2.3. Northern Kurdish (Kurmanjî)

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1. Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of Northern Kurdish, or Kurmanjî (in various spellings), as it is spoken in eastern Anatolia. The material is largely based on two joint publications with Ergin Öpengin: Öpengin and Haig (2014), and Haig and Öpengin (2018), to which the reader is referred for further details. The variety of Kurmanjî spoken in northern Iraq (Behdinī, under various spellings) is treated in Haig (this volume, chapter 3.3, §4). For the purposes of this chapter, "eastern Anatolia" is taken to coincide with the the eastern part of Turkey, extending south-eastward from a line beginning from Sivas, but excluding the Mediterranean and Black Sea coastal regions.

Eastern Anatolia is the homeland of the majority of Kurmanjî speakers, but their traditional settlement region overlaps into Syria, northern Iraq and western Iran (see Figure 1). Various estimates put the number of Kurmanjî speakers in Turkey at between 8 and 15 million, but any figures must be treated with caution, due to differences in definitions and methodologies. Following decades of violence in the region, there has been a large-scale diaspora from Anatolia's rural areas to Turkey's larger cities, both within Anatolia (e. g. Van, Diyarbakır, and Mardin) and in western Turkey (e. g. İstanbul, İzmir), and beyond into Europe. Perhaps as many as one third of Kurmanjî speakers have left their Anatolian homeland in the last 40 years, but reliable figures are impossible to obtain.

Traditionally, Kurmanjî is classified as a member of the northwest Iranian branch of the west Iranian languages, within the Iranian branch of Indo-European. Besides Kurmanjî, two other closely-related Iranian languages are spoken in Turkey, but are not covered in this volume. 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 me. The second is Zazaki, spoken in several locations in central Anatolia (cf. Figure 1, and Paul 2009 for recent summary of Zazaki). Figure 1 illustrates the locations of the various varieties belonging to what is traditionally termed "Kurdish". Just how one would define the assumed superordinate entity "Kurdish", and which varieties should be included in it, are questions that go beyond the scope of this chapter; see Öpengin and Haig (2014), Haig and Öpengin (2018) for discussion.

Research on Kurdish in Turkey was hampered for decades by exclusory language politics directed at "non-Turkish" languages (see Haig 2004; Öpengin 2012, 2015;
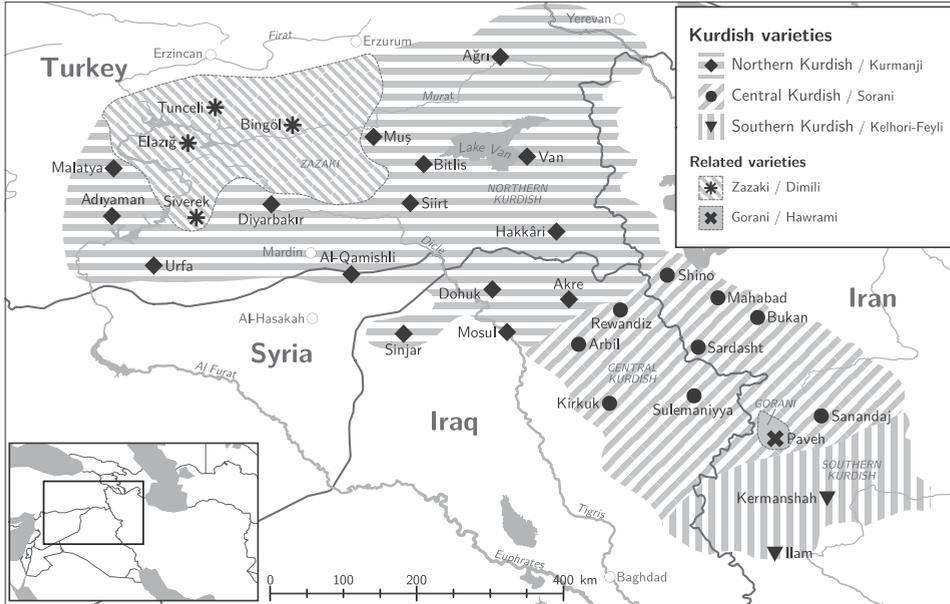
Figure 1: Overview of varieties traditionally considered to be "Kurdish"

Haig and Öpengin (2018) for discussion and references). Between around 1920 and 1990, the only reliable publications on Kurdish spoken in Turkey are Jastrow's sketch of the phonology of the Van dialect (1977), and Ritter's collection of spoken Kurdish narratives from the Midyat region (1971 and 1976). A rich body of material has also been compiled under the auspices of L'Institut kurde de Paris, though we still await a more structured survey. Very recently, an online-accessible data-base of Kurdish dialects has been launched (Matras et al. 2016), which provides the most comprehensive coverage to date of the Kurmanjî varieties spoken in eastern Anatolia. Although there is considerable dialectal variation within Anatolia, the situation is one of a dialect continuum, with a high degree of mutual intelligibility across most of the region, except between the farthest southeastern and northwestern dialects (see §4 below). In this regard, the situation of Kurmanjî is rather different to that of Neo-Aramaic, likewise spoken in eastern Anatolia and northern Iraq, but which consists of scattered and distinct local dialects (or perhaps languages), with low levels of mutual intelligibility (see Khan, this volume, chapters 2.5 and 3.4).

    Below I provide a brief outline of the history and current situation of the speakers (Section 1.2), followed by a grammatical sketch of what is termed here "Standard Kurmanjî", loosely based on the dialect of Cizre and Botan in southeastern Turkey (Section 2). In Section three, selected areas of variation are presented, illustrating the two most divergent dialects in eastern Anatolia, namely southeast-

ern Kurmanjî and western Kurmanjî. Section four sums up the main points of the chapter.

1.1.   History of the Kurmanjî speech community in Anatolia

There are no direct historical records of Kurdish settlement in Anatolia, so estimates of the timing and pathways are correspondingly speculative. Asatrian (2009) follows MacKenzie (1961b) in assuming that the initial formation of Kurdish would 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).

Haig and Öpengin (2018) suggest that a northwestward expansion of the Kurmanjî-speaking peoples into a largely Armenian-populated region receives some support from the areal distribution of certain features in Kurmanjî. The first is the comparative homogeneity, and relative simplicity (in terms of morphology) of those Kurmanjî dialects further to the west. The southeastern varieties of Kurmanjî (cf. e. g. Behdinī in North Iraq (Haig, this volume, chapter 3.3, §4) and Şemzinan in Turkey, 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 Kurmanjî in these formative stages, evidenced in the presence of an additional row of unaspirated voiceless plosives and affricates in Kurmanjî, a feature that is characteristic (to varying degrees) of all the dialects (cf. Section 3.1).

Several thousand Kurmanjî speakers were forcibly resettled in the Khorasan province of Iran in the seventeenth century by the Safavids, with the intention of protecting the eastern borders of Persia from Uzbek and Turkmen tribes (Oberling 2008). They have maintained their language and many customs down to the present. Although there is little systematic research on their language, my impression of recordings made available to me by Don Stilo (p.c.) is that they are descendants of speakers from the western Kurmanjî dialect group (see §3.5 below).

In Anatolia, Kurmanjî speakers have co-existed with speakers of Armenian, Neo-Aramaic, Zazaki, Arabic and Turkish for many centuries, leading to considerable mutual influence. In the southeast, Kurdish has left a deep impact on Arabic and Neo-Aramaic (see Khan, this volume, chapters 2.5 and 3.4), while Armenian left its mark at least in the phonology (see §3.1). Turkish influence on Kurmanjî has also been considerable (Haig 2001, 2006, 2007), particularly on Western Kurmanjî (see §4). However, it is probably first since the founding of the Turkish Republic in 1923, leading to nation-wide compulsory schooling and military service, and the large-scale diaspora from rural Anatolia in the second half of the twentieth century, that Turkish influence on Kurmanjî has become so omnipresent (see §4). The future of Kurmanjî in Turkey is impossible to predict. But it must be noted that, despite the seemingly high absolute figures of "Kurmanjî speakers" today, very few children are exposed to the early rich input that would ensure full acquisition of the language, and there is still no regular representation of Kurmanjî in state-controlled primary education.

