region) of Mardin (Kr. Mêrdîn) in southeastern Turkey. It is considered to represent a relatively large area: in the east and north, the west and southern parts of Şirnak and Siirt provinces respectively, and the province of Batman; in the west, the province of Mardin and eastern half of Diyarbakır. Also included in the dialect zone is the Kurdish spoken in Al-Hasaka province of Syrian Kurdistan. In this sense, what is called here Mardin dialect (shortened as SK for Southern Kurmanji) stands for the central part of the southern regions of the Kurmanji speech zone. As in other dialect analyses, here also the dialect data is compared to Standard K. and only its principal distinctive features are discussed.

4.2.1 Phonology

Southern Kurmanji phonology has basically the same number of the phonemes as Standard K., though the quality of certain phonemes differ from the latter substantially. Thus the low central unrounded [aː] of Standard K. (orthographically <a>) is usually a further back or retracted vowel, approaching [ɑː]. The near open-mid [æ] (orthographically <e> in Standard K.) tends to be pronounced with the more open variant [a]. Compare the variation with Standard K. in the words below. Note that both of the alternative sounds are phonetic variants, though the environments where they occur are yet to be described.

   [aː] <a> → [a̱ː], where underlining indicates backing

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[21] Note that this TAM particle should be differentiated from the homophonous conjunction *da* 'so that' (probably related to Sorani and Persian *ta* 'so that'), which often combines with the complementizer *ko* giving *da ko,* and the verb in the subordinate clause can only be in present subjunctive.

Orthog.	Standard K.	SK	Gloss
agir	[a:gɨr]	[a̲:gɨr]	fire
hatin	[ha:tɨn]	[h̲a̲:tɨn]	to come
da	[da:]	[d̲a̲:]	s/he/it gave

[ɛ] or [æ] <e> → [a]

Orthog.	Standard K.	SK	Gloss
hestī	[hæsti:]	[has'tu:]	bone
mezin	[mæzɨn]	[maz'ɨn]	big
weke	[wækæ]	[waka]	like

In SK, there are pharyngeal "fricatives" ([ʕ], [ħ], cf. discussion in footnote 8 above), and some consonants with a heavy pharyngeal quality (traditionally termed "emphatic consonants", indicated with superscript [ˤ]), in a number of words where other dialects (e.g. SEK and WK dialects) do not have them:

Orthog.	SK	Mêrd.	Gloss
čav	[tʃʰa:v]	[tʃa:ʕv]	eye
tehl	[tʰæhl]	[tˤaħl]	bitter
pehn	[pʰæhn]	[pˤæħn]	like

Given that SK is the dialect area of Kurmanji which historically had the greatest contact with Semitic-speaking speech communities, the abundance of pharyngeals may be due to language contact. In the case of the word for 'eye', SK *çav*, a number of dialects (see below) have a non-aspirated, or arguably ejective variant of the initial consonant. In SK (and northern dialects) the marked quality of the initial consonants appears to be re-analysed as a pharyngeal feature of the entire syllable. This is a matter for further research.

Related to the pharyngeals, in SK there is a relatively higher frequency usage of emphatic consonants. The emphatic consonants are mostly seen in Arabic loan words but are not restricted to them, and occur in native words such as *šewitandin* 'burn' and *se* 'dog'. Some such words follow:

Orthog.	Standard K.	Mêrd.	Gloss
hestī	[hæsti:]	[ha:sˤtˤu:]	bone
mezin	[mæzɨn]	[ma:zˤɨn]	big
se	[sæ]	[sˤa:]	dog
ta	[ta:]	[tˤa̲:]	rope/string
šewitandin	[ʃæwɨta:ndɨn]	[ʃæwɨtˤa:ndɨn]	to burn

Onset clusters are usually not tolerated except for /st/ and /sp/ as in [stɨrɨh] 'horn' and [spæh] 'louse'. Furthermore, an element /h/ occurs in a number of words whose cognates in other dialects and in Standard K. lack it, listed below:

Orthog.	Standard K.	Mêrd.	Gloss
spī	[spi:]	[spæh]	'louse'
mī	[mi:]	[mɨh]	'sheep'
rī	[ri:]	[rih]	'beard'
bēvil	[be:.vɨl]	[be:h.vɨl]	'nose'
mirov	[mɨ.ɾov]	[mɨɾ.hov]	'relatives'
razan	[ra:za:n]	[ra:zɨha:n]	'to sleep'
ēšān	[e:ʃa:n]	[e:ʃɨha:n]	'to hurt'

Where an additional /h/ in Mardin occurs, it generally follows syllable-final, unrounded vowels, though it is not inserted regularly in all such syllables. In some words (cf. the last two below), it occurs in a different context, perhaps through secondary metathesis with the following consonant (i.e. [*e:hʃa:n → e:ʃɨha:n] 'hurt'), but we cannot detect a general rule here. Words containing syllable-final /h/ are usually thought to be the archaic forms (Bedir Khan and Lescot 1970:46), but in Mardin /h/ is added even to relatively recent borrowings such as *mifteh* 'key' for Standard K. *mifte* (from Arabic *miftāḥ*).

The epenthetic glide (GL) is normally a palatal approximant [j] (orthographically <y>), as in ex. no. (63a), however, in Mardin, it can also be a labial approximant [w] following back rounded vowels [u:] and [o:], as in ex. no. (63b).

(63) a. *ban-ē   xanī-y-a*   'the roof of houses'

b. *dest-ē didū-w-a* 'second round [lit. second hand]'

The epenthetic vowel /ɨ/ found with a number of prepositions and verbal prefixes in Standard K. (cf. Section 3.1) is used only sparingly. Thus, the preposition cliticizes on the following element in ex. no. (64a) whereas in ex. no. (64b), the consonant of the prefix undergoes devoicing preceding a vowel or /h/ phoneme.

(64) a. *bihn   b=wa   [<bi wan]   masī-ya   ket-i-bū*

smell   with=those   fish-OBL.PL   fall.PST-PTCP-COP.PST

'Those fish were stinking [lit. Smell had fallen to those fish].' (Ritter 1971:12)

b. *čaẋ-ē   kū   baran   ū   berf   t-ē   [<di-(h)ē]*

time-EZ.M   that   rain   and   snow IND-come.PRS.3SG

'When the rain and snow comes,' (Ritter 1971:2)

Following are further morphophonological changes that occur in similar manners. Note that similar changes are seen, in differing degree and ways, in all spoken varieties of Kurmanji.

