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DEFINITENESS IN SORANI KURDISH AND ENGLISH

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Abstract

This paper aims to investigate the system of definiteness in two genealogically relative Indo-European languages, namely English and Sorani Kurdish. A questionnaire including Farsi and English sentences was developed in order to gather the required data. 30 Sorani Kurdish speakers answered the questionnaire. Due to the diversity in the Sorani dialect spoken in different regions, this study focused on data gathered from Sorani speakers of Saghez. Results show that the English articles *a/an* and *the* used to make noun phrases indefinite and definite respectively, are equivalent to suffixes *ek* and *aka* in Sorani. In both languages the generic form of the noun was either without any special article or affix, or formed by a bare plural noun.

Keywords
definiteness, indefiniteness, genericity, suffix

LA DETERMINACIÓN EN SORANI E INGLÉS

Resumen

Este artículo pretende identificar el sistema de determinación en dos lenguas indoeuropeas genealógicamente emparentadas: el inglés y el Sorani (curdo central). Se diseñó un cuestionario que incluía frases en farsi e inglés para reunir los datos necesarios. Treinta hablantes de Sorani respondieron el cuestionario. A causa de la diversidad dialectal del Sorani hablado en regiones distintas, el estudio se

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centra en los datos procedentes de hablantes de Sorani de la ciudad de Saghez. Los resultados muestran que los artículos *a/an* y *the* en inglés, usados para hacer frases determinadas e indeterminadas, respectivamente, son equivalentes a los sufijos *ek* y *aka* en Sorani. En ambas lenguas la forma genérica del nombre se forma o bien sin ningún artículo o afijo especial o bien con una forma plural de sustantivo.

Keywords
determinación, indeterminación, genericidad, sufijos

1. Introduction

English and Kurdish are both branches of Proto-Indo-European language family (cf. Appendix I). English is a West Germanic language that is spoken as a native language in many countries such as United States, United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, Ireland, South Africa, and New Zealand. It is also spoken as second language in several other countries such as India, Pakistan, Philippines, Jamaica, Malaysia, etc. According to Drechsel (2001), in an ESL situation (English as a Second Language), English is considered as one of the official languages of that country and is used for communication, trade or education. Drechsel (2001: 7) considers that English is considered as a foreign language in countries where people speak a particular vernacular, but also "learn English for private, business or scientific communication with persons all over the world." Thus, English is considered as a foreign language in most countries of the world, e.g. Iran, China, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Egypt, to name a few.

Kurdish is mainly spoken in central and eastern Turkey, northern Iraq and Syria and western Iran (Friend 1985; Walther and Sagot 2010). Friend (1985) further explains that Kurds are also scattered in Northeast of Iran, in Bojnurd, Neyshabur, Shirvan, and Quchan, as well as other areas like North of Qazvin, Northwest of Luristan, and North-eastern Baluchistan. Kurdish language belongs to the Indo-Iranian branch of Indo-European language family. Haig (2004) provides a simplified overview of the branches of Iranian languages. His classification is shown in Figure 1, below.

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HISTORICAL STAGES	MAJOR ATTESTED LANGUAGES	
Old Iranian	Old Persian (6-4 c. BC);	Old Avestan, Younger Avestan (12c.-6c. BC, dating is controversial)
	Western Iranian	**Eastern Iranian**
Middle Iranian (4/3c.BC-8/9c. AD)	Middle Persian, Parthian	Sogdian, Khotanese
Modern Iranian	Persian	Pashto
	Kurdish	Pamir
	Baluchi	Ossetic
	etc.	etc.

Figure 1.Overview of the Iranian languages (adopted from Haig 2004: 8)

Blau (1989) puts Kurdish among the North-western group of Iranian languages. However, Gunter (2003) asserts that different dialects of Kurdish, though they are considered to be of a common origin, are from different groups of Iranian languages: Kormanji and Sorani, the most widely spoken dialects are from south-western group of Iranian languages, while Gurani and Dimili (Zaza) belong to North-western group.

Generally, different dialects of Kurdish are divided into two broad categories: 1) the Northern dialects or Kurmanji, and 2) the Central dialects or Sorani. Kurmanji is spoken in the northern part of Iraqi Kurdistan, Caucasus, Anatolia, Northeast of Iran, and Syria. Sorani dialect, on the other hand, is spoken in much of Northeast Iraq (including Sulaymaniyah, Xanekin, Halabdjeh, KuySanjagh, Arbil, and GhaleDeze) and west Iran (including Mehabad, Naghadeh, Oshnavieh, Saghez, Baneh, Bukan, Sardasht, and Sanandadj).Windfuhr (1989: 294) provides a classification of Kurdish dialects "based on a combination of genetic relationship, geographic proximity, and ethnic identity, and less so on typology." He classifies Kurdish dialects into 4 groups: 1) Northern Kurdish, in Northern Iraq, Eastern Syria, and Eastern Turkey; 2) Central Kurdish, in Eastern Iraq and Western Iran; 3) Southern Kurdish, spoken in Iran and 4) and some other groups in Iran, Turkmenistan, Khorasan, Armenia, and Azerbaijan.