2.   A grammatical sketch of "Standard Kurmanjî"

Although Kurmanjî is spoken across a large area, there is a reasonably widely-accepted written standard, loosely based on the dialect of the region Cizre and Botan in southeastern Turkey. It uses a modified version of the Roman alphabet, and is employed in all manner of publications, including journals, newspapers, literature, internet publications, chat-rooms etc. 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. In this chapter I will present a grammatical sketch of this Standard Kurmanjî (Standard K.), based on Haig and Öpengin (2018, §3), with examples provided in standard orthography, but noting additional phonetic detail where necessary. In Section 3, selected issues in regional variation are presented.

2.1.   Phonology

2.1.1.   Vowels

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

Long, or tense vowels: /a/ <a>; /i/ <î>; /e/ <ê>; /o/ <o>; /u/ <û>
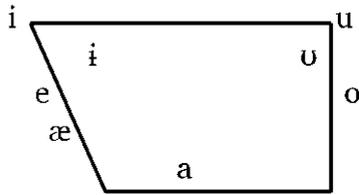Short, or lax vowels: /æ/ <e>, /ʊ/ <u>, /ɨ/ <i>

Figure 2: Pan-dialectal scheme for the vowel phonemes of Kurdish
(cf. Haig and Öpengin, 2018)

The tense 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 five-term vowel system; the other three vowels are more centralized. Examples from Haig and Öpengin (2018, §3.1.1) are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: The tense vowels of Kurmanjî (from Haig and Öpengin, 2018)

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

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

/o/ <o>		
Orthography	IPA	Gloss
toz	[tʰoz]	dust
çok	[ʧʰok]	knee
got	[got]	said
zozan	[zo:zan]	alpine summer settlement
koçer	[koʧʰæɾ]	nomad

The two lax vowels vowels /ʊ/ and /æ/are realized more centrally than the tense 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. Examples are provided in Table 2:

Table 2: The lax vowels of Kurmanjî (from Haig and Öpengin, 2018)

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

The mid-high, centralized rounded vowel /ʊ/ is sometimes 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/ is approximately a mid-high, mid-closed, unrounded vowel; it cannot occur word-finally (though there are dialectal exceptions; see §3.1). Haig and Öpengin (2018) distinguish two underlying sources of this vowel, though both are written with the same symbol <i> in the standard orthography: the lexical central vowel, and the epenthetic 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.[1] Some examples are provided in Table 3.

Table 3: The lexical central vowel in selected words

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

Epenthetic central vowels occur in a number of forms, generally in order to satisfy constraints on syllable structure. An example is the use of epenthetic vowels in the infinitive endings of verbs. If we assume that the infinitive ending is [-n], then this

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

may attach directly to a vowel-final past verb stem, such as *kêşa-* 'draw, pull' (note that some dialects have a different past stem for this verb). The infinitive is thus *kêşa-n.* Following a consonant-final stem, however, an epenthetic [ɨ] is inserted to avoid non-licensed syllable codas; see Table 4 for examples

Table 4: Epenthetic vowels in infinitives

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

Vowel epenthesis may also occur in syllable-onset clusters in lexical items, though there is considerable regional variation here:

bɨlind ~ blind	'high'	*sɨtra:n ~ stra:n*	'song'
bɨlu:ɾ ~ blu:ɾ	'type of wooden flute'	*bɨɾa: ~ bɾa:*	'brother'
dɨre:ʒ ~ dre:ʒ	'long'	*ʃɨkæft ~ ʃkæft*	'cave'
fɨɾotin ~ fɾotin	'sell'	*zɨma:n ~ zma:n*	'tongue, language'
sɨpi: ~ spi:	'white'	*zɨla:m ~ zla:m*	'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 seldom realized, regardless of phonological conditioning). For example the preposition *ji* [ʒɨ] 'from' undergoes reduction and devoicing in normal connected speech: 'from you' [ʒɨ tæ > ʃtæ].

2.1.2. Consonants

The consonant phonemes of Kurmanjî are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: The consonant phonemes of Kurmanjî, generalized scheme (Haig and Öpengin, 2018)

	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 ʕ²	h
Affr.				ʧʰ ʧ ʤ						
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 6.

Table 6: Three-way contrast on the stops and affricates (Haig and Öpengin, 2018)

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

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[2] The phonemic status of the pharyngeal sounds in Kurmanjî is controversial. First, they are most prominently linked to Semitic loan words, though Barry (2017) points to language-internal factors that have contributed to the emergence of pharyngeals, and their spread to native vocabulary (e.g. most dialects have initial [ħ] in the word for the numeral "7"). 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. 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.

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'

With regard to pharyngeal segments, there is considerable cross-dialect variation, (see Khan 2008 on pharyngealization as a variant feature of pronunciation, and Haig and Öpengin, 2018, §4.2.1 for discussion of local variation). Some relatively widespread examples include [ʕeliː] 'Ali'; [teʕm] 'taste'; [pʰeħn] 'flat'.

2.2.   Nominal morphology

2.2.1.   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 are 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 Behdinî, the default gender for inanimate nouns is feminine: most loanwords with non-human reference take this gender. In Behdinî, on the other hand, the default gender is masculine. Dialectal variation in gender is discussed in Haig and Öpengin (2018, §3.2.2).

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. Paradigms for singular nouns showing their inflectional possibilities are shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Case and indefiniteness in Standard Kurmanjî (Haig and Öpengin, 2018)

Masculine singular				Feminine 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*

The forms for oblique case marking on singular nouns are provided in Table 7. Note that 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
II. Goal or Recipient argument immediately following a predicate of motion or transfer
III. Complement of any adposition (though dropped in certain combinations)
IV. Possessor in an ezafe construction
V.   Subject of a past-tense transitive verb

The direct case is used elsewhere.

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*:

(1) *Ez   şîr   ve-na-xw-im*
     I   milk(M)   PRV-IND-drink.PRS-1SG
     'I do not drink milk.'

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*[3] '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'				

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[3] 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.

Bare masculine singular nouns 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. 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*. An example with a demonstrative is (2); the presence of an oblique suffix suppresses stem-vowel raising:

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

See Haig and Öpengin (2018, §3.2.4) for regional variation in the marking of singular masculine obliques.

2.2.2.   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 8:

Table 8: Plural and case marking in Standard Kurdish

Plural (masc. and fem.)			
Definite		Indefinite	
DIRECT	OBLIQUE	DIRECT	OBLIQUE
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.

2.2.3. Pronouns

The forms for the personal pronouns are given in Table 9. The "third person" pronouns are basically the distal demonstratives.

Table 9: Personal pronouns in Standard Kurmanjî (cf. Haig and Öpengin 2018)

		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*

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. In Standard K., the reciprocal pronoun is *hev* or *hevdû*, again used for all persons.

There are two demonstratives, *ew* 'that' and *ev* 'this', with considerable dialectal variation. The standard forms are illustrated in Table 10.

Table 10: Demonstratives in Standard Kurmanjî

	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, most 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*. 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 marker is not used.

(3)   (Antep-Adiyaman region, Haig and Öpengin 2018)
       Va   *defter=na*   *yē*   *min=in*
       DEM.PROX   notebook=DEM.PL   EZ.PL   1SG.OBL=COP.3PL
       'These notebooks are mine'

2.3.   The structure of the NP

The basic structure of a NP in Kurmanjî 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	1SG.OBL	EZ.PL	black

'these three black hats of mine'

Demonstratives have already been illustrated in Table 10. The numerals are given in Section 2.4. 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 written Kurdish).

2.3.1.   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. We distinguish between simple linking ezafe constructions, and free or demonstrative ezafes.

A simple ezafe construction is found with any noun that is modified by an adjective, as in (4), or with a possessor, as in (5). An ezafe particle attaches to the head noun, and varies according to gender and number of that noun:

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

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

Nouns may also be modified by prepositional phrases, as in (6), or by relative clauses as in (7) and (8), in which case they also take the ezafe:

(6)   *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'

(7) *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)

(8) *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’

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:

(9) *Ez*   *li*   *mal-a*   *xwe*   *me*   /   *mal-a*   **min*
1SG   in   house-EZ.F   REFL   COP.1SG   /   house-EZ.F   1SG.OBL
im
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 11:

Table 11: 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 Behdinī (see Haig, this volume, chapter 3.3, §4). 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. In the spoken language, an ezafe may be omitted completely following nouns with indefinite *-ek*, and this can also 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 Kurmanjî syntax: it means that the ezafe itself is impervious to the external case of the entire NP. For example:

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

(11) *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 (10), we would expect an oblique case, because it is the complement of an adposition, while in (11) 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:[4]

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

(13) *[**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.'