ži te	>	*ž=te*	>	*š=te*	'from you'
ji hev	>	*j=hev*	>	*jev*	'from each other'
di hev	>	*d=hev*	>	*tev*	'together'
bi hev	>	*b=hev*	>	*pev*	'to each other'

An instance of metathesis is the verb form *taht,* shown below, while the ensuing two words are result of dissimilation.

dihat	>	*that*	> *taht*	'S/he/it was coming.'
šišt	>	*šist*		'S/he/it washed.'
sist	>	*šist*		'loose'

Finally, in SK a word-final *-n* is regularly dropped from inflectional suffixes containing a full vowel (e.g. the plural ezafe, and the oblique plural of nouns).

4.2.2 Nominal Morphology

Ezafe: The ezafe marking of singular nouns, definite and indefinites, follows the pattern of Standard K. (cf. 3.3.1) and is surprisingly consistent compared to other varieties. As mentioned, the plural ezafe on definite nouns (Standard K. –*ēn*) regularly drops the final *-n,* giving *-ē.* Thus the ezafe marker for definite singular masculine and definite plural nouns is homophonous.

There is a further formant *-e* that links an indefinite plural noun to its dependent elements. We suggest that the ezafe marker in indefinites does not contain the information of the number (singular vs. plural); rather, number is already expressed through the singular and plural indefiniteness suffixes (*-ek* and *-in* respectively). This analysis differs from most of the current treatments of the phenomenon, which assume a composite (plural) indefinite – *ine* (e.g. "particule d'indefinition", in Bedir Khan and Lescot 1970:76).

Definite:	*dest-ē*	*min*	'my hand' (masc. sing.), indistinguishable from plural 'my hands'
	zaŕok-ē	*min*	'my children' (masc. pl.)
	bēhvil-a	*min*	'my nose' (fem. sing.)
	sēv-ē	*min*	'my apples' (fem. pl)
Indefinite:	*dest-ek-ī*	*min*	'one of my hands' (masc. sing.)
	sēv-ek-e	*sor*	'a red apple' (fem. sing.)
	zaŕok-n-e	*baš*	'(some) good guys' (masc. pl.)
	sēv-n-e	*xweš*	'(some) delicious apples' (fem. pl.)

The demonstrative/independent ezafe markers are the same as the simple linking ezafe, with a form-initial glide, thus *yē, yā, yē,* but the forms without the glide are also found in most of the rest of the dialect zone. There is still another form of a free ezafe, *ī,* used for adding an additional dependent to an ezafe construction. In Standard K., this form is thought to be relevant only with masculine nouns (cf. Tan 2005); however, in Mardin, the form occurs regardless of the gender of the head noun, as shown in ex. no. (65).

(65) a. *mal-ek-e*   *min*   *ī*   *mezin*   *he-ye*
       house-INDF-EZ.F 1SG.OBL EZ2 big   exist-COP.3SG
       'I have a big house.'

   b. *heval-ek-ī*   *min* *ī*   *baš* *he-ye*
       friend-INDF-EZ.M 1SG EZ2 good exist-COP.3SG
       'I have a good friend.'

Singular indefiniteness marker: The indefiniteness markers are *-(e)k* for singular nouns and *-(i)n* for plural nouns. Following a vowel, hiatus is avoided by dropping the initial vowels of these suffixes rather than, as in Standard K., the insertion of a glide. After a consonant-final word, though, there is some variation. In controlled speech, the forms can be *-ek* and *-in* as in Standard K., but most of the time the vowels of these suffixes are elided leading to complex syllable codas. In the latter usage, when a singular noun ends in a voiceless velar or uvular stop, gemination is avoided either by the deletion of one of the consonants or similar adjacent consonants or by inserting an epenthetic vowel. This is illustrated below:

    *šūtik-ek > *šūtik-k > šūtikik / šūtik   'a girdle'
    *zařok-ek > *zařok-k > zařokik /zarok   'a child'

In the spoken language, pronunciation of the indefiniteness suffix is thus often [-ɨk], making it largely indistinguishable from the so-called diminutive suffix. The same phenomenon can also be observed in the dialect of Karakoçan.

Oblique case: Case marking follows the pattern of Standard K., though the plural oblique is reduced to a vowel *-a*. Note that with definite nouns, number is expressed only via the plural oblique, while with indefinite nouns the number is additionally expressed via the indefiniteness marker.

	masc	fem	pl. (masc./fem.)
Def. and Indef.	*-ī*	*-ē*	*-a*

Definite		**Indefinite**	
vī zilam-ī	'this man (masc)'	*ji zilam-ek-ī*	'from a man'
dūvē kehrik-ē	'the tail of the kid-goat (fem)'	*ji kehrik-ek-ē*	'from a kid-goat'
goštē masī-ya	'the meat of fish (pl.)'	*masī-n-a bēne*	'bring some fish (pl.)'

As in Standard K., the feminine singular and plural oblique suffixes are systematically realized in SK, but bare masculine singular nouns lack case suffixes, except under the usual conditions (e.g. presence of a demonstrative determiner, etc., discussed in 3.2.3 for Standard K.). Some masculine singulars undergo vowel-raising in the oblique case (affecting the vowels *e* and *a*, raised to *ê*, cf. 3.2.3.1), but this option does not apply to all words, even if they contain the relevant vowels. Thus vowel-raising affects *dīwar* 'wall' in (a) but not *hesp* 'horse' in (b) below:

a. *pisīk li ser dīwēr e / *li ser dīwar e*   'The cat is on the wall.'

b. *ew li hesp siwar bū / *ew li hēsp siwar bū*   'She/he mounted the horse.'

