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A Morpho-phonological Adaptation of English Loanwords into Central Kurdish in Selected Political Texts

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Abstract

The present study examines the morpho-phonological adaptation of English loanwords into Central Kurdish within the context of political news articles. The study focuses on how English lexical items are integrated phonologically and morphologically into the Central Kurdish Dialect (or CK), demonstrating the constant language contact and influence. For this purpose, a total of 9 political news articles are analyzed, drawn from three major Kurdish news outlets, namely, Rudaw, Channel 8, and Kurdistan 24 (K24), that were published during the first quarter of 2025 (January, February, and March). The selection of articles was based on their titles and likelihood of containing loanwords from English. The articles covered news events of local, regional, and international political news, depending on the categorization as appears on the websites. The analysis focuses on segmental and supra-segmental phonological adaptation processes such as substitution, stress modification, syllable restructuring, as well as morphological integration through Kurdish inflectional and derivational patterns. The findings demonstrate and highlight systematic adaptation strategies of English loanwords into Central Kurdish, shaped by both linguistic structures and the sociopolitical role of media, particularly political news websites, as they get the most readers' attention nowadays.

Keywords: English Loanwords, Lexical Borrowing, Phonological Adaptation, Morphological Adaptation, Language Contact.

لیکۆلینه‌وهیه کی مورفو-فونولوچی وشه وهرگیراوه کان له زمانی ئینگلیزیه وه بۆ زمانی کوردي سۆرانی له دهقی وهرگیراوه باهتی سیاسی بلاوکراوه

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پوخته

ئەم تۆیزینه‌وهیه لیکۆلینه‌وهیه کی مورفو-فونولوچیه له وشه وهرگیراوه کان له زمانی ئینگلیزیه وه بۆ زمانی کوردي سۆرانی له چوارچیوهی باهتی هەوالی سیاسیدا. تۆیزینه‌وه کە تیشك دهخاته سەر چۆنیه‌تی تیکەلبونی وشهی ئینگلیزی لە ریوی فونولوچی و مورفو-لوجیه وه لەگەل شیوه‌زاري کوردي ناوه‌ندی (سۆرانی) کە بەرکەوتن و کاریگەري بەرده‌وامی زمان نیشان ده‌دات. بۆ ئەم مەبەسته، کۆی گشتنی ۹ و تاری هەوالی سیاسی شیکاریان بۆ کراوه، کە له سێ دەزگای هەوالی کورديي وه ورگیراون، ئەوانیش پیکهاتون له روداو، کەنال ۸، و کوردستان (K24) ۲۴، کە له ماوهی چاره کی يە كەمی سالی ۲۰۲۵ (مانگە کانی کانوونی دوهم، شوبات، و ئازار) دا بلاوکراونه‌تەوە. هەلبزاردەنی باهتە کان له سەر بەنەمای ناونیشانە کانیان و ئەگەری وشهی ورگیراوه لە ئینگلیزیه وه بۆ کوردي بوه. باهتە کان له هەوالی سیاسی ناوخوی و گونجاندەنی سیستماتیکی وشه ورگیراوه کانی ئینگلیزی بۆ کوردي سۆرانی نیشان ده‌دەن، کە هەم له پیکهاتە زمانه‌وانی و هەم رۆلی کۆمەلایەتی سیاسی مائپەرە هەوالییە سیاسییە کان پیشان ده‌دەن، بەو پییەی لهم سەرده‌مەدا زۆرترین سەرنجی خوینەران بە دەست دەھینەن.

کلیله وشه کان: وشهی ورگیراوه لە ئینگلیزی، ورگرتەنی وشهی، گونجاندەنی فونولوچی، گونجاندەنی مورفو-لوجی، بەرکەوتنی زمان

1. Introduction

Borrowing is a complex process and it can happen in various forms or types depending on the nature of change and adaptation of the lexical items. Crystal (1985:36) defines borrowing as “linguistic forms being taken over by one language or dialect from another”. To Durkin (2014:3), borrowing in linguistics describes “a process in which one language replicates a linguistic feature from another language, either wholly or partly”. Borrowing can happen in various types, including phonological, morphological, syntactic, and semantic. Lexical borrowing is the most common form, which simply means taking or incorporating words from one language to another.

Haugen (1950) divides borrowing into two primary categories: importation and substitution. In importation, a linguistic pattern is adopted from one language to another, while substitution refers to the replacement of an element of a foreign language with a native equivalent. Haugen (1950: 214-215) further breaks down borrowing into three types: loanwords, loan blends and loan shifts. Simply, a loanword involves borrowing both the form and meaning of a word, with or without a change in the original form. A loan blend is blending elements from both the source and the native language. Haugen (1950: 214) defines loanblends as “hybrid forms in which part of the word is borrowed while the rest is native”. Loan shifts occur when a native word is used to express a foreign concept. Additionally, he categorizes loanwords based on their level of assimilation into three groups: unassimilated, partially assimilated and fully assimilated loanwords.