Ezafe particles may also occur separated from their head noun. We refer to these as free, or demonstrative, ezafes. 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'

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.)'.

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4   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.

In Behdinī Kurdish, and dialects close to it such as Şemzinan (cf. §3.2.1), 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, and this volume, chapter 3.3, §4), as in (14).

(14) … *ez* *ya* *bêdeng* *im*
        I EZ.F silent COP.1SG
        'I am remaining silent' (the speaker is a woman)[5]

Something similar may be found in the Elbistan dialect, discussed below in §3.2.2, though the origins of these forms are somewhat obscure.

2.4. Numerals

The main numbers, given in Standard Orthography (following Bedir Khan and 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 Kurmanjî 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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[5]   From a short story *Hirmîka Xirş* by Mihemed Selim Siwarî, a writer from the Behdinī-speaking region in North Iraq, published in *Antolojiya çirokên kurmancên başûr*, edited by Xelîl Duhokî (Avesta, 2011).

2.5.   Adpositions

In Kurmanjî, I distinguish three components of the adpositional system, which can be combined in various ways: basic prepositions, locational nouns, and postpositional particles.

2.5.1.   Basic prepositions

Standard Kurdish has three basic prepositions, and these are reasonably stable in most dialects (though Southeastern Kurmanjî differs in some respects, cf. §3.3). Each covers a broad and fairly abstract semantic space, with a spatial core: *ji* 'from', *bi* 'by, through', *li* 'at'.

Recall from the discussion of phonology in §2.1 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. (15) from Karakoçan dialect (field notes from Karakoçan):

(15) *ister   pê   dest-an   bi-xw-e   ister   pê   kevčî*
      want   with   hand-OBL.PL   SUBJ-eat:PRES-IMPER.2SG   want   with   spoon
      'Eat (it) with (your) hands, or with a spoon, as you please'[6]

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 Kurmanjî 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 *bo* 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.

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6   *ister … ister* is a modified loan construction from Turkish, based on the Turkish verb *istemek* 'want'

2.5.2.   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'
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 and post-verbally:

(16) *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'

2.5.3.   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.

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

2.6.   Verbal morphology

Verbs exhibit the typical western 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 we will not attempt a classification here. Table 12 provides a list of frequent verbs:

Table 12: Frequent verbs in past and present stems

Infinitive	Past Stem	Present Stem	Meaning
bûn	*bû-*	*-b-*	be
birin	*bir-*	*-b-*	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-*	*-k-*	do, make
çûn	*çû-*	*-ç-/-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-*	*-d-*	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 Kurmanjî (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 present stems: *gerîn* 'walk, stroll' → *gerandin* 'lead', *nivistin* 'sleep' → *nivandin* 'put to sleep'. New verb meanings are normally 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).

2.6.1.   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 13 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 15.

Table 13: Person agreement suffixes

PERSON	STEM	
	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 indicate)[7] or *ne-* (replaces the subjunctive). In imperative forms, and with preverbal elements combined with light verbs, a prefix may be lacking. In

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[7]   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 Behdinī and Şemzînan dialects, negates the present stem with *ne: nešêm* 'I can not'.

the Behdinī 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[8] 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 patterns vary according to the transitivity of the verbs (cf. §3.4–3.5 below). Sample paradigms are given in Table 14.

Table 14: Sample verb conjugations

	simple present (trans.) *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 (sth.)'	*ez dihatim*	*min dixwar*
2SG	*tu dibêjî*	*tu hatî*	*te xwar*	*tu dihatî*	*te dixwar*
3SG	*ew dibêje*	*ew hat*	*wî (*masc.*) xwar* *wê (*fem.*) xwar*	*ew dihat*	*wî (*masc.*) dixwar* *wê (*fem.*) dixwar*
1PL	*em dibêjin*	*em hatin*	*me xwar*	*em dihatin*	*me dixwar*
2PL	*hûn dibêjin*	*hûn hatin*	*we xwar*	*hûn dihatin*	*we dixwar*
3PL	*ew dibêjin*	*ew hatin*	*wan xwar*	*ew dihatin*	*wan dixwar*

Non-verbal predicates in the present indicative receive a set of clitic person markers or copula forms, see Table 15.

Table 15: 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 [iːj])
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*

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

In Western Kurmanjî, special constructions are found with non-verbal predicates (cf. §3.4.2.2). For non-verbal predicates in the past tenses, or in subjunctive mood, the appropriate form of *bûn* 'be' is required.

2.6.2.   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 16: 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 1SG 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 the western dialects of Kurmanjî (WK, see §3.4.2 below), the imperative stem *-her-* of 'go' is also used in the indicative, so for example in Elbistan, 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).

2.6.3.   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. 18–21) 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):

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

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

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

(21) *heke pirs-a   wan   he-b-e,*
      if   question-EZ.F 3PL.OBL existent-be.PRS.SUBJ-3SG
      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'

Other subordinate clauses may (as in (22) and (23)) or may not be in the sub-
junctive (as in 24–25), depending on the degree of certainty of the proposition
expressed.

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

(23) *De   bêje,   te   çawan kir*
      MOD.PRT say.PRS.IMPER 2SG.OBL how   do.PST.3SG
      'go on, say how you did it'

(24) *Ni-zanîbû*[9]   *ko   çawan bê   pere*
      NEG-know.PST(3SG)   COMPL how   without money
      ve-ger-e   mal
      PRV-return.PRS.SUBJ-3SG home
      'He didn't know how he would return home without any money'

(25) *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'

2.6.4.   The future tense

The future tense is expressed via a particle *(d)ê* or *wê*, combined with a subjunctive
form of the verb; see (26). It is most frequent in clause-second position, often (but
not always) preceded by the subject as in (27), though it is also possible clause-

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

initially; see (28) 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' (exs. from Haig and Öpengin 2018).

(26) *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.'

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

(28) *wē   čawa   heval-ēn   nexweš   derbas   bi-bi-n*
      FUT   how   friend-EZ.PL   ill   PRV.pass SUBJ-be.PRS-3PL
      'How will the wounded friends pass?'

(29) *ewro   ne,   dē   sibe   či-m*
      today   no,   FUT   tomorrow come.SUBJ.PRS-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 Behdinī, there is no dedicated negative future; the negative indicative is used:

    Standard K.:   *Ez ē sibe bi wan re ne-či-m.*
    Behdinī: *Ez sibe digel wan na-či-m*   'I won't go with them
                                                    tomorrow'

2.6.5.   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):

(30) *Se   û   zarok-ên   gund   li   gur   hat-in-e*
      dog   and   child-EZ.P   village   at   wolf   come.PST-3PL-DRCT
      hev   ...
      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.

2.6.6. 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 Kurmanjî 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'
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'

2.7.   Syntax of the simple clause

2.7.1.   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 the circumposition *ji ... ra* (cf. §3.5) for recipients and benefactives, they 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 southeastern dialects make more extensive use of the post-predicate position, which is almost always coupled with the presence of the directional particle on the verb (§2.6.5). These dialects also make use of a preposition *bo* with some post-predicate recipients and benefactives (see Haig 2015 on post-predicate goals), in which case no directional particle occurs on the verb.

2.7.2.   Alignment and related issues

Kurmanjî 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*. Throughout Northern Kurdish, it is subjects only which control reflexive *xwe*, with exceptions only regularly found in WK (§3.5). Thus the relation of subjecthood in Northern Kurdish is quite robust, and largely independent of surface case (cf. Haig 1998 for discussion). Typical examples (from Thackston 2006: 49) are given in (31–33):

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

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

(33) *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 regard to 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 (34) below, which represents the written

language (the poem *Ji Biçukan re*, by Cegerxwîn), an intransitive clause precedes the past transitive verb *gotin* 'say':

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

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:

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

See Haig and Öpengin (2018), and Haig (2017: 477–479) for discussion and references on deviations to canonical ergativity.