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Figure 2. Kurdish speaking regions (adopted from Michael M. Gunter 2003: xiv)

Blau (1989) and Blau and Barak's (1999) classification of Kurdish dialects includes the same categories as Windfuhr's. However, Blau's classification further subdivides Northern group into Western and Eastern group. A summary of his classification is provided below:

a) Northern Group: The group comprises two major dialects, as follows:

-Western: the Kurmanji dialect spoken in Eastern and South-eastern Turkey, and the neighbouring regions of Iran and Syria.

-Eastern: comprises Kurdish spoken in Caucasus, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Turkmenistan, Kirgizstan, and Kazakhstan. Badīnānī, a dialect almost similar to the eastern group, is spoken in North-western Iraq.

b) Central Group: called Sorani, includes Kurdish spoken in North-eastern Iraq including Suleimaniye, Arbil, Kirkouk, Khaneqin; and in South of Western Azerbaijan and Kordestan in Iran.

c) Southern Group: includes Kermanshahi, Sanjabi, Kalhori, Lakki, and Lori dialects.

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Kreyenbroek (1992: 71) demonstrates that Sorani and Kurmanji are considered as two distinct dialects of a same language due to "their common origin, and the fact that this usage reflects the sense of ethnic identity and unity of the Kurds." In fact, he believes that talking about Kurmanji and Sorani as the main "dialects" of Kurdish is misleading, and by comparing their differences to the distinctions among English and German languages states them as two separate languages, not dialects. Kreyenbroek (1992: 71) notifies their distinction at the grammatical level as: "Sorani has neither gender nor case endings [...] In Sorani pronominal enclitics play a crucial role in verbal constructions, while Kurmanji has no such enclitics, etc."·Similarly, Haig (2004) points out that what distinguishes the Northern Group from the Central (and Southern) Group is that the Central and Southern group use a definiteness suffix ("*-aka"* in Suleimaniye dialect which he studies), and a set of enclitic personal pronouns.

The body of the present article consists of five main sections. The present section, Introduction, has been a brief introduction to English and Kurdish languages, together with the different classifications of Kurdish dialects. This study is mainly focused on Sorani, the central dialect of Kurdish spoken mainly in Kordestan province in Iran; including Mehabad, Naghadeh, Oshnavieh, Saghez, Baneh, Bukan, Sardasht,and Sanandadj. Section 2 will provide the background—i.e. the related review of literature. Sections 3 will lay out the method used in this research, comprising the participants, instrumentation and procedure. In Section 4, results will be presented and findings will be discussed in details. Section 5 will serve as the conclusion to the article.

2. Background

2.1. Writing System

2.1.1. English writing system

Each writing system is a "system of graphic symbols that can be used to convey any and all thoughts" (DeFrancais 1989, cited in Fischer 2001: 11). English language uses Latin alphabet and consists of 26 letters, which can be written in 'capital' or 'small' forms. It includes 23 consonants and 12 vowels (containing 7 short and 5 long

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ones). Furthermore, the language uses 7 diphthongs, and 2 triphthongs in the case of British English.

Capital letters (Uppercase)																									
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
Small letters (Lowercase)																									
a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z

Figure 3.*English alphabet*

2.1.2. Kurdish writing system

On the other hand, the main writing system employed in Kurdish is of two types: Arabic and Latin. The Arabic script of Kurdish alphabet, used mainly in Iran among Sorani Kurds, consists of the following letters:

غ	ع	ش	س	ژ	ز	ڕ	ر	د	خ	ح	چ	ج	ت	پ	ب	ا									
	ی	ێ	ه	ھ	وو	و	ۆ	ن	م	ڵ	ل	گ	ک	ق	ف	ف									

Figure 4. Arabic Kurdish alphabet

Other alphabets are also used in Kurdish, including Hawar, Cyrillic, Armenian alphabet as well as a Turkic adaptation for Kurdish using Latin alphabet. As a result of such diversity in its writing system, the Kurdish Academy of Language (KAL) has recently proposed a unified system called *Yekgirtú* (Yekgirtí, yekgirig) alphabet in order to solve the problem with writing and reading of different Kurdish alphabets. A table of different Kurdish alphabets is provided in Appendix II. Kurdish has 30 consonants and 9 vowels (including 3 short and 6 long vowels). A table of phonological specifications of English and Kurdish vowels and consonants is also provided in Appendix III.

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2.2. Definiteness and Indefiniteness

2.2.1. Definiteness in English

An article is a subclass of determiners. It is used with a noun and shows whether the noun refers to something definite or indefinite. English has two articles: *definite* article *the*, and *indefinite* article *a* or *an*. The indefinite article *a* is used before singular nouns beginning with a consonant, while *an* with singular nouns beginning with a vowel, as seen in example (1) below:

1) *A man* was walking in the rain.
An apple a day keeps a doctor away.

Goard (2003: 1) states that "a nominal is definite if its felicity is associated with its profiling one and only one maximally salient referent". In fact, the definite article *the* used with singular or plural nouns gives the noun a sense of referring to something specific and particular.

2) *The man* who is with Mary is her fiancé.

Noun Phrases [NP] in some sentences are capable of obtaining a generic interpretation which means they can be used in "kind-reference, and on generalizations about classes of individuals" (Pérez-Leroux, Munn, Schmitt, Deirish 2003: 1). English language allows bare plural NPs to gain generic interpretation, but not definite plural NPs.

