A Reference Grammar
with Selected Readings

W. M. Thackston
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### READINGS

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Kurdish–English Vocabulary | 163
Kurdish belongs to the Western Iranian group of the Indo-Iranian branch of the Indo-European family. The two principal branches of modern literary Kurdish are (1) Kurmanji, the language of the vast majority of Kurds in Turkey, Syria, Armenia, and Azerbaijan, the area designated by Kurdish nationalists as “North Kurdistan,” with an estimated fifteen to seventeen million speakers, and (2) Sorani, the language of most Kurds in Iraq (four to six million speakers) and Iran (five to six million speakers), the area designated as “South Kurdistan.” Although the two are closely related, Kurmanji and Sorani are not mutually intelligible and differ at the basic structural level as well as in vocabulary and idiom. Since Kurdish is fairly closely related to and has been massively influenced by Persian, the dominant literary and cultural language of the area for the last millennium, Kurdish is best approached with a basic knowledge of Persian.

While Kurmanji is still far from being a unified, normalized, or standardized language, Sorani has been the second official language of Iraq since the creation of that country after World War I and has many decades of literary activity behind it. In Iran, Kurdish has never been accorded official status, but in Iranian Kurdistan there has been noteworthy publication in Kurdish, particularly after the Iranian revolution. The area in which Sorani is spoken in Iran is more or less the region designated as Kurdistan. Outside of that area, south to Kermanshah and east as far as Bijar, the language is known as Gorani, or South Sorani, which is a Mischsprache that is basically Persian in structure but Kurdish in vocabulary.

The readings, chosen to give samples of a broad range of prose writing ranging from fairy tales to the internet, are provided with running glosses beneath the texts, and the glosses in the readings are also contained in the Kurdish–English vocabulary at the end of the book. Words considered to be absolutely basic vocabulary are not glossed in the notes, since it is assumed that these words either are known already or will be actively acquired by looking them up in the vocabulary in the back. Generally words are not glossed more than once in the notes because any word encountered a second
SORANI KURDISH

time should be learned actively. Words are glossed after the first instance only if they are considered rare enough to warrant being ignored for acquisition. Because Sorani Kurdish dictionaries are not easily obtainable, I have made the vocabulary as large as possible. It contains around 4,000 words, which represent a basic working vocabulary for the language.

For dictionaries of Sorani, the following may be consulted:

Hazhâr, Hanbâna borîna: Farhang-i Kurdi–Farsi, 2 vols. Tehran: Surûsh, 1368 [1989]. With definitions in both Kurdish and Persian, this is by far the most comprehensive dictionary of Kurdish, but Kurmanji words are also included without any differentiation. Hazhâr uses ی instead of ی for ی; otherwise the orthography is standard.


An on-line Sorani dictionary is available at www.namonet.com.
The Phonology of Sorani Kurdish

Vowels:

\[
\begin{array}{cc}
\text{î} & \text{û} \\
i & \text{u} \\
e & \text{o} \\
a & \text{â}
\end{array}
\]

\(\text{î}\) is like the ‘ee’ in ‘beet’ and ‘tree,’ International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) [i], as in hîch [hitʃ] ‘nothing.’

\(\text{i}\) is like the ‘i’ in ‘bit,’ IPA [i], as in gîrîn [gir’tin] ‘to take’

\(\text{e}\) is like the ‘ai’ in ‘bait,’ IPA [e], without the y-offglide of English, as in hez [hez] ‘power’

\(\text{a}\) is like the ‘a’ in ‘bat,’ IPA [æ], as in tanaka [tænæ’kæ] ‘tin can,’ except (1) in the sequence aw, where it is pronounced [a], (2) when it is followed in the same syllable by y, in which case it is pronounced [a], as in tanakakay [tænækæ’kay] ‘his tin can,’ and (3) when it is followed by y but not in the same syllable, in which case it is pronounced [e], as in tanakayek [tænæ’keyek] ‘a tin can.’

\(\text{û}\) is like the ‘oo’ in ‘boot,’ IPA [u], as in gûr [gur] ‘calf’

\(\text{u}\) is like the ‘u’ in ‘put’ and ‘pull,’ IPA [u], as in gûrg [gurg] ‘wolf’

\(\text{o}\) is like the ‘oa’ in ‘boat,’ IPA [o], without the w-offglide of English, as in goř [gor] ‘level’

\(\text{â}\) is like the ‘a’ in ‘father’ and ‘balm,’ IPA [a], as in gâ [ga] ‘cow’

Consonants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>bilabial</th>
<th>labiodental</th>
<th>dental/alveolar</th>
<th>palatal</th>
<th>velar</th>
<th>uvular</th>
<th>glotto-pharyngeal</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>p</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>q</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>g</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>kh</td>
<td>h, h</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v</td>
<td>z</td>
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SORANI KURDISH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sound</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>sh</td>
<td>nasal m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ch</td>
<td>nasal n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zh</td>
<td>approximant w</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j</td>
<td>approximant y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>r, ř</td>
<td>flap, trill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l</td>
<td>laterals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\text{g})</td>
<td>is like the ‘b’ of English, IPA [b]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\text{ch})</td>
<td>is like the ‘ch’ in ‘church,’ IPA [tʃ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\text{d})</td>
<td>is like the ‘d’ of English, IPA [d]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\text{f})</td>
<td>is like the ‘f’ of English, IPA [f]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\text{g})</td>
<td>is the hard ‘g’ of English in ‘go’ and ‘get,’ IPA [ɡ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\text{gh})</td>
<td>is a voiced velar fricative, IPA [ɣ]; it rarely occurs word-initially and is usually replaced by (\text{kh}) in borrowed words (e.g. (\text{þ}) (\text{gham}) ‘grief’ &gt; (\text{kham})); word-finally it is often in free variation with (\text{kh})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\text{h})</td>
<td>is like the ‘h’ of English, IPA [h]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\text{ḥ})</td>
<td>where it exists (according to regional dialect: fairly generalized in Iraq, rare in Iran), it is a voiceless pharyngeal fricative, IPA [h], like the Arabic  ﺞ; otherwise it is not distinguished from (\text{h})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\text{j})</td>
<td>is like the ‘j’ in ‘judge,’ IPA [dʒ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\text{k})</td>
<td>is like the ‘k’ of English, IPA [k]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\text{kh})</td>
<td>is a voiceless velar fricative, IPA [x], like the (\text{ch}) in German (\text{Bach}) and the Arabic  ﺞ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\text{l})</td>
<td>is a liquid ‘l’ [l] as in Persian, like the ‘l’ in ‘lee’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| \(\text{ṭ}\) | is like the dull ‘l’ of English in ‘all’ [ɬ]; in some areas it is a lateral fricative, like the \(\text{ll}\) of Welsh [ɬ]; it does not occur word-initially (cf. \(\text{gul}\) ‘leper’ with \(\text{gul}\) ‘flower’ and \(\text{chil}\) ‘forty’ with \(\text{chīl}\) ‘stalk’)
| \(\text{m}\) | is like the ‘m’ of English, IPA [m] |
| \(\text{n}\) | is like the ‘n’ of English, IPA [n] |
PHONOLOGY

\( p \) is like the ‘p’ of English, IPA \([p]\)

\( q \) is a voiceless uvular stop, like the Arabic \( \dot{\text{z}} \), IPA \([q]\)

\( r \) is a flap as in Persian and Italian, IPA \([r]\); does not occur word-initially

\( \dot{r} \) and \( rr \) are trills, IPA \([r]\), like the \( rr \) of Spanish (cf. \( khor \) \([xɔɾ]\) ‘sun’ with \( kho\dot{r} \) \([xɔɾ]\) ‘blood’ and \( bar \) \([bɔɾ]\) ‘breast’ with \( ba\dot{r} \) \([bɔɾ]\) ‘rug’);

all initial \( r \)'s are trilled (verbal stems beginning with \( r \) are trilled regardless of prefixes, as in \( \text{ʃoysht} \) ‘he went’ and \( da\text{ʃoysht} \) ‘he was going’)

\( s \) is like the ‘s’ of English in ‘see,’ IPA \([s]\)

\( sh \) is like the ‘sh’ in ‘ship,’ IPA \([ʃ]\)

\( t \) is like the ‘t’ of English, IPA \([t]\)

\( v \) is like the ‘v’ of English, IPA \([v]\), but it is of rare occurrence in Sorani

\( w \) is like the English ‘w’ except before \( e \), \( i \), and \( \text{i} \), when it is a close back unrounded semifowel, IPA \([u]\), like the ‘u’ in French \( \text{cuire} \) and \( \text{huit} \).

\( y \) is like the ‘y’ of English, IPA \([j]\)

\( z \) is like the ‘z’ of English, IPA \([z]\)

\( zh \) is like the French ‘\( j \)’ and the ‘g’ in ‘beige,’ IPA \([ʒ]\)

**Stress.** All nouns and adjectives are stressed on the final syllable: \( \text{tanaká} \) \([tæna'keæ]\) ‘tin can,’ \( \text{gawrá} \) \([gɔw'ræ]\) ‘big’. When enclitic endings are added, stress remains on the final syllable of the base word: \( \text{tanakáyék} \) \([tæna'keæyek]\) ‘a tin can,’ \( \text{tanakáyék i gawrá} \) \([tæna'keæyek i gɔw'ræ]\) ‘a big tin can.’ The definite suffix is stressed: \( \text{tanakayaká} \) \([tænækeæ'keæ]\) ‘the tin can.’

The hierarchy of stress in verbs is as follows:

1. The negative prefixes \( na- \) and \( nå- \), as in \( nå\text{chû} \) \('[nɔtʃu]\) ‘he didn’t go’ and \( nå\text{che} \) \('[nɔtʃe]\) ‘he doesn’t go.’

2. Preverbs like \( war-, \) \( hat-, \) and \( då-, \) as in \( wårge\text{râm} \) \('[wɔɾɡerəm]\) ‘I returned,’ \( hå\text{tdagirim} \) \('[hæʔdæɡɪɾɪm]\) ‘I pick up,’ and \( då\text{nishtim} \) \('[dænishtɪm]\) ‘I sat down.’
The modal prefixes \textit{(d)a-} and \textit{bi-} as in \textit{dábînim} [‘dæbinim] ‘I see’ and \textit{bîbînim} [‘bbinim] ‘let me see.’

(4) When there are no prefixes on finite verbal forms, the final syllable of the verb stem is stressed, as in \textit{hâ’tin} [‘hatim] ‘they came’ and \textit{kîrdibet-mânawa} [‘krdibetmanwæ] ‘that we have opened it.’

(5) The infinitive is stressed on the final syllable, as in \textit{hâtín} [‘hatin] ‘to come.’

The Writing System

The Kurdo-Arabic alphabet consists of the following letters:

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{cccccccc}
\textbf{\textit{a}} & \textbf{\textit{d}} & \textbf{\textit{z}} & \textbf{\textit{g}} \\
\textbf{\textit{b}} & \textbf{\textit{t}} & \textbf{\textit{l}} & \\
\textbf{\textit{p}} & \textbf{\textit{r}} & \textbf{\textit{l}} & \\
\textbf{\textit{i}} & \textbf{\textit{m}} & \\
\textbf{\textit{j}} & \textbf{\textit{k}} & \textbf{\textit{h}} & \textbf{\textit{w}} \\
\textbf{\textit{ch}} & \textbf{\textit{q}} & \textbf{\textit{y}} \\
\textbf{\textit{h}} & \textbf{\textit{s}} & \textbf{\textit{v}} & \textbf{\textit{h}} \\
\textbf{\textit{kh}} & \textbf{\textit{y}} & \textbf{\textit{z}} & \textbf{\textit{hamza}} \\
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

Letters in parentheses are not normally used. Some writers occasionally ‘import’ these specifically Arabic letters for use in words borrowed from Arabic, even though the vowels are written in the Kurdish manner. Thus, \textit{khâsatan} ‘especially’ (from the Arabic خاصَتَنَ ‘خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خ_chars

\section*{The Writing System}

The Kurdo-Arabic alphabet consists of the following letters:

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{cccccccc}
\textbf{\textit{a}} & \textbf{\textit{d}} & \textbf{\textit{z}} & \textbf{\textit{g}} \\
\textbf{\textit{b}} & \textbf{\textit{t}} & \textbf{\textit{l}} & \\
\textbf{\textit{p}} & \textbf{\textit{r}} & \textbf{\textit{l}} & \\
\textbf{\textit{i}} & \textbf{\textit{m}} & \\
\textbf{\textit{j}} & \textbf{\textit{k}} & \textbf{\textit{h}} & \textbf{\textit{w}} \\
\textbf{\textit{ch}} & \textbf{\textit{q}} & \textbf{\textit{y}} \\
\textbf{\textit{h}} & \textbf{\textit{s}} & \textbf{\textit{v}} & \textbf{\textit{h}} \\
\textbf{\textit{kh}} & \textbf{\textit{y}} & \textbf{\textit{z}} & \textbf{\textit{hamza}} \\
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

Letters in parentheses are not normally used. Some writers occasionally ‘import’ these specifically Arabic letters for use in words borrowed from Arabic, even though the vowels are written in the Kurdish manner. Thus, \textit{khâsatan} ‘especially’ (from the Arabic خاصَتَنَ ‘خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خاصَتَنَ خا...
tion of a preceding vowel, as in Persian.

The vowels are written as follows:

- **a** is written
  1. word-initially with hamza + final h, as in يم am
  2. elsewhere with a final (or alone) h, as in يم bar and يم dam

- **â** is written
  1. word-initially with hamza + alif, as in شاوات âwât, or, alternatively, with alif-madda, as in آوات âwât
  2. elsewhere with an alif, as in بâr

- **e** is written
  1. word-initially with hamza + y with a caret above, as in يووی ewâra
  2. elsewhere with y with a caret above, as in يووی ber

- **i** is written
  1. word initially as alif, as in ام imîro
  2. elsewhere i is not indicated in the writing system, as in بر bir and گرین girtin; it is the only vowel not indicated in the writing system (see below)

- **î** is written
  1. word-initially with hamza + y, as in يووی îtir
  2. elsewhere with y, as in يووی bir

- **o** is written
  1. word-initially as hamza + wâv with a caret above, as in يوو oda
  2. elsewhere with a wâv with a caret above, as in يوو bor

- **u** is written
  1. word-initially as hamza + wâv, as in يوو umêd; alternatively initial u can be written as alif + wâv, as in يوو umêd
  2. elsewhere with one wâv, as in يوو bur

- **û** is written with two wâws, as in يوو bur.

The vowel i of the izâfa is written as y (ی) attached directly to words ending in letters that join to the left. Thus, کردکان i کردستان i ‘erâq (‘the Kurds of Iraqi Kurdistan’) is written: کوردکانی کوردستانی عراق. When added to words ending in letters that do not join to the left, the y is written in the alone form, as in تانکا i گورکادا, written تانکای گورکادا.

The trilled r is indicated by a caret over or under the r, as in يوو فرودگی fîroka ‘airplane.’ Since all initial r’s are trilled, they are rarely marked.
SORANI KURDISH

The “dull l,” called lâm i qaław “fat l” in Kurdish, is indicated by a caret over the l, as in قللم قللم قللم قللم.

The only illogicality in the system lies in the writing of the sequence ye, which is written ﯽ، as though it were ya, as in nâmayek, written نامیایدک، and ﯽدی‌یه. For this and other orthographic peculiarities and variants, see §41.