2.7.3. Non-canonical subjects

In the dialects of the south and the east (e. g. Şemzînan and Behdinī), 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) *birçî me* 'I am hungry'. The verb *viyan*, expressing necessity/desire, also takes an oblique "wanter":

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

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

(37) *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:

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

3.   Dialectal variation in phonology and morphosyntax

This section briefly summarizes aspects of regional variation, largely based on Haig and Öpengin (2018). For more detailed discussion of lexical and phonological variation, see Öpengin and Haig (2014), which is based on a comparative list of lexical items. The two studies just mentioned yield a broad division of Kurmanjî into three main dialect groups: Southeastern Kurmanjî (SEK), Southern Kurmanjî (SK), and Western Kurmanjî (WK). Their approximate respective locations are indicated in Figure 3 below (see §4 for details).
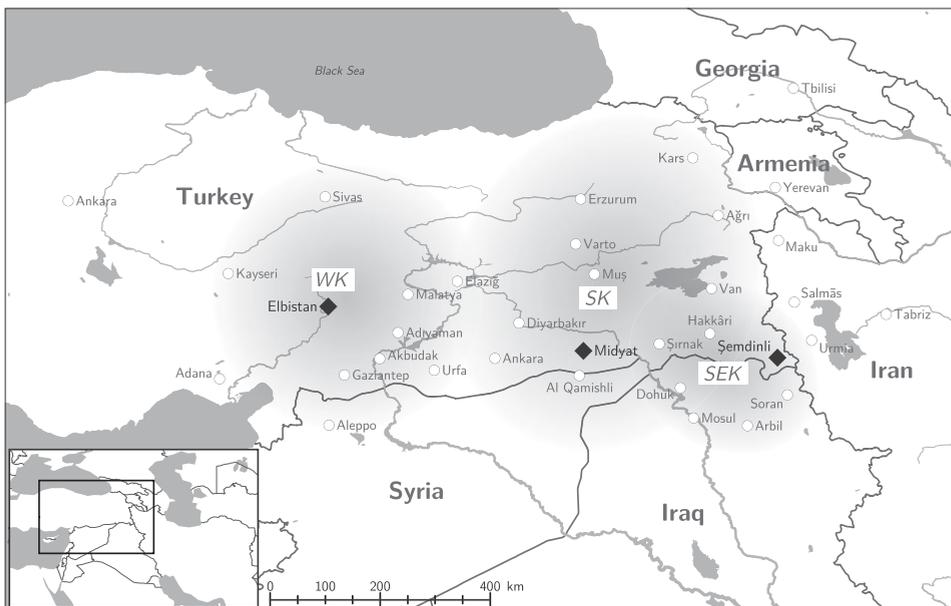

Figure 3: Approx. locations of three main Kurmanjî dialect zones

The situation is best captured in terms of a northwest-to-southeast dialect continuum, with the two endpoints Southeastern Kurmanjî and Western Kurmanjî as the most clearly differentiated dialects. In the intermediate region, provisionally termed here "Southern Kurmanjî" (SK), dialect boundaries are blurred, and features of both WK and SEK are found to varying degrees. Probably the most divergent dialect is SEK, which includes Behdinī of North Iraq (see Haig, this volume, chapter 3.3, §4).

An initial impression of dialectal diversity can be gained by considering the distribution of the lexical item used to express the English activity verb 'speak'. In Kurmanjî, at least eight distinct lexical items (including complex predicates) are used to express the English verb 'speak'. They are provided in Table 17:

Table 17: Lexical expressions for SPEAK (numbers in brackets refers to numbering in Figure 4)

deyn/deng kirin (1)
ştaxilîn (2)
xeber dan (3)
axaftin (4)
peyivîn (5)
qise kirin (6)
qez kirin (7)
şor kirin (8)

The distribution of these eight variants is largely geographically determined, and is graphically represented in Figure 4. Each triangle represents the location of a speaker, while the numbers refer to the variant of 'speak' which she used in response to a translation task (see Table 17 for the actual variants). Most of the data were extracted from the Database of Kurdish dialects (Matras et al. 2016); see Haig and Bulut (2017) for details of the methodology and the map.

It is evident that SEK fairly consistently uses variant 4 *axaftin*, while WK uses fairly consistently 1 *deyn kirin*. Elsewhere areal trends are clearly visible, but we also find, for example, that variant 3 *xeber dan* is widely used throughout the central region.

An area of morphosyntax where the dialectal divisions mentioned in Figure 3 are also relevant is adpositions, and word order. A particularly clear example concerns the position, and adpositional marking, of the Addressee argument of the verb 'tell, say', expressed through the lexeme *gotin* (with some phonological variants) in all dialects of Kurmanjî. Three main constructions are associated with this verb, and are illustrated in examples (39–41). In (39), typical for SEK, the Addressee is post-verbal, and the verb carries the so-called directional particle (see §2.6.5), the attenuated remnants of an earlier preposition. In (40), typical for Standard K. and most of the core of the Kurmanjî speaking zone in Anatolia, the Addressee
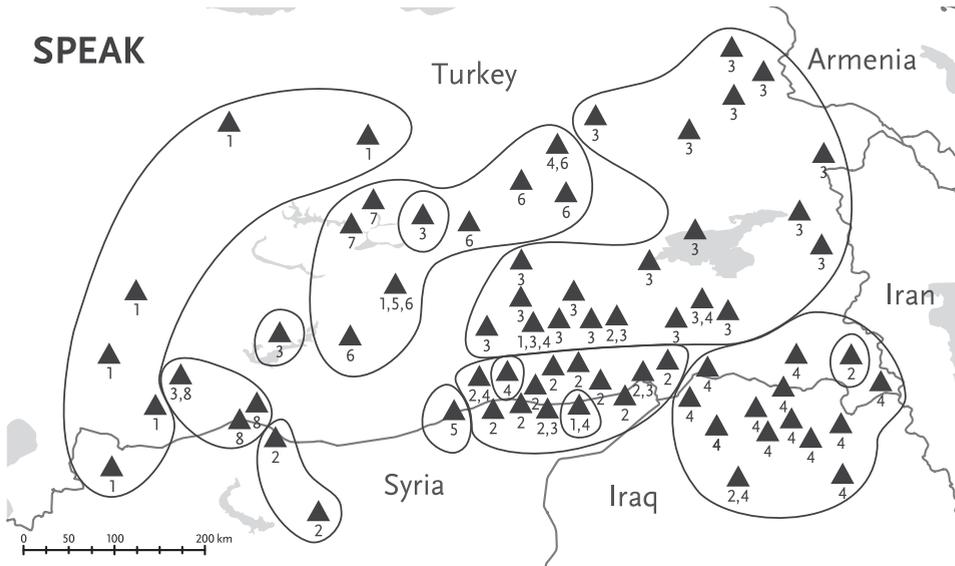
Figure 4: Distribution of lexical variants for 'speak' (from Haig and Bulut, 2017)

is pre-verbal, and flagged through a circumposition, *ji … =ra*. Finally, in (41), typical of WK and the northern peripheries of Anatolia, we find the Addressee flagged solely through the postpositional clitic *=ra*, clearly a reduced form of the circumpositional variant illustrated in (40), via loss of the preposition.

The three examples each represent translations of the sentence 'She/that woman told me', and were extracted from the data for their respective locations from the Database of Kurdish Dialects (Matras et al. 2016). Note that *gotin* is a transitive verb in Kurmanjî, hence the subjects are in the Oblique case in these past-tense clauses. Figure 5 is a map compiled by the present author to indicate the areal distribution of these three variants, with each point indicating the location of a speaker from the Database of Kurdish Dialects (Matras et al. 2016).