Similar lexical idiosyncrasies can be observed on proper names. Thus, while the vowel of final syllable in *Osman* (for instance as the direct object in the present tenses) is always raised, that of *Ehmed* is not. This is an area of considerable variation, both across different speakers and across different lexical items, which would definitely merit closer investigation. Vowel-raising can also affect word-final vowels, as in ex. no. (66):

(66) a. *bē (<ba)*   *li*   *min*   *xist*

       wind.OBL.M   at 1SG.OBL   hit.PST.3SG

       'The wind blew on me.'

b. *bi*   *kešē (<keše)*   *di-ken-in*

       with priest.OBL.M   IND-laugh.PRS-PL

       '(They) laugh at the priest.' (Ritter 1971:14)

When feminine singular words ending in the vowel *e* take the oblique suffix, the word-final vowel is assimilated, as in ex. no. (67), a feature shared probably in most of the spoken Kurmanji varieties):

(67) *perdē (<perde + -ē)*   *bi-kēš-e*

      curtain.OBL.F   SUBJ-pull.PRS-IMP

      'Pull the curtain.'

Personal pronouns: The 1SG and 3PL oblique pronouns generally drop the final *-n*, giving *mi* and *wa* respectively. Furthermore, 2SG direct pronoun is *ti* (*tu* in Standard K.), a consonant plus a short central vowel. This relatively weaker form of the pronoun lends itself to contractions with auxiliary clitics. For instance, when the future auxiliary form, a clitic = *ē*, follows the 2SG direct pronoun, the pronominal form is reduced to the consonant and it hosts the auxiliary clitic to form a phonological word, illustrated in ex. no. (68). Note that this contracted (2SG + FUT) usage is quite common and its use is extended to some modal domains, i.e. order or request.

(68) *t = ē*   *bi*   *či*   *qas-ē*   *bi-kiř-ē*

      2SG = FUT   with what much-OBL   IND-buy.PRS-2/3SG

      'How much shall you pay (for it)?' (Ritter 1971:4)

4.2.3 Verbal morphology

Person agreement affixes are generally close to those of Standard K. The main difference in Mardin is the neutralization of the person distinction in 2SG and 3SG suffixes (as can be seen by comparing the person suffixes in ex. no. (68) and (75b)). The Standard K. forms *-ī* (2SG) and *-e* (3SG) are both realized as *-ē* in Mardin, while in certain parts of the dialect area (e.g.

in Derik), both person forms are realized as *-e*. Finally, with some frequent verbs it is also possible not to mark the first person suffix, as in ex. no. (69).

(69) *ez   di-bē*

　　1SG　IND-say.PRS 'I say (that)'　(Ritter 1971:4)

Directional morpheme -e: In SK, like in SEK, a directional morpheme *-e* attaches to the end of an inflected verb to mark the direction of the action or any post-verbal complement, as in ex. no. (70a). In Standard K., a goal (indirect) argument with third person reference can be pronominalized on the verb as *-ē* (cf. 3.6), while in SK the form is *-(i)yē* in ex. no. (70b).

(70) a. *her　sē　t-ē-n-e*　　　　　　　*mal-ē*

　　　　each three IND-come.PRS-PL-DRCT　house-OBL.F

　　　　'All three come home' (Ritter 1971)

　　b. *ha　　kur-o!　　got-yē*

　　　INTJ　　son-VOC.M　　say.PST-3SG.GOAL

　　　'Tell me man! (he) said to him/her.' (Ritter 1971)

Subjunctive prefix bi-: The subjunctive prefix, used in the future tense verb forms and in a number of non-indicative moods, is usually deleted when used in a future tense construction, as in ex. no. (71a). However, it can also be retained, as in ex. no. (71b).

(71) a. *em=ē　　d=řē　　　kurt-ē　　　ve　　　č-in*

　　　1PL=FUT　in=road　　short-OBL.F through　　go.PRS-PL

　　　'We will go through the short road.' (Ritter 1971:10)

　　b. *ez=ē　　　bi-čin-im　　　　l=vē　　dera　　ha*

　　　1sg=FUT　　SUBJ-sow.PRS-1SG　at=this place　PTCL

　　　'I will sow (it) there (visible distal).' (Ritter 1971:4)

Citation form of verbs: A peculiar feature of Mardin dialect concerns the citation or infinitive form of the verbs. As discussed above, verbs in Standard K. have an infinitive formed by adding *-(i)n* to the past stem (e.g. *hat-in, kēša-n,* etc.). In addition, in Standard K. some causative verbs can be derived via the suffix *-and* affixed to the present stem. In SK, however, the 'causative suffix' has been extended to serve as a general base for infinitives of many verbs, although no additional causative semantics is implied, and the form can even occur with intransitive verb stems without transitivizing them. Thus, the intransitive verbs below have the following citation forms, and the ex. no. (72) illustrates a context:

Standard K.	SK	Gloss
štex̌līn	*štex̌landin*	'to speak'
ʕelimīn	*ʕelimandin*	'to learn'
řazan	*řazandin*	'to sleep'
šewitīn	*šewit'andin*	'to burn (intr.)'
betiłīn	*betłandin*	'to get tired'

mešiyan	*mešandin*	'to walk'
ḥisiyan	*ḥisandin*	'to listen'

(72) *šteẋlandin-a   ser   vē   mesel-ē   bē-me'ne=ye*

speaking-EZ.F on   this   issue-OBL.F   without-meaning=COP.3SG

'Speaking on this issue is meaningless.'

Note that highly frequent verbs such as *hatin* 'come', *ketin* 'fall', *gotin* 'say' and *kirin* 'do' do not fall under this pattern. Crucially, the verbs are inflected not according to the regular paradigms of the verbs dervied with causative -*and*. That is, the present stem of a verb like *xurandin* 'scratch', derived via the causative suffix, is *xur-în* and its past stem is *xur-and*. However, the intransitive verbs above carrying -*and* in their citation forms are not inflected on the basis of the -*and*-type verbs, but on the basis of their corresponding Standard K. citation forms. Thus, the present stem of the verb *řazandin* is not *řazîn-* but *řaz-* (cf. Table 10) while its past stem is not *řaz(ih)and-* but *řaz(ih)a-*, without any resurgence of the causative suffix.

(73) *xwe   gēr   kir   řaziha*

self   NVP.roll.up   do.PST.3SG sleep.PST

'He rolled himself up (and) slept'   (Ritter 1971:20)

Periphrastic causative: The periphrastic causative construction in Standard K. is based on the inflected form of the verb *dan* 'give' as the auxiliary, and the infinitive form of the main verb [i.e. *dan*+Infinitive]. In SK the order of the components is inverted, as follows: [bi + Infinitive + *dan*]. This construction is generalized such that it has taken over the functions of the inflectional causativization (i.e. derivation of causative verbs via -*and* in Standard K. and other dialects), as in ex. no. (74).