The letters with their various initial, medial, final, and alone shapes are as follows (those marked with an asterisk do not connect to the left and are followed by an initial or alone form):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>ALONE</th>
<th>FINAL</th>
<th>MEDIAL</th>
<th>INITIAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>alif*</td>
<td>ا</td>
<td>ﻝّ</td>
<td>ﻝّ</td>
<td>ﻝّ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alif + madda (initial only)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ﯽ</td>
<td>ﯽ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hamza</td>
<td>ﯽ</td>
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<td>ﯽ</td>
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PHONOLOGY

<table>
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<td>h</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Vowels:
THE GRAMMAR OF SORANI KURDISH

SUBSTANTIVES

§ 1. The Absolute State of the Noun. A Kurdish noun in the absolute state, i.e. without any ending of any kind, gives a generic sense of the noun. It is also the “lexical” form of the noun, i.e. the form in which a noun is given in a vocabulary list or dictionary. The absolute state is normally used for the generic sense, as in qâwa rash a ‘coffee is black’ and wafr spî a ‘snow is white’.

§ 2. The Indefinite State. The sign of the indefinite singular (‘a, any, some’) is an unstressed enclitic -(y)èk (i.e. -èk after consonants and -yèk after vowels) added to the end of the absolute singular noun.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{pyâw} \text{ ‘man’} & \quad \rightarrow \quad \text{pyâwèk} \text{ ‘a man’} \\
\text{rozh} \text{ ‘day’} & \quad \rightarrow \quad \text{rozhèk} \text{ ‘a day’} \\
\text{darg} \text{ ‘door’} & \quad \rightarrow \quad \text{dargyèk} \text{ ‘a door’} \\
\text{nâma} \text{ ‘letter’} & \quad \rightarrow \quad \text{nâmayèk} \text{ ‘a letter’}
\end{align*}
\]

Among the modifiers that demand that a following noun be indefinite are chand ‘a few,’ ченде hamû ‘every,’ че chi ‘what?’, and هم har ‘each,’ as in

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{چند pyâwèk} & \quad \rightarrow \quad \text{a few men} \\
\text{هم hamû rozhèk} & \quad \rightarrow \quad \text{every day} \\
\text{چ لەپارایەک?} & \quad \rightarrow \quad \text{what page?} \\
\text{هم har láyèk} & \quad \rightarrow \quad \text{each direction}
\end{align*}
\]

The construction …i zor ‘many, a lot of’ also takes a preceding indefinite singular noun:
SUBSTANTIVES

Kurdish:  
kurdêk i zor  
a lot of Kurds

Pehlevi:  
pyawêk i zor  
many men

The indefinite plural is formed by adding -àn to the absolute singular. If the absolute singular ends in -â, the indefinite plural ending is -yân. Nouns with absolute singulars ending in -a, like nâmä, form the indefinite plural by dropping the final -a and adding -ân.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pehlevi</th>
<th>Kurdish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pyâw</td>
<td>ﭘﻴﺎو</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dargâ</td>
<td>ڊرگا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nâmä</td>
<td>نامان</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>amarîkî</td>
<td>اماريکي</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples:
- pyâw > pyêwân (some) men
- dargâ > dargâyân (some) doors
- nâmä > nâmân (some) letters
- amarîkî > amarîkîân (some) Americans

§ 3. The Definite State. Singular nouns are made definite (‘the’) by adding the suffix -(a)ká (i.e. -aká after consonants, u, e, and i, and -ká after the vowels a, â, and o). The combination ïaká often results in a vowel contraction to eká, sometimes so spelled in Kurdish.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pehlevi</th>
<th>Kurdish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pyâw</td>
<td>ﭘﻴﺎو</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>amarîkî</td>
<td>اماريکي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ktawi</td>
<td>كتاوي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>de</td>
<td>دە</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dargâ</td>
<td>ڊرگا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nâmä</td>
<td>نامان</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples:
- pyâw > pyêwaká the man
- amarîkî > amarîkîaká the American
- ktawi > ktâwiaká the student
- de > dekâ the village
- dargâ > dargâkâ the door
- nâmä > nâmakâ the letter

The definite plural is made by adding (a)kân to the singular, i.e. by changing the -(a)ká of the definite singular to -(a)kân.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pehlevi</th>
<th>Kurdish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pyâwaká</td>
<td>ﭘﻴﺎوەکا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ktâwiaká</td>
<td>كتەوەكە</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dargâkâ</td>
<td>ڊرگەكە</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nâmakâ</td>
<td>نەمەكە</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples:
- pyâwaká > pyêwakân the men
- ktâwiaká > ktâwiakân the students
- dargâkâ > dargâkân the doors
- nâmakâ > nâmakân the letters
§ 4. Demonstratives. As attributive adjectives the demonstratives (‘this, that’) envelop the nouns they modify. ‘This’ is نام (ناه), and ‘that’ is نامو (ناه). The forms of nouns enveloped by demonstratives are the absolute singular and the indefinite plural.

تم يوا > تام نامو this man
تم كاوي > تام کاوي these men
تم درگک > تام درگک these doors
تم نامه > تام نامه those letters

The demonstrative pronouns are نام ‘this,’ نام ‘these,’ and نام ‘those.’

§ 5. Attributive Adjectives: The Open Adjectival Izâfa. The attributive adjective following a noun that is (1) absolute singular, (2) indefinite singular, or (3) indefinite plural is linked to the noun by the unstressed vowel i (called the izâfa vowel). The izâfa is written as ی added directly to words that end in joining letters or an alone ی after non-joining letters.

hotel i bâsh — good hotel
hotelêk i bâsh — a good hotel
hotelân i bâsh — (some) good hotels
nâma i drezh — long letter
nâmayêk i drezh — a long letter
nâmân i drezh — (some) long letters

§ 6. Possession: The Izâfa Construction. The same izâfa vowel i links the two parts of a possessive construction and is equivalent to the English ‘of.’

کاويکانی قوتاخبانهایک the students of a school

1 This also has the generic sense, as in “good hotels are hard to find” or “a good hotel is hard to find.” It contrasts with the following indefinite hotelêk i bâsh, as in “there is a good hotel on the corner.”
§ 7. Attributive Adjectives with Demonstratives and Definets: The Close Izâfa Construction. When noun-adjective constructions are enveloped by the demonstratives or modified by the definite suffix, the linking vowel changes to \( a \). The indefinite is, of course, excluded from this category.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{هوتیله باشکه} & \text{ hotel a bâsh} & \text{the good} \\
\text{هنام هوتیله باش} & \text{ am hotel a bâsh} & \text{this good}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{پیاووه تهماریکه} & \text{ pyâw a amarîkî} & \text{the American} \\
\text{هنام پیاووه تهماریکه} & \text{ am pyâw a amarîkî} & \text{that American}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{دروسانه تاسانه} & \text{ darsân a âsân} & \text{the easy} \\
\text{هنام دروسانه تاسانه} & \text{ am darsân a âsân} & \text{these easy}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{دروسانه سخته} & \text{ darsân a sakht} & \text{the hard} \\
\text{هنام دروسانه سخته} & \text{ am darsân a sakht} & \text{those hard}
\end{align*}
\]

If the noun in a close-izâfa construction ends in \(-a\), the linking \( a \) is omitted, as in the following:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{قاوتهانه ابتیدیکان} & \text{ qutâbkhâna ibtidâî} & \text{the elementary schools} \\
\text{قاوتهانه کورده} & \text{ châykhâna gawra} & \text{the big teahouse} \\
\text{هنام قاوتهانه کورده} & \text{ am châykhâna gawra} & \text{this big teahouse} \\
\text{ناتاو ویکگیرتوکان} & \text{ natawa yekgirî} & \text{the United Nations}
\end{align*}
\]

\footnote{ibtidâîakân may contract to ابتیدیکان. For the contraction \( ia > e \), see §42.}
SORANI KURDISH

The envelopment of the demonstrative is extendable indefinitely and includes all matter immediately related to a demonstrative phrase.

bo twânîn i am {dyârî} kirdin i jegâ i Mir Gawra'yá

in order to enable this clarification of Mir Gawra’s position

Close izâfa constructions may be mixed with open izâfa constructions, as in the following:

چایخانە گوارکەی سەر شەقامە {châykhâna gawranká} i sar {shaqâm a sarakî-aká} i shâr

the big teahouse on the major street in town

§ 8. Attributive Adjectives with Definite Nouns. Attributive adjectives modifying definite nouns also are linked to the noun by the izâfa vowel i, but the placement of the definite suffix, both singular and plural, is variable.

درس‌کانی سخت darsakân i sakht

the hard lessons

درس‌ان سختکە darsân a sakhtaká

Noun–adjective constructions in which the izâfa is embedded (the second and third examples above), where plural and definite suffixes fall at the end of the izâfa “string,” represent a very close connection, inseparable in the mind of the speaker, between noun and adjective.

1 These three examples all have the same meaning in English, but they connote different aspects of noun-adjective linkage to the speaker of Kurdish. darsakân i sakht are the lessons (about which we already know), which happen to be hard, not necessarily in contrast to anything else. دەرسەکانی سەختت darsân a sakhtaká points out the specific lessons that are hard, as in دەرسی کەوەم و دەرسی حەوتەم دەرسەکانی سەختت کەوەم تەم کەتەوە dars i chvâram u dars i hawtam darsân a sakhtaká i am këwêm “lesson four and lesson seven are the hard lessons in this book.” دەرسە سەختکەن dars a sakhtaká is “the hard lessons” as opposed to, say, دەرسە ناسەکان dars a âsânakân “the easy lessons,” where the adjectives “hard” and “easy” are inextricably linked to “lessons,” i.e. we are considering “hard-lessons” vs. “easy-lessons.”

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A good example is گول سوور gut i sîr ‘red flower, rose.’ If the speaker is thinking of a flower that simply happens to be red, say a red carnation, the indefinite is گول که سوور gutēk i sîr, the definite is گول که سوور gutaká i sîr, the indefinite plural is گول که سوور gutkân i sîr, and the definite plural is گول که سوور gutkâkân i sîr. If by gut i sîr the speaker means the ‘rose,’ in which case sîr is inseparable from gut, the indefinite is گول سوورنک gut a sūrek, the definite is گول سوورنک gut a sūrak, the indefinite plural is گول سوورنک gut a sūrân, and the definite plural is گول سوورنک gut a sūrakân.

Similar close constructions are the following:

مژنوسه عربیکان mezhûnûs a ‘arabakân the Arab historians

Here we are considering only Arab historians, not historians who happen to be Arabs, who would be مژنوساکان i ‘arab mezhûnûsakân i ‘arab.

کوتیبی کوردنکان qutâbî a kurdakân the Kurdish students

Similarly here only students who are Kurdish are under consideration. The students who happen to be Kurdish, but not as an exclusive category, would be کوتیبیکان i kurd qutâbîakân i kurd.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SINGULAR</th>
<th>PLURAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>absolute</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>کتاب ktâw ‘book’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>نامه nâma ‘letter’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>indefinite</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>کتاب که کتاب که کتاب که nâmâyêk nâmân</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>نامه کتاب کتاب کتاب کتاب nâmék nâmân</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>LOOSE-IZÂFA NOUN-ADJECTIVE CONSTRUCTIONS</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>نامه کتاب کتاب کتاب کتاب nâmék nâmân</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13
### SORANI KURDISH

#### CLOSE-IZĀFA NOUN-ADJECTIVE CONSTRUCTIONS

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Article</th>
<th>Pronoun</th>
<th>Adjunct</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Absolute</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indefinite</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Definite</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Demonstrative</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### § 10. Personal Pronouns.

The independent personal pronouns are as follows:

- **min** I
- **تو** to you (sing.)
- **ئو** to you (pl.)
- **ئه** aw he, she, it
- **ئوهان** awân they

The independent personal pronouns are used as (1) subjects of equational sentences:
(2) emphatic subjects of verbs and topics of topic-comment sentences:

*Aw ūt; ewa nāhāt.*

He came; you didn’t.

*Min awim balâwa giring niya.*

For me, that’s not important.

and (3) emphatic possessors in an izâfa string:

*ktâwakâ i min* my book

*nîshtimânakâ i ema* our homeland

For pronominal objects of verbs, see §23.

§ 10.1. Possessive Pronouns. The normal possessive pronouns are unstressed enclitics added to the noun. They take the following forms:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AFTER CONSONANTS</th>
<th>AFTER VOWELS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>م-ّim</td>
<td>م-ّîm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>م-ّim</td>
<td>م-ّîm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ت-ît</td>
<td>ئ-ّîtan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ت-ît</td>
<td>ئ-ّîtan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ي-ّîyan</td>
<td>ي-ّîyan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ئ-ّîyan</td>
<td>ي-ّîyan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples of possessive pronouns with kuř ‘son’ and pâra ‘money’:

*korim* کورم

*kuřmán* کورم

*pâram* بارام

*pârâmân* بارام

*korit*کورت

*kuřtân* کورت

*pârat* بارت

*pârâtân* بارت

*kurî* کوری

*kuřyân* کوری

*pârayî* باری

*pârâyân* باری

The enclitic possessive pronouns may be added to the absolute (کورم kuřm, بارم pâram), the definite (کورم کوکه kuřakâm, بارم pârakâm), or the indefinite (کورم کوکه kuřekâm, بارم pârâyekâm) forms of the noun. When added to the absolute, the noun has a figurative meaning; for actual, concrete meanings the definite form is used. For instance, money (پارا pâra) you can hold in your hand you would call بارم pârakâm ‘my money,’ while بارم pâram is figurative, more like ‘my wealth.’ Someone who writes for a living can be said to earn his livelihood by means of قلم qalam ‘his pen,’ but what he actually holds in his hand is قلم qalamakay ‘his pen.’ Compare and contrast the following:
### SORANI KURDISH

#### Figurative vs. Actual

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figurative</th>
<th>Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pərat your money, your wealth</td>
<td>pərakât your (real) money, your cash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kərum my son, “sonny”</td>
<td>kərakâm my (real) son</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nənmân our livelihood</td>
<td>nənakâmân our bread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>məltân your home</td>
<td>mətakâtân your house</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exceptions to the general rule. Prominent exceptions to the general formation are the family members (bəwk ‘father,’ dəyik ‘mother,’ bərā ‘brother’ and khwayshk ‘sister’) and nəw ‘name.’ When modified by pronominal possessives, these nouns are the reverse of the formation described above. Birakâm and khwayshkakâm are used to address or refer to anyone other than one’s real brothers and sisters, who are called birâm and khwayshkim. Nəwî means ‘his (real) name,’ as opposed to nəwakî, which means ‘his name’ in the sense of a label or sobriquet given to someone, not his actual name.

When possessives are added to the indefinite form of the noun, they mean ‘a … of mine,’ &c., e.g. kərekîm ‘a son of mine,’ ktəwekit ‘a book of yours,’ and qalamekî ‘a pen of his,’ &c.