(39) Şemzinan (SEK)

 ewê *got=e*   ***min***

 3SG.OBL.F tell.PST.3SG=DRCT 1SG.OBL

 'She told me'

(40) Bingöl (SK)

 wê *jin-ê* ***ji*** ***mi=ra*** *gotibû*

 3SG.OBL.F woman-OBL.F ADP 1SG.OBL=ADP tell.PPRF.3SG

 'That woman told me'

(41) Elbistan (WK)
      wê   ***mi=ra***   *go*
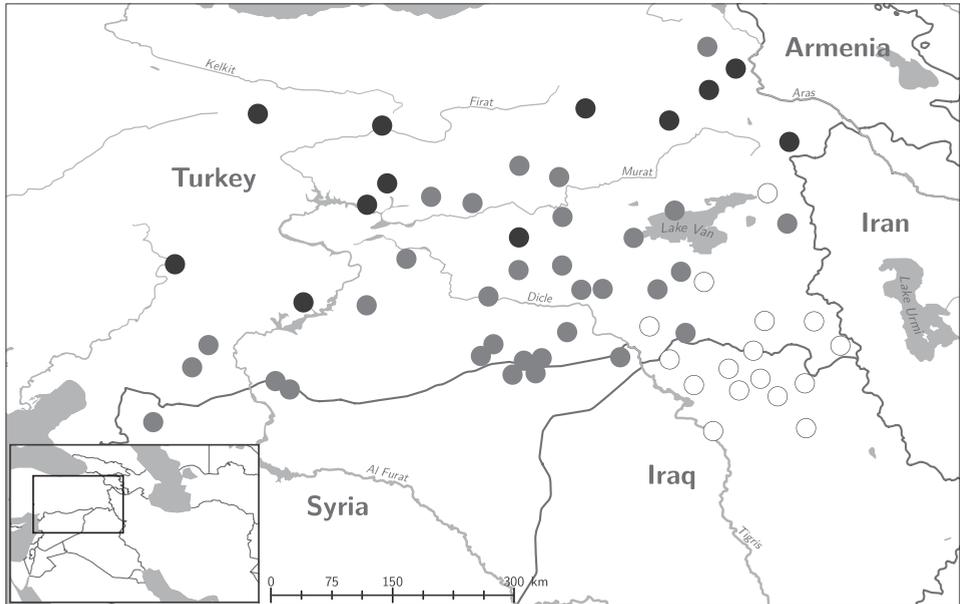   3SG.OBL.F   1SG.OBL=ADP   tell.PST.3SG
      'She told me'

Figure 5: Distribution of construction types with the verb *gotin* in Kurmanjî
Key: white=post-verbal, with directional particle (39); grey=pre-verbal, with
circumposition (40); black=pre-verbal, with postposition (41).

Having briefly illustrated the main dialectal divisions within Kurmanjî, I will turn
to some more specific features of phonology and morphosyntax, focussing on fea-
tures where SEK and WK show the most divergent features with respect to Stand-
ard K., and what has been provisionally termed Southern Kurmanjî above. Again,
it must be stressed that Southern Kurmanjî is not a well-defined entity, but essen-
tially covers those areas that are not captured by SEK and WK. Within SK, there
is of course a great deal of finer-grained dialectal differentiation, but it is beyond
the scope of this chapter to cover it.

3.1.   Variation in Phonology

3.1.1.   Phonological variation in SEK

In SEK of the Şemzinan dialect, there is a process of final-vowel centralization: A high front unrounded vowel [iː] is mostly centralized into an [ɨ] in word-final position. The process affects certain inflectional morphemes, for example Standard Kurmanjî *wî mirov-î* 'that man-OBL.M' is *wi mirow-**i*** in Şemzinan, Standard K. *naç-î* 'NEG.go.PRS-2SG' is *naç-**i*** in Şemzinan. It also affects some lexical items, e. g. *tiji* as opposed to Standard K. *tijî*. However, otherwise a lexical final long [iː] is preserved, as in *spī* 'white', *tarī* 'dark', or *karī* 'a sort of plant'. Note that the masculine ezafe and the oblique case following the indefiniteness suffix are not subject to centralization, as seen in the following examples:[10]

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

This feature is salient in the eastern half of the SEK dialect zone, but not found in the western section such as in Dohuk or Amêdî (see Haig, this volume, chapter 3.3, §4).

  Another feature of SEK, particularly of northern Iraq (Haig, this volume, chapter 3.3, §4.1.2), is the fronting of [uː] towards [yː]. In Behdinî of North Iraq and in the southeastern dialects of Kurmanjî in Turkey, the fronting process is accompanied by de-rounding, leading to [iː] in a number of lexical items, e. g. [xæsiː] 'mother-in-law', or [diːɾ] 'far' (Zakho, North Iraq), as opposed to Standard Kurmanjî [xæsuː] and [duːɾ]. Examples of fronting of [uː] to [yː], transcribed here as <ü>, are given in Table 18 (examples from Şemzînan dialect):

Table 18: Vowel fronting in Southeastern Kurmanjî (SEK)

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

Bilabialization of the voiced labio-dental fricative: Standard K. [v] is systematically seen as an approximant [w] in Şemzînan, similar to much of Central Kurdish (Haig, this volume, chapter 3.3, §3.1), so the the contrast between [v] and [w]

---

[10]   The final [iː] of participles is centralized when the participle is used predicatively (discussed in §3.2.1), as in: *mala wan a soti* 'their house has burnt down'. Otherwise, participles retain the final long vowel.

is neutralized. For example, Standard K. *av, şev, çav* 'water, night, eye' are pronounced *aw, şew, çaw* in Şemzînan. The process can also be observed in loanwords, such as *vazo* 'vase' (from 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. In the Behdinī 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 (Haig, this volume, chapter 3.3, §4).

3.1.2.   Phonological variation in WK

The phonology of WK diverges from that of Standard K. in several respects. The most striking is the backing and rounding of Standard K. [aː] to WK [ɔː], shown in Table 19.

Table 19: Backing and rounding of /a/ in Western Kurmanjî (WK)

Orthog.	Standard K.	WK	Gloss
av	[aːv]	[ɔːv]	'water'
hatin	[haːtɨn]	[hɔːtɨn]	'to come'
da	[daː]	[dɔː]	's/he/it gave'

Standard K. [ɛ] or [æ] is also regularly retracted to a low central unrounded vowel [æ] in WK. Thus Standard K. *dest* 'hand' and *dev* 'mouth' ([dæst], [dæv]) become [dæst] and [dæv] respectively.

Turning to the consonants, 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 (such as northern part of Kurmanjî speech zone). The process regularly affects an initial [b-] of verbal stems, when they are preceded by a tense, aspect, mood, or negation prefix.

Table 20: Lenition of pre-vocalic /b/ in Western Kurmanjî (WK)

Orthog.	Standard K.	WK	Gloss
hebek	[ħæbæk]	[ħæwæk]	'one unit'
seba	[sæbaː]	[sɛwaː]	'because of'
bîne	[biːnæ]	[wiːnæ]	'Bring (it)!'
bibîne	[bɨbiːnæ]	[bɨwiːnɨ]	'(If s/he) sees (it)'
nebēže	[næbeːʒæ]	[mæweː]	'Do not say!'
kitēb	[kʰɨteːb]	[kʰɨteːw]	'book'

An epenthetic vowel [ɨ] (see §2.1) in a number of Standard K. function words and inflectional morphemes is regularly a full vowel [æ] in WK (similar to Sorani/ Central Kurdish to which, geographically, WK is the most distant region). For example, the indicative present suffix *di-* generally loses its vowel, and is reduced do [d-], or [t-] in e. g. SEK (the entire morpheme is generally absent in the Mardin region of Southern Kurmanjî), just as the epenthetic vowel of the basic prepositions is likewise often lost in SEK. In WK, on the other hand, we find the indicative prefix [dæ-], as in *dæ-kɨm* 'I do', or the preposition *læ* for SEK [l(ɨ)] 'at'.

Notice that a pharyngeal [ʕ] is altogether not attested in the 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.

3.2.   Variation in the Ezafe construction

3.2.1.   Ezafe in SEK

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, see also Haig (this volume, chapter 3.3, §4):

Table 21: The Ezafe in Southeastern Kurmanjî (SEK)

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

One of the features distinguishing SEK from Standard K. and the rest of Kurmanjî 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. (42) illustrates a clausal expression of possession (realized via the copula in Standard K.).

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

Predicates expressing location require a clause-final copula in Standard K., but in SEK the ezafe suffices:

(43) *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, the copula is combined with the ezafe.

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

With finite verbs in the present tense, the ezafe expresses a progressive aspect:

(45) *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, it forms the present perfect tense:

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

(47) *pīrežin-ē   ser-ē   da-na-y-e   se*
      old.woman-OBL.F   head-EZ.M   PRV-put.PST-PTCP-DRCT   on
      ber-ek-ē
      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. (46) above). In the Yezidī dialects of Tur ʿAbdîn discussed in Bailey (2005), there is a similar neutralization of these tense-ezafes, leading to a uniform *-ī*.

3.2.2.   Ezafe in WK

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

Table 22: The Ezafe in Western Kurmanjî (WK)

	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*	'your 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.

