Analysis of Phonology and Morphology in the Kobani Dialect

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This submission is a computer-aided analysis of the Kurdish dialect Kobani, based on speech data collected from dozens of native speakers from various villages of that region.

Kobani is a Kurdish dialect spoken in and around Kobanê (or Ain al-Arab), which is the capital city of the district Ain al-Arab in the gouvernement Aleppo in Syria. The Kobani dialect can be considered to be part of the Southern Kurmanji dialect-group according to (Öpengin & Haig, 2014).

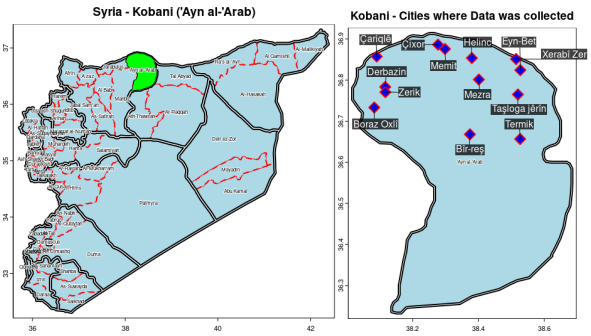


Figure 1: Study locations.

The only other work on the Kobani variety of Kurmanji that the authors could find is (Najem-Aldin, 2021), which is of a smaller scope and mainly reports about the Izafe phenomenon and reported three observations:

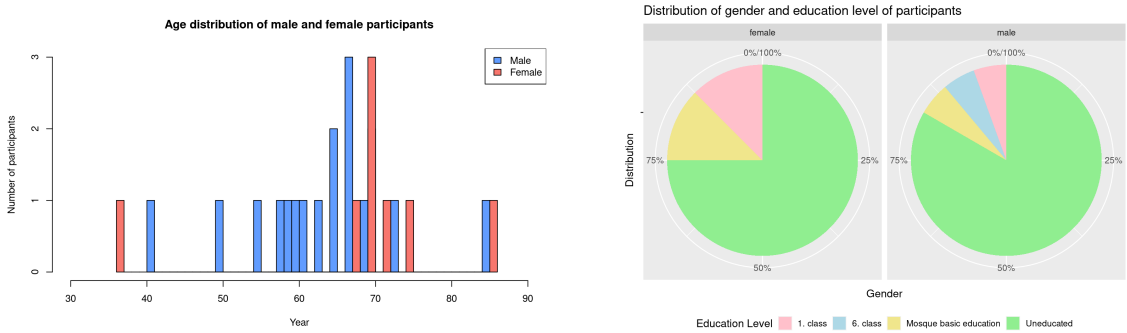


Figure 2: Demographics of study participants, aimed at less-educated elderly native speaker of Kobani.

1. The presence of an additional form for the Izafe with the definite feminine and masculine singular used in alternation with the standard ones. **2.** The additional form of Izafe for the definite singular feminine sounds to have unique vowel qualities that are not existent in other varieties of Kurmanji and consequently different from the previously supposed-to-be masculine marker -ê by (Ali 2018) and it can probably be the same as the presumed loss of gender phenomenon by (Dorleijn, 1996) in the Diyarbakir varieties. **3.** The presence of Izafe markers on the subject of copular sentences.

The data elicitation consisted of recording stories told by people from several selected villages (see Figure 1) while ensuring the story teller (study participant) to be of a certain age (see Figure 2), including both genders (8 female, 18 male) and of a limited formal education. This approach helps mitigate the influence of other languages, such as Arabic, as individuals who attend school or pursue higher education often incorporate foreign words into their language usage. The data has been collected from February to July of 2021 and consists of 320 minutes of speech recorded by native speakers of the Kobani dialect. The instructed interviewers always made an effort to pretend not to record audio in order to prevent the interviewees from speaking in Standard Kurdish. However, after every interview, the participants were informed that the recording had been captured and asked for permission to use it for analysis.

Our initial analysis approach, drawing inspiration from (Geyik, 2022; Jafarzadeh, 2017), agrees with the findings reported by (Najem-Aldin, 2021). After conducting our analysis, we have discovered several intriguing differences between standard Kurdish and the Kobani dialect. During our analysis, we

observed a distinct group (clan) that exhibits a unique pronunciation. This group is situated in the villages of Zerik, Lihên, Taşlûg, and Reqas. There are several disparities between the pronunciation of this group and the standard pronunciation. For instance, our analysis revealed that in Shexi-pronunciation, all nouns ending in "î" are pronounced as "I" (see Table 5). The following is a selection of the findings that have emerged from our analysis:

	Ending	Standard Kurdish	Kobani Dialect
masculine singular	î	Alan rind e	Alan-**î** rind e
feminine singular	e	Nalîn xweşik e	Nalîn-**e** xweşik e
plural masculine/ feminine	e	Dîwar bilind in	Dîwar-**e** bilind in

Table 1: Nouns always get an ending in copular sentences.

Standard Kurdish	Kobani Dialect
Bi hev re	Bi hev r**a**
Di vir de	Di vir d**a**
Ji mêj ve	Ji mêj v**a**

Table 3: Second part of compound prepositions ends in "a".

vowel, semi-vowel, vowel	Fusion sound	Standard Kurdish	Kobani Dialect
(î)/iyê	ê	Ew ji Kobaniyê ye	Ew-*î* ji Kobanê ye
êyê	ê	Di Rêyê re çû	Di r**ê** ra çû
eyê	ê	Em paleyê dikin	Em pal**ê** dikine

Table 2: Fusion of (vowel, semi-vowel, vowel) into one sound.

Standard Kurdish	Kobani Dialect
Jinik avê radike	Jinik avê radik**ê**
Mîr zêr dikire	Mîr zêr dikir**ê**

Table 4: Verbs receive the ending ê when conjugated with the third person singular.

Standard Kurdish	Shexi-pronunciation	Most used pronunciation
Derî	Qap**i**	Qapî
Kevçî	Kevç**i**	Kevçî
Xanî	Xan**i**	Xanî

Table 5: Examples of Shexi-pronunciations encountered in the study data.

Standard Kurdish	Kobani Dialect
Mêvan	M**î**van
Nêçîrvan	N**î**çîrvan
Bêrvîvan	B**î**rvîvan

Table 6: Transformation of "ê" to "î".

Standard Kurdish	Kobani Dialect
Tûj	T**o**j
Gûz	G**o**z
Bilûr	Bil**o**r

Table 7: Transformation of "û" to "o".

References

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