#### § 11. Enclitic -îsh.

The enclitic particle -îsh (‘too, also, even’ and often equivalent to a simple raised voice inflection in English) is added to nouns, noun–adjective phrases and pronouns. It cannot follow a finite verb form. When added to words ending in vowels, -îsh loses its own vowel in favor of the preceding vowel, becoming ‘sh. When added to words that have an enclitic pronoun attached, -îsh intervenes between the noun and pronoun.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Min/Me</th>
<th>من min 1/me &gt; منîsh 1/me too</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We/Us</td>
<td>ema we/us &gt; ema’sh we/us too</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ayoki</td>
<td>bəwkî his father &gt; bəwkîshî his father too</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pərakâyăn</td>
<td>pərakâ’shyân their money too</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### § 12. Cardinal Numbers

All words having to do with time and instance follow the cardinal number immediately in the absolute state:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>Persian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>١٠٠  ﻥو</td>
<td>100 no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>١٢٠  ﺪه</td>
<td>120 da</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>١٣٠  ﺸز</td>
<td>130 shazeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>١٤٠  نو</td>
<td>140 no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>١٥٠  ﺱد</td>
<td>150 sad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>١٦٠  ﺶز</td>
<td>160 shazeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>١٧٠  ند</td>
<td>170 nadd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>١٨٠  هش</td>
<td>180 hashad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>١٩٠  نز</td>
<td>190 nozda</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With other words the cardinal number is followed by a classifier, which is followed by the singular noun in the absolute state, as in Persian. The most common classifiers, and those which can be used, practically speaking, for almost anything are دانه dâna for things, نفر nafar for people, and سال sar.
for animate beings other than people.

jahâr danhâ kitâv four books
penj nafar five people
da sar mar ten sheep

§ 12.1 Ordinal numbers. The ordinal numbers are formed from the cardinal numbers plus the suffix -(h)am, as follows:

| 1st | yekam | 7th | hawtam |
| 2nd | dûham | 8th | hashtam |
| 3rd | seham | 9th | noham |
| 4th | chwâram | 10th | daham |
| 5th | penjam | 11th | yânzaham |
| 6th | shasham | 12th | dwânzaham, &c. |

§ 12.2 Days of the Week and Months of the Year. The days of the week, made up mostly of cardinal numbers and shamma, are as follows:

| shamma | Saturday | chwârshamma | Wednesday |
| yekshamma | Sunday | penjshamma | Thursday |
| dûshamma | Monday | jum’a | Friday |
| seshamma | Tuesday |

§ 12.3 Months of the Year and the Kurdish Calendar. The traditional months of the year, which correspond to the signs of the zodiac, are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bahâr SPRING</th>
<th>Tâwistân SUMMER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>khâkalêwa Aries, March 21–April 20</td>
<td>pushpař Cancer, June 22–July 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bánamañ or golân</td>
<td>galâwezh Leo, July 23–August 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taurus, April 21–May 21</td>
<td>kharmânân Virgo, August 23–September 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jozardan Gemini, May 22–June 21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The names of the Western (Roman) months are as follows:

- **January**: Kânûn i dûham
- **February**: Shubât
- **March**: Âdâr
- **April**: Nîsân
- **May**: Âyâr
- **June**: Hûzâyra tân or Hûzâyra mlân
- **July**: Tamûz
- **August**: Âb
- **September**: Aylûl
- **October**: Tishrîn i yekam or Tishrîn i dûham
- **November**: Kânûn i yekam
- **December**: Kânûn i dûham

The recently instituted “Kurdish era” dates from 612 B.C., and the Kurdish year, like the Iranian, begins on Nawroz, the vernal equinox, on or about March 21.

§ 13. Comparative and Superlative Adjectives. The comparative degree of the adjective is made by suffixing -tir, e.g. gawra ‘big’ > gawratir ‘bigger,’ garm ‘warm’ > garmtir ‘warmer,’ and zây ‘much’ > zâtîr ‘more.’ The preposition of comparison is X la, as in the following examples.

- *Amîro la dwene sârdtîr a.* Today is colder than yesterday.
- *Ama l’ awa châktîr a.* This is better than that.

The superlative degree is formed by suffixing -tirîn. Superlative adjectives so formed precede the nouns they modify, as in

- *Sârdtîrîn rozh* the coldest day
§ 14. Prepositions, Postpositions, Circumpositions. Certain prepositions, in particular the prepositions $\text{ba} ‘in, at,’ $\text{da} ‘to, in, into’ and $\text{la} ‘by, to, in, at’ and ‘from,’ occur as circumpositions that envelop the complement, that is, the preposition itself marks the beginning of the prepositional phrase, and the end of the complement is marked by a postpositional element like -awa, -(d)â, or -râ.

The $d$ of $dâ$ is often dropped, particularly but not necessarily after $n$, giving -â, as in

- $\text{la Kurdistân’â}$ in Kurdistan
- $\text{la nâwcha i Sorân’â}$ in the district of Soran
- $\text{la shwenawrakân i nâhiya i Khormal’ish’â}$ in the monuments of the Khormal region too
- $\text{la pâsh’â}$ after(wards)
- $\text{la lagal min’â}$ with me

The postpositional element does not usually, in and of itself, add anything substantial to the meaning of the prepositional phrase, and most prepositions occur without the postpositional element without any significant change in meaning—with the important exception of $\text{la...dâ ‘in, at’ and la...awa ‘from,’}$ where the postpositions define the meaning of $\text{la}$. When $\text{la}$ lacks the postpositional element, the meaning must be ascertained from con-
SUBSTANTIVES

Common prepositions and circumpositions:

- **ba** (been) to; with, by
  - **babe** ... **awa** without
  - **badam** ... **awa** along with, while, during
  - **balâ i** ... **awa** in the opinion of
  - **bape i** according to
  - **bar la** before (temporal)
  - **baraw i** ... **dâ** in the direction of
  - **bardam** before, in the face of
  - **be** without
  - **bejiga la** ... **awa** except for
    - **bo** for
    - **da (te)** on, in
    - **dagal** with
    - **dvâ i after**
    - **jiga la** except for, aside from
  - **la** (le) in, from
    - **la** ... **(dâ)** in, at
      - **la** ... **awa** from, than
      - **labar** ... **(dâ)** in front of, before
      - **labar ...awa** because of
        - **labayn i** ... **dâ** between, among
  - **labâbat** ... **awa** concerning, about
  - **labâra i** ... **awa** concerning
  - **labât i** instead of
  - **labin** beside
  - **labiret** i instead of
  - **ladam** ... **dâ** behind
  - **lagal** ... **(dâ)** with, together with
  - **lalâyan** ... **awa** by (passive agent)
  - **lalâyan** ... **awa** by (passive agent)
  - **lanâw** within
  - **lanew** ... **dâ** between, among
  - **lapenâw i** ... **dâ** for the sake of
  - **lare i** with respect to
  - **lare i** ... **awa** by means of; for
    - **laregâ** ... **dâ** for the sake of
      - **lasar** on, on top of;
        - **lazher** ... **dâ** under
          - **la** between, among
          - **labar** after
            - **labin** beside
            - **labin** beside
            - **lapen** like

§ 14.1. Preposed Pronominal Prepositional Complements. When pro-
nouns are complements of prepositions, they occur as enclitics unless they are to be particularly stressed. Pronominal complements may be either preposed, i.e. added to the word preceding the preposition, or postposed, i.e. added to the preposition itself. When the following prepositions have enclitic complements, either pre- or postposed, they change their forms as follows:

- **ba** becomes **pe**
- **da** becomes **te**
- **la** becomes **le**
- **-à** becomes **-ê** (see §35 below)

All prepositions may take an independent pronoun as complement, as in **la** **min** ‘from me.’ If the pronoun is enclitic, the preposition changes to **le**. When the enclitic pronoun is postposed the phrase is **lem** ‘from me,’ and such phrases with postposed complements generally occur as tag phrases, i.e. falling after the verb, or at the end of a clause or sentence. When the prepositional phrase falls before the verb, or before the end of a clause or sentence, the enclitic pronoun is usually preposed as **-im le**, and the enclitic pronoun must be attached to some available preverbal matter.

For instance, in the sentence

\[
\text{پَرَسیِلَکَ لَه رَفیق‌کَی} \text{پَرَسیِلَک*} \text{رَفیق‌کَی} \text{دَکَا}
\]

he asks a question of his friend

if **rafiqakay** is changed to a pronoun and the prepositional phrase is a tag, the sentence becomes

\[
\text{پَرَسیِلَکَ لَه رَفیق‌کَی} \text{پَرَسیِلَک*} \text{دَکَا}
\]

he asks a question of him

Normally, however, the prepositional phrase would have a preposed complement as

\[
\text{پَرَسیِلَکَ لَه رَفیق‌کَی} \text{پَرَسیِلَک*} \text{دَکَا}
\]

he asks a question of him

In the sentence

\[
\text{پَرَسیِلَکَ لَه} \text{پَرَسیِلَک*} \text{دَکَا}
\]

he asks a question of me

**min** ‘me’ is stressed, but it could be expressed with an enclitic pronoun (and
SUBSTANTIVES

therefore not particularly stressed) as

برسـاریکم لی دکا  
pirsyârkîm le dâkâ  
he asks a question of me

It is important to realize that, for Kurdish speakers, the preposed enclitic pronoun is inextricably linked to the word to which it is attached—i.e., in the example above pirsyârkîm must be pronounced as one word. If there is any pause, the place for it is between the pronoun and the preposition.

Other examples are:

I'm listening to them.
I'm listening to them.

He takes the money from him.

Let me tell you a story.

Let me say this to you.

A hunter almost came upon the fox > A hunter almost came upon it.

Maybe he'll give me something.

He speaks with you.

He is more important to me.

Similar is the construction involved in the idiom khav- le kawtin—literally “for sleep to fall on (someone)” — “to fall asleep,” as in

خەمۆئ لی کەمۆت  
kha-
SORANI KURDISH

"wi le kawt ‘he fell asleep,’ khowim le nákawt ‘I didn’t/couldn’t fall asleep.’ In this construction the person upon whom sleep falls is expressed by a pronominal enclitic on khaw-; if a 3rd-person “subject” is expressed, the resumptive construction is used, as in

kichakân khowyân le kawt the girls fell asleep (lit., “the girls—sleep fell upon them”)"

In all the previous examples, the preposed complement has preceded the preposition immediately, and generally this is the position it takes. However, a preposed complement separated from the preposition by other matter also occurs.

"Dabe khewatêk? la dara-wa i shâr bo halbidan. They will have to pitch a tent for me outside the city."

For the special cases in which preposed postpositional complements displace enclitic possessive pronouns, see §27.4.
§ 15. Present Copulas. The present-tense copulas (‘am, is, are’) consist of the following enclitics:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSTCONSONANTAL</th>
<th>POSTVOCALIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-im</td>
<td>-m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-in</td>
<td>-yn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-y(t)</td>
<td>-n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-a</td>
<td>-ya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-n</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples are with Kurdish ‘Kurdish’ and l’era ‘here’:

- kûrdîm ‘I am Kurdish’
- kûrdî ‘you are Kurdish’
- kûrdît ‘he/she is Kurdish’
- l’érâm ‘I am here’
- l’eráy ‘you are here’
- l’érâya ‘s/he is here’

When the 3rd-person possessive enclitic (-î/-y) is followed by the 3rd-person copula (-a), a special form, -yatî, is used.

- ìn tiyûm ‘it is not’
- ìn tiyû ‘they are not’

The negative copula is formed on the base nîy-:

- nîyîm ‘I am not’
- nîyî ‘we are not’
- nîyî(t) ‘you are not’
- nîya ‘he/she/it is not’
- nîyîn ‘you are not’
- nîyî ‘they are not’
§ 16. ‘To Have.’ There is no verb in Kurdish equivalent to the English verb ‘to have.’ Kurdish expresses possession through the following formula:

noun possessed (indefinite or absolute) + possessive pronoun + háya/níya (present) or hábû/hanábû (past) or some form of the verb bûn ‘to be’

I have a question. Pirsyârek háya.
I had a question. Pirsyârek hábû.
You have money. Pârât háya.
He doesn’t have a good book. Ktôwêk bâsh nîya.
We had some pens. Qalamânman hábû.
How many sons do you have? Chand kuştàn háya?
They didn’t have much money. Zor pârayân hanábû.
He has an only son. Tâqû kuřekê dabe.

§ 17. The Present Habitual/Progressive. The present habitual tense corresponds to the English simple present used for habitual action (‘I go’), progressive action (‘I’m going’), and the future (‘I’ll go, I’m going to go’). It is formed from the present stem of the verb with a prefixed modal marker, which receives the stress, and the following suffixed personal endings.

CONSONANT STEMS | VOWEL STEMS
---|---
-i(m) | -în | -m | -yn
-î(t) | -în | -y(t) | -n
-e(t) | -în | -û(t)/-(t) | -n

The inherent (t) shown for the 2nd- and 3rd-persons singular is characteristic of literary Kurdish and seldom appears in the more informal spoken lan-

1 Unlike Kurmanji, Sorani Kurdish has no future tense. The future may be expressed periphrastically (“I want to go,” e.g.), but normally the future sense is gained from context.
THE VERB

guage. It is recovered, however, when any enclitic or suffix is added to the verb form (see §18 below).

The modal prefix in Sulaymani Kurdish is نه dā-; in most other dialects the modal prefix is د dā-. Since otherwise verbs are conjugated identically in all varieties of Sorani Kurdish, the modal marker will be shown in this book as dā-, and examples will be given with dā- or dā- as they occur in the texts from which they have been taken. Examples of the conjugation of verbs with present stems ending in a consonant are as follows (examples are -ch- ‘go’ and -nûs- ‘write’):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dáchim</td>
<td>dáchit</td>
<td>dáchet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dáchîn</td>
<td>dáchîn</td>
<td>dáchîn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dánûsim</td>
<td>dánûsît</td>
<td>dánûset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dánûsîn</td>
<td>dánûsîn</td>
<td>dánûsîn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the negative, the modal marker dā- is replaced by stressed nā´- (< na + a-).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>náchim</td>
<td>náchît</td>
<td>náche(t)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>náchin</td>
<td>náchîn</td>
<td>náchin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nânûsim</td>
<td>nânûsît</td>
<td>nânûset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nânûsîn</td>
<td>nânûsîn</td>
<td>nânûsîn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The negative of the modal marker dā- is náda-:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nádáchim</td>
<td>nádáchît</td>
<td>nádáchet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nádáchîn</td>
<td>nádáchîn</td>
<td>nádáchîn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nádanûsim</td>
<td>nádanûsît</td>
<td>nádanûse(t)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nádanûsîn</td>
<td>nádanûsîn</td>
<td>nádanûsîn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The negative of the Sulaymani habitual is occasionally used as an emphatic

---

1 Henceforth the second- and third-person singular forms will normally be given as dáchî(t) and náchî(t), with only the literary form in Arabic script but with both forms in transcription.
negative in dialects that normally have the negative in ná다-، as in
nánísim ‘I don’t ever write’ (which would then contrast with
nádanísim ‘I’m not writing’) and ٽgaydë nákâ ‘it doesn’t matter at all.’

For verbs with stems ending in a vowel, the personal endings combine
with stems in -a, -o, and -e as follows (examples, kirdin ‘to do,’ present
stem ٽka-: royshìn ‘to go away,’ present stem ٽro-: gaרàn ‘to turn,’ present stem ٽga-)
The only forms that show changes in the stem vowel are the 3rd-person
singular of the -a- and -o- stems, which change to -â(t) and -wâ(t) respectively.

A-STEMS

dákm دکم

dáky(t) دکی

Common verbs conjugated in the present tense like kirdin/ka- are
khisin/خه kha- ‘to throw,’ birdin/به ba- ‘to carry,’ dàn/د دa- ‘to
give,’ and gayshin/گه ga- ‘to reach.’

O-STEMS

dárom دروم

dároy(t) درویت

Like ro- are ٽkhwàrdin/خو kho- ‘to eat’ and ٽshùrtin/شو sho- ‘to wash.’

Verbs with present stems in -e, of which there are many, keep the theme
vowel unchanged throughout the conjugation, and in the 3rd-person singular
nothing is added other than the inherent -t.