In addition, Katamba (1994:133) differentiates between direct and indirect borrowing in language. While direct borrowing involves taking a word directly from another language, like the English ‘omelette’ from French. Indirect borrowing passes a word through several languages, often leading to phonological modification and a change in meaning.

Lexical borrowing, in most cases, can be the result of having unequal social or political relations between linguistic communities. As explained by Thomason and Kaufman (1988) lexical borrowing can be observed in situations where one language has been dominant over another. Also, according to Weinreich (1953), borrowing normally starts with words first, before encompassing other areas such as phonology or syntax.

1.1. The Aim of the Study

The primary aim of this study is to investigate the morpho-phonological adaptation patterns and strategies of English loanwords into Central Kurdish within political discourse, in an attempt to provide an analysis of the way English influences the Kurdish language.

1.2. The Significance of the Study

The study contributes to the growing body of work in contact linguistics and loanword investigation. The findings may inform language policy, educational material development and efforts toward a standardized Kurdish language, particularly in contexts where foreign terminology is significantly rising and unavoidable.

1.3. The problem of the Study

In recent years, English has become a major influencer on the Kurdish language and specifically in the Kurdistan Region, where it is widely taught in schools and universities, and plays a major role in the media, business, and international communication. It is gradually replacing other regional languages such as Arabic, Turkish and Persian as the main sources of new vocabulary in Central Kurdish. Despite this, there is limited research on how English loanwords are integrated into the dialect.

1.4. The Significance of Loanwords in Language Contact

Loanwords reveal the influence of one language over another. Normally, borrowed words enrich the borrower's language in terms of vocabulary, and they are mostly connected to areas such as trade, conquest, and culture (Weinreich, 1953). In other words, loanwords are important because they indicate contact between cultures or linguistic communities and can echo a more profound cultural impact. For instance, Guo (2020) found that English vocabulary consists of 80% of loanwords, and this is a good indicator of the impact of other languages or cultures on English. Additionally, according to Weinreich (1953) loanwords fill the lexical gaps for new concepts in the borrowing languages, while this may often result in inconsistency between spelling and pronunciation, but it diversifies the language. This can be observed clearly in English as it has borrowed extensively from languages such as Latin, French, Germanic languages, etc.

Katamba (1994) emphasizes that there are several compelling reasons for borrowing, one of which is identity. Language is not only a tool for communication but also a marker of identity. For bilingual speakers, the choice of language can reflect how they see

themselves. For instance, if two people in a foreign country speak Kurdish or their native language, it may signify a sense of solidarity and belonging. Also, sometimes, individuals may engage in code switching, blending two or more languages in their conversation. Over time, frequently used foreign terms in code-switching can be integrated into the dominant language. Also, prestige may play a role, as people often adopt fashionable foreign terms to showcase their modernity and social status.

Sedeq (2018) argues that due to the lack of specific vocabulary in Kurdish for the modern fields like sciences, politics, administration, art and technology, earlier Kurdish speakers in the Kurdistan Region often depended on surrounding languages, especially Arabic, to fill those gaps. However, English has now become the preferred second language in the region, choosing English loanwords over Arabic traditional ones.

Additionally, according to Katamba (1994), loanwords often undergo another process which can be known as nativization. It allows foreign words to blend into the native lexicon and lose their foreign features as time passes. Furthermore, some loanwords resist full integration into the borrowing language by keeping the distinctive foreign grammatical forms; for instance, a French noun like 'bureau' maintains its French plural form in English, which is '*bureaux*', and this is not a standard way for English nouns to pluralize.

2. Literature Review

Hasanpoor (1999), in a study titled 'a Study of European, Persian and Arabic loans in Standard Sorani', investigated the integration of foreign words into Sorani Kurdish. The study focused on the phonological and morphological processes involved in adapting loanwords from Arabic, Persian and some European languages. This study was a key reference for understanding how foreign words have shaped Kurdish vocabulary over many years. Hassanpoor has applied Haugen's classification to borrowed terms to organize the loans in Central Kurdish into three types, which are loanwords, loan blends and loan shifts.

Azeez and Awla (2016), in a study titled explored English loanwords in Kurdish. The primary source of data collection was 'the Azadi (English-Kurdish) Dictionary by

Karadaghi (2006)'. The study distinguished 358 loanwords borrowed from English and analyzing the way they were integrated into Kurdish and phonologically categorizes them into three forms: assimilated, partially assimilated and non-assimilated.