(74) *ez=ē   te   bi   wī   bi   naskirin   bi-di-m*

1SG=FUT   2SG.OBL   with 3SG.OBL.M   with know.INF   SUBJ-give.PRS-1SG

'I will introduce you to him.'

Preverb incorporation: In Mardin the preverbal elements used in the derivation of new verbs are not separated from the verb stem when the verb is inflected. Thus, the combination of 'preverb+verb stem' is treated as a unit for negation and tense-aspect inflection, as seen in ex. no. (75).

(75) a. *ḥeta ji   dēr-ē   ne-der-kev-in*

until from church-OBL.F   NEG-PVB-fall.PRS-3PL

'Until they come out of the church'

b. *her   kes   di-řa-b-ē*

each   person   IND-PVB-be.PRS-3SG

'Every one stands up'

Other examples of preverb incorporation from the Nusaybin dialect are following (Rûşen Rengîn, p.c.):

Infinitive	1sg prs. ind.	Standard K. 1sg prs. ind.	gloss
rabûn	*dirabim*	*ra-di-bim*	'get up'
derketin	*diderkevim*	*der-di-kevim*	'go out'
rakirin	*dirakim*	*ra-di-kim*	'lift up, take'
vexwarin	*divexwim*	*ve-di-xwim*	'drink'
rûkirin	*dirûkim*	*rû-di-kim*	'pour'
vekirin	*divekim*	*ve-di-kim*	'open'
ba(ng) kirin	*dibakim*	*ba(ng) dikim*	'call'
danîn (da anîn)	*dideynim (< di-da-înim)*	*da-t-înim (< da-di-înim)*	'place, put'

4.3 Elbistan variety Western Kurmanji

The Western Kurmanji dialect region corresponds to the western peripheries of the Kurdish-speaking regions of Turkey, and includes loosely much of the eastern half of Maraş province, northern half of Antep province, western half of Adıyaman and the Kurdish spoken in Malatya and Sivas provinces. Within this large region, there is considerable subvariation, which we cannot do justice to here. There has been extensive contact with Armenian and Turkish, and with Arabic (in the southern parts of the dialect region). Here, the Kurdish of Elbistan district is analyzed. Elbistan has a relatively higher Kurdish concentration compared to the rest of the region and the variety of Elbistan is usually considered representative of the Western Kurmanji (WK).

4.3.1 Phonology

The phonology of WK diverges from that of Standard K. in several respects.

Standard K. [a:] ~ WK [ɔ:]:

Orthog.	Standard K.	WK	Gloss
av	[a:v]	[ɔ:v]	'water'
hatin	[ha:tɨn]	[hɔ:tɨn]	'to come'
da	[da:]	[dɔ:]	's/he/it gave'

Standard K. [ɛ] or [æ] ~ WK [æ]: Standard K. [ɛ] or [æ] is regularly retracted to a low central unrounded vowel [æ] in WK:

Orthog.	Standard K.	WK	Gloss
dest	[dæst]	[dæst]	'hand'
dev	[dæv]	[dæv]	'mouth'

Lenition of Standard K. [b] into WK [w]: The Standard K. [b] is lenited via [β] into an approximant [w] in intervocalic, and in some cases in word-initial and word-final positions.

Note that the phenomenon is restricted to intervocalic position in other dialects where it is seen (such as Serhed dialect in the northern part of Kurmanji speech zone). Note also that word-initial lenition of [b] in WK affects frequently also the subjunctive prefix *b(i)-*.

Orthog.	Standard K.	WK	Gloss
hebek	[ħæbæk]	[ħæwæk]	'one unit'
seba	[sæba:]	[sɛwa:]	'because of'
bīne	[bi:næ]	[wi:næ]	'Bring (it)!'
bibīne	[bɨbi:næ]	[bɨwi:nɨ]	'(If s/he) sees (it)'
nebēže	[næbe:ʒæ]	[mæwe:]	'Do not say!'
kitēb	[kʰɨte:b]	[kʰɨte:w]	'book'

Standard K. [ɨ] ~ WK [æ]: An epenthetic vowel [ɨ] in a number of Standard K. function words is regularly a full vowel [æ] in WK (similar to Sorani/Central Kurdish to which, geographically, WK is the most distant region):

Orthog.	Standard K.	WK	Gloss
li	[lɨ]	[læ]	at
dikim	[dɨkɨm]	[dækɨm]	I do

Notice that a pharyngeal [ʕ] is altogether not attested in our data of the Elbistan variety of WK dialect. That is, the few words which are most prone to the development of pharyngeals in Kurdish dialects, such as Standard K. *mar* 'snake', *tehl* 'bitter', *čav/čehv* 'eye', do not contain a pharyngeal phoneme.

4.3.2 Nominal morphology

Personal pronouns: The free pronouns are the same with Standard K. forms except for (i) frequent final consonant deletion, leading to *e* for Standard K. *ez* (1SG direct pronoun), and *mi* for Standard K. *min* (1SG oblique pronoun); (ii) the regular addition of *-a*, probably originally the proximal marker, to the 3PL oblique pronoun, giving the form *wana* for Standard K. *wan*; (iii) the 2PL is usually *wun* (Standard K. *hūn)*.

Ezafe forms: The ezafe forms and their functions constitute another domain where the WK dialect diverges remarkably from Standard K. Related forms are below:

	masc	fem	pl. (masc./fem.)
Definite	*-ī / -ē*	*-ē / -ɔ*	*-ē*
Indefinite	*-ī*	*-ē*	*-e*
Dem. ezafe	*ī*	*ɔ*	*ē*

With definite nouns the basic ezafe forms are *-ī* and *-ē*. The alternative forms *-ē* and *-ɔ*, masculine and feminine respectively, which are parallel to Standard K. forms, occur rarely and the conditions of their occurrence are not yet clear. The plural ezafe, as in Mardin, is a

reduced form *-ē*. Thus, theoretically, in some cases of definite nouns, gender and number distinctions of ezafe are neutralized, illustrated in following examples:

ziman-ī/-ē mi	'my tongue'	(masc. sg.)
mɔl-ē/-ɔ min	'my home'	(fem. sg.)
sēv-ē mi	'my apples'	(pl.)
mɔl-ē bɔv-ī te	'you father's home/house'	
	(*mɔl* 'home': fem. sg.; *bɔv* 'father': masc. sg.)	