E-STEMS

Like gæ- are all verbs with infinitives ending in -än.
THE VERB

One verb with a peculiar present tense is هاتین ‘to come’ (present stem -ye). In Sulaymani Kurdish the present stem, ye-, is regularly conjugated but without the modal marker a-. In most other dialects, particularly Iranian varieties, the present stem combines with the modal marker da- to become de-. The two variants are conjugated in the present as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SULAYMANI</th>
<th>NON-SULAYMANI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yem</td>
<td>dem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yey(t)</td>
<td>dey(t)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yen</td>
<td>den</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ye(t)</td>
<td>de(t)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The negative is regularly conjugated on the stem نایه-:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SULAYMANI</th>
<th>NON-SULAYMANI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nâyem</td>
<td>nâyeyn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nâyey(t)</td>
<td>nâyen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nâye(t)</td>
<td>nâyen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

§ 18. Verbs in -awa. Many Kurdish verbs end with the suffix -awa, which has the following basic meanings: (1) ‘again, back, re-,’ as مان ‘to remain, be left’ > مانوا ‘to be left behind,’ كوت ‘to say’ > كوتاوا ‘to say again, repeat,’ وتن ‘to turn’ > وتيناوا ‘to return,’ (2) ‘open,’ as in كردنوا ‘to open,’ and (3) to give a nuance of meaning to a verb, as سوور ‘to make red’ > سووركرتاوا ‘to sauté.’ This said, it should also be noted that -awa often adds nothing of any real lexical significance to the verb but gives a perfective aspect instead. All such verbs are regularly conjugated. With verbs ending in -awa, the -awa suffix is added after the personal ending, as in

- دارگادکمانوا dargâ dakamawa I(‘ll) open the door
- داگارنوا dâgařenawa you/they(‘ll) return

Second- and third-person forms always recover the / inherent in the personal endings before -awa, as in

- داگارنوا dâgařenawa he’ll return
Full inflections of gašanawâ and kirdinawâ are as follows:

- dâgařemawâ
- dâgařewâ
dâgařenawâ
dâgařetawâ
dâkamawâ
dâkaynawâ
dâkaytawâ
dâkanawâ
dâkâtawâ

§ 19. The Present Subjunctive. Like the present habitual, the present subjunctive is formed from the present stem of the verb and the personal suffixes. The modal marker for the subjunctive is bî-.

In compound verbs, the bî- prefix is optional, and when it is omitted the lack of a modal prefix identifies the verb as subjunctive. The modal prefix is regularly omitted with close compound verbs with prefixes like war- and hat-.

When the preceding word ends in a vowel and the verb stem begins with a
THE VERB

single consonant, the vowel of the modal prefix may be elided, giving, e.g.,

I think (lit., if I know thus)

let’s write this word

This feature is not represented in the Kurdo-Arabic writing system.

The negative prefix for the subjunctive is ná-, which replaces bí- where it occurs.

The present subjunctive of the verb bûn ‘to be’ is based on the stem b-. It occurs both with and without the bí- prefix with the following conjugations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WITHOUT PREFIX</th>
<th>WITH PREFIX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bûm</td>
<td>bíbûm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bîn</td>
<td>bíbîn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bî(t)</td>
<td>bíbî(t)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bî(t), bî</td>
<td>bíbî(t), bíbî</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be(t)</td>
<td>bíbî(t)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be(t), be</td>
<td>bíbî(t), bíbî</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When the verb means ‘to be’ the bí- prefix is omitted, but when it means ‘to become’ or is part of a compound verb like nîzîk-bûn ‘to get near’ or āshkirâ-bûn ‘to be revealed’ in the following examples, the bí- prefix is present.

One should not be despondent.

They didn’t dare get near their houses.

She fears there will come a day this secret will be revealed.

The present subjunctive of hâtîn ‘to come’ is regularly conjugated on the stem be- (for *bhîye-). Note that the 3rd-person singular subjunctive of hâtîn is identical to the 3rd-person singular subjunctive of bûn, i.e. both are be(t).
The verbs *henân* ‘to bring’ and *heshtin* ‘to let’ have subjunctives formed both on the regular stems *bîhen-* and *bîhel-* and on the contracted stems *ben-* and *be-*:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REGULAR SUBJUNCTIVE</th>
<th>CONTRACTED SUBJUNCTIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Henân</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Bîhenim</em></td>
<td><em>Bîhîn</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Bîhenî(t)</em></td>
<td><em>Bîhîn</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Bîhene(t)</em></td>
<td><em>Bîhîn</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Henî(t)</em></td>
<td><em>Hîn</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The present subjunctive is used in the following instances:

1. Independently—i.e. not dependent upon a preceding construction—as a deliberative (English ‘should’). In literary style, the interrogative particle ‘*âyâ*’ often introduces the construction.

   - Should he retrace his steps? *Ayā pāshawpāsh bīgaře-tawa?*
   - Should I come tomorrow? *Sbaynî bem?*
   - Should we open the door? *Dargā bikaynawa?*

2. In the 1st persons as a cohortative (‘let me, let’s’) and in the 3rd persons as a hortatory (‘let him…, may he …’). The 1st-person is often preceded by *bā* or *wāra* (‘c’mon’).

   - C’mon, let’s go. *Bā bîroyn.*
   - C’mon, let’s play a trick on him. *Wāra, feřēkî le bikayn.*
   - May it not happen. *Nābetâ dî.*
THE VERB

Dâ-binîshinawa.

Let them sit back down.

(3) as complement to all verbs and constructions of wanting (see §20), ability (see §21), necessity, etc.

Let them sit back down.

Amawe bichimâ mâle.

I want to go home.

Datwânîm bitbînim.

I can see you.

Pewîst a ka sar i l’ aw mirov a kilôkî bidât ka cháwaşvéni akà.

It is necessary for her to pay a visit to that miserable man who is waiting.

Pewîst nîya ka bîlem…

It is not necessary that I say…

(4) after a number of conjunctions like bar l’ awaî ‘before’ and ba be awaî ‘without’

Pewîst nîya ka bîtem… before he goes/went…

Pewîst nîya ka bîtle… before you sit/sat down…

Ba be awaî qsa bikâ, roysh.

Without speaking, he left.

Ba be awaî bitbîne… without his/her seeing you…

(5) in the protasis of a possible conditional:

Ama agar betâ dî, atwânîn bitleyn…

If this should come about, we can say that…

Agar bitawe, datwânî.

If you want to, you can.

1 Bar l’ awaî is always followed by the present subjunctive; the proper tense for English translation is gained from context. In English ‘without’ is followed by a gerund, but in Kurdish it is followed by a subjunctive clause, which is necessarily personal.
SOHANI KURDISH

If it should be that the power of the atom be used for war, slaughter, and destruction…

§ 20. ‘To Want.’ The Kurdish verb corresponding to the English verb ‘want’ is wîstin (present stem we-). The construction that serves as the present tense of this verb is compounded of the prefix (d)á- (negative ná-) + possessive pronoun enclitic + -awe. The full inflection of the present tense is as follows:

**AFFIRMATIVE PRESENT**

- dámawe
- dátawe
- dáyawe

**NEGATIVE PRESENT**

- námawe
- nátawe
- náyawe

**PRESENT SUBJUNCTIVE**

- bímawe
- bitawe
- bîyawe

When the complement, or logical object, of wîstin (i.e. what one wants) precedes the verb, the “subject” pronominal enclitics are usually attached to the complement, and the verb is the invariable 3rd-person singular (d)awe (negative nâwe). The full present “conjugation” of this construction is:

**AFFIRMATIVE**

- -im dâwe
- -mân dâwe
- -mân nâwe
- -it dâwe
- -it nâwe
- -yân dâwe
- -yân nâwe

**NEGATIVE**

- -im nâwe
- -mân nâwe
- -tân dâwe
- -tân nâwe
- -yân nâwe
- -yân nâwe
as in the following examples:

I want that.

He doesn’t want these things.

All verbal complements of ‘want’ are in the subjunctive, as in the following paradigm of ‘want to go’:

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
\text{dámawe bíchim} & \text{dámânawe bíchín} \\
\text{dátawe bíchit} & \text{dátânawe bíchín} \\
\text{dáyawe bíchet} & \text{dáyânawe bíchín}
\end{array}
\]

Other examples are as follows:

You want to write a letter.
He wants to buy a book.
We want to write a letter.
Do you (pl) want to ask a question?
They do not want to study.

\[\text{Wîstin is conjugated as a transitive verb in the past (see §27 below).}\]

\[\text{§ 21. ‘To Be Able.’ The verb ‘to be able’ is }\text{twânîn (pres. stem }\text{twân-). Twânîn is regularly conjugated in the present, and it is necessarily followed by a subjunctive complement. Below is given the full present conjugation, affirmative and negative, of ‘can/can’t say’:}\]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>can</td>
<td>دَتَوَانَتِيْنَ بَلِينَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>can’t</td>
<td>دَتِوارَانَتِيْنَ بَلِينَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>can</td>
<td>دَتَوَانَتِيْنَ بَلِينَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>can’t</td>
<td>دَتِوارَانَتِيْنَ بَلِينَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>can</td>
<td>دَتَوَانَتِيْنَ بَلِينَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>can’t</td>
<td>دَتِوارَانَتِيْنَ بَلِينَ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

35
The subjunctive is regularly formed: ُبِنَّاَنِم، &c., negative subjunctive: ُنَتْوَانِم، &c. Twânîn is conjugated as a transitive verb in the past (see §27 below).

§ 22. ‘To Remember.’ The idiom used for ‘to remember’ is لِه بَی بُوون la bîr ñûn, literally “to be in the mind.” The construction of the idiom, like the present of wîstin, depends upon whether or not there is preposed matter.

NOTHING PREPOSED

WITH PREPOSED MATTER

Simple ‘I remember,’ ‘you remember,’ &c. (without mentioning what one remembers) are لِه بَی بُرته la bîr m, &c. (negative لِه بَی بُرته la bîr mîya, &c. (negative لِه بَی بُرته la bîr nîya). However, if anything is preposed to the construction, that is, what one remembers, the enclitic pronouns are detached from bîr and attached to the preposed matter, as in the following:

٨ُو رَوْزِانَم لِه بَیر. Aw rozhânâm la bîr a. I remember those days.

Hence, the prepositional phrase is actually -îm la bîr, where the complement to la bîr, -(î)m, has been preposed, or placed before the preposition. Other examples are the following:

ٗوُلَااَی پَرْسَبِارَکَات يِلْه بِیر. Wâlâm i pîrsyârakât la bîr You didn’t remember the answer to the question.

ٚوِنَبُع.}

Other constructions involving bîr are -î bîrá hâtîn and -î bîr kawtinawa ‘to remember,’ all of which usually take preposed pronominal enclitics.

٨ُوِت بِه بَیرا هَات کَه... Wât ba bîrâ hât ka... Thus you remembered that...
THE VERB

Shitèkim hât ba bîrâ. I remembered something.
Dâykyân kawtawa bîr. They remembered their mother.
Wakû shitèkyân bîr wakîtawa as though they remembered something.

and la bîr chûn ‘to forget.’
Nâw i aw pyâvâm la bîr chû. I forgot that man’s name.
Shitèk la bîr chû? Did you forget something?

§ 23. Pronominal Objects of Verbs. Direct-object pronouns of verbs in the present tense and the present subjunctive mood are normally enclitics attached to some part of the verbal conglomerate (i.e. the verb, any preverbal prefixes, compounding agent). Identical to the possessive enclitic pronouns, the direct-object pronouns are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AFTER CONSONANTS</th>
<th>AFTER VOWELS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-im</td>
<td>-mân</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ît</td>
<td>-tân</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-i</td>
<td>-yân</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The enclitic pronouns are attached in the following order:

1. If the verb is compound, the pronoun object is added to the preverb.¹

They are calling me. (1)
We’ll take it up. (2)
Ahmad will pick them up. (3)
I’ll learn it. (3)

¹A preverb may be (1) a noun like bâng ‘call’ as in bâng kirdin ‘to call,’ (2) an adjective like âshkirâ ‘obvious’ as in âshkirâ kirdin ‘to clarify,’ or (3) a directional element like war ‘up’ as in war-gîrîn ‘to take up.’
If the verb is not compound, the pronoun object is added to the model prefix (á-, dá-, bî-) or the negative prefix (nâ-, ná):

- **dáyánbîne.** He’ll see them.
- **dátbinim.** I’ll see you.
- **náynásim/náydanásim.** I don’t know him.
- **náykîm.** I’m not going to buy it.
- **amawe bîyâkîm.** I want to buy it.
- **Haz akam bîyânawa bo rafigêkim.** I’d like to send it to a friend of mine.
- **Rû bikaynà wilâtêk kas namûnnê.** Let’s go to a country where nobody knows us.

§ 24. The Imperative. The singular imperative of verb stems ending in vowels is formed from bî- + the present stem. The plural imperative is exactly like the 2nd-person plural subjunctive. As in the subjunctive of close compound verbs, the bî- prefix is usually omitted; in open compounds it is generally found but may be omitted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INFINITIVE</th>
<th>PRES. STEM</th>
<th>SINGULAR IMPERATIVE</th>
<th>PLURAL IMPERATIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kîrdin</td>
<td>ka- + bîka</td>
<td>bikan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>royštîn</td>
<td>ro- + bîro</td>
<td>bîron</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tawâw-</td>
<td>tawâw-ka-</td>
<td>tawâw-(bîka)</td>
<td>tawâw-(bîkan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kîrdin</td>
<td>(bîka)</td>
<td>(bîkan)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If the present stem ends in a consonant, the singular imperative is formed from bî- + present stem + -a. The plural imperative is identical to the 2nd-person plural subjunctive.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>bûn</th>
<th>b- + bîba</th>
<th>bîbin</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>chûn</td>
<td>ch- + bîcha</td>
<td>bîchin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\*\*1 In addition to bîcha, chûn has several alternative imperatives, viz. chêchê bîcho and chêchê bîchora.\*\*
THE VERB

girtin gir-

bigira

bígirin

nûsîn nûs-
bînûsa

bînûsin

gwe-girtin gwe-gir-
gwe-(bi)gira

gwe-(bi)girin

dâ-nîshtin dâ-nîsh
da-(bi)nîsha
da-(bi)nîshin

wis-bûn wis-b-
wis-ba

wîs-bên

Note the irregular singular imperatives of birdin, dân, khistin, and the totally irregular imperative of hâtìn:

birdin ba-

bibara

bîban

dân da-

bidara

bîdan

khistin kha-

bîkara

bîkhan

hâtìn ye-

wâra

wárîn

The bi- prefix of the imperative takes pronominal direct objects exactly like the subjunctive prefix:

Ba châw i khot bîmbîna

ces chon pyâwêkim!

Bîyêna laga khot!

Bring him/her/it with you!

Imperatives are often preceded by the “attention-getting” particle õ2 da.

The negative imperative prefix is mà-, which replaces bi- where it occurs.

Màgrî!

Don’t cry!

Màyêna!

Don’t bring it!

Dà-mànîsha!

Don’t sit down!

§ 25. The Simple Past (Intransitive). The simple past (preterite) of intransitive verbs is formed by adding unstressed personal suffixes to the past stem of the verb. The past stem is derived by deleting the -(i)n ending of the infinitive, e.g., hâtìn > hât-, bûn > bû-.
Examples of the simple past inflection are from hâtin 'to come,' bûn 'to be,' gayîn 'to arrive' (int.), and mân 'to remain.'