Later, Sedeeq (2018), in a study, examined the growing presence of English loanwords in the Central Kurdish dialect as used in media discourse, especially in political articles. The study focused on the period 1993-2013, during which substantial sociopolitical developments happened in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, leading to increased contact with the English language. Therefore, the study aimed to investigate and analyze the frequency of English loanwords in the CK dialect over the two decades, and to compare the use of English loans with Arabic ones and document their diachronic change. Also, the study examined the phonological and orthographic adaptation of English loanwords and the changes that occur as words are integrated into Kurdish accordingly. The main source of data collection was *Xebat* newspaper, a prominent Kurdish daily newspaper at the time. A total of 246 articles over the period were analyzed, and the data included both English and Arabic loanwords used in political articles. After extracting the loanwords, their phonological and orthographic changes were analyzed. The study compared the frequency of Arabic and English loanwords over six selected years mentioned above.

On the other hand, Rasul (2019) conducted a study in which he examined a shift from Arabic to English loanwords in the Kurdish media. The study was titled 'a Shift from Arabic to English: A new trend in using loanwords in Kurdish Journalistic Translation'. This research tackled a key sociolinguistic change, in which words borrowed from English replace Arabic terms in the Kurdish media. The author has shown the influence of globalization and the dominance of English as an international language for this change.

Similarly, Hamid (2021) investigates the Arabic loan consonants in central Kurdish. In the findings of the study, it categorizes Arabic loan consonants into three groups: consonants existing in both phonetic inventories, unadopted consonants and those that are modified via phonological features. The study helps to understand the way consonants are adapted into Kurdish from Arabic and it could be useful to understand the processes involved in the adaptation of English loans into Kurdish as well.

Additionally, Hasan's (2021) study compared the frequency and usage of loanwords in Northern Kurmanji (NK) and Middle Kurmanji (MK) dialects represented by Sorani or CK. Also, some key factors were investigated that contribute to loanword adoption in these dialects. Thus, the research questions aimed at those points as well as identifying the donor languages for each dialect, the topic and the most common parts of speech of loanwords in each dialect where most borrowings occur. The data collection was based on two newspapers, each one representing a dialect and 25 articles were analyzed across six topics: politics, economics, science, law, arts and sport. As a result, the study found that the MK dialect uses loanwords more frequently than NK. This is attributed to MK's official status in Iraq and its role in education, media, and administration. Hasan suggested that MK's wider use and higher prestige necessitate borrowing to enrich its vocabulary, specifically from Arabic and English.

Also, Mohammed (2022), in his study on language ideologies and the process of borrowing European words into Kurdish, examined how language ideologies influence borrowing patterns. The study focused on the role of intellectuals and cultural movements in shaping the adaptation of loanwords into Kurdish.

Finally, Ghafar and Mohamedamin (2023) analyze the integration of English loanwords into Kurdish. They examined pronunciation, semantic shifts, and morphological changes in the interaction between English and Kurdish.

Apparently, most research on loanword adaptation into Kurdish has so far focused on the regional languages' influence, such as Arabic and Persian, while leaving English, a rapidly growing source of loans, underexplored. Even though English is becoming a significant source of new vocabulary in Kurdish, particularly in political contexts that tend to attract public interest in today's globalized world, and Kurdish language is changing significantly as a result of this increased use of English-borrowed terms. This change is happening especially among younger speakers and in writers who access the international media. Yet, there isn't a full understanding of how English words are being transmitted into Kurdish or what this change means for the language's future, despite this growing influence.

This study provides a current view of how the Kurdish language is changing by looking at how English words are becoming part of Kurdish and how they are being

modified phonologically and morphologically in terms of pronunciation, spelling, and usage. It also investigates the impact of digital media on language change in the context of political news. Considering that nearly all previous research has focused on the investigation of the subject in printed media. Therefore, this study not only addresses a significant gap in the literature but also establishes the framework for further research on Kurdish linguistic change and modern language contact.

3. Methodology

3.1. The Design of the Study

A qualitative research approach is used to analyze the morpho-phonological adaptation of English loanwords in Central Kurdish. Since, the study focuses on linguistic structures, patterns and theoretical analysis, a qualitative method is the most suitable. It examines how and why loanwords are integrated into CK and identifies the regular patterns. Such analysis requires a detailed linguistic description rather than numerical analysis.

3.2. Data Collection

The main source of data for the study comprises a selection of political news articles published in the Central Kurdish dialect by three prominent Kurdish websites, namely, Rudaw, Channel 8, and Kurdistan 24 (K24). These were chosen due to their wider readership and consistency in publication. The articles were collected from January to March 2025. Three articles were selected from each website, one article for each month, covering news related to Kurdistan, the Middle East and international politics. This resulted in 9 articles in total.

3.3. Data Analysis

The analysis was done in two stages: lexical identification and morpho-phonological analysis. After identifying the borrowings from English within the texts, they were extracted and compiled in 3 tables in a Word document file, one table for each news website. The tables included the borrowing items in Kurdish (both with Kurdish and Latin script), their IPA transcriptions, and the total number of occurrences across the selected

articles. Following that, the identified loanwords were examined for patterns of phonological and morphological adaptation.