In indefinite nouns, however, the alternative forms are not used at all. Thus, the ezafe forms in indefinite nouns are the same with Standard K. in singular masculine and plural but differ from Standard K. in feminine, illustrated below:

kečik-ek-ē rindik	'a lovely girl' (fem. sg.)
mērik-ek-ī gir	'a big man' (masc. sg.)
pisīk-n-e řeš	'(some) black cats' (pl.)

The demonstrative or pronominal ezafe forms are substantially different from Standard K. and other dialects. A three way distinction (singular feminine and masculine, and plural) is preserved albeit with different forms. See the examples below and compare with Standard K. in 3.3.1.

æv pisīkɔ ɔ min=e	'This cat (fem) is mine.'
æv xɔynɔ ī min=e	'This house (masc) is mine.'
æv xɔynɔnɔ ē min=in	'These houses are mine.'

Ezafesas subject markers

The most distinctive and remarkable feature of the Elbistan WK morphosyntax is the obligatory use of what appears to be an ezafe which cliticizes to the subject constituent of certain types of clauses (see 4.3.3). The examples below show the construction in copular clauses:

æz-ī/-ē gir=im	'I (masc/fem) am big.'
t-ī/-ē gir=œ	'You (sg masc/fem) are big.'
æw-ī/-ē gir=œ	'She/he (masc/fem) is big.'
æm-e gir=in	'We are big.'
hūn-e gir=in	'You (pl) are big.'
æw-ē gir=in	'They are big.'

The ezafe forms used with the singular pronouns correspond to the indefinite singulars (see above), while the plural indefinite ezafe is used only with pronouns of the first and second person plural. For the third person plural, the definite plural ezafe is used. These particles introduce gender distinctions into the first and second person singular of non-verbal clauses. The same phenomenon is found in verbal clauses in the present tense, whether intransitive, as in ex. no. (76a-b) or transitive, as in ex. no. (77a-b).

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(76) a. *œw-ī*   *t-er-i*

      3SG-EZ2.M   IND-go.PRS-3SG

      'He goes'

   b. *œz-ē*   *dœ-gē-m*

      1SG-EZ2.F   IND-reach.PRS-1SG

      'I (female) am arriving.'

(77) a. *œz-ē*   *te*   *dœ-pē-m*

      1SG-EZ2.F   2SG.OBL   IND-wait.PRS-1SG

      'I (female) am waiting (for) you.'

   b. *t-ī*   *dar-an*   *xiš*   *dœ-k-œ*

      2SG-EZ.M   wood-PL.OBL   NVP.cut   IND-do.PRS-2SG

      'Are you (male) cutting the wood?'

The marking also applies to copular constructions in the past, as in ex. no. (78a). However, it is yet to be confirmed whether clauses with full verbs in the past tenses allow for the subject to be further marked by the ezafe forms. In the data there are two intransitive constructions in the past tenses, where the NP subjects are not marked by ezafe, as in ex. no. (78b). Similarly, the subject marking ezafe is not seen on the subject of a number of past tense sentences in Çapar (2009), as shown in ex. no. (78c). We conclude provisionally that ezafesattach to the subjects of present tense verbs, and to copular constructions irrespective of the tense.

(78) a. *œz-ē*   *dœ-zɔn-im*   *k=œw-ī*   *lœ*   *vir* *bū*

      1SG-EZ2.F IND-know.PRS-1SG   that=3SG-EZ2.M   in   here be.PST.3SG

      'I know that he was here.'

   b. *[pisīk-n-e*   *řeš]*   *geyrɔ-n*

      cat-INDF.PL-EZ black   roam.around.PST-3PL

      'The black cats roamed around.'

   c. *min*   *řē-yɔ*   *xa* *šaš-miš*   *kir*

      1SG.OBL road-EZ.F self wrong-mIš do.PST.3SG

      'I lost my way.' (Çapar 2009:63)

The ezafe forms marking the subject in the present tense and copular constructions applies also to non-pronominal subjects. The resulting forms are (superficially) identical with oblique marked agents in past tense constructions of Standard K. and other dialects: *Musayī lœ virœ* 'Musa is here'. With plurals, the ezafe applies regardless of whether the subject carries the plural oblique suffix, as in ex. no. (79b), or does not carry it, as in ex. no. (79a).

(79) a. *pisīk-ē*   *šīr* *vœ-dœ-xɔ-n*

      cat-EZ2.PL milk PVB-IND-eat.PRS-3PL

      'The cats are drinking milk.'

b. *pisīk-ɔn-ē*   *šīr*   *vœ-dœ-xɔ-n*

     cat-OBL.PL-EZ2.PL   milk   PVB-IND-eat.PRS-3PL

     'The cats are drinking milk.'

Note that in this dialect, the plural oblique case suffix has been generalized to apply to nouns which in Standard K. would be in the direct case, as in ex. no. (79b). However, it does not seem to have been fully reanalyzed as a generic plural suffix, since it does not systematically mark all the plural entities, hence the variation between ex. no. (79a) and ex. no. (79b).

With complex subject noun phrases, the particle occurs at the end of the subject phrase, as in ex. no. (80):

(80) a. *pisīk-n-e*   *řeš-ē*   *šīr*   *vœ-dœ-xɔ-n*

       cat-INDF.PL-EZ   black-EZ2.PL   milk   PVB-IND-eat.PRS-3PL

       'The black cats are drinking milk.'

    b. *vī*   *īlag-ɔ-y*   *qilēr=e*

       this   shirt-PROX-EZ2.M   dirty=COP.3SG

       'This shirt is dirty.'