The negative is formed by prefixing ná-:

The t of the 2nd-person singular form is recovered if the verb has any suffixed ending like -awa or the directional suffix -à. For example, the verbs hâtinawa 'to come back' and chûnà mâl 'to go home' are conjugated as follows:

§ 26. The Past Habitual/Progressive (Intransitive). The past habitual ('I used to go') and progressive ('I was going') is formed by adding the habitu-
THE VERB

al/progressive prefix \((d)\)á- to the simple past.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{dáhätim} & \quad \text{dáhätin} & \quad \text{dágayım} & \quad \text{dágayyn} \\
\text{dáhätî(t)} & \quad \text{dáhätin} & \quad \text{dágayîy(t)} & \quad \text{dágayîn} \\
\text{dáhät} & \quad \text{dáhätin} & \quad \text{dágayî} & \quad \text{dágayîn}
\end{align*}
\]

For past habituals in \(d\)-, the negative is formed by prefixing \(ná\)- to the affirmative, but, unlike the present, the negative prefix does not combine with the modal prefix:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{náahätim} & \quad \text{náahätin} & \quad \text{náagayım} & \quad \text{náagayîn} \\
\text{náahätî(t)} & \quad \text{náahätin} & \quad \text{náagayîy(t)} & \quad \text{náagayîn} \\
\text{náahät} & \quad \text{náahätin} & \quad \text{náagayî} & \quad \text{náagayîn}
\end{align*}
\]

For past habituals in \(dá\)-, the negative is regularly formed by prefixing \(ná\)- to the affirmative:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{nádahätim} & \quad \text{nádahätin} \\
\text{nádahätî(t)} & \quad \text{nádahätin} \\
\text{nádahät} & \quad \text{nádahätin} \\
\text{nádagayım} & \quad \text{nádagayîy(t)} \\
\text{nádagayî} & \quad \text{nádagayîn}
\end{align*}
\]

As in the present tense, in the Suleymani dialect the marker is \(d\)-, and it is used as both past habitual and past progressive; in other dialects the marker is \(dd\)-.

§ 27. The Simple Past (Transitive): The Ergative. The simple past tense of transitive verbs is formed from the past stem of the verb and an agent affix—the ergative construction.\(^1\) The agent affixes are identical to the enclitic

\(^1\) In ergative-type constructions what we think of as the subject is the “agent” (or “logical subject”) and what we think of as the direct object is the “patient” (for Sorani we will also call it “logical object”). In ergative languages that also have case, the agent is in an oblique case (and/or otherwise marked) and the patient is in the nominative (or subjective) case with the verb agreeing in number (and gender if applica-
possessive pronouns:
(i)m -man
(i)t -tân
(i)y -yân

The agent affix usually precedes the verb and is attached to some preverbal matter (more about which shortly) to give the following “conjugation” of khwârdin ‘to eat.’

-IM khwârd
-în khwârd
-î khwârd
-în khwârd

If only the verb is expressed, or only the verb and its logical subject, the agent affixes are added to the end of the past stem, as

khwârdîn
khwârdît
khwârdî

If anything other than the verb is expressed, then the agent is affixed to the first available preverbal matter—“available preverbal matter” includes the following categories in hierarchical order:

(1) the negative prefix, as in

nâmâ khwârd I didn’t eat (it).
ndít
you didn’t see (him/her/it).
THE VERB


Full inflection of the negative past tense of *khwârdin* is as follows:

- **nâmâmkhwârd**
- **nâtâmkhwârd**
- **nâyâmkhwârd**

(2) the progressive prefix, as in

- **dâmnûsî**
  - I was writing (it).
- **daybînîst**
  - he was tying (it).

Full inflection of the progressive past tense of *khwârdin* is as follows:

- **dâmâmkhwârd**
- **dâtâmkhwârd**
- **dâyâmkhwârd**

(3) a compounding preverb as in

- **hatîngirt**
  - I took (it).
- **darîhenâ**
  - he took (it) off/out.

Full inflections of the past tenses of *hal-gîrtin* ‘to pick up’ and *nâma-nûsîn* ‘to write letters’ are as follows:

- **hatîngirt**
- **halmângirt**
- **halîgirt**
- **haltângirt**
- **halîyângirt**

- **nâmam nûsî**
  - nâmamân nûsî
- **nâmât nûsî**
  - nâmâtân nûsî
- **nâmây nûsî**
  - nâmâyân nûsî

(4) the logical object (patient) of the verb, as in

- **nâmâkâm nûsî**
  - I wrote the letter.
- **av kârdây nákîrd**
  - He didn’t do that.
When the logical object is modified by the enclitic -išh/-ysh 'too, also,' the enclitic comes between the logical object and the agent affix:

\[ \text{birākān i zhinakāyshā} \]

\[ \text{bāng kird.} \]

He invited his wife’s brothers also.

(5) A prepositional phrase other than temporal or manner, as in

\[ \text{Bo rafīqēk yân nûsî.} \]

They wrote it to a friend.

\[ \text{Ba pewîst im zânî bíyân-nûsimaw u châpyân bikam.} \]

I considered it necessary to write them down and get them printed.

Generally speaking, the only things to which the agent affix cannot be joined are (1) the expressed logical subject to which the agent affix refers (pyâwaká witî ‘the man said’), (2) temporal adverbs and phrases like ‘today’ and ‘at that time,’ and (3) prepositional phrases of manner (generally with the preposition ba) like \[ \text{ba tūraîawa ‘in anger,’} \]
\[ \text{ba pala ‘in haste,’} \]
\[ \text{ba ḵalû ‘in error.’} \]

An overtly expressed logical subject in no way obviates the necessity for a third-person agent affix, but the agent affix cannot be attached to the logical subject.

\[ \text{Kābrā i pîr diramakânî wargirt.} \]

The old gent took the dirhems.

\[ \text{Kuʁakân ba minyān wit.} \]

The boys said to me.

\[ \text{Min ba kuʁakânîm wit.} \]

I said to the boys.

**Each and every transitive verb in the past tense must have its own agent affix.** i.e. one agent affix cannot serve more than one verb. For example, in the phrase \[ \text{rûy kîrd u gutî (‘he faced him and said’)}, \]
the first agent affix, -yi, serves only the verb \[ \text{rû-kîrd}; \]
the second verb, \[ \text{gut}, \]
must also have an agent affix, and since there is no preposed matter, the affix is on the end of the verb.

---

1 Prepositional phrases with pronominal complements present a special problem. See §27.3 below.

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THE VERB

When a phrase consists only of an expressed logical subject (agent), prepositional matter to which the agent affix cannot be attached, and verb, then the agent affix is attached to the verb:

\[ \text{kichaká ba tûraìawa} \]

[kichaká ba tûraìawa] the girl said angrily…

\[ \text{wit...} \]

[wire...]

§ 27.1. The Ergative in South Sorani. In North Sorani the past tense of all transitive verbs is made on the ergative model with agent affixes as described above. In South Sorani, however, a split has occurred. Generally, the ergative construction has been displaced by the non-ergative construction on the model of intransitive past verbs (and doubtlessly under the influence of Persian). However, the older ergative construction has remained for certain figurative expressions. Although the ergative is theoretically available for any past transitive verb, its use may produce a statement on the figurative plane that sounds “funny” or odd—i.e. a figurative use that really has no conventional application. For instance, the verb [말 سووتین māl sūtīn] ‘to burn someone’s house’ may have an actual, literal application, as in

\[ \text{ملاگکی دارا سووت} \]

[malaká i Dârâ sūtim] I burned Dara’s house down

or it may have a figurative application, as in

\[ \text{ملاگکی دارام سووت} \]

[malaká i Dârâm sūt] “I burned Dara’s house”

but here, since it is ergative, it is figurative and really means “I ruined him,” “I did him in.” The verb نان خواردن nān-khwârdin ‘to eat bread’ may be either actually ‘to eat (some) bread’ or figuratively ‘to break bread, have a meal, enjoy someone’s hospitality.’ On the actual level the past tense is nān khwârdim, as in

\[ \text{نان خواردم} \]

[nān khwârdim] I ate bread.

while on the figurative level the past tense is nānim khwârd, as in

\[ \text{لاک ایا نانیم خوارد} \]

[Latak ewa nānim khwârd] I broke bread with you (I enjoyed your hospitality).

North Sorani, with no such differentiation, expresses these two examples as
mâlakâ i Dârâm sûtâ and nânim khwârd in all situations (nân khwârdîm is meaningless in North Sorani).

§ 27.2. Pronouns as Logical Objects of Past Transitive Verbs. With past transitive verbs, when the agent affix precedes the verb, enclitic pronominal logical objects are attached to the past stem of the verb, but the enclitics used are the subject endings for the intransitive past,¹ as in the following paradigm of the verb âgâ-kirdin ‘to inform’ with the 3rd-person singular agent affix -y.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{âgâ kirdim} & \quad \text{he informed me} \\
\text{âgâ kirdîn} & \quad \text{he informed us} \\
\text{âgâ kirdî(t)} & \quad \text{he informed you} \\
\text{âgâ kirdin} & \quad \text{he informed you} \\
\text{âgâ kird} & \quad \text{he informed him/her} \\
\text{âgâ kirdîn} & \quad \text{he informed them}
\end{align*}
\]

A 3rd-person singular logical object is not overtly expressed with a pronominal suffix since it is implicit in the zero ending of the verb (as in the second example below).

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{nâmdî(t)} & \quad \text{I didn’t see you} \\
\text{nâmdît} & \quad \text{I didn’t see him/her/it} \\
\text{hâlitgirtin} & \quad \text{you picked them up} \\
\text{nâmândîtin} & \quad \text{we didn’t see you (pl)} \\
\text{dânânkeshân} & \quad \text{you (pl) were pulling them}
\end{align*}
\]

With a 3rd-person plural inanimate logical object, the verb optionally agrees in number with the logical object. In the example, kâbrâ i pîr diramakânî wargirt ‘the old gent took the dirhems,’ the verb could also be wargirtin to agree with the plural logical object. Similarly, in the sentence

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Pyâwèk ktâwakânî křî(n).} & \quad \text{A man bought the books.}
\end{align*}
\]

the verb křî may agree with the plural logical object as křîn. With 1st- and

---

¹ Another way of analyzing this pattern is to think of the past transitive verb dît as meaning “saw him/her/it.” Similarly, dîtim means “saw me,” dîtî(t) means “saw you.” The logical subjects of these verbs must be expressed by agent affixes.
THE VERB

2nd-person logical objects and with animate 3rd persons, the verb perforce agrees with the object in both number and person.

When the agent affix does not precede the verb (i.e. if only the verb, or verb + logical subject, and no other element is present), the logical subject agent affix is suffixed to the verb first, and the logical object follows the agent affix except for the 3rd-person singular agent. When the logical subject is 3rd-person singular, the order is reversed: the logical object cedes the logical subject. In the table below are all available forms using ditin 'to see' as an example; the logical objects are given in boldface. Again, a 3rd-person singular logical-object pronoun is not expressed; it is built into the verb.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I saw</th>
<th>me</th>
<th>you</th>
<th>him/her</th>
<th>us</th>
<th>you</th>
<th>them</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ditimî(t)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>dim</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>dimin</td>
<td>ditimin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ditim</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>dîtimî(t)</td>
<td>dimin</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>ditimin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ditimî(t)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>dim</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>dimin</td>
<td>ditimin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| you saw | dîtim    | —      | dîtimî(t) | dimin   | —       | ditimin |
| s/he saw | dîtimî(t) | dim    | dîtimî    | dimin   | —       | ditimin |
| we saw   | —        | dim    | —       | —        | dimin   | ditimin |

| you saw | dîtimâni(t) | dimân  | —      | dîtân    | dîtânî(t) | dimânîn |
| s/he saw | dîtimî(t) | dim    | dîtimî    | dimin   | —       | ditimin |

| you didn’t see | nûmadîtim(t) | nûmadît | —      | nûmadîtin | —       | nûmadîtin |
| s/he didn’t see | nûmadîtim(t) | nûmadît | nûmadîtin | —       | —       | nûmadîtin |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>me</th>
<th>you</th>
<th>him/her</th>
<th>us</th>
<th>you</th>
<th>them</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I didn’t see</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>nûmadîtim(t)</td>
<td>nûmadît</td>
<td>nûmadîtin</td>
<td>nûmadîtin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In South Sorani the situation is altogether different. Since, with the few exceptions noted above, the ergative construction has been lost, transitive verbs are regularly conjugated exactly like intransitives, and pronominal objects are added directly to the end of the verb form—all on the Persian model. The normal forms for South Sorani are as follows (note that the normal South Sorani third-person plural ending is -ân instead of -in):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>me</th>
<th>you</th>
<th>him/her</th>
<th>us</th>
<th>you</th>
<th>them</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I saw</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you</td>
<td>ditim</td>
<td>ditim</td>
<td>ditimân</td>
<td>ditimyân</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s/he</td>
<td>ditim</td>
<td>ditit</td>
<td>ditimân</td>
<td>ditityân</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we</td>
<td>ditin</td>
<td>ditin</td>
<td>ditinân</td>
<td>ditinyân</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you</td>
<td>ditinim</td>
<td>ditinim</td>
<td>ditinimân</td>
<td>ditinimyân</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they</td>
<td>ditanim</td>
<td>ditanit</td>
<td>ditanmân</td>
<td>ditanîyân</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

§ 27.3. Pronominal Prepositional Complements with Agent Affixes. In past transitive verbs the space normally available for a preposed pronominal complement is taken by the agent affix. In this case, the preposition and its complement are split—the preposition precedes the verb, and the complement of the preposition is “bumped” to the end of the verb, but the pronouns
used are the endings used for intransitive past verbs (-im/-m, -i(t)/-y(t), —, -in/-yn, -in/-n, -in/-n). Note especially that when the prepositional complement is 3rd-person singular, nothing is added to the verb stem. Since the past verb has built-in logical objects, these logical objects are used in such constructions as prepositional complements. The example

\[ \text{Pirsyârèkmân le dakā.} \quad \text{He asks a question of us.} \]

(present tense), can be viewed diagrammatically as follows:

\[ \text{PRESENT TENSE} \quad \text{Pirsyârek} \quad \text{-mân le} \quad \text{dakā} \]

prepositional phrase with preposed complement

But in the past tense—‘he asked a question of us’—the agent affix takes the place that would be occupied by the preposed complement to the preposition, so the complement of the preposition is removed to the end of the verb stem,

\[ \text{Pirsyârèkî le kirdîn.} \quad \text{He asked a question of us.} \]

In another example,

\[ \text{bo-nârdin} \]

\[ \text{bo-dánerim} \]

1 Or, the incomplete sequence \text{pirsyârek-le-kird-} can be thought of as meaning "asked-a-question-of" and the personal ending -in supplies the "object" "us." Such an approach is probably closer to how native speakers "feel" all such constructions involving a preposition + verb. In the next example, \text{bo-nârd-} is certainly felt to mean "sent-to" and -in supplies the "object" "them." Even in the present-tense example \text{bo-dánerim} is felt to mean "I-am-sending-to" and the preposed -yân supplies the object "them." Native speakers do not seem to feel that -yân \text{bo} really "go together" as a coherent unit in any way separable from the verb; they think of \text{bo-dánerim} as the coherent unit and feel that the proper place to pause is between -yân and \text{bo}, not between \text{bo} and \text{dánerim}. To a certain extent, in the minds of native speakers \text{bo-nârdin} is not felt to differ substantially from \text{hat-girîn} or any other compound verb.
I’m sending those books to them.

the preposition *bo* has its complement -yân preposed:

\[
\text{aw ktâwâná -yân bo dânerim}
\]

prepositional phrase

with preposed complement

In the past, however, the agent affix -(i)m takes the place of the complement of the preposition. The complement is deferred to the end of the verb stem and is changed from -yân to -in, giving

\[
\text{aw ktâwânám bo nârdin.}
\]

I sent those books to them.