3) *Men* are more muscular than women. (shows a kind-reference, i.e. generic)
4) *The men* are more muscular than women. (shows object, i.e. some thing particular)

Abbott (2004) discussing literature on definite NPs, provides a summary of other definite NP structures proposed by other scholars (like Ariel 1988 & 1990; Birner and Ward 1998; Prince 1992). The following figure is adopted from her:

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	NP Type	More details	Examples
1	[NP *e*]	control PRO; pro; other instances of ellipsis	*Mary tried e to fly;* [on a pill packet] *e contains methanol* [= Ariel 1988, ex. 7a]
2	Pronouns	the personal pronouns	*I, you, she, them*
3	Demonstratives	demonstrative pronouns; NPs with demonstrative determiners	*This, that, this chair over Here*
4	Definite descriptions	NPs with *the* as determiner	*the king of France, the table*
5	Possessive NPs	NPs with genitive NPs as Determiner	*my best friend's wedding, our house*
6	Proper names		
	b. First name only		*Julia*
	b. Full proper name		*Julia Child*
7	∀ NPs	NPs with a universal quantifier as determiner	
	a. Each		*Each problem*
	b. Every		*Every apple*
	c. All		*All (the) girls*
8	[DET Ø]	The null determiner understood generically	*Pencils [are plentiful/made of wood], beauty [is eternal]*

Figure 5. List of English definite NPs (adopted from Abbott, 2004: 1-2)

Our sentences included definite NPs formed by demonstratives: *this, that, those,* and *these* as well as definite article: *the.*

5) Pass me *that umbrella.*

On the other hand, Abbott (2004) also provides a list of more indefinite NPs among which only the indefinite articles *a* and *an* are used here to form indefinite sentences.

	Determiners	Comments	Examples
1	[DET Ø]	'Bare' NPs understood Existentially	*Children [are crying], snow[was piled high]*
2	*Any*	Polarity sensitive *any* 'Free choice' *any*	*[hardly] any books, Any idiot [can lose money]*
3	*No*		*No thought(s), no music*

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4	*Most*		*Most (of the) apples, most Snow*
5	*A/an*		*A cook, an idea*
6	*Sm, some*	*sm* refers to unstressed occurrences with weak or cardinal interpretation. *Some* is the strong, or partitive, version (see §4 below).	*Sm books, some (of the)Space*
7	*Several, a few, many, few*	These determiners also are said to have weak and strong versions.	*Several (of the) answers, few (of the) athletes*
8	Indefinite *this*	Occurrences of this *this* can occur in existentials (see below).	*This weird guy [came up tome]*

Figure 6. List of English indefinite NPs (adopted from Abbott, 2004: 2-3)

The literature proves that there have always been controversies on the definition and properties of definiteness. Abbott (2004) states that definiteness has usually been investigated in terms of properties like uniqueness, familiarity, strength, and specificity. As this study was not concerned with the essence of definiteness and its various forms, the definite and indefinite NPs were created with English prototype articles: *the, a,* and *an* and also demonstratives *this, that, these,* and *those*. Generic sentences were also made by bare plural NPs.

2.2.2. Definiteness in Kurdish

Definiteness in Kurdish language is also problematic, because of various available dialects, diversities in writing system, and also shortage of academic researches regarding Kurdish language. Rhea (1869: 120), providing one of the oldest reports on Kurdish, cites that "Kurdish has no articles; but the demonstratives are often used with the value of a definite article, and the numeral "*ēk*" 'one', with that of an indefinite…".[1] However, he seems to be the only person who denied the use of articles in Kurdish. Soane (1913) does not mention definite and indefinite articles, but compares some examples which differ in definiteness under singular nouns title. He also illustrates that the diminutives "*-ek*", "*-aka*" and "*-k*" should not be confused with those signifying singular nouns. The following examples are adopted from Soane (1913: 9):

[1]All phonetic symbols and examples used in literature review are adopted from the original sources.

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6)

Kurdish Transcriptions	English Translations
Pāīoek	one man
Pāīo	the man
Pāīoaka	the man (dim)
Pāīoakaī	a man (dim)

Ali Saeed (1969) lists eight possible articles for definiteness in Kurdish language as summarized in the following figure:

Indefinite	-ê	-yê	-êk	-yêk	-yak	-ak
Definite	-ka	-aka				

Figure 7. Kurdish definite and indefinite articles

While, on the other hand, according to Kalbasi (2006), in Mehabadi dialect definiteness is specified with the following articles:

Indefinite	-ē	-ēk
Definite	-a	-aka

Figure 8. Kurdish definite and indefinite articles

Kalbasi (2006) only cites a few examples for the articles without discussing the rules in applying them. She remarks the change of "*-a*", "*-aka*", and "*-ēk*" to "*-ya*", "*-yaka*", and "*-yēk*" after the words that end in /â/ vowel.

Thackstone (2006a) discussing substantives in Kurdish language points three states of noun, including: absolute state, indefinite state, and definite state, which are of interest in this paper.