*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.'

The most distinctive feature of 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. The examples below show the construction in copular clauses:

> *æz-ī/-ē gir=im*   'I (masc./fem.) am big.'
> *t-ī/-ē gir=æ*   'You (sg. masc./fem.) are big.'
> *æw-ī/-ē gir=æ*   '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.'

With negated non-verbal predicates, the ezafe particle attaches to the negation marker (Kömür 2003: 19):

> *az nî birçî ma*   'I (male) am not hungry'   (*ne+î=nî*)
> *az nê birçî ma*   'I (female) am not hungry'   (*ne+ê=nê*)

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.

3.3.   Adpositions in SEK

The system of adpositions in SEK differs from that of standard K. in several respects. Some of these are illustrated in (48), from Haig and Öpengin 2018 (glosses simplified). One of the three basic prepositions of standard K., *ji* 'from', is only present in SEK in a few formulaic expressions. In SEK, the sense of 'from' is covered by *li*, which also expresses 'in, at'. Example (48b) illustrates the preposition *li* in the sense of 'from'. Benefactives in SEK are expressed through the preposition *bo*, rather than the standard K. circumposition *ji … ra*. This is shown in (48a). In addition to Standard K. *bi* 'with, through', SEK has also *(li)gel* or *(di)gel* 'with', as well as a further circumpositional *di … da* 'inside', which is often reduced to the postpositional element (cf. 48c).

(48) a. *tu   hinde   šīrē   kīwīya   nešēy   **bo   min***
          you   some   milk.EZ.M   goat   NEG.can.2SG   for   me
          bīni
          SUBJ.bring.2SG
          'Can't you bring some goat milk for me?'
      b. *ez   dē   šīrē   kīwīya   **li**   kē_derē   īnim*
          I   FUT   milk.EZ.M   goat   from   where   (SUBJ)take.1SG
          'Where shall I bring the goat milk from?'
      c. *du   šēx   małekē   **da**   čēnabin*
          2   sheikh(PL)   hous.IND.OBL   in   PRV.NEG.be.PL
          '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 parentheses), as seen in this proverb (49):

(49) *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 (48a) rather than Standard K. circumposition *'ji X re'* for expressing benefactive; *'(li)gel X'* rather than Standard K. *'bi X re'* for comitative. 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'.

3.4.   Verbal morphology

3.4.1.   SEK verbal morphology

3.4.1.1. Stem formation

As noted in §2.6, 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 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 (50):

(50) *bi-ke-m*   *bi-be-m*
     SUBJ-do.PRS-1SG   SUBJ-take.PRS-1SG
     'I'll do'   'I'll take'

     di-de-m   *di-xo-m*
     IND-give.PRS-1SG   IND-eat.PRS-1SG
     'I give'   '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 23. Furthermore, in a number of verbs, also shown in Table 23, the present and past stems of the verbs in SEK/Şemzînan are different from Standard K. and other dialects.

Table 23: Comparison of verb stems in Şemzînan (SEK) and Standard K.

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'
ēšīya-	*ēša-*	ēšan 'hurt'	*-kišīn-*	*-kēš-*	kēšān 'pull'
kišand-	*kēša-*	kēšan 'pull'	*-řiž-*	*-řižiyē-*	řižiyan 'spill'
řižand-	*řēt-*	řētin 'spill'	*-řižīn-*	*-řēž-*	řētin 'pour'
avēt-	*howēt-*	howētin 'throw'	*-āvēž-*	*-howēž-*	howētin 'throw'
ajot-	*ha(w)jot-*	ha(w)jotin 'drive'	*-x-*	*-ēx-*	ēxistin 'drop'
xist-	*ēxist-*	ēxistin 'drop'	*-girī-*	*-girī-/-giriyē-*	giriyan 'weep'

3.4.1.2. 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. The same phenomenon is also found in the southernmost dialects of Southern Kurmanjî, for example around Midyat; see Haig and Öpengin (2018), ex. (75) and accompanying discussion.

Examples (51a) and (51b) show preverb incorporation in Şemzînan (SEK). In (51a), the present indicative form of the verb *hel-(h)atin* 'preverb-come' (='rise') has the indicative prefix preceding the preverbal element, and in (51b), both negation and indicative prefixes precede the preverbal element.[11]

(51) a. *řoj   spēdē   zū   di-helē-t*[11]
          sun   morning   quick   IND-rise.PRS-3SG
          'The sun rises early in the morning.'

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11   The verb form can be analysed as a contraction of *di-hel-hē-t* (IND-PRV-come.PRS-3SG). Cf. the corresponding standard K. form *hil-t-ê* (PRV-IND-come.PRS.3SG).

b. *ez   heta   hēwari   žī   ne-di-řa-westīya-m*
    1SG   until   evening   also   NEG-IPFV-PRV-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 (52).[12]

(52) *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).'

3.4.1.3. Additional aspect distinctions

As already discussed under §3.2.1, an analytic "present progressive" can be expressed in SEK by using the ezafe, as illustrated in (53).

(53) *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 Kurmanjî in Turkey lack this possibility. Similarly, an alternative present perfect can be created using the ezafe in combination with past participles, as shown in examples (46) and (47). Note that these two tenses, present progressive and present perfect tense, constructed using the ezafe, are mostly restricted to affirmative and declarative clauses, as they are in Behdinī (cf. Haig 2011, Haig, this volume, chapter 3.3, §4). However, in Şemzînan the present progressive does lend itself to negation, illustrated in (54).

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

3.4.2.   Verbal morphology in WK

3.4.2.1. Person marking

The WK person marking system differs from Standard K. in that the copula forms of 2SG and 3SG are merged in *-(y)æ*. Similarly, the 2SG and 3SG verbal agreement suffixes are merged in *-i* [ɨ]; see Table 24. In this manner, similar to the Mardin

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[12]   In Mêrd. dialect, a similar incorporation of preverbal particles can also be observed, cf. §4.2 in Haig and Öpengin (2018).

dialect, but unlike Şemzînan dialect of SEK, the person marking distinctions on verbs is reduced to three levels: 1SG – 2SG/3SG – 1PL/2PL/3PL.

3.4.2.2. Gender marking in the predicate

In WK, an ezafe particle attaches to the subject of non-verbal predicates, as shown in §3.2.2. A very similar usage also obtains in the present indicative, as in the following:

(55) a. *æw-ī   t-er-i*
          3SG-EZ.M   IND-go.PRS-3SG
          'He goes'

    b. *æz-ē   dæ-gē-m*
          1SG-EZ.F   IND-reach.PRS-1SG
          'I (female) am arriving.'

(56) a. *æz-ē   te   dæ-pē-m*
          1SG-EZ.F   2SG.OBL   IND-wait.PRS-1SG
          'I (female) am waiting (for) you.'

    b. *t-ī   dar-an   xiš   dæ-k-æ*
          2SG-EZ.M   wood-PL.OBL   PRV.cut   IND-do.PRS-2SG
          'Are you (male) cutting the wood?'

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. It is absent on a number of past tense sentences in Çapar (2009). We conclude provisionally that ezafes attach to the subjects of present tense verbs, and to copular constructions irrespective of the tense, but we await a full account of the conditions on the use of the ezafe in other verbal constructions.

(57) *æz-ē   dæ-zɔn-im   k=æw-ī   læ   vir   bū*
      1SG-EZ.F   IND-know.PRS-1SG   that=3SG-EZ.M   in   here   be.PST.3SG
      'I know that he was here.'
      (Çapar 2009: 63)

(58) *[pisīk-n-e   řeš]   geyrɔ-n*
      cat-INDF.PL-EZ   black   roam.around.PST-3PL
      'The black cats roamed around.'

(59) *řē-yɔ   xa   šaš-miš   kir*
      road-EZ.F   self   wrong-mIš   do.PST.3SG
      'I lost my way'

The ezafe forms marking the subject in the present tense and copular constructions apply 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 læ viræ* 'Musa-EZ.M (is) here'. With plurals, the ezafe applies regardless of whether the subject carries the plural oblique suffix, as in (60b), or does not carry it, as in (60a).

(60) a. *pisīk-ē   šīr   væ-dæ-xɔ-n*
          cat-EZ.PL   milk   PRV-IND-eat.PRS-3PL
          'The cats are drinking milk.'
      b. *pisīk-ɔn-ē   šīr   væ-dæ-xɔ-n*
          cat-OBL.PL-EZ.PL   milk   PRV-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 (60b). 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 (60a) and (60b).