When the first available element to which an agent affix can be attached is a preposition, the complement of the preposition is “bumped,” as in the following:

\[
\text{dâykyân boy sûr kirdinawa u boy dâ-nân.}
\]

their mother fried it for them and set it down before them.

Here the -y on *boy* in both parts of the sentence is the agent affix referring to *dâykyân* and the -in in *kirdinawa* and *dâ-nân* furnishes the complement of the preposition *bo*. Another example is as follows:
THE VERB

pâraká y le girtim u pey witim... he took the money from me and said to me...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pâraká</th>
<th>-y</th>
<th>le</th>
<th>girt</th>
<th>-im</th>
<th>u</th>
<th>pe</th>
<th>-y</th>
<th>wit</th>
<th>-im</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Here the -y on pâraká and on pe is the agent affix (‘he’), and the -im suffix in the verbs girt and wit are complements to the prepositions le and pe respectively.

Other examples are as follows:

They opened the door for me.

He took the money from us.

We said this to you.

I told you a story.

I listened to him.

He said to them.

Since the ergative construction is not in normal use in South Sorani, the placement of these pronouns is quite the reverse of North Sorani. Therefore, while in North Sorani pey witim means ‘he said to me,’ in South Sorani it means ‘I said to him.’ Bot kirdim means ‘you did it for me’ in North Sorani but ‘I did it for you’ in South Sorani, and bomân kirdin means ‘we did it for...
SORANI KURDISH

you/them’ in North Sorani but ‘you/they did it for us’ in South Sorani.

§ 27.4. Displacement of a Possessive Pronoun by a Preposed Prepositional Complement. Similar to the displacement of a prepositional complement by the agent affix is the displacement of a possessive pronoun by a preposed prepositional complement. In a construction such as the following:

chalîwim ba rafaqakânim kawt. My eye fell upon my friends.

if the noun rafaqakânim is replaced by a pronoun, turning the phrase into -yên pe, the preposed prepositional complement “bumps” the possessive -im from its position on châw to the end of the verb, as:

chalîwan pe kawtim my eye fell upon them

The endings on the verb in such situations are the verbal personal endings, not the possessives. The first-person shows no difference, of course, but the other persons are distinguished, as in the following:

chalîwan ba min kawt > their eye fell upon me
chalîwim pe kawtin

In a combination of the principles given in this and the preceding paragraphs, when a possessive pronoun would be followed by an agent affix, the possessive pronoun may also be “bumped” to the end of a past transitive verb (turning into the intransitive past subject pronouns in the process), as in

kuţ a korpakîy ditim. He saw my infant son.
THE VERB

We saw your infant son. We saw our infant sons.

The first example could also be expressed as kař a korpakā′ mān dīt, but the combination of possessive pronoun + agent affix is generally avoided. Hence the “bumped” possessive.

§ 28. The Perfect Active Participle. The perfect active participle is formed by adding -ū to the past stem of the verb. With past stems that end in vowels the participle takes the form -w.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONSONANT STEMS</th>
<th>VOWEL STEMS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INFINITIVE</td>
<td>PARTICIPLE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hātin</td>
<td>háṭū</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>te-gayshtīn</td>
<td>tegayshtū</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kirdūnawa</td>
<td>kirdūawa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In meaning the perfect active participle corresponds roughly to the English present perfect participle: háṭū ‘having come,’ tegayshtū ‘having understood,’ kirdūawa ‘having opened,’ &c. Transitivity and intransitivity are retained in the participle, i.e. kīw means ‘having bought’ in the active sense, not ‘bought’ in the passive sense. (For the perfect passive participle, see §34.1 below.)

The perfect active participle is principally used to form the present perfect tense (see §29 below), but it can also be used both adjectivally pāshkawtū ‘fallen behind, backward,’ dānistū ‘having sat down, seated,’ and nominally mustū ‘having gone to sleep, asleep’) and nominally (rūdāw ‘event’) rū-dān ‘to happen, take place’).

§ 29. The Present Perfect Tense (Intransitive). The present perfect tense of intransitive verbs is formed from the perfect active participle plus the present copulas. Examples from mān ‘to remain’ (perfect active participle māw) and hāṭū ‘to come’ (perfect active participle háṭū) are:
The negative is formed by prefixing ná-

Verbs in -awa have a -t- inserted between the copula and -awa, as in křiwēdēa.
The verb

Kirdinawa 'to open' and dozinawa 'to discover.'

When nothing else is available to which the agent affixes may be joined, they fall on the participle and are followed by the 3rd-person singular copula -a (except the 3rd singular, which has the form -yatî), as in the negative:

1 The same -yatî that results consistently from the 3rd-person singular enclitic -î/y plus the 3rd-person singular copula. The spelling of this suffix is inconsistent. See §15 above.
§ 30. The Past Perfect Tense (Intransitive). For intransitive verbs with past stems ending in a consonant (like hatin > hat-), the past perfect tense, which is functionally equivalent to the English past perfect (‘I had come, you had gone’), is formed from the past stem + i + the past tense of bûn ‘to be.’ Verbs with past stems ending in a vowel (like bûn > bû) form the past perfect tense from the simple stem + the past tense of bûn.

The negative is formed by prefixing ná- to the verb:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intransitive Past Perfect</th>
<th>Intransitive Past Perfect Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hâtibûm</td>
<td>náhâtibûm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hâtibûy(t)</td>
<td>náhâtibûyn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hâtibûn</td>
<td>náhâtibûn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chûbûm</td>
<td>náchûbûm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chûbûy(t)</td>
<td>náchûbûyn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chûbûn</td>
<td>náchûbûn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The past perfect of bûn ‘to be’ can be slightly irregular. In addition to the expected bûbû, there is also a conjugation based on the form bûbû, as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intransitive Past Perfect</th>
<th>Intransitive Past Perfect Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bûbûm</td>
<td>bûbûyn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bûbûy(t)</td>
<td>bûbûn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bûbûn</td>
<td>bûbûn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The past perfect tense is commonly used in the expression heshtâ + negative past perfect + ka (‘no sooner had…than,’ ‘scarcely had…when’).

Heshtâ nânustibû ka dangêk’i ba gwe gaysh. No sooner had he gone to sleep than a sound reached his ear.

§ 30.1. The Past Perfect Tense (Transitive). The past perfect tense of
transitive verbs is formed, like that of intransitive verbs, from the past stem + -i + the past tense of bûn— with the addition of the agent affixes somewhere. Past stems that end in vowels add bû directly without the -i-. Examples: dîtin and dân:

As with all past transitives, if there is nothing else to which the agent affixes can be attached, they go onto the end of the verb form, as in

As if there is any available preverbal matter, the agent affixes are attached thereto, as in negative and compound verbs. Examples: ditin and dar-hênân.

§ 31. The Past Subjunctive. The intransitive past subjunctive is formed like the past perfect, but instead of the past tense of bûn, the present subjunctive of bûn is added. Examples: hâtin and chân:

The negative is formed by prefixing ná- to the verb:
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Transitive verbs are similarly formed (here, as usual, a 3rd-person singular patient is assumed). Examples: ditin and dân:

- im ditibe(t)  - mân ditibe(t)
- it ditibe(t)  - tân ditibe(t)
- û ditibe(t)  - yân ditibe(t)
- im dâbe(t)  - mân dâbe(t)
- it dâbe(t)  - tân dâbe(t)
- û dâbe(t)  - yân dâbe(t)

If there is no preverbal matter available, the agent affixes are attached to the verb, as follows in the examples ditin and kirdinawa:

- ditibetim  - ditibetmân
- ditibetit  - ditibettân
- ditibeti  - ditibetyân
- kirdibetimawa  - kirdibetmânawa
- kirdibetitawa  - kirdibettânawa
- kirdibetiawa  - kirdibetyânawa

And if there is any available preverbal matter, the agent affixes are attached thereto, as in ditin and dar-henân:

- nâmëditibe(t)  - nâmënditibe(t)
- nätëditibe(t)  - nätënditibe(t)
- nâyëditibe(t)  - nâyënditibe(t)
- darimhexêbë(t)  - darmacëxêbë(t)
- darithênêbë(t)  - dartënêbë(t)
- darihêxêbë(t)  - daryêxêbë(t)
THE VERB

The past subjunctive is used (1) after all constructions that take subjunctive complements when the complement is in the past, as, for example

(a) after دبَّا ‘must,’ as in

Pyâwâkân dâbê roysht-bin.

\( \text{The men must have gone.} \)

Dâbê aw shitânât ditibe (ditîbin).

\( \text{You must have seen those things.} \)

(b) for a past tense complement to a predicate adjective. Such complementary clauses are often introduced by the conjunction كَا ‘that,’ but it is optional.

Râng a kâ bârân bârîbê(t). It’s possible that it (has) rained.

\( \text{It’s possible that it will rain.} \)

Lâzîm niya (kâ) ditibetim. It’s not necessary for me to have seen it.

(2) in past clauses after superlatives (note that a relative-clause antecedent modified by a superlative is in the indefinite state, ...:\( \text{ек} \)).

\( \text{He is the first person who has attempted...} \)

\( \text{He is the first person I’ve seen...} \)

In this type of clause the subject of the relative clause must be the same as the noun modified by the superlative. In an example such as

\( \text{He’s the first person I’ve seen...} \)

the relative clause is not subjunctive because the subjects of the main clause (‘he’) and of the relative clause (‘I’) are different.

(3) in past relative clauses after negatives (‘there isn’t anyone who has ...’) or expressions with an essentially negative sense (‘there are few who have...’)

\( \text{Compare this with the present subjunctive: Râng a kâ bârân bîbârett(t) ‘it’s possible that it will rain.’} \)

59
Kas niya (ka) am kâtâwî nâkhwendîbe.

There isn’t anyone who hasn’t read this book.

Kam kas haya hîkâyat a kon u lamedhzânakân i kurdî la dâyapîra u bâb u dâyk u kasukâr i khoy nähîstibe.

Rare is the person who has not heard old Kurdish stories of long ago from his grandmother, grandfather, mother, and relatives.

(4) after wak(û) ‘as though’ in the past for hypothetical situations (note that wak(û) followed by the indicative means ‘just as’ for situations that have actually occurred)

Wakû shitèkyân bîr kawtîbetawa…

As though they remembered something…

(5) in the past protasis of a possible conditional

Agar gyân i khom bakht kirdibe la penâw i ka’m näwe.

If I have sacrificed my life for the sake of my son, I do not want anything else.

§ 32. The Irrealis Mood. The irrealis mood, which expresses an unfulfilled or unfulfillable contrafactual statement, usually dependent upon an unrealized conditional, is identical to the past habitual tense (a- or da- + past tense).

(a) The irrealis is used in the apodosis of contrafactual conditionals (see §33 below) and expressions that are contrafactual apodoses with ellipsis, as in

Namatwânî hîch i tîr bikam.

I couldn’t have done anything else (even if I had wanted to).

1 This may be contrasted with wakû aw shitîyân bîr kawt “just as they remembered that thing.”
(b) The irrealis is used after *hoxza* ‘would’ for unfulfilled wishes in the past:

*Khozga järêk i tirîsh ahâtît!* Would that you had come some other time!

*Khozga zistân nádahât!* Would that winter had not come!

§ 33. The Past Conditional. There are two forms of the past conditional mood (‘if I had gone,’ ‘had I gone’). The first past conditional mood is formed of the subjunctive prefix *bî-* (negative *nâ-*), and the simple past conjugation + *-âya*.

**INTRANSITIVE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>bîhâtîmâyà</th>
<th>bîhâtînâyà</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bîhâtîtâyà</td>
<td>bîhâtînâyà</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bîhâtâyà</td>
<td>bîhâtînâyà</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TRANSITIVE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>bîhâtîbâm</th>
<th>bîhâtîbâyûn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bîhâtîbâtû</td>
<td>bîhâtîbán</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second past conditional is similarly formed, but the *bî-* prefix is optional, and instead of the personal endings + *-âya*, the verb is formed like the past subjunctive but based on *bâ-*, a variant of the subjunctive of *bân*.

**INTRANSITIVE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(bîhâtîbâm)</th>
<th>(bîhâtîbâyûn)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(bîhâtîbâtû)</td>
<td>(bîhâtîbán)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

1 Or, if there is nothing preceding to which the agent affix can be attached, the forms are *bînûsâyà*, *bînûsîâyà*, *bînûsîûyà*, and so on.
The past conditional mood is used in the following instances:

(a) In contrafactual conditional sentences, the protasis (the ‘if’ clause) contains a verb in the past conditional mood, and in the apodosis (the result clause) the verb is in the irrealis. Note, as in the last three examples below, that *agar* may be elipsed from the protasis.

If you had come yesterday, you would’ve seen Azad.

If you had sent the letter, it would’ve arrived.

If you had written it, you wouldn’t have forgotten it.

If I had known that it would happen thus to us, I wouldn’t have taken this road and I wouldn’t have caused myself and my father to encounter all this misfortune.

Had you gone around house by house, you wouldn’t have seen anyone other than women and children.
were someone who didn’t know to see them, he would call them both swallows.

Had he said, “Go throw yourself off that high place,” I would have thrown myself off.

I wish they had mounted you on an ass and paraded you through every street in town.

Would that he hadn’t done that.

§ 34. The Passive Voice. The past passive stem is constructed from the present stem of a transitive verb + -râ'. The present passive stem is the present stem + -re-. For example, from the stem bîn ‘see’ comes bînrân ‘to be seen,’ bînraytâya ‘it was seen,’ and dînîrây(t) ‘it is/can be seen’; from the stem ner ‘send’ comes nerâyar ‘to be sent,’ nerây(t) ‘it was sent,’ and dînerrey(t) ‘it is sent.’ The past and present passives are regularly conjugated:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Past Passive</th>
<th>Present Passive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bînrâm</td>
<td>bînrây(t)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bînrây(t)</td>
<td>bînray(t)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nerâram</td>
<td>nerâyar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nerâyn</td>
<td>nerây(t)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nerân</td>
<td>nerân</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Bînyângerây(tâya = bî (subjunctive prefix) + yân (agent affix) + gerâ (verb stem) + yt (2nd-person singular patient suffix) + âya (conditional suffix).

2. Since rr = r, the verb nerrân is often written alternatively as nerân.
SORANI KURDISH

bînra  bînrân  nerrâ  nerrân

PRESENT PASSIVE

dábînrem  dábînreytn  dánerrem  dánerreyn
dábînreyn(t)  dábînren  dánerreyt  dánerren
dábînren(t)  dábînrey(t)  dánerreyn(t)  dánerren

The past perfect passive conjugation is regularly formed as a vowel stem ('I had been seen, I had been sent' &c.):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVE</th>
<th>PASSIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bîstin &gt; bîstran</td>
<td>bînra &gt; bînrân</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dân &gt; d(i)rân</td>
<td>nerrâ &gt; nerrân</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dîtin &gt; bindrân</td>
<td>nerrâbû &gt; nerrabûn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>girîn &gt; gîrân</td>
<td>nerrâyû(t) &gt; nerrabûn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gotîn &gt; gutrân</td>
<td>nerrâyû(t) &gt; nerrabûn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>khistîn &gt; khîrân</td>
<td>nerrâyû(t) &gt; nerrabûn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>khwârdin &gt; khûrân</td>
<td>nerrâyû(t) &gt; nerrabûn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kîrdîn &gt; k(i)rân</td>
<td>nerrâyû(t) &gt; nerrabûn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Irregular passives. Although the passive is regularly and predictably formed from the vast majority of verbs, the following common verbs have irregularly formed passives:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVE</th>
<th>PASSIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bîstran &gt; bîstran</td>
<td>bîstran bîstr-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d(i)rân &gt; d(i)rân</td>
<td>d(i)rân bîndre-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gîrân &gt; gîrân</td>
<td>gîrân gîre-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gutrân &gt; gutrân</td>
<td>gutrân gutre-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>khîrân &gt; khîrân</td>
<td>khîrân khire-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>khûrân &gt; khûrân</td>
<td>khûrân khure-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k(i)rân &gt; k(i)rân</td>
<td>k(i)rân k(i)re-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THE VERB

nârdin > nârdn nârdre- nerdrân nerdre-

nân > n(i)rân n(i)re-
witin > witrân witre-

Other moods and tenses of the passive are regularly formed. All passive verbs are intransitive by definition and therefore never form their past tenses on the ergative model. Examples of passive constructions are as follows:

Pewîst a am likâyatâná binâsrenawâ u la châp dren u bilâw bikrenawâ. It is necessary that these stories be written down, printed, and published.