4. Results and Discussion

The collected corpus demonstrates that a subset of English loanwords is used recurrently in the news websites, probably suggesting their significance in political discourse. The words 'Christian' (15 occurrences), 'company' (12), 'project' (5), 'process' (5) and 'budget' (6) are among the most repeated. Such high-frequency words tend to be abstract, institutional or terms related to politics. Their repetition shows both the need for such terms in Kurdish and their successful integration into CK. In total, these high-frequency loans account for 54 instances, emphasizing their prominence within contemporary Kurdish media language and discourse.

Furthermore, the data also demonstrate that most of the English loanwords used in the websites are nouns, especially those that appear mostly. This is a common pattern in many languages, where nouns are the most borrowed word type, including concrete nouns like /ba:nd/ 'band', /o.'fi:s/ 'office', /post/ 'post', /ʃef/ 'chef', /ton/ 'ton', /o.tom.'bel/ 'automobile', and /rɛs.to:.ra:nt/ 'restaurant'. There are also abstract or technical nouns such as *prose* 'process', *stratiji* 'strategy', *budce* 'budget', *prroje* 'project', *kwalîtî* 'quality' and *kompaniya* 'company'. In addition, institutional terms like *dîmukrasî* 'democracy', *parleman* 'parliament' and *NATO* 'NATO' are also among the frequent ones. There are nouns which can be turned into verbs using Kurdish verb forms, such as *dîmukratîzekrdin* 'democratization', which combines the borrowed word 'democracy' with the Kurdish verb *kirdin* (=to do), showing flexibility in Kurdish and that borrowed words can become the source for creating new forms.

4.1. Analysis of Loanwords Found Across the Selected Articles of the Channel 8 Website

Table (1) displays the data collected from all three articles from the Channel 8 Website.

Borrowed words in Kurdish Alphabet	Latin Form	IPA Transcription	English	IPA Transcription	News Article No.	Total No. of Instances
فیدرال	<i>Fîdrral</i>	fi:dra:ɫ	Federal	'fedərəɫ	1	1
ميديا	<i>mîdiya</i>	mi:dja:	Media	'mi:diə		1
کۆمپانیا	<i>kompaniya</i>	kompa:nija:	company	'kʌmpəni		5
گرەنتى	<i>grentî</i>	grənti:	Guarantee	,gærən'ti:		1
بودجه	<i>budce</i>	buðæ	Budget	'buðʒɪt		2
پرۆژياسا	<i>prrojeyasa</i>	prozæ ja:sa:	The Bill	ðə bɪl		1
مليون	<i>miliyon</i>	miljon	million	'mɪljən	2	2
پلان	<i>plan</i>	pla:n	plan	plæn		1
گۆلدن کارت	<i>golldin kart</i>	goɫdn kart	Golden Card	'gəʊldən ka:d		1
ئۆفیس	<i>ofîs</i>	?ofis	Office	'ɒfɪs		1
گرین کارت	<i>grîn kart</i>	gri:n ka:rt	Green Card	gri:n ka:d		4
کارتى زىرين	<i>kartî zêrrîn</i>	ka:rti zəri:n				4
پروسە	<i>prose</i>	prosæ	process	'prəʊsəs		5
پرۆگرام	<i>prrogram</i>	progra:m	Program	'prəʊgræm		1
ئايى	<i>aytî</i>	?a:jtî:	IT	,aɪ 'ti:		1
کۆنگرئيس	<i>kongrês</i>	kongrës	Congress	'kɔŋgrɛs		1
پاسپورت	<i>pasport</i>	pasport	Passport	'pa:sport		1
فراکسيونى	<i>frraksiyonî</i>	fra:k.sjoni:	party faction	'pa:ti 'fækʃən		1
پارتە كە	<i>parteke</i>	pa:rtæ.kæ				
پارتى	<i>partî</i>	pa:rti:	Party	'pa:ti	3	5
ديموكراتىزە كردن	<i>dîmukratîzekrdin</i>	di:mokra:ti:zæ krðn	Democratization	dî,mokrətəz'eiʃn		1
فيزيكى	<i>fizîkî</i>	fi:zi:ki:	physical	'fizɪkəl		1

4.1.1. Phonological Integration

The data demonstrates that English loanwords in CK generally undergo several sound changes to integrate into the Kurdish phonological rules. The key adaptation patterns observed in the collected data are discussed in the following.

English vowels get substituted by the nearest Kurdish equivalents, for instance, the English /ʌ/ is substituted by /u/ or /o/ in CK as in /'bʌdʒɪt/ 'budget', which is realised as /buðæ/ and /o/ in /kompa:nija:/. Similarly, English /æ/ as in /plæn/ is substituted by /a:/ as in /pla:n/, and /ɛ/ is replaced by /i:/ as /'fɛdərəl/ becomes /fi:dra:f/. Such changes happen since Kurdish vowel inventory does not include sounds like /ʌ/ (Arizona.edu, 2016).