   With complex subject noun phrases, the particle occurs at the end of the subject phrase, as in (61):

(61) a. *pisīk-n-e   řeš-ē   šīr   væ-dæ-xɔ-n*
          cat-INDF.PL-EZ   black-EZ.PL   milk   PRV-IND-eat.PRS-3PL
          'The black cats are drinking milk.'
      b. *vī   īlag-ɔ-y   qilēr=e*
          this   shirt-PROX-EZ.M   dirty=COP.3SG
          'This shirt is dirty.'

The same system apparently also applies to the future tense, according to the description in Kömür (2003: 18–20). The relevant forms are provided in Table 24. I assume that in the plural, the relevant clitic is uniform =ê, though this is not shown in the source. Note also the identical person marking suffixes in the second and third persons, as mentioned above. Unfortunately, we lack a detailed analysis of the verbal system of these dialects.

Table 24: Gender marking in Western Kurmanjî verbs ('send', present stem *şîn-*)

	PRESENT		FUTURE
1SG.M	*az=î*	*da-şîn-im*	*az=î ku bi-şîn-im*
1SG.F	*az=ê*	*da-şîn-im*	*az=ê ku bi-şîn-im*
2SG.M	*tu=yî*	*da-şîn-i*	*tu=yî ku bi-şîn-a*
2SG.F	*tu=yê*	*da-şîn-i*	*tu=yê ku bi-şîn-a*
3SG.M	*aw=î*	*da-şîn-i*	*aw=î ku bi-şîn-a*
3SG.F	*aw=ê*	*da-şîn-i*	*aw=ê ku bi-şîn-a*

3.4.2.3. Verbal negation

The negation prefix in past imperfective verb forms is *nɔ-,* identical with the negation prefix used in present indicative verbs, as in (62). 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, *mæ-*, as in ***mæ-wē*** 'do not say (it)'.

(62) *gɔv-ɔ   k=æz-ē   læ mereš-ē   wū-m   min*
      time-EZ   that=1SG-EZ   in place.name-OBL   be.PST-1SG   1SG.OBL
      *pir   sēv   **nɔ-dæ-xɔr-in***
      many   apple   NEG.IPFV-IPFV-eat.PST-3PL
      'When I was in Maraş, I would not eat so many apples.'

3.4.2.4. Turkish miş-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' (Tk. *anlamış*), *qapatmīš kirin* 'close' (Tk. *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 Kurmanjî texts of Le Coq 1903), and many are firmly established and phonologically adapted, as in (63).

(63) a. *min   řē-yɔ   xa šaš-mīš   kir*
          1SG.OBL road-EZ.F   self wrong-mIš do.PST
          'I lost my way.'
          (Çapar 2009: 63)
      b. *insɔn-?   dayan-miš   na-b-ī   ki*
          human-EZ   stand-mIš   NEG-be.PRS-3SG   PTCL
          'One cannot endure it.'

3.5.   Issues in Western Kurmanjî (WK) syntax

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 (64).

(64) a. *bɔv-ē* **xe** *čū-ye* *alwistan-ē*
father-EZ.M   REFL   go.PST-DRCT[13]   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?'

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 (65).

(65) *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=POSTP   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 Kurmanjî 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,[14] as in (66). But the conditional conjunction *eger* and more widely the *ki* particle can also start the sentence.

(66) *tu* *hat=se* *telafon-a* *mi* *ke*
2SG   come.PRS=COND   phone-EZ.F   1SG.OBL   do.IMPER.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 1998) 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 (67).

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[13]   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).

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

(67) *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)

4.   Northern Kurdish in eastern Anatolia: summary of main contact issues

Northern Kurdish is spoken across most of eastern Anatolia, and has thus been exposed to contact influence from several different languages: In the southeast, it has co-existed for centuries with Neo-Aramaic and local varieties of Arabic, while probably the most important historical contact language in central and northeastern Anatolia would have been Armenian. More recently, Turkish has exerted considerable influence on all varieties of Kurmanjî, through Turkish-language mass media, compulsory schooling, military service, and large-scale migration to the main administrative centres, where representatives of the Turkish state tend to be concentrated.

Areally, Kurmanjî is split across the Mesopotamian zone and the Caspian/Caucasian zone, and variation in morphosyntax corresponds broadly to this north/ south divide (Haig 2017). For example, the SEK dialects are firmly within the Mesopotamian zone, and here we find widespread use of non-canonical subjects with experiencer predicates, modal 'want', and expressions of possession (Haig 2006, 2017), a greater reliance on prepositions (§3.3), and a larger range of arguments that can occur post-predicatively (Haig 2015). The dialects of the north and west lack these features. This ties in with the general picture of Semitic influence in the southeast with a gradual fade-out northwards and westwards. But not everything fits this picture. It is quite unclear, for example, how areal considerations would be relevant in understanding the Western Kurmanjî constructions with the ezafe particle in the verbal domain (§3.2, 3.4).

In general, the core areas of Kurmanjî morphology show relatively little evidence of heavy structural borrowing (Haig 2007: 180). Most plausible candidates for contact-induced developments stem from phonology, lexicon, and syntax. The following list of candidate features for contact influence is not exhaustive, but merely illustrates some of those discussed in the literature:

1. Additional series of voiceless obstruents, presumably in part through Armenian influence (§2.2);
2. Pharyngealization, presumably through Semitic influence, but building on inherited features of the phonological system (Barry 2017);
3. Close similarities across the vowel systems in the languages of Anatolia (Haig 2017: 402);
4. Borrowing of Turkish conditional clitic =*ise* (cf. (66) from WK);

5. Use of Turkish *-mIš*-verb forms, incorporated into Kurdish complex predicates (cf. (59), (63) from WK);
6. Western Kurmanji dialects: numerals 11–19 follow Armenian pattern, reinforced by Turkish ('11' *dah-u-yek* etc. instead of *yānzdah* etc.), WK only;
7. Strategies for clause linkage (Matras 2002);
8. Common Anatolian clause-final copula construction (Haig 2017);
9. Borrowing of Turkish comparative particle *daha*;
10. Loss of the rule for reflexive binding with *xwe* 'self' (WK only, see Haig 2006, §3.5)

Previous research (Dorleijn 1996, Haig 2006, Haig 2007) has tended to focus on Turkish influence on Kurmanjî. While contemporary spoken Kurmanjî is undoubtedly heavily influenced by Turkish, it is important to consider the issue from a longer-term perspective. If we consider the situation of Kurdish prior to the founding of the Turkish state in 1923, there is little evidence of Turkish influence on much of Kurmanjî. Original texts recorded as late as the 1960's by Ritter (1971, 1976, see §5), show few traces of Turkish influence, either in lexicon or morphosyntax. The same holds for most of what I have above termed Southeastern Kurmanjî (SEK), particularly in the far southeast of the country. There are still monolingual speakers of Kurdish in this region today, and we can reasonably assume that this was much more widespread a century ago. The texts compiled by Nikitine from this region in the early twentieth century reflect reasonably reliably the Kurdish at the time, and illustrate the general paucity of Turkish influence (see MacKenzie (1995) for a critical edition of one Nikitine's texts). In what we have termed Western Kurmanjî (WK), Turkish influence appears more deeply entrenched, and is evident in the texts of Le Coq (1903). In these texts, provided by speakers from Zincirli, west of today's Gaziantep, we already find the reflexive pronoun used as a general possessive marker, without being subject to the binding conditions that apply to Standard Kurmanjî, we find the numerals 11–19 in the Turkish/Armenian form rather than the inherited Iranian form, and a scattering of Turkish *miş*-verbforms. But none of these sources show anything approaching the massive Turkish influence (e. g. in terms of loan words, code-switching, Turkish-influenced syntax) that characterizes the casual speech of many Kurds today. While the data is still very sketchy, it seems reasonable to assume that up until the beginning of the twentieth century, Kurmanjî speech communities were able to foster and preserve their language over a vast region, and ensure unbroken transmission across generations. Levels of loan words in the basic vocabulary (see e. g. Haig and Öpengin 2014) are also low; despite centuries of co-existence, there are remarkably few clear cases of Armenian or Neo-Aramaic borrowings in the basic Kurmanjî lexicon, suggesting that Kurmanjî was not under any particular pressure from these languages (Kurdish loanwords in Neo-Aramaic on the other hand, are extremely numerous, see Khan 2007).