Tanakayêk la bar dukâna-kâ dâ-nrâbû. A can had been set down in front of the shop.

§ 34.1. The Past Passive Participle. The past passive participle is regularly formed from the past passive stem in -râ + -w, giving, for example, bînrâw ‘having been seen,’ nerrâw ‘having been sent,’ and nûs-râw ‘having been written.’ The negative participle is regularly made by prefixing ná- námâbînrâw ‘not having been seen,’ nâmerrâw ‘not having been sent’.

From the past passive participle is made the present perfect passive conjugation (‘I have been seen, I have been invited,’ &c.):

bînrâwim bînrâwin
bînrâwit(t) bînrâwin
bînrâwa bînrâwin
bâng krâwim bâng krâwin
bâng krâwit(t) bâng krâwin
bâng krâwa bâng krâwin

Examples of passive constructions:

witû-kirdin ‘to iron’ > witû-kirân ‘to be ironed’
§ 35. Postposed Verbal Complements. With verbs of motion many verbal complements are postposed, i.e. they come after the verb and are linked it by the unstressed vowel à. For example, chûn is ‘to go,’ but chûnà mâlê is ‘to go home.’ The linking vowel occurs in all persons in all tenses. In the present tense the t inherent in the 2nd and 3rd persons singular is recovered before the à. An example of the present tense is that of chûnà mâlê:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2nd person singular</th>
<th>3rd person singular</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dáchînà mâlê</td>
<td>dáchînà mâlê</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dáchîtû mâlê</td>
<td>dáchînà mâlê</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dáchîtâ mâlê</td>
<td>dáchînà mâlê</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the past tenses, the linking à also comes between the verb and its complement. The t inherent in the 2nd person singular is always recovered. An example of the paradigm for verbs with consonant-final stems is hâtînà darè, ‘to come out.’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2nd person singular</th>
<th>3rd person singular</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hâtînà darè</td>
<td>hâtînà darè</td>
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<tr>
<td>hâtîtû darè</td>
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<tr>
<td>hâtîtâ darè</td>
<td>hâtînà darè</td>
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<tr>
<td>hâtâ darè</td>
<td>hâtînà darè</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 3rd-person singular past verbs ending in -û and -î, a t may be infixed (depending upon dialect) between the verb and the linking à, as in chûnà shârâwa ‘to go to town’ and gayînà mâlêwa ‘to reach home.’
THE VERB

In past verbs that end in -â, a y is infixed between the verb and the linking à, as in dânà yek ‘to throw together’:

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
\text{dâmà yek} & \text{dâmânà yek} \\
\text{dâtà yek} & \text{datánà yek} \\
\text{dâyà yek} & \text{dâyânà yek} \\
\text{-im dâyà yek} & \text{-mân dâyà yek} \\
\text{-it dâyà yek} & \text{-tân dâyà yek} \\
\text{-i dâyà yek} & \text{-yân dâyà yek}
\end{array}
\]

With verbs in -awa, the -awa suffix takes precedence over the directional -â, which is deleted. Compare the following:

Hâtimà hosh. I came to consciousness.
Hâtimawa hosh. I regained consciousness.

When a postposed directional complement is turned into a preposed pronominal enclitic, the directional -â becomes -è.

Ayawe bigâtà shâr > Ayawe biyâtè. He wants to get to town.
Hargîz nágamà aw kew a dârânà > nâyángamè. I’ll never make it to those far-away mountains.

Chûà shârawa also exists in some regions.
This also happens occasionally with the verb دان ٍبَه ‘to give to,’ in which case the preposition ba is deleted, its place taken by the directional -è. A full conjugation of this phenomenon is illustrated by the following:

- نِهمَان ددانَه ‘you’ll give this to us’
- نِهْنَان ددانَه ‘they’ll give this to you (pl)’

Examples:

- Let him give something to the beggars > Let him give them something.
- I gave something to that man > I gave it to him.
- I’ll give you ten thousand liras.

§ 36. Factitive Verbs. The factitive infinitive is formed from the present stem of the intransitive (if the intransitive stem ends in -e, it is dropped) + -(y)ândin. The present stem of all such verbs is in -(y)en-. Examples are:

- رُخَان (pres. stem rukhe-) روختاندن rukhândin rukhen- ‘to destroy’
- مِردن (pres. stem mir-) مرعدن mîrûndin miren- ‘to make die, to kill’
- گَیشتن (pres. stem ga-) گیشتن gayîndin gayen- ‘to make reach, to deliver’
- تِ-گَیشتن (pres. stem te-ga-) تی گیشتن te-gayîndin te-gayen- ‘to make understand’
Rewi kherâ râkeshâ u khoy mirând.

Lawakân khoyân gayândê.

If I hadn’t wanted to come on this trip, I could have made him understand somehow.
§ 37. Expressions of Temporal Duration. For statives (‘X state has been going on for X amount of time’), the Kurdish temporal expression consists of: the temporal + -(y)a + present perfect tense verb:

Chand sâlek a bâs i chonêti yekgirtin i shewakan i zimân i kurdî hâtû-ata goê.

Chênd sênaêtiêke ëro nîşhtûmê.

For several years now discussion of how to unite the dialects of the Kurdish language has come to the fore.

For present statives with the verb ‘to be’ (‘he’s been here for X amount of time’) the formula is: temporal + -(y)a + present copula:

Chwâr sâl a l’era.

He’s been here for four years.

For on-going, progressive action continuing to the present (‘it’s been raining for X amount of time’) the formula is: temporal + -(y)a + present progressive verb.

Chand rozhêk a bârân dabâre.

It’s been raining for several days.

Zor la mezhû a dazânim...

I’ve known for a very long time...

For negatives (‘I haven’t done X for X amount of time’) the formula is: temporal + -(y)a + negative present perfect verb.

Chwâr sâl a nâmûndîtûna.

We haven’t seen them for four years.

Chênd rozhêk a bûn nêbarîwa.

It hasn’t rained for several days.
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For the past (‘something had been going on for X amount of time’), the formula is: temporal + (da)bû + past progressive for affirmative or past perfect for the negative (‘I hadn’t done X for X amount of time’):

\[
\text{Chand rozhêk dabû bârân dabäri.} \quad \text{Chand rozhêk bû bârân nábârîbû.}
\]

It had been raining for several days. It hadn’t rained for several days.

\[
\text{Nizîka i se–chwâr mâng dabû namdîtibû.}
\]

I hadn’t seen him for nearly three or four months.

§ 38. Subordinating Conjunctions. Subordinating conjunctions generally consist of prepositions + awaî (ka), where the relative ka, as in relative clauses (see §39), is optional.

Conjunctions that mean ‘after,’ like (la) dwâîâ ka, (la) pâsh awaî ka, are followed by an indicative verb, present or past according to sense.

\[
\text{dwâ i awaî ka shâr khiroshâ, …}
\]

After the city was thrown into an uproar, …

Conjunctions that mean ‘before’ (ber l’ awaî ka) and (la) pesh awaî ka are invariably followed by a present subjunctive verb. The correct tense for English translation is gained from context.

\[
\text{bar l’ awaî lâfâwaká hurizhun benetû sar zhu- rakâmân, minâlakân pekawa yârîyân akird.}
\]

Before the torrent hurled down on our rooms, the children were playing together.

Other conjunctions that demand a subjunctive verb include ba be awaï (ka) ‘without’
and bo awai (ka) ‘in order that’

He had set that first day for getting ourselves accustomed, for practice, in order that our legs and feet become accustomed and that we make ourselves ready in every way for that long road.

bo awai pâkî u begunâhî i khoy bisalmene… in order that he prove his innocence…

A short list of common subordinating conjunctions:

1. _ba be awaî (ka)_ without (+ pres. subj.)
2. _bar l’ awaî (ka)_ before (+ pres. subj.)
3. _bo awaî (ka)_ in order that (+ pres. subj.)
4. _chunkû_ since
5. _dwa i awaî (ka)_ after
6. _jâ ka_ inasmuch as
7. _ka_ when
8. _kâte(k)_ when
9. _pâsh amaî/awaî (ka)_ after
10. _pêsh awaî (ka)_ before (+ pres. subj.)

§ 39. **Relative Clauses.** Relative clauses in Kurdish are often, but not necessarily, introduced by the relative pronoun _ka_ ‘who, which, that.’ Syntactically Kurdish relative clauses do not differ significantly from Persian relative clauses, with the exception of the omission of the relative pronoun.
which does not happen in Persian. The antecedent of any relative pronoun, expressed or omitted, is usually but not necessarily marked by enclitic -i, -e, or -èk. Generally speaking, the relative pronoun ka may be omitted, particularly when it functions as the object of the verb in the relative clause. The relative pronoun is not often omitted when it functions as the subject (logical or real) of the verb in the relative clause—as in English ('the man whom I met' and 'the man with whom I went' may be equally well expressed as ‘the man I met’ and ‘the man I went with,’ but ‘the man who came’ cannot become *‘the man came’).

If the syntactical function of the relative pronoun within the relative clause is other than subject of the verb, the grammatical place is marked within the clause by a “referent pronoun” that refers back to the relative. The verb inside a relative clause modifying a true indefinite or nonspecific antecedent is in the subjunctive, as in Persian. Examples follow.

In this example the relative pronoun ka functions as the subject of nustibû—and is therefore not omissible—and the antecedent is marked by -i.

Here the relative pronoun ka refers to the antecedent yekèk la lâwakân. The -èk ending on yekèk functions as the marker of the antecedent.
In this example the referent pronoun -î complementing tûshî refers to the antecedent, har arab, marked with the enclitic -e. The relative pronoun is omitted. The verb tûsh-bît is in the subjunctive because the antecedent is nonspecific and the clause is hypothetical (‘any and every Arab you may meet’).

Write down these few things you know.

In this example the referent pronoun -yân in dayânzâni refers to the antecedent am kamâná, which is marked as antecedent by -i without the relative pronoun. The -yân- in biyânûsawa is a resumptive object pronoun, which, strictly speaking, is optional since the object of binûsawa has already been stated (am kamâná). Such resumptive object pronouns are often used after a relative clause to make clear that the antecedent of the relative clause is actually the object of the main verb.

It is different from those things he has complained of.

1 Compare the hypothetical subjunctive clause with the actual hevar erdemîn min nûxî hê parê: har ‘arabê min tûshî bûma “every Arab I’ve met,” where the antecedent is definite and the verb of the relative clause describes something that has actually happened.
OTHER SYNTACTICAL FEATURES

Here the referent pronoun -n, the “bumped” complement of the preposition le, refers to the antecedent awâna, which is so marked by -î without the relative pronoun.

He was forcing himself to hide those two large tears, which were about to dribble down.

In this example the antecedent of the relative clause, dû firmesk a gawrayâ, is marked by î, and the relative pronoun is omitted. The -yân- in biyân-shâretawa is another example of a resumptive object pronoun.

Whatever I had thought about, I hadn’t thought about dying.

In this example, har shitêk ‘whatever’ produces an indefinite relative clause; thus the verb birim kirdibetawa is subjunctive, and in this case, past subjunctive.

§ 40. Directional Nouns in è. Certain nouns become quasi-adverbial directionals with the addition of unstressed -è. Among these are mâtê ‘homeward,’ zhûrê ‘inward,’ and darê ‘outward.’ These directionals tend to occur as postposed directionals after -à (see §35).

§ 41. Orthographic Peculiarities of Sorani Kurdish. For the most part, Sorani Kurdish is written in a “phonetic” version of the Arabic alphabet in which all but one of the vowels are given graphic representations. Only the vowel i is not represented internally in a word.

The only real inconsistency in the writing system is the representation of the sequence ye, which is written û, as though it were ya, which is written the same. Both the writing of ye and the lack of indication of i go back to early twentieth-century attempts to render Ottoman spelling more “phonetic” and actually have nothing to do with Kurdish, but since Kurdish spelling was devised during the late Ottoman period, it has been saddled with û for ye and nothing for i.
SRONI KURDISH

Writers of Kurdish, as well as writers of other languages using the Arabic alphabet, are loath to write several y’s in sequence. It is probably safe to say that a word like gayîn ‘we arrived,’ which technically should be spelled with three y’s in a row (one for the first y, a second for the î, and a third for the second y), will never be seen with all three y’s. At most it will appear as gayîn, the same spelling as gayîn ‘you/they arrived.’ The same applies to the sequence -î i, i.e. a word ending in î followed by the i of the izâfa: rarely is this sequence spelled with two y’s; generally the -î ending of the word is spelled with y and the izâfa y is omitted, as in

بّو دانمی توانا bo diñarmî i awâna for placating them
بکهایت اندبیا و بارعیا dyârikrawi niya. A story does not have a clearly defined size or length.

The same applies to the sequence ɨy, where a word ends in î and is followed by the 3rd-person singular pronominal enclitic (possessive or agent affix). Occasionally the sequence is spelled in full with the correct number of y’s, but normally only one y is written. This is particularly true when there would be three y’s, as in

میلیویلا لی خنالک کرد. mîlîwîly la khalk kîrd. He bade farewell to the people.

The sequence ɨa, as in tânîjâkâ ‘the hunting dog,’ is written as either تانیجعک kîya or تاناچیک kîya, as though the sequence were ɨ-ya. The sequence îek, given the orthographic peculiarity of the -ek suffix after vowels, may be written as ɨek or as iyek, as in tânîjîek ‘a hunting dog,’ which can be written either as تاناچیعک or تاناچیک.

There is also no unanimity among writers of Kurdish with regard to the writing of compound words. Some put all the elements together, and others leave each element separate. Thus, diñarmî is spelled either دلنهامی or دلیههک and dyârikraw is either دیارکرو or دیاریکرو or دیاریکرو, This is rarely troubling to the reader, but the longer compounds like سارینریکش sarinjîkësh ‘attrac-
OTHER SYNTACTICAL FEATURES

tive’ become, the more difficult they become to recognize.