Indefinite	*èk*	*yèk*	*ân*	*yân*
Definite	*aká*	*ká*	*akân*	*kân*

Figure 9. Kurdish definite and indefinite articles

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First, the absolute state gives the noun a generic sense. In an absolute state, a Kurdish noun has no ending of any kind, as what can be found in a dictionary.

7)

Sorani Example	Transcription	English Translation
وەفر سپیە	*wafrspîa*	snow is white(adopted from Thackstone 2006b)

Second, is the indefinite state that is made by attaching the indefinite marker "*-(y)èk*" ("*èk*" after consonants and "*èk*" after vowels) to the end of singular nouns:

8)

Sorani Examples	Transcriptions	English Translations
پیاو	*pyâw*	Man
پیاوئک	*pyâw**èk***	a man
نامە	*nâma*	Letter
نامەئەک	*nâma**yèk***	a letter (adopted from Thackstone 2006b)

Or by adding *-(y)ân* (*ân* after consonants and *yân* after vowels) to the absolute singular noun to make the indefinite plural form.

9)

Sorani Examples	Transcriptions	English Translations
پیاوان	*pyâw**ân***	(some) men
نامان	*nâm**ân***	(some) letters

Finally, *definite* singular nouns are formed by adding the suffix "*-(a)ká*", "*aká*" after consonants, *u*, *e*, and *î*, and "*-ká*" after the vowels *a*, *â*, and *o*):

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10)

English Translations	Transcriptions	Sorani Examples
man	*pyâw*	پیاو
the man	*pyâw**aká***	پیاوەکە
letter	*nâma*	*نامە*
the letter	*nâma**ká***	نامەکە

To form the definite plural *(a)kân* should be added to the singular absolute state of the noun.

11)

English Translations	Transcriptions	Sorani Examples
the men	*pyâw**akân***	پیاوەکان
the letters	*nâma**kân***	*نامەکان*

Thackstone (2006b) explains that demonstratives (i.e., *this*, *that*, *these*, and *those*) can also accompany the nouns and affect their definiteness. Kurdish demonstrative pronouns are:

English Translations	Transcriptions	Sorani Examples
this	*am... á*	ئەم ...ە
these	*am... âná*	ئەم ...انە
that	*aw... á*	ئەو ...ە
those	*aw... âná*	ئەو ...انە

Figure 10. Demonstratives in English and Kurdish

These demonstratives are normally added to the beginning of the absolute singular and the indefinite plural nouns while*(y)á* also joins to the end of the noun. For example:

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12)

English Translations	Transcriptions	Sorani Examples
this man	***am*** *pyâw****á***	پیاوە ئەم
these men	***am*** *pyâwân****á***	ئەم پیاوانە
that letter	***aw*** *nâma****yá***	ئەونامەیە
those letters	***aw*** *nâmân****á***	ئەونامانە

The studies cited above have mainly investigated the Sorani Kurdish language in general, without focusing on regional dialect; among them Kalbasi (2006) can be notified as a research on the dialect of Mehabad region in particular. Due to the lack of regional researches the present study is aimed to explore the system of definiteness in Sorani Kurdish, spoken in the Saghez region.

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants

The participants of the present research have been thirty Iranian Kurdish speakers, ranging in age from 18 to 25 years old who were all university students at Al-Zahra University in Tehran or Azad University of Sanandaj. They were selected to answer the questionnaire because of their familiarity with Sorani dialect and Arabic script of Kurdish alphabet. More than half of the participants were from Saghez and others from other Kurd cities. Due to the great deal of diversity observed among the data gathered from the participants from other cities which included Sanandaj, Mehabad, Bukan, and Baneh, the study has been focused on the data gathered from the Sorani dialect spoken in Saghez.

3.2. Instrumentation

The instrument used in this research to gather data was a questionnaire that included Farsi and English sentences for which participants were supposed to provide

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Kurdish equivalence. It contained thirty three sentences made by eleven nouns in all three definite, indefinite, and generic forms. The English sentences were written based on generally accepted grammatical rules of English language. Farsi equivalent translations were also checked by several Farsi speaking linguists. The scrambled sentences were put into a table to be filled by Kurd speakers (cf. Appendix IV).

3.3. Procedure

Eleven nouns were selected and for each of them three sentences were written in English that included definite, indefinite, and generic NPs. After translating them into Farsi, three linguists checked the appropriateness of the equivalent sentences in Farsi language. Then, thirty participants who were selected because of their familiarity with Sorani dialect and the writing systems filled the questionnaires. In order to summarize the data, a frequency table was formed to include all Kurdish equivalents used for selected nouns and the number of times they were used in different samples (cf. Appendix IV). Finally the data was used to compare the definiteness in Sorani Kurdishand English.

4. Results and Discussion

At first, the noun phrases used to indicate definiteness and their frequencies were summarized in a table (cf. Appendix V). Then the results of the analyses of the definite, indefinite, and generic endings in each noun phrase were placed in the following table for more investigation.