Considering today's situation, the most crucial difference to pre-republican times is the incomplete childhood acquisition of the full spectrum of grammatical and lexical oppositions of Kurdish. The destruction of traditional village networks, the intrusion of Turkish into the domestic sphere via the media, and most importantly, pre-school and primary school monolingual language policies, means early acquisition of Kurdish is interrupted, with concomittant loss or simplification of lexical and grammatical structure. Thus much of what is often considered "Turkish influence" (see e. g. Dorleijn 1996) can also be interpreted as the result of imperfect acquisition.

5.   Short glossed text

The following text is an excerpt from the story 'The poor man, the snake, the Jew, and good fortune', recorded in the 1960's in one of the villages southeast of Midyat which, at that time, were still inhabited by Yezîdîs. The speaker was the Pîr of the local Yezîdîs, and the recording was made by a local Kurd, who was collaborating with the German Semitist Hellmut Ritter. They subsequently transcribed and published this and several other texts, together with a German translation, in Ritter (1976). Unfortunately, Ritter himself passed away in 1971, and the original magnetic tapes have never been recovered.

These stories represent one of the very few reliable records of spoken Kurmanjî from this period, and are typical of the oral tradition preserved in e. g. MacKenzie (1962), or Blau (1975), and discussed in Turgut (2012). Ritter's original transcription is phonetic rather than phonemic, and uses quite idiosyncratic symbols, making it rather inaccessible. In the version provided below, I have adapted it to the standard Kurmanjî orthography as outlined in Section 2 above, but the syntax remains as in the original, and dialectal features are noted where necessary.

(68) *roj-ek*[15]-*ê*   *kerk-ê*[16]   *wî*   *li*   *mil-ê*   *wî*
     day-INDF-OBL.F   yoke-EZ.M   3SG.OBL.M   at   shoulder-EZ.M   3SG.OBL.M
     ye
     COP.3SG
     'One day, his yoke is at his shoulder

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15   In the original transcription, the indefinite suffix is rendered with *-(i)k*, but I have standardized it throughout. Reduction of the indefiniteness suffix is a typical dialect feature of the Mardin region, where the suffix is realized as [-(i)k], unlike Standard Kurmanjî [-æk].

16   This word, transcribed in the original as *kärkē* (with ezafe), is translated into German as "*Holzgabel*", evidently a wooden artefact to enable a person to carry a load of wood on his or her shoulder. I have not been able to trace it in any of the Kurdish lexical sources known to me.

û   bivr-ê   wî   li   ser dest-ê   wî   ye
and   axe-EZ.M   3SG.OBL.M   at   on   hand-EZ.M   3SG.OBL.M   COP.3SG
and his axe is in his hand.

(69) ji   xwe=ra   di-ç-e   dar-a   çîy-ê.
for   self=POSTP   IND-go-PRS.3SG   wood-EZ.F   mountain-OBL.M
He is just going to the woods on the mountain.

(70) çû,   dîn   da-ye   vaye   mar-ek
go.PST.3SG   sight   give.PST.3SG=DRCT   EXCL   snake-INDF
He went, and saw – what's that, a snake
ser-ê   xwe   der-êxist   ba(ng)   kiri=yê,
head-EZ.M   self   out-put.PST.3SG   calling   do.PRF.3SG=3SG.OBL
has popped out its head and called to him

(71) go   kur-o!   go   ha!
say.PST.3SG   fellow-VOC.M   say.PST.3SG   yes!
saying: "fellow!", he said "yes?"

(72) go   ka   were   ez   bêj-im=e   te
say.PST.3SG   PRT   come.IMPER.SG   1SG   say.PRS.SUBJ-1SG=DRCT   2SG.OBL
He said: "won't you come, that I may tell you (something)?"

(73) were   cem   mi(n)!
come.IMPER.SG   to   1SG.OBL
"come to me!"

(74) belengaz   goti=yê   go   ya   haywan-ê
poor.man   say.PRF.3SG=3SG.OBL   say.PST.3SG   EXCL   animal-EZ.M
xwedê
god.OBL.M
The poor man said to him, saying: "Oh creature of God,

(75) tu   mar   î   û   ez   insan   im
2SG   snake   COP.2SG   and   1SG   person   COP.1SG
you are a snake, and I am a human.

(76) ez=ê   çawa   b-êm=e   cem   te? [...]
1SG=FUT   how   SUBJ-come.PRS-1SG=DRCT   to   2SG.OBL
How should I come to you?"

(77) belengaz   çû   cem   mêr   sekinî
poor.man   go.PST.3SG   to   snake.OBL.M   stop.PST.3SG
The poor man goes up to the snake and waits.

(78) *ya   haywan-ê   xwedê   derd-ê   te   çi*
EXCL   animal-EZ.M   god.OBL.M   trouble-EZ.M   2SG.OBL   what
ye,
COP.3SG
"Oh creature of God, what is your plight?

(79) *tu   çi   ji   mi(n)   di-xwaz-î?   gôti=yê*
2SG   what   from   1SG.OBL   IND-want.PRS-3SG   say.PRF.3SG=3SG.OBL
go
say.PST.3SG
What do you want from me?" (He) said to him:

(80) *ka   bost-ik-ê   ji   dûv-ê   mi(n)*
COMPL   span-INDF-OBL.F   from   tail-EZ.M   1SG.OBL
jê-bi-k-e!
from.it-SUBJ-do.IMPER-2SG
"cut off one span (unit of measure) from my tail!

(81) *bost-a   xwe   bi-gir-e   bi   dûv-ê   mi(n)*
span-EZ.F   REFL   SUBJ-take.IMPER-2SG   through   tail-EZ.M   1SG.OBL
Measure a span across my tail
û   jê-ke!
and   from.it-do.IMPER-2SG
and cut it off!"

(82) *bê*[17] *belê   tu   kêm   santîn-k-î*
but   2SG   less   centimetre-INDF-OBL.M
jê-k-e
from.it-SUBJ-do.IMPER-2SG
but if you cut off one centimetre too little

(83) *ez=ê   mal-a   te   xirab   bi-k-im!*
1SG=FUT   house-EZ.F   2SG.OBL   ruined   SUBJ-do.PRS-1SG
I will destroy your house!

(84) *bi-hêl-im   pirç-a   ser-ê   te*
SUBJ-let.PRS-1SG   hair-EZ.F   head-EZ.M   2SG.OBL
bi-waş-e   [...]
SUBJ-fall_out.PRS-3SG
I will cause the hair of your head to fall out."

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17   This reflects the original, though in Standard K. one might have expected *lê belê* here.

(85) ê   go   ya   haywan-ê   xwedê,   ez
      ez.M   say.PST.3SG EXCL   animal-EZ.M god.OBL.M 1SG
      na-wêr-im
      NEG-dare.PRS-1SG
      The other one said: "Oh creature of God, I don't dare
      dûv-ê   te   jê-k-im
      tail-EZ.M   2SG.OBL   from.it-SUBJ-do.PRS-1SG
      to cut off your tail."

(86) *go   me-tirs-e   baxt-ê   xwedê   ji*
      say.PST.3SG NEG-fear.IMPER-2SG   fortune-EZ.M god.OBL.M   from
      te=ra
      you=POSTP
      He (the snake) said: "don't be afraid, the fortune of God is with you."'

Abbreviations

1	first person	MOD	modality
2	second person	NEG	negation
3	third person	OBL	oblique
ADD	additive	PERF	perfect
ADP	adposition	PL	plural
AFF	affirmative	POSTP	postposition
COMPL	complementizer	PPRF	pluperfect
COND	conditional	PRES	present
COP	copula	PRF	perfect
DEM	demonstrative	PROX	proximal
DRCT	directional	PRS	present
EXCL	exclamative	PRT	particle
EZ	ezafe marker	PRV	preverbal particle
F	feminine	PST	past
FUT	future	PTCP	participle
HORT	adhortative	REFL	reflexive
IMPER	imperative	REL	relative
IND	indicative	SG	singular
INDF	indefinite	SUBJ	subjunctive
IPFV	imperfective	VOC	vocative
M	masculine		

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