The construction shows some obvious similarities with the use of the ezafe in the VP in Şemzînan and SEK/Badini in general, as outlined in 4.1.2 and 4.1.3. However, there are some crucial differences:

   i. The demonstrative ezafe forms in SEK are systematically associated with certain tense/aspect nuances, and also occur with past-tense verb forms, whereas the construction here seems to be generally associated with the present tense.

  ii. In SEK past transitive constructions, the ezafe agrees with the direct object, not the subject, as long as the object is expressed in the sentence.

 iii. In SEK non-verbal constructions, the clause-final copula, and the ezafe are in complementary distribution; in WK the copula is maintained in the presence of the ezafe.

 iv. Finally, unlike SEK, the ezafe forms in WK do not contribute a 'progressive' aspect reading to the sentence. Whereas in SEK, the tense-ezafe usually cannot be used to form questions and in negated constructions, in WK no such restrictions are at stake (cf. the following example from Çapar (2009:59): *ez-ī nɔxɔm* 'I won't eat').

Given these differences, one can reasonably ask whether the development in WK occurred independently of that in SEK. A possible contributing factor may be language contact: Eastern Armenian has a split predicate in the present tenses, consisting of a person-marked auxiliary, basically identical to the copula, which generally follows the subject and is separated from the lexical verb. A rather similar construction is also found in Zazaki present tense, though with progressive meaning.

Oblique marking: The oblique markers formally and functionally mostly follow the pattern of Standard K. (3.2.3), with some differences. The gender distinction of singular oblique forms following indefinite nouns seems to be neutralized by overgeneralization of the masculine form *-ī*. Masculine singular definite nouns are never suffixed in the oblique case (see proximals below), though vowel-raising (*a - e > ē*) is common for marking the masculine singular oblique case. In terms of function, the oblique plural suffix can optionally apply to plural subjects in present tenses too, as shown in (79b). Finally, the oblique form of the demonstrative constructions can be used in syntactic functions (e.g. the subject of a copular construction) that employ the direct forms in Standard K., as seen in (80b). This might indicate that the case distinctions are neutralized in the demonstrative forms, but further research is needed to make such a claim.

Proximal and distals: In WK, as in Standard K., a proximal and distal demonstrative is distinguished by the form of the demonstrative determiner. However, there are further markers, distinguished for number as singular (*-ɔ*) and plural (*-ɔnɔ*), attaching to the noun modified by the demonstrative determiner. These are clearly the cognates of the proximate markers in SEK. Different from SEK, however, the oblique marking is blocked in the presence of these markers in WK (cf. ex. no. 81a and ex. no. 81b).

(81) a. *œz-ē*   *vē*   *pisīk-ɔ*   *dœ-xʷɔz-im*

        1SG-EZ2.F   DEM.PROX.F   cat-PROX   IND-want.PRS-1SG

        'I want this cat.'

    b. *vī*   *xoyn-ɔ*   *bi-di-m-e*   *te*

        DEM.PROX.M   house-PROX   SUBJ-give.PRS-1SG-DRCT   2SG.OBL

        'I shall give this house to you.'

4.3.3 Verbal morphology

The verb 'go': In WK, all forms of the present tense, indicative and non-indicative, are based on the stem *(h)er-*, e.g. *t-er-im* (1SG indicative present), (see Section 3.6 and Table 14 above for discussion).

Person marking: WK person marking system differs from Standard K. in that the copula forms of 2SG and 3SG are merged in *-(y)œ* (see 4.3.2). Similarly, the 2SG and 3SG verbal agreement suffixes are merged in *-i* [ɨ]. In this manner, similar to Mardin/SK and unlike Şemzînan/SEK, the person marking distinctions on verbs is reduced to three levels: 1SG – 2SG/3SG – 1PL/2PL/3PL.

Reflexive pronoun: In WK the reflexive pronoun in possessor function is generalized to be used in contexts where it is not controlled by a co-referential subject. It is thus used in much the same way as a 3SG oblique pronoun, as in ex. no. (82).

(82) a. *bɔv-ē*   ***xe***   *čū-ye*   *alwistan-ē*

         father-EZ.M   REFL   go.PST-DRCT[22] place.name-OBL.F

         'His/her father has gone to Elbistan.' (Standard K.: *bavê wî ...*)

    b. *ferq-a*   *xe*   *či=ye*

         difference-EZ.F   REFL   what=COP.3SG

         'What is its difference?'

Directional particle: A directional particle (DRCT) *-e* attaching to the verb marks the direction in WK, as in the other two dialects, shown in ex. no. (82a).

Tense-aspect-mood categories

Capability is expressed by a complex predicate *šæ kirin*, illustrated in ex. no. (83), which looks superficially similar to the Şemzînan/SEK modal verb *šiyan*.

(83) ez *šæ*   *nɔ-k-im*   *vī*   *tūr-ɔ*   *bi-kšīn-im*

     1SG.DIR   NEG-do.PRS-1SG   this   bag-PROX   SUBJ-pull.PRS-1SG

     'I cannot carry this bag.'

A particle *ki*, homophonous to the particle also used in functions such as relative particle and subordinating conjunction, expresses the modality of 'having the intention of doing something' (glossed as MOD), illustrated in ex. no. (84).

(84) *Sudi*   *ew*   *ki*   *hata*   *türk*   *baqɔl-ē*   *har-in,*

     tomorrow   3PL   MOD   until   turkish   grocery-OBL.F   go.PRS-3PL

     ez=jī   *ki*   *vē=rɔ*   *har-im*

     1SG=also   MOD   3SG.OBL.F=POST   go.PRS-3SG

     'Tomorrow they will go to the Turkish grocery store, I will also go with her.'

     (Çapar 2009:78)

The *ki* particle can be used with the subject-marking ezafe, but it cannot be used with a future tense particle *-ē*. Note finally that the particle might originate from the auxiliary use of the verb *kirin* 'do' (present stem: *ki-*). In Standard K. and in central areas of Kurmanji speech zone, as in SK, the conjugated form of the verb *kirin* is employed as the auxiliary in expressing the prospective aspect or the "immediate future".

The conditionals in WK usually incorporate the Turkish clausal enclitic conditional marker *=se* to mark the verb of the protasis,[23] as in ex. no. (85). But the conditional conjunction *eger* and more widely the *ki* particle can also start the sentence.

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[22] This may be a present perfect formative, widely used in this dialect, rather than the directional particle. It is impossible to decide in this context (they cannot both be overtly realized on the same verb).

[23] This is observed also for the geographically close Tunceli (Kr. Dersim) Kurmanji in Haig (2006).