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Indefinite			Definite			Generic		
Transcriptions	Saghez Endings	Frequencies	Transcriptions	Saghez Endings	Frequencies	Transcriptions	Saghez Endings	Frequencies
ek	یێک	136	ækæ	ەکە	85	---	---	114
---	---	14	(æw) a:næ	ـەوـانە	29	æka:n	ە کان	46
jek	یێک	14	(æm) æ	ـە مـ...ە	18	a:n	ان	14
k	ک	11	(æm) ja:	ـە مـ...یە	16	ika:n	یکان	2
jæk	یە ک	5	---	---	13			
æk	ە ک	5	I	ـ ی ...	10			
I	ی	3	ek		4			
			(æw) a:ni		1			

Figure 11. *Summary of suffixes.*

As can be seen in the above table, the majority of the participants have used the ending "*ek*" and "*aka*" to form indefinite and definite NPs respectively. Generic nouns do not usually take any suffixes.

4.1. Indefinite State

To explain the use of (in)definite suffixes in detail, we review some of the sentences below:

13) mæn keteb-ek-m hæjæ:
I book-INDEF[inite]-me is
'I have a book'.

14) ka:ɣæz-ek-m la:zem-æ
Paper-INDEF-me need- is
'I need a paper'.

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As can be seen in example (13a), *keteb* (book) which ends in a consonant takes the affix *ek* to show the indefinite state. The same pattern can be seen for the word kāɣæz 'paper' which shows indefiniteness by taking the affix *"ek"*.

However, when the noun ends in a vowel, *"jek"* is used instead of *"ek"* to indicate indefiniteness. This is shown in the examples below:

15)	bɪ	zæhmæt,	ku:litʃæ-jek-i	dIkæ-m	bedæ-jæ
	Without	trouble,	cookie-INDEF-*ezafe*	another-me	give- you
	'Please, give me another cookie'.				

Interestingly, the semi-vowel *w* acts like consonants in taking the indefinite suffix. This is obvious in example (16). A man is shown by /pia:wek/, using the indefinite affix *"ek"* and not *"yek"*.

16)	pia:w-ek	læ	bn	ba:ra:n	dæ-roʃt
	man-INDEF	in	under	rain	PROG[ressive]-went
	'A man was walking in the rain'.				

4.2. Definite State

Regarding the use of definite affix, too, different patterns were observed. *"ækæ"*, *"æ"*, and *"yæ"* were used in different contexts to indicate definiteness.

17)	ku:r-ækæ	næj-twa:ni	a:na:na:s-ækæ	bobr-e
	boy-DEF[inite]	NEG[ative]-could	pineapple-DEF	cut-3rd Person
	'The boy couldn't slice the pineapple'.			

In this sentence, both of the nouns *pineapple*, and *boy* are definite and the suffix *"ækæ"* is used to indicate the definite state.

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18) æw tʃætr-æ-m bedæ-jæ
that umbrella-DEF-me give-2nd
'Pass me that umbrella'.

In sentence (18a) the definiteness of the noun *tʃætr* (umbrella) is indicated by the suffix ***æ*.**

Another suffix used to show definite state, is *ya* which was used with nouns ending in vowels, like *toʃæ* (cookie) in the sentence below:

19) ta:m-I æm tɔ:ʃæ-jæ xoʃ nj-æ
taste-of this cookie-DEF good NEG-is
'This cookie does not taste good'.

As was discussed in the previous section in regard to the noun *pyaw* 'man' which ends in a semi-vowel, the noun takes the suffix *"ek"* in indefinite states; i.e. suffix is used with nouns ending in a consonant. Regarding the definite state, too, "*æka"* is used with *pyaw* to indicate definiteness:

20) æw pIa:w-ækæ ke lægæl Ma:rI-æ dæzgIra:nI-jæt-I
that man-DEF that with Mary-is fiancé-POSS[essive]3rd-is
The man who is with Mary is her fiancé'.

In the data gathered, there was one example of a sentence in which the definite noun was not marked by any affix, i.e. it was used in a generic form. This is not correct; however, the mistake might have occurred by Kurds perhaps because they have not noticed that they should use the noun in the definite state.

21) dæ-mæ-je da:ven su:r læ bær kæm
PROG-I-want skirt red to body do
'I want to wear the red skirt'.

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4.3. Generic State

A generic noun refers to a category as a whole (e.g. *cats* as an entirety), not to any individual or group of individuals (e.g. the wolves we saw in the zoo were wild). Generic nouns can be singular or plural. What is important is that they must refer to *kinds*, i.e. a category which is a coherent, stable entity (Gopnik and Meltzoff 1997). In our data, both singular and plural nouns were used to show genericity. As can be seen in the table summarizing the data, nouns in generic state usually take no suffix. While using the generic noun in plural form, the suffixes *"æka:n"* and *"a:n"* are used to show plurality:

22) kteb dɔ:stɪ emæ jæ
book friend we is
'Books are our friends'.

The generic noun *kteb* (book) has no suffixes in this example.

23) særv læ da:r-æka:n-ɪ hæmɪʃæ sæwz-æ
cedar of tree-PL[ural]-*ezafe* always green-is
'Cedar is among ever-green trees'.

24) pia:w-a:n ma:sulækæi:-tær læ ʒna:n-n
man-PL muscular-COMP[lementizer] from women-are
'Men are muscular than women'.

In the two examples above, two suffixes are used to make a plural noun in the generic sense. The suffixes *"ækan"* and *"ān"* are used with plural generic nouns.