The data also reveal that English proper names like tiremp 'Trump' (تره‌مپ), haward lutinîk 'Haward Lutink' (هاوارد لوتنیک), and brand names such as epll 'Apple' (ئېپل), and monetary terms as dolar 'Dollar' are unadapted or unchanged, indicating pure importation. They are only orthographically transliterated.

Since consonants like /p, t, k, f, v, s, z, l, m, n, r/ are found in both English and Central Kurdish phoneme inventories, they remain unchanged despite minor changes in their realization such as differences in aspiration (e.g., English /p, t, k/ are aspirated in initial position in English, but Central Kurdish lacks this feature), or in terms of voicing intensity (e.g., English /v/ carries more voicing energy or more vibration in the vocal cords). Such variations do not change the phonemic identity of the sounds while reflecting natural adjustments to fit into the borrowing language's sound system.

Diphthongs undergo monophthongization, since Central Kurdish lacks them, and they are systematically simplified into long monophthongs. Consequently, English /əʊ/ is replaced by /o/ as in /'gəʊldən/, /'prəʊsəs/ and /'prəʊgræm/realised as /go:tdn/, /prosæ/, and /progra:m/ in CK. Similarly, /aɪ/ adapts to become /a:/ and the glide /j/ is inserted to fit the Kurdish syllable structure as in English /,aɪ 'ti:/ becoming /?a:jtɪ:/ in CK, and /eɪ/ to /i:/ as in English /dɪ,mpkrətaɪ'zeɪfən/ → CK /di:mokra:ti:zæ krdn/.

Another common pattern is the insertion of the glottal /?/ in words beginning with vowels, since Central Kurdish does not allow vowel-initial words, ensuring every syllable begins with a consonant, which Kurdish phonotactics prefer. As Hasan & Mohammed (2023) confirm that the glottal stop functions as an epenthetic onset in Bahdini and Sorani as well, for instance, as in the data /'ɒfɪs/ is adapted as /?ɒfɪs/ and /,aɪ 'ti:/ is realized as /?a:jtɪ:/.

The English rhotic approximant /r/ is realized either as the alveolar tap /r/ or to the alveo-palatal trill /r/ (Rahimpour & Dovaise, 2011: 76). Hence, in our data, the English

/r/ is consistently realized as /r/ in *grentî*, *grîn kart*, *prose*, *kongrêş*, *partî* and *dîmukratîzekrdin*; while it is realized as /r/ in *Fîdrral*, *prrojeyasa*, *frraksiyonî* and *prrogram* contains both realizations. Such changes ensure that English borrowings conform to the sound system of Kurdish.

4.1.2. Morphological Integration

Once phonologically adapted, English loanwords are further incorporated into the morphological system of Central Kurdish through various morphological strategies. Following Haugen (1950), the loans can be classified either as importations (keeping foreign realizations) or substitutions (using native items). Apparently, in the data importations (pure loanwords) dominate; most items keep their English form and meaning, with various degrees of phonological adaptation. Examples include *mîdiya*, *miliyon*, *plan*, *ofîs*, *prrogram*, *pasport*.

On the other hand, substitutions (loan translations) also occur but they are less frequent. One notable example is *golldin kart* literally translates the English ‘golden card’ into native elements, although within the text native terms are also used concurrently, showing the prestige and dominance of such English terms or due to the reader’s familiarity for such terms or for the purpose of clarity, as it is a technical term. The terms used are *grîn kart* and *kartî zêrrîn*. Additionally, such terms are globally recognizable, therefore, a Kurdish approximation is used with Kurdish script, while *kartî zêrrîn* is a new and local term integrated using Kurdish morphology with an ezafa -î. Thus, well-known terms tend to be borrowed as they are for the purpose of transparency and prestige, while local concepts can be formed based on them to enhance meaning and relevance within Kurdish discourse.

Loan blends (hybrids) also occur when part of the form is borrowed and part is native, as in *prrojeyasa*, likely formed from *prroje* ‘project’ (a loan) + *yasa* (native) ‘law’. Such forms align with Haugen’s loanblend or hybrid formations. Furthermore, imported nouns are also frequently used in the formation of compounds, either by suffixation or compounding as noun-noun, noun-adjective or noun-verb constructions. For instance, *prrojeyasa* is composed of two nouns *prroje* ‘project’ and *yasa* ‘law’, similarly *frraksiyonî parteke* is the combination of two nouns linked with an ezafa -î, while *dîmukratîzekrdin*

is the combination of a noun and the verb *krdin* (=to do), and *kartî zêrrîn* combines a noun *kart* 'card' + *ezafa -î* and a native adjective *zêrrîn* 'of gold'. This conforms with Hasanpour (1999: 42) that demonstrates many European (including English) loans in Sorani undergo loanblending, involving compounding as derivational processes.