(85)   *tʊ*   *hat=**se***   *telafon-a*   *mi*   *ke*

        2SG   come.PRS=COND   phone-EZ.F   1SG.OBL   do.IMP.2SG

        'Call me if you come.' (Çapar 2009:64)

Note that the *ki* relative/subordinating particle (Standard K. *ku*) is formally the same with the corresponding Zazaki (Haig 2001:202; Paul 1988) and in all its functions it is usually a proclitic and reduced to the sole consonantal element.

The Standard K. adhortative particle *bila* does not exist in WK, a form *ma* is used in this function, as in ex. no. (86).

(86)   *tēlefon-a*   *Domi*   *ki-m,*   ***ma***   *wer-i*

        phone-EZ.F   proper.name   do.PRS-1SG   HORT   come.PRS.SUBJ-3SG

        'I shall call Domi so that he comes' (Çapar 2011:78)

A verb-final suffix *-e* is used in some constructions, as in ex. no. (87). It may contribute a progressive aspect, though this cannot be claimed firmly at this stage.

(87)   *œz-ī*   *vēsta*   *nēn*   *dœ-xɔ-m-**e***

        1SG-EZ2.M   now   bread.OBL   IND-eat.PRS-1SG-PROG

        'Now I am eating (food).'

The negation prefix in past imperfective verb forms is *nɔ-,* identical with the negation prefix used in present indicative verbs, as in ex. no. (88). In this feature, WK differs from Standard K., which uses the same negation prefix for all past tense verbs, and a different one for the indicative present. Furthermore, there is a distinct negation prefix for imperatives, *mœ-,* as in ***mœ-wē*** 'do not say (it)'.

(88)   *gɔv-ɔ*   *k=œz-ē*   *lœ mereš-ē*   *wū-m*   *min*   *pir*

        time-EZ   that=1SG-EZ2 in   place.name-OBL   be.PST-1SG   1SG.OBL   many

        sēv   ***nɔ-dœ-xɔr-in***

        apple   NEG.IPFV-IPFV-eat.PST-3PL

        'When I was in Maraş, I would not eat so many apples.'

Miš-verb forms in WK: A ubiquitous feature of all the western dialects is the massive influx of Turkish verb forms based on the Turkish perfect/evidential suffix -mIš, combined with Kurdish light verbs, for example *an(l)amīš kirin* 'understand' (Turk. *anlamış*), *qapatmīš kirin* 'close' (Turk. *kapatmış*). The widespread use of such forms constitutes an important feature of these dialects as opposed to those of the southeast such as SEK, or SK, where at least in the speech of older speakers, such forms are rarely used (e.g. the extensive text material of Ritter, from Midyat region, or that of Nikitine from Şemzinan (in MacKenzie 1995) contain hardly a single form). But from WK, they are well attested in older sources (e.g. in the Kurmanji texts of Le Coq 1903), and many are firmly established and phonologically adapted, as in ex. no. (89).

(89) a. *min*   *řē-yɔ*   *šaš-mĭš*   *kir*
      1SG.OBL road-EZ.F   wrong-mIš do.PST

      'I lost my way.'   (Çapar 2009:63)

    b. *insɔn-i*   *dayan-miš*   *na-b-ī*   *ki*
      human-EZ2   stand-mIš   NEG-be.PRS-3SG   PTCL

      'One cannot endure it.'

4.4 Summary of salient dialectal features

In this section we provide a short summary of some of the most salient dialectal features in the three dialects investigated above.

Lexical variation

	Şemz./SEK	SK	WK
'speak'	*axiftin*	*peyivîn*	*deng kirin*
'learn'	*fêr bûn*	*'elimîn*	*belî kirin*
'look at'	*berê xo dan*	*mêzandin*	*mêz kirin*
'be able'	*şiyan*	*karîn*	*şe kirin*
'get tired'	*şeqî bûn*	*betilîn*	*wastîyan*
'burn, catch fire'	*hel kirin*	*pêxistin*	*vêxitin*
'lose'	*bezir kirin*	*hunda kirin*	*anda kirin*
'brought'	*îna*	*anî*	*anî*
'I am going'	*diçim*	*diçim*	*terim*
'extinguish'	*mirandinewe*	*tefandin*	*vêsandin*
'you.PL'	*hing/hingo*	*win/we*	*wun/we*
'they.DIR'	*ew*	*ew*	*wana*

Morphosyntactic variation

Feature	Şemz./SEK	SK	WK
suffixal singular masculine oblique	+	-	-
singular masculine oblique by vowel raising	-	+	+
neutralization of gender with indefinite nouns	-/+	-	+
plural ezafe forms	-êd/-êt	-ê	-ê
proximal marker on nouns (sg/pl)	-e/-ene	-	-a/-ana
distinct 1PL verbal agreement suffix	+	-	-
3SG verbal agreement suffixes	-(î)t	-ê	-e
future tense particle	dê	=ê	=ê
future tense form of verb lacks *bi-* prefix	+	+(-)	-
plural indefiniteness suffix	-	+	-
aspectual verbal morpheme *-ewe*	+	-	-
mood-aspect particle *da*	+	-	-
incorporation of preverbs	+	+	-
ezafe used for progressive aspect	+	-	-
ezafe/gender marking of subjects in present	-	-	+
prepositional marking of goal/recipient	+	-	-
circumpositional marking of goal/recipient	-	+	-
postpositional marking of goal/recipient	-	-	+
directional particle *-e*	+	+/-	+/-
definiteness suffix *-eke*	+	-	-
heavy verb stems (for *kirin, birin, dan*)	+	-	-
possessive reflexive pronoun without a same-clause subject antecedent	-	-	+
particle for 'intention' mood	-	-	+

5. The status of Kurdish in Turkey

This section presents an overview of the the status of Kurdish within the Turkish state. We start with characterizing the juridical framework in which which Kurdish (but also other minority languages) are marginalized. Then we discuss some of the outcomes of Turkey's language policy with respect to the status and representations of Kurdish in public sphere. Before concluding with some prevalent patterns of language use and perceptions among Kurdish speakers, we provide a brief treatment of the extent and influence of the recent steps towards increased democratization as well as of cultural activism on the evolution of the situation of Kurdish in Turkey.