As can be seen in Figure 11, there are other suffixes used to indicate (in)/definite and generic state. However, these suffixes are not discussed here. The sentences were scrambled and presented to participants. They were also not told to notice the use of definite articles. Thus, they had used the noun in a state which was not similar to the

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either Farsi or English equivalents, sometimes. These matters were not used within the data analysis throughout this paper.

6. Conclusion

To conclude, suffixes are used to mark definiteness in Sorani Kurdish. Suffixes "*ek*", "*jek*" indicate indefinite state; "*æk*", "*ækæ*", "*yæ*" mark nouns in definite state, and "*æka:n*" and "*an*" (in plural form), along with no suffix (in singular form) give nouns a generic sense, as seen below:

25)

Indefinite Endings

English Translations	Transcriptions
a flower	gɔ:l*ek*
a cookie	tɔ:ʃæ*jek*

26)

Definite Endings

English Translations	Transcriptions
the flower	gɔ:l*æk*
the tree	da:r*ækæ*
this cookie	æm tɔ:ʃæ*jæm*

27)

Generic Endings

English Translations	Transcriptions
(the) men	pıa:w*a:n*
(the) flowers	gɔ:l*ækan*
(the) umbrellas	tʃætr

In English, as can be seen in the English translations above, the definite state is shown by using article *the* before nouns. Indefinite state is indicated by articles *a* and *an*, and the nouns in generic state have either article *the* before them, or take no article at all.

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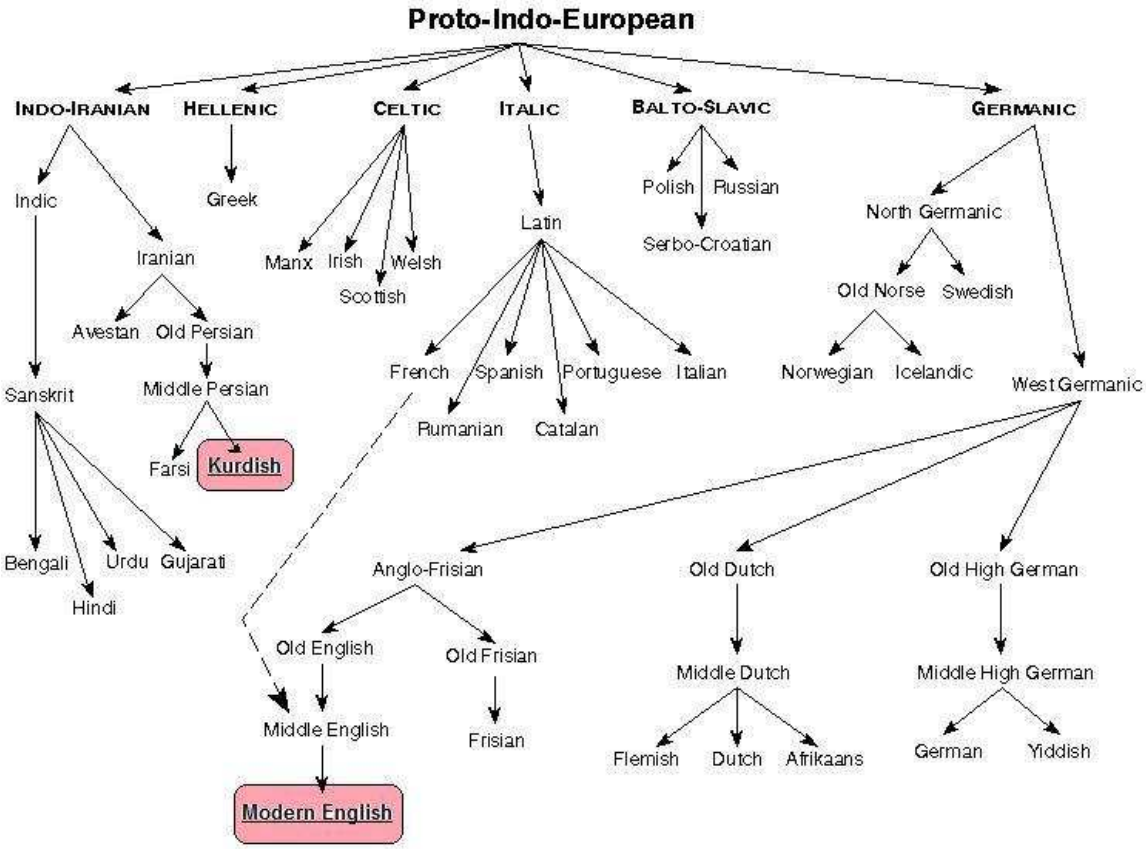
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Appendices

Appendix I

Proto-Indo-European Language Family (Retrieved on 11, June, 2010, from http://andromeda.rutgers.edu/~jlynch/language.pdf)



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Appendix II

Comparison of different Kurdish alphabets

(Retrieved from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kurdish_alphabet)