§ 42. Vowel Contractions. (1) The sequence -iâ- is often contracted to -e-, as in 

\[ \text{amarikâká} \rightarrow \text{amarîkeká} \]

(2) The sequences -ûwa- and -ûâ- can be contracted to -o-, as in 

\[ \text{bûwatawa} \rightarrow \text{botawa}, \text{dîtûatawa} \rightarrow \text{ditotawa}, \text{bîbûawa} \rightarrow \text{bibowa} \]
### Verb Tenses and Moods

#### Present Habitual/Progressive

*(kawtin ‘fall,’ nûsîn ‘write,’ & qsa-kirdin ‘speak’)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SINGULAR</th>
<th>PLURAL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>دکوم</td>
<td>دکون</td>
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<tr>
<td>دکویت</td>
<td>دکوین</td>
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#### Present Subjunctive

*(‘that I fall,’ &c.)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SINGULAR</th>
<th>PLURAL</th>
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<tbody>
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VERB TENSES AND MOODS

**Simple Past** (‘I fell,’ &c.)

**FOR INTRANSITIVE:** 科ونت KAWTIN ‘TO FALL’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Present Stem</th>
<th>Imperfect Stem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>كوات</td>
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**FOR TRANSITIVE VERB FOLLOWED BY AGENT AFFIX:** نوسين NUSIN ‘TO WRITE’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Present Stem</th>
<th>Imperfect Stem</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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**FOR AGENT AFFIX PRECEDING A TRANSITIVE VERB:** QSA-KIRDN ‘TO SPEAK’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Present Stem</th>
<th>Imperfect Stem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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**Past Habitual/Progressive (= Irrealis)** (‘I used to fall,’ ‘I would have fallen,’ &c.)
### SORANI KURDISH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present Perfect ('I have fallen', &amp;c.)</th>
<th>SORANI KURDISH</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dákawtim</td>
<td>دکوم توم</td>
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<tr>
<td>dákawt</td>
<td>دکوم ت</td>
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<td>نکوم توم (سول)</td>
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<td>nákawtîn (Sul.)</td>
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<td>قسامان نکارد</td>
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#### Present Perfect

- **kawtûm**
- **kawtûn**
- **kawtûy(t)**
- **kawtûa**
- **nákawtûm**
- **násîwîma**
- **násîwîta**
- **násîwyatî**
- **nâmûnûsîwa**
- **qsam kirdûa**
- **qsat kirdûa**
- **qsay kirdûa**
- **qsam nákirdûa**

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### Verb Tenses and Moods

**Past Perfect** (*‘I had fallen,’ &c.*)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Past Perfect</td>
<td>kawtibûm</td>
<td>kawtibûn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past Perfect</td>
<td>kawtibêt</td>
<td>kawtibûn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past Perfect</td>
<td>kawtibû</td>
<td>kawtibûn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past Perfect</td>
<td>nûsîbûm</td>
<td>nûsîbâmân</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past Perfect</td>
<td>nûsîbêt</td>
<td>nûsîbêtân</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past Perfect</td>
<td>nûsîbetî</td>
<td>nûsîbetîn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past Perfect</td>
<td>nûmânûsîbet</td>
<td>nûmânûsîbetân</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Past Conditional I** (*‘had I fallen,’ &c.*)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Past Conditional I</td>
<td>bikawtîmâya</td>
<td>bikawtîmâya</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

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SORANI KURDISH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active V.</th>
<th>Passive V.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bikawtîdâya</td>
<td>bikawtinâya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bikawtâya</td>
<td>bikawtinâya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nákawtinâya</td>
<td>nákawtîdâya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nákawtâya</td>
<td>nákawtinâya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bîmnûsîâya</td>
<td>bîmnûsîbâ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bîtnûsîâya</td>
<td>bîtnûsîbâ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nâmûsîâya</td>
<td>nâmûsîbâ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Past Conditional II ('were I to have fallen,' &c.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active V.</th>
<th>Passive V.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bikawtibâm</td>
<td>bikawtibây</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bikawtîbân</td>
<td>bikawtîbân</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nákawtibân</td>
<td>nákawtibâm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bîmnûsîbâ</td>
<td>bîmnûsîbâ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bîtnûsîbâ</td>
<td>bîtnûsîbâ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nâmûsîbâ</td>
<td>nâmûsîbâ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PASSIVE TENSES AND MOODS

Present Passive ('I am seen')

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active V.</th>
<th>Passive V.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dabînrem</td>
<td>dabînrey(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dabînreyn</td>
<td>dabînren</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### VERB TENSES AND MOODS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present Subjunctive Passive</th>
<th>Past Tense</th>
<th>Present Perfect Tense</th>
<th>Past Perfect Tense</th>
<th>Past Subjunctive Passive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>dabinre(t)</strong></td>
<td><strong>dabinren</strong></td>
<td><strong>nabînrem</strong></td>
<td><strong>nâdabinrem</strong></td>
<td><strong>bînrâbim</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>nâbînrem</strong></td>
<td><strong>nabînreyn</strong></td>
<td><strong>nâbînrem</strong></td>
<td><strong>nâbînreyn</strong></td>
<td><strong>nâbînreyn</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>nâdabinrem</strong></td>
<td><strong>nâbînreyn</strong></td>
<td><strong>nâdabinrem</strong></td>
<td><strong>nâdabinreyn</strong></td>
<td><strong>nâdabinreyn</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Present Subjunctive Passive** (‘that I be seen’)
- **bînrâm**
- **bînrây(t)**
- **bînrâ**
- **nâbînrân**

**Past Tense** (‘I was seen’)
- **bînrâm**
- **bînrây(t)**
- **bînrâ**
- **nâbînrân**

**Present Perfect Tense** (‘I have been seen’)
- **bînrâwim**
- **bînrâwî(t)**
- **bînrâwa**
- **nâbînrâwim**

**Past Perfect Tense** (‘I had been seen’)
- **bînrâbûm**
- **bînrâbûy(t)**
- **bînrâbû**
- **nâbînrâbûm**

**Past Subjunctive Passive** (‘that I have been seen’)
- **bînrâbim**
- **bînrâbî(t)**

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**SORANI KURDISH**

| Subjective Pronoun | Imperative | Pronoun | Imperative
|--------------------|------------|---------|------------|
| بیگراییت | بیگرای | بیگراییم | بیگراییم
| بنگراییم | بنگراییم | بنگراییم | بنگراییم

**Past Conditional Passive** (‘had I been seen’)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjective Pronoun</th>
<th>Imperative</th>
<th>Pronoun</th>
<th>Imperative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>بیگراییا</td>
<td>بیگراییا</td>
<td>بیگراییا</td>
<td>بیگراییا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>بیگراییا</td>
<td>بیگراییا</td>
<td>بیگراییا</td>
<td>بیگراییا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>بیگراییا</td>
<td>بیگراییا</td>
<td>بیگراییا</td>
<td>بیگراییا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>هیچگراییا</td>
<td>هیچگراییا</td>
<td>هیچگراییا</td>
<td>هیچگراییا</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### Synopsis of Tenses and Moods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTRANSITIVE</th>
<th>TRANSITIVE</th>
<th>PASSIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>infinitive</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>جوون</td>
<td>بانک کردن</td>
<td>بانک کردن</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chûn</td>
<td>bâng kirdin</td>
<td>bâng krân</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to go</td>
<td>to invite</td>
<td>to be invited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>past</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>جووم</td>
<td>بانک کرکم</td>
<td>بانک کرکم</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chûm</td>
<td>bângim kird</td>
<td>bâng krâm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I went</td>
<td>I invited him/her</td>
<td>I was invited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>past habitual</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>دوجووم</td>
<td>بانک دکرکم</td>
<td>بانک دکرکم</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dachûm</td>
<td>bângim dâkird</td>
<td>bâng dâkrâm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I used to go</td>
<td>I used to invite him</td>
<td>I used to be invited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>pres. perf.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>جووم</td>
<td>بانک کرکووه</td>
<td>بانک کرکووه</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chûwim</td>
<td>bângim kirdûa</td>
<td>bâng krûwim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have gone</td>
<td>I have invited him</td>
<td>I have been invited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>past perf.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>جووم</td>
<td>بانک کرکبیبو</td>
<td>بانک کرکبیبو</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chûbûm</td>
<td>bângim kirdibû</td>
<td>bâng krûbûm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had gone</td>
<td>I had invited him</td>
<td>I had been invited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>present</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>دیجیم</td>
<td>بانک دکرکم</td>
<td>بانک دکرکم</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d)achîm</td>
<td>bâng (d)akam</td>
<td>bâng (d)akrem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I(‘ll) go</td>
<td>I(‘ll) invite</td>
<td>I am (will be) invited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>pres. subj.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>بچیم</td>
<td>بانک بکیرکم</td>
<td>بانک بکیرکم</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bichîm</td>
<td>bâng bikam</td>
<td>bâng bikrem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that I go</td>
<td>that I invite</td>
<td>that I be invited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>past subj.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>جووم</td>
<td>بانک کرکدنیت</td>
<td>بانک کرکدنیت</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chûbûm</td>
<td>bângim kirdîbe(t)</td>
<td>bâng krûbûm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that I have gone</td>
<td>that I have invited him</td>
<td>that I have been invited</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

1 Because of the ergative nature of the past tenses, a 3rd-person singular object is built into the verb.
SORANI KURDISH

past cond. I

bichûmâya  bângim bikrâdyâya  bâng bikrâmâya

past cond. II

(bi)chûbâm  bângim (bi)kirdîbâ  bâng (bi)krâbâm

had I gone  had I invited him  had I been invited

irrealis (= past habitual)

(d)dachûm  bângim (d)akird  bâng (d)akrâm

I would have gone  I would have invited him  I would have been invited

Conditional Sentence Types

present/future possible (present subjunctive or simple past indicative protasis, indicative apodosis)

Agar biche(t) (or chû), dayânbîne(t).

If he goes, he’ll see them.

Agar bíchîtà (or chûytà) Kurdistân, fer i kurdî dabi.

If you go to Kurdistan, you’ll learn Kurdish.

past possible (past subjunctive protasis, indicative apodosis)

Agar l’awe wafr bârîbe, nâyên.

If it has snowed there, they won’t be coming.

Agar chûbêm, nâmânîm kay chûâ darè.

If he has gone, I don’t know when he went out.

Agar chûbîtà Kurdistân, dahe fer i kurdî bibî.

If you have gone to Kurdistan, you must have learned Kurdish.

contrafactual (past conditional protasis, past habitual apodosis)

Agar náchûbîtà Kurdistân, nâtwânî fer i kurdî bibî.

If you haven’t gone to Kurdistan, you can’t have learned Kurdish.
SYNOPSIS OF TENSES AND MOODS

If he had gone, he would have seen them./ If he were to go, he would see them.

If you had gone to Kurdistan, you would have learned Kurdish.

If you hadn’t gone to Kurdistan, you wouldn’t have learned Kurdish.
Conversion Table for the Sorani and Kurmanji Alphabets

Recently there have been attempts, particularly on the internet and on the part of Kurds influenced by speakers of Kurmanji Kurdish, to write Sorani in the Latin-based Kurmanji alphabet. The conversion is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sorani</th>
<th>Sorani Arabic</th>
<th>Kurmanji</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>ه</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>â</td>
<td>ا</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>ب</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ch</td>
<td>چ</td>
<td>ç</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>د</td>
<td>d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>ێ</td>
<td>ê</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>ف</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td>گ</td>
<td>g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gh</td>
<td>غ</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h</td>
<td>ح, ه</td>
<td>h</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>ێ</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>î</td>
<td>ی</td>
<td>î</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j</td>
<td>چ</td>
<td>c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k</td>
<td>ک</td>
<td>k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kh</td>
<td>خ</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l</td>
<td>ل</td>
<td>l</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ḷ</td>
<td>ل</td>
<td>ll</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>م</td>
<td>m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>ن</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o</td>
<td>و</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p</td>
<td>پ</td>
<td>p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>q</td>
<td>ق</td>
<td>q</td>
</tr>
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<td>r</td>
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<tr>
<td>ř</td>
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<td>rr</td>
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<tr>
<td>s</td>
<td>س</td>
<td>s</td>
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<tr>
<td>sh</td>
<td>ش</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
<td>ت</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td>و</td>
<td>u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>û</td>
<td>وو</td>
<td>û</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v</td>
<td>ف</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONVERSION TABLE FROM SORANI TO KURMANJI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sorani</th>
<th>Kurmanji</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>w</td>
<td>w</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>y</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>z</td>
<td>z</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zh</td>
<td>ù</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘</td>
<td>(not indicated)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In writing Sorani in the Kurmanji alphabet, a one-to-one correspondence is observed. The i of the izda after consonants is written as i joined directly to the preceding word, but after vowels it is usually written as y, as in ray ğişti for râ i ğişti ‘public opinion’ and zaraweey zanîsti for zîravî i zânîsti ‘scientific language.’ An example of such transcribed text is given below:

Ber le Sedam Husên hîc berpisêkî Êraqî newêrawe îmza le ser rêkkewtinêk bikat ke otonomî bidate kurd, ewîş le 11-i adarî 1970 rêkkewtinname benawbangekey adarî legell Mela Mistefa Barzanî mor kird, tefsîrî ciyaciya bo karekey (cêgirî berêzê) dekira. Hendê deyanut be rastî deyewê ew birêne qülley cestey Êraqî îmar bikat, hendêkî dikeş deyanut deyewê piştîgo hêzî serbaziya bo xoy misoger bikat û bixate jêr rikêfi xoyewe, diway evey le biwerekanî emnî û rageyandin î hizbî da ew pallpiştîyey misoger kirdibû.\(^1\)

In Arabic script the passage is as follows:

بحث له سعدام حوسين هيج بادرسكي عبّراق نموذروه نيمزا له سمر ريكوگونتيك بكات كه تونتومي بدانه كورد، نموش له 11 اي تاداري 1970 ريكوگونتيامه بنواناكه كي تاداري ليكل ملا مستعده أزاراني موركرد. تفسيري جباحا بوبهكاركه (جيكري يبري) دكره: هئندي ديبانوت به راستي ديهومي نزو رينه قولوي جمستي عيزاق تيار بكات، هئنديكي ديكش ديبانوت ديموي پيشتويكي هنزي سيرابزي نو خوي مسوكر بكات و بيخته زير ركجي خوهيوم، دووي نوهي له بوارگه يلنمي و ينکابن و حزدياه نزو يلبشيبيه مسوكر كرديوم.

An example of a slightly different form of transcription sometimes used on the internet is as follows:

Ke dellin zimanî Kurdî, mebest ew zimaneve ke ęsta Kurd qisey pédeken. Gelê zimanwan u rojhel hafîna henderî (ferengî) degell zimanî Kurdî xerîk bûne, zurbev ew zanayaney ke be shêmeyêkî gishtî ya taybetî le zimanî Kurdî duwawin gutûyane ke em zimane le binez zimanekanî Hînd

\(^1\)Taken from the internet at www.kerkuk-kurdistan.com/hevpeyvinek.asp?ser=1&cep=4&nnimre=281).
SORANI KURDISH

In Arabic script, this text is as follows:

كە دەدەنت زەمانى کوردی، مەبەست تنە زەمانەیە کە تێبەکارەت کردو چەندەگە. کەمە زەمانەوە و رۆژەمە لە زەمانی ھەندەیەییکەیە (فەرەوەکی) دەگەڵ زەمانی کوردی خەڵکی یووە، زەمانەوەیە دەگەڵ زەمانەیە کە بە شێوەیە پێکەدی‌ کە تایبەتیش لە زەمانی کوردی دەوەن کەتەوییەیەن کە تنە زەمانەکەی ەندەوەوەکەیی و بەمەڵەوە ەندەوەئەن و لە خەڵکی زەمانی تەرەوەیە دەگەڵ زەمانی فەردەسی خەڵکی یووەیە. یەکە زەمانی کوردی کە تنە رەوەشی جەژن بەمە یووە ؛ تاشکەریشە زەمانی هەموو لەلایە زەمانی دەبەسەوان و لەوەیە کە بەریکەدێتیە نەوەیە. یەکە دەبەسەوانی ناتە دەگەڵ زەمانی هەر زەمانی دەبەسەوانی کەوە و لەتاوەگەیە یەکە دەبەسەوانی ناتە دەگەڵ زەمانی کەوە زەمانی کوردی چەژن؟

1Taken from the website www.kurdishacademy.org/ku/history/history.html.