The language policy of Turkish Republic has its seeds in the intellectual and political climate of the final phases of Ottoman Empire (e.g. the constitution of 1876, see Eraydın 2003). It is often seen as one of the principal components of the larger project of creating a

linguistically and culturally homogenous Turkish nation (Bozarslan 2004; Zeydanlıoğlu 2012; Üngor 2012; Haig 2004; Oran 2010; Yeğen 1999). The central tenets of the policy entailed the consolidation and elaboration of Turkish as the sole official language of all citizens. A number of measures were deployed to achieve these aims, such as ideology-dissemination through institutions like Turkish Hearts, bans on Kurdish person names (Skutnabb-Kangas and Bucak 1995), campaigns for the promotion of Turkish (Üngor 2012) as well as a number of laws (e.g. Law on the Unification of Education in 1924), decrees and re-settlement plans aimed at weakening the demographic dominance of Kurdish in many areas (for details and documents see Bayrak 1993). Turkish-only language policies were stamped into successive versions of the constitution (for language policy in constitutions see Zeydanlıoğlu 2012), bearing witness to the high priority of Turkification policies in the realm of language. Hassanpour et al. (1996) refer to Turkish language policy towards Kurdish under "linguicide", while Skutnabb-Kangas and Bucak (1995:366), suggest that, from a comparative global perspective, Turkey's repression of Kurdish represents the most extreme case of directed discrimination against a minority language ever documented. Haig (2004) characterizes the pre-2000 language policy towards Kurdish in terms of the concept of 'invisibilisation': the removal, or suppression, of overt symbols of existence, with the aim of creating a linguistically homogenous public sphere – and ultimately, a linguistically homogenous population.

Although policies of invisibilization (and/or linguicide) have undoubtedly had a hugely detrimental impact on the transmission of Kurdish in the first 40 years of the Republic, they have been counterbalanced in recent years following the rising political and cultural consciousness among Kurds since the 1960s. Especially after 1991, following the relative easing of the ban on the public usage of Kurdish, the language has gained some means public representation (i.e. through publications, private institutions, satellite television). Furthermore, wider democratization perspectives, and the EU-accession negotiations, have compelled the government to retreat from the earlier standpoint, which was beginning to appear increasingly absurd. In 2001, Turkey removed some constitutional articles prohibiting public usage of Kurdish, while further regulations introduced in 2002 enabled broadcasting and teaching in private institutions of "the different languages and dialects used traditionally by Turkish citizens in their daily lives". These reforms were followed by the establishment of private institutions for teaching Kurdish in major cities, launching a number of local TV and Radio stations which broadcast also in Kurdish (albeit under strict measures severely limiting their practical benefits), the establishment of a state-funded TV channel entirely in Kurdish, foundation of an academic institute under Mardin Artuklu University where MA level research in Kurdish Studies is conducted, and finally, granting the right to launch Kurdish Language and Literature Departments at a number of universities.

Full documentation of the developments and their critical assessment are beyond the scope of this overview, readers are referred to Zeydanlıoğlu (2012), Bayır (2013), Öpengin (2015), among others. The main contribution of these measures is symbolic, rather than practical: For the first time in the history of the Turkish Republic, Kurds are able to perceive their language as a publicly visible medium of communication, officially tolerated (if not encouraged). However, the practical impact in terms of safeguarding the long-term survival of the language is far from evident. Certainly in the key area of education in state schools, official policies remain stubbornly restrictive: It is Kurdish children who are still denied educational rights in their mother tongue. Nevertheless, these measures have opened up a previously unavailable space for public discourse on language policy. They have undoubtedly led to increased interest and esteem for the Kurdish language among larger sectors of the population, and have contributed to the adoption of more liberal attitudes in regard to linguistic and cultural rights of non-Turkish components of the society.

One case suffices to illustrate the relative change in attitudes: On 3 February 2012, talking at a TV program on the possibilities and circumstances of education in Kurdish, Bülent Arınç, the deputy prime minister, cast doubt on the viability of Kurdish for such an undertaking, stating "Is Kurdish the language of [a] civilization?". The statement was widely criticized by writers and groups of diverse intellectual and political alignments. Finally, the deputy prime minister announced that his statements were not intended to denigrate Kurdish and that, as a consequence of the reactions to his statements, he now considers that Kurdish is a "living language", the "language of civilization with its own book, culture and thought."

As for the patterns of language practices and language perceptions, surprisingly little serious research has been undertaken to date. One of the few studies is Öpengin (2012), a survey into the sociolinguistic situation of Kurdish, which showed that Kurdish is no longer the default language of communication for a good portion of its speakers: the younger the speakers are, and the more formally educated, and outside of their local social networks, the less Kurdish they use. The use of and proficiency rates in Kurdish are significantly higher in rural contexts than among urban populations, pointing to a more advanced and rapid process of language shift in the urban context; the wider use of and higher proficiency in Kurdish among older women (compared to older men) does not hold among younger generations of women speakers. The research showed also that the perceptions of speakers on recent developments relating to linguistic and cultural rights are mostly shaped in line with political tendencies, but that in general they generally estimated that the developments will have a positive impact on the transmission and survival of the language. The low rates of literacy and written activity in Kurdish (reflecting the oppressive language policies towards Kurdish) point to the principally oral status of Kurdish, while affirming the role of Turkish as the language of written activity. However the research indicated that the situation is too complex for any wholesale conclusion, because the spread and consolidation

of Turkish in low domains is counteracted by a robust degree of Kurdish-language consumption in high domains like media, and its emerging presence in certain institutions suggest further support for reversing the language shift. Thus in urban settings there appear to be two diametrically opposed tendencies, one towards the growing acceptance of Turkish in domestic and communicative domains previously occupied by Kurdish, the other involving increasing inroads of Kurdish into higher domains of media consumption and as an emblematic index of political alignment and group identity.

In a very recent survey, Çağlayan (2014) traces intergenerational differences in the use of Kurdish in 21 families from the Diyarbakır region, noting a fairly consistent pattern of Kurdish/Turkish bilingualism in the parent generation, with a shift to Turkish monolingualism among the children, and noting that women are the leaders in this development. However, Çağlayan also points out that some parents are increasingly aware of the detrimental aspects entailed in this language loss, and are taking active measures to counteract it. It remains to be seen how these varying factors will interact in shaping patterns of usage of Kurmanji Kurdish in Turkey over the coming decades.

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