Latin Kurmanjî	Yekgirtú	Cyrillic Kurmanjí	Sorani - Stand-alone	Sorani Initial	Sorani Medial	Sorani Final	IPA
A,a	A,a	А,а	ا	ئا	—	ـا	[aː]
B,b	B,b	Б,б	ب	بـ	ـبـ	ـب	[b]
C,c	J,j	Ҷ,ҷ	ج	جـ	ـجـ	ـج	[ʤ]
Ç,ç	C,c	Ч,ч	چ	چـ	ـچـ	ـچ	[ʧ]
D,d	D,d	Д,д	د	—		ـد	[d]
E,e	E,e	Ə,ə	ه	ئه	—	ـه	[ɛː]
Ê,ê	É,é	Е,е(Э э)	ێ	ێـ	ـێـ	ـێ	[e]
F,f	F,f	Ф,ф	ف	فـ	ـفـ	ـف	[f]
G,g	G,g	Г,г	گ	گـ	ـگـ	ـگ	[g]
H,h	H,h	h,h	ھ	ھـ	ـھـ	ـھ	[h]
Ḧ,ḧ	H',h'	h`,h`	ح	حـ	ـحـ	ـح	[ħ]
—	'	—	ع	عـ	ـعـ	ـع	[ʕ]
I,i	I,ı	Ь,ь	—				[ɯ]
Î,î	Í,í	И,и	ی	ئی	ـیـ	ـی	[iː]
J,j	Jh,jh	Ж,ж	ژ	—		ـژ	[ʒ]
K,k	K,k	К,k	ک	کـ	ـکـ	ـک	[k]
L,l	L,l	Л,л	ل	لـ	ـلـ	ـل	[l]
—	Ll	Л',л`	ڵ, ڵ	ڵـ, ڵـ	ـڵـ, ـڵـ	ـڵ, ـڵ	[lˁ]
M,m	M,m	М,м	م	مـ	ـمـ	ـم	[m]
N,n	N,n	Н,н	ن	نـ	ـنـ	ـن	[n]
O,o	O,o	О,о	ۆ	ئۆ	-	ـۆ	[o]
P,p	P,p	П,п	پ	پـ	ـپـ	ـپ	[p]
Q,q	Q,q	Q,q	ق	قـ	ـقـ	ـق	[q]
R,r	R,r	Р,р	ر	—		ـر	[r]
—	Rr	Р',р`	ڕ, ز, ږ	—		ـڕ, ـز, ـږ	[r]
S,s	S,s	С,с	س	سـ	ـسـ	ـس	[s]
Ş,ş	Sh,sh	Ш,ш	ش	شـ	ـشـ	ـش	[ʃ]
T,t	T,t	Т,т	ت	تـ	ـتـ	ـت	[t]
U,u	U,u	Ö,ö	و	—		ـو	[œ]
Û,û	Ú,ú	У,у	وو, ۊ	—		ـوو, ـۊ	[uː]
—	Ù,ù	—	ۋ	—		ـۋ	[ʉː]
V,v	V,v	В,в	ڤ, ۋ	ڤـ	ـڤـ	ـڤ, ـۋ	[v]
W,w	W,w	W,w	و	—		ـو	[w]
X,x	X,x	Х,х	خ	خـ	ـخـ	ـخ	[x]
Ẍ,ẍ	X',x'	Ґ,ґ	غ	غـ	ـغـ	ـغ	[ɣ]

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Y,y	Y,y	Й,й	ی	ـیـ	—		[j]
Z,z	Z,z	З,з	ز	—		ـز	[z]

Appendix III

The inventories of phonemes of the Kurdish and English

Vowel Phonemes in English and Sorani

	Sorani			English		
	Front	**Center**	**Back**	**Front**	**Center**	**Back**
High	i	ʉ	U	i		u
Mid	I		ʊ	I	ɜ ə	ʊ
	e		ɔ	e		ɔ
Low	æ a			æ	ʌ	ɑ ɒ

English consonants

place / manner	bi-labial	labio-dental	dental	alveolar	alveo-palatal	palatal	velar	uvular	glottal
Plosive	p b			d t			k g		
Fricative		f v	θ	s z	ʃ ʒ				h
Affricate				tʃdʒ					
Nasal	m			n			ŋ		
Liquid				l r					
semi-vowel	w					j			

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Sorani consonants

place / manner	bi-labial	labio-dental	dento-alveolar	alveolar	alveo-palatal	palatal	velar	uvular	glottal	pharyngeal
Plosive	p b		d t				k g	q	ʔ	
Fricative		f v	s z		ʃ ʒ		x	ʁ	h	ħ ʕ
Affricate					ʧ ʤ					
Nasal	m		n				ŋ			
Liquid			l	r						
Lateral					ɾ	ɬ				
semi-vowel	w					j				