When English nouns are borrowed, they discard their original plural morphemes such as (-s/-es), and adapt the Kurdish plural suffix (-an ان) instead, showing a deeper level of integration as Haugen (1950) suggested. For instance, a loanword like *kompaniya* 'company' adds the Kurdish plural morpheme, often combined with the Kurdish definite marker (-eke که) to form plural, as in *kompaniyakan* 'the companies', the same happens with *prrojeyasakan, ofisekan, prosekan, pasortekan*, etc.

English proper names and brand names are unadapted or unchanged, indicating pure importation. They are only orthographically transliterated. As in *epîl* 'Apple' (اپل), *tiremp* 'Trump' (تره‌مپ), *haward lutinîk* 'Haward Lutink' (هاوارد لوتینک). Similarly, monetary terms behave in the same way, except they receive Kurdish affixes and can adapt to Kurdish quantification applied to the loanwords, as appears in examples in the second news article in expressions like *miliyarêk dolar* 'a million dollar' and *pênc miliyon dolar* 'five million dollars', which show how 'dollar' is adapted within the Kurdish context. Nevertheless, internationally recognized terms or abbreviations like 'EB-5' and 'IT' are imported in their original Latin script form, but immediately substituted with Kurdish transliteration as initialisms. For instance, in the second article, EB-5 is first introduced in its Latin form, immediately followed by the Kurdish phonetic rendering (ئی بی فایف), then the text continues without English or Latin version, not the Kurdish as appears in the statement in the fifth paragraph:

(پروگرامی EB-5 که له سالی ۱۹۹۰ نویکراوەتەوە بە گوتهی هاوارد لوتینک، وزیری بازرگانی ئەمریکا ساخته‌کارییە کی زۆری لیکەوتەوە)

prrogramî EB-5 ke le sallî 1990-ewe nwêkrawetewe be guteyi haward lutinîk, wezîrî bazirganîyi emirîka saxtekarîyekî zorî lêkewtuwetewe...

4.2. Analysis of Loanwords Found Across the Selected Articles of the K24 Website

Table (2) displays the data collected from all three articles from the K24 Website

Borrowed words in Kurdish Alphabet	Latin Form	IPA Transcription	English	IPA Transcription	News Article number	Total Number of occurrences
میلیشیا	mîlîşıya	mili:ʃja:	militia	mî'lîʃə	1	3
کریستیان	krîstîyan	kri:stija:n	Christian	'krîstfən krîstfən'		11
کونگریس	kongrês	kongrəs	Congress	'kongrəs		2
پارتی دیموکرات	partî dîmukrat	pa:rti: di:mukra:t	Democratic Party	,dəmə'krætîk 'pa:ti		2
گروپ	grûp	gru:p	Group	gru:p		1
سیستم	sîstem	si:stæm	system	'sistəm		1
دیموکراسی	dîmukrasî	di:mokra:si:	democracy	dî'môkrəsi		1
جینوّساید	cênosayd	dʒənəsəjd	Genocide	'dʒənəsəjd		1
بودجه	budce	budʒæ	Budget	'bʌdʒɪt		4
فیدرالی	fîdrallî	fi:dra:li:	Federal	'federal		2
فراکسیون	fraksiyon	fra:k.sjon	faction	'fækʃən		2
په‌رلەمان	perleman	parlæma:n	Parliament	'pa:lɪmənt		3
بۆمباران	bombaran	bomba:ra:n	Bombardment	bom'ba:dmənt	3	3
زایونیستی	zayonîstî	za:joni:sti:	Zionist	'zaiənɪst		1
کەمپ	kemp	ka:mp	Camp	kæmp		1
سغیل	svîl	sîvi:l	Civil	'sivəl		1

The data reveals that the Kurdish website K24 also makes use of English loanwords with similar purposes and patterns of adaptation as mentioned in the previous section. The terms are related to governance, ideology, military affairs and diplomacy fields in which Kurdish does not possess precise native equivalents. The key adaptation patterns observed happen as discussed below.

4.2.1. Phonological Analysis

Sound replacement is one common strategy. For instance, schwa as a phoneme /ə/ is not present in Central Kurdish, therefore replaced by Kurdish vowels as in /mî'lîʃə/

which is realized as /mili:ʃa:/ in the final position. Also, schwa can be replaced by /æ/ as in English /sistəm/ adapted as /si:stæm/ in CK.

Diphthongs and triphthongs are commonly replaced by a long vowel plus a glide as /j/ in Kurdish. As in /'dʒenəsaɪd/, /aɪ/ is substituted with /a:/ + /j/ to conform to the Kurdish phonotactic rules. Similarly, the triphthong /aɪə/ in /'zaɪənɪst/ is substituted with /a:/ + /j/ and /o/ in the Kurdish /za:joni:sti:/.

While Central Kurdish phoneme inventory shares most consonants with the English counterpart, sounds such as /tʃ/, /dʒ/, /ʃ/ as well as most stops and fricatives, therefore they survive with minimal changes as in /dʒənəsə:jd/ and /buddʒæ/. Although in the word 'Christian', -tian can have two realizations in English /krɪstʃən/ and /krɪstɪən/, CK has borrowed the second one. Confirming speakers often choose the easier form to pronounce, matches native patterns, however in this case it could be influenced by other languages, such as Arabic or Persian or since Kurdish depends on spelling norms for loanword adaptation, not the pronunciation. CK lacks the velar nasal /ŋ/ as in /'kɔŋgrɛs/, consequently realized as /ng/ depending on the English orthography, resulting in the Kurdish /kongrɛs/.

As discussed in the previous section, the English approximant /ɹ/ is realized either as the alveolar tap /r/ as in /kongrɛs/, /pa:rti:/, /gru:p/, /di:mokra:si:/, /fra:k.sjɔn/ or to the alveo-palatal trill /r/ as in /fi:dra:li:/ and /parlæma:n/.

While Kurdish loanword adaptation is mainly phonologically-driven, English orthography has an impact on the outcomes, particularly in the way 'l' and 'r' are adapted. For instance, while *fidrrallî* retains both 'l' and 'r' from the English spelling, *mîlîşıya* reflects the English pronunciation, not the spelling, realizing -ti- as /ʃ/, although it could be influenced by the Arabic word. Nevertheless, 'r' in English loanwords tend to be pronounced even though it is silent many dialects of English such as the standard RP. For instance, in words like 'party', and 'parliament', 'r' is not pronounced, but as loans in Kurdish they are realized as /pa:rti:/ and /pærلæma:n/.

4.2.2. Morphological Adaptation

Examining the words like *mîlîşıyakanî* 'the militias', *krîstiyanekan* 'the Christians', *fraksiyonekanî* 'the parliamentary fractions of', *kempêkî* 'a camp' demonstrate a

common morphological adaptation pattern which is suffixation. In short, English roots or base words take Kurdish endings to blend into the grammatical structure of the language. Both derivational and inflectional suffixes can be added. For instance, nouns take the plural and definite markers (-an) and (-ekan). Or derivational suffixes can be added to form new word classes from them as in *fidrrall* (n.) can be turned into an adjective by adding (-î) *fidrrallî* as in *banikî fidrrallî* 'the Federal Bank' or *hukumetî fidrrallî* 'the Federal Government'.

Importation occurs when the English word is used with no Kurdish morpheme as in *mîlîşıya*, *grûp*, *sistem*, *kemp*, and *svîl*.

Furthermore, compounding is a common process. Loanwords can be used to create new expressions or to convey certain concepts. They are joined together by Kurdish affixes, particularly the ezafa -î is the most frequent. For instance, *partî dîmukrat* 'democratic Party', *grûpe milîşıyakan* 'militia groups', *cenosaydî krîstiyanezan* 'genocide of Christians', and *fraksiyonekanî perleman* 'parliamentary factions'.

4.3. Analysis of Loanwords Found Across the Selected Articles of the Rudaw Website

Table (3) displays the data collected from all three articles from the Rudaw Website

Borrowed words in Kurdish Alphabet	Latin Form	IPA transcription	English	IPA Transcription	News Article number	Total Number of occurrences
دیپورتکردنەوە	Dîportkrdinewe	diport krdn æwæ	Deportation	di:pɔ:t'teɪʃn	1	5
ستراتیژ	stiratîj	stra:ti:ʒ	Strategy	'strætədʒi		3
باند	band	ba:nd	band	bænd		1
رۆل	roll	roɫ	role	rəʊl		1
تەکنەلۆژیا	tekinojîya	tæknæloʒja:	technology	tɛk'nɒlədʒi		2
کۆمپانیا	Kompaniya	kompa:nja:	Company	'kʌmpəni		7
پاکیچ	pakêc	pa:kedʒ	package	'pækɪdʒ		1
مليار	miliyar	mlja:r	billion	'bɪljən		1
پروژه	proje	proʒæ	project	'prɒdʒeкт		5

لوجستي	locstî	lodʒsti:	Logistics	lə'dʒɪstɪks		1
کوالبيتى	kwallîtîyi	kwa:lji:ti:	Quality	'kwɒləti		1
ئۆتۆمبىل	otombêl	?otombel	Automobile	'ɔ:təməbî:l		1
كريستيان	krîstian	kri:stija:n	Christian	'krîstfən		4
پۆست	post	post	post	pəʊst		1
ئەتومى	etomî	?ætomi:	Atomic	ə'tɒmɪk		3
ناتو	nato	na:to	NATO	'neɪtəʊ		2
پەرلەمانتار	perlementar	parlæma:nta:r	Parliamentarian	,pa:lɪmən'teəriən		1
پارت	part	pa:rt	Part	pa:t		1
فېستيڤال	fêstîvall	fæsti:va:ł	Festival	'festɪvəł		6
تون	ton	tæn	ton	tʌn		1
مهىكىتاب	meykap	mæjk?ə:p	Makeup	'meɪkəp		1
شىف	şêf	ʃef	Chef	ʃef		1
رېستورانت	rêstorant	rəstora:nt	Restaurant	'restɔ:rɒnt		2

4.3.1. Phonological Analysis

The data reveal that English loans undergo dativisation to fit into the phonology of Central Kurdish. Consonants that are not found in CK get replaced, vowels are shifted and consonant clusters not conforming to CK syllable structure rules are broken up and a change in stress happens. All this shows the substitution of foreign sounds by native ones rather than faithful importation of them as outlined by Haugen (1950). The majority of loans are assimilated, and unassimilated items are also observed, specifically those related to technical terms or initialisms such as NATO. The adaptation process follows certain recognizable features that are summarized as follows.

Phoneme substitution is observed in most loanwords, in which English phonemes are substituted by their closest equivalents in CK. For instance, the voiced alveolar affricate /dʒ/ is often replaced by the fricative /ʒ/ as in /'strætədʒi/ → /stra:ti:ʒ/, /tek'nplædʒi/ → /tæknæloʒja:/, /'prɒdʒekt/ → /proʒæ/, although it does not happen in all instances and /dʒ/ may remain as it is in other occurrences as in 'package' and 'logistics'. The English rhotic /r/ is not native to Kurdish, therefore it is mostly adapted as the alveolar tap /r/ as in /stra:ti:ʒ/, /proʒæ/, /kri:stija:n/, /parlæma:nta:r/, /pa:rt/, and /restora:nt/. Also, since Kurdish depends on spelling or due to the influence of

orthography, in /r/ is restored in the loanword while originally it is not pronounced in the English word, as in /diport krdn/, /parlæma:nta:r/ in the first syllable and /pa:rt/.

Loanwords beginning with a vowel-initial syllable receive the glottal stop /ʔ/ in CK. For instance, /Pætomi:/ and /Potombel/. Since CK phonotactics typically does not allow onsetless syllables, as presented by Abdulrahman (2023) and Hamid (2021). Therefore, when a borrowed term begins with a vowel, a glottal stop /ʔ/ is inserted to fulfill the obligatory onset position.

Complex consonant clusters are simplified when loanwords enter Central Kurdish, particularly by deleting or insertion sounds. Such a strategy is described as a phonological repair strategy by Kenstowics (1994) and Uffman (2006) that helps in both articulation and maintaining syllable structure. For instance, the insertion of /j/ in /'kʌmpəni/ which makes it easier to pronounce as /kompa:nja:/ and similarly in /tæknæložja:/, both involve simplification in their final syllables. Additionally, deletion is another strategy to simplify complex coda structures, as in /'prɒdʒɛkt/ adapted as /prɔ:zæ/ and /lə'dʒɪstɪks/ as /lodʒsti:/.

Stress in CK nouns typically falls on the final syllable, unlike English, where it is frequently placed on the first or middle syllable on nouns. As a result, nouns that do not have stress on their final syllable get stress re-assignment as in ‘project’ and ‘festival’. Zetterholm and Tronnier (2014) confirm that this is a common feature in CK.

English diphthongs such as /əʊ/ and /eɪ/ are regularly replaced by monophthongs. As in /rəʊl/ → /roɻ/, /pəʊst/ → /post/, /'neɪtəʊ/ → /na:to/ and /'meɪkʌp/ → /mæjk?a:p/.

Above all, the differences between English and Kurdish spelling conventions also significantly impact the way loanwords integrate into Kurdish.

4.3.2. Morphological Analysis

The data reveal several morphological integration strategies, mostly common with the ones previously discussed, as follows.

There are loanwords that go under the category of importation depending on Haugen’s (1950) classification, i.e., the form and meaning of the word are retained; they

still take Kurdish suffixes like the plural marker or the ezafe. For instance, *band* 'band', *roll* 'role', *kompaniya* 'company', *post* 'post', *nato* 'NATO', *şêf* 'chef' and *rêstorant* 'restaurant'.

Loan blends or mixed borrowings are also observed. These involve an English base with Kurdish affixation, reflecting Haugen's (substitution + importation) pattern. As in *dîportkrdinewe* consisting of 'deport' from English and *-kirdin + ewe* '=to deport' or *dîport dekrênewe* consisting of *dîport + dekrênewe* (passive) 'they get deported'