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Appendix IV

Questionnaire used to gather samples

	English	فارسی
1	I have a book.	من یک کتاب دارم.
2	Can you name a flower?	می توانی یک گل را نام ببری؟
3	Pass me that umbrella.	آن چتر را به من بده.
4	Storks migrate in the winter.	لک لک ها در زمستان مهاجرت می کنند.
5	My mother has sewed me a new skirt.	مادرم دامن جدیدی برایم دوخته است.
6	Pineapple grows in tropical regions.	آناناس در مناطق گرمسیری می روید.
7	This cookie does not taste good.	مزه ی این کلوچه خوب نیست.
8	Cedar is among ever-green trees.	سرو از درختان همیشه سبزاست.
9	I need a paper.	یک کاغذ لازم دارم.
10	Books are our friends.	کتاب دوست ماست.
11	I gave him the flower.	گل را به او دادم.
12	White umbrellas are used in sunny days.	در روزهای آفتابی از چتر سفید استفاده می‌شود.
13	A stork has nested on our chimney.	یک لک لک روی دودکش ما لانه ساخته است.
14	Scottish men wear skirts.	مردان اسکاتلندی دامن می پوشند.
15	Give me another cookie, please.	لطفاً یک کلوچه ی دیگر به من بده.
16	Those papers are wet.	آن کاغذها خیس هستند.
17	She broke a cup while washing the dishes.	وقتی ظرف‌ها را می‌شست، یک فنجان را شکست.
18	A man was walking in the rain.	مردی در باران قدم می زد.
19	Cups are more suitable for drinking coffee.	فنجان برای نوشیدن قهوه مناسب تر است.
20	The boy couldn't slice the pineapple.	پسر نتوانست آناناس را ببرد.
21	I saw the book on the table.	کتاب را روی میز دیدم.
22	Flowers need a lot of care.	گلها به مراقبت زیادی نیاز دارند.
23	He bought an umbrella.	او یک چتر خرید.
24	We let the stork enter our house.	گذاشتیم لک لک وارد منزلمان شود.
25	I want to wear the red skirt.	می خواهم دامن قرمز را بپوشم.
26	The lime tree blossomed earlier this year.	درخت لیمو امسال زودتر شکوفه داد.
27	I want those cups.	آن فنجان ها را می خواهم.
28	I planted a new tree in our garden yesterday.	دیروز یک درخت تازه توی باغچه مان کاشتم.
29	Papers are made from woods.	کاغذ از چوب ساخته می شود.
30	I found a pineapple in the fridge.	یک آناناس در یخچال پیدا کردم.
31	I prefer cookies to biscuits.	کلوچه را به بیسکویت ترجیح می دهم.
32	Men are more muscular than women.	مردها عضلانی تر از زن ها هستند.
33	The man who is with Mary is her fiancé.	آن مرد که همراه ماری است، نامزد اوست.

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Appendix V

Summary of the gathered data and the frequencies

No	English	Kurdish					
1	A book	کتێبێک ketebek	11	کتێبکم ketebækæm	5		
2	The book	کتێبەکە ketebækæ	16				
3	Books	کتێب kteb	16				
4	A flower	گوڵێک gulek	16				
5	The flower	گوڵەکە gulækæ	12	گوڵیک gulik	4		
6	Flowers	گوڵەکان gulæka:n	16				
7	An umbrella	چەتریکی ʧætriki	16				
8	The umbrella	ئەو چەترە æw ʧætræ	16				
9	Umbrellas	چەتر ʧætr	16				
10	A stork	لەقلەقیك læqlæqik	12	لەقلەق læqlæq	1	لەکلەکیک læklækik	3
11	The stork	لەقلەقەکە læqlæqækæ	12	لەقلەق læqlæq	2	لەکلەک læklæk	2
12	Storks	لەقلەقەکان læqlæqæka:n	10	لەکلەکەکان læklækæka:n	4	لەقلەق læqlæq	2
13	A skirt	داوێنێک da:wenek	13	داوێن da:wen	3		
14	The skirt	داوێن da:wen	9	داوێنە کە da:wenækæ	7		
15	Skirts	داوێن					

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		da:wen	16				
16	A pineapple	ئاناناس a:na:na:s	10	ئاناناسێک a:na:na:sek	6		
17	The pineapple	ئاناناسەکە a:na:na:sækæ	16				
18	Pineapples	ئاناناس a:na:na:s	16				
19	Another cookie	تۆشەیکی دیکە tʉ:ʃæjæki dikæ	11	کۆلیچەیەکی دیکە kʉ:litʃæjæki dikæ	5		
20	This cookie	ئەم تۆشەیە æm tʉ:ʃæjæ	12	ئەم کولیچەیە æm kʉ:litʃæjæ	4		
21	Cookies	تۆشە tʉ:ʃæ	12	کۆلیچە kʉ:litʃæ	4		
22	A tree	داریک da:rek	14	داری da:ri	2		
23	The tree	داڕێ da:re	10	دارەکە da:rækæ	6		
24	Trees	دارەکان da:ræka:n	14	داریکان da:rika:n	2		
25	A paper	قاقەزێک qa:qæzek	11	کاقەزەیک ka:qæzek	5		
26	The paper	ئەو قاقەزانە æw qa:qæza:næ	10	ئەوکاقەزانە æw ka:qæza:næ	5	ئەو قاقەزانی æw qa:qæza:ni	1
27	Papers	قاقەز qa:qæz	11	کاقەز ka:qæz	5		
28	A cup	فنجانێک fndʒa:nek	13	فینجانەک findʒa:næk	2	فنجانەک fndʒa:næk	1
29	Those cups	ئەو فینجانانە æw findʒa:na:næ	14	ئەو فنجانە æw fndʒa:næ	2		
30	Cups	فینجان	12	فنجان			

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		findʒa:n		fndʒa:n	4		
31	A man	پیاوێک	16				
		pia:wek					
32	The man	پیاوه که	16				
		pia:wækæ					
33	Men	پیاوان	14	پیاوەکان	2		
		pia:wa:n		pia:wæka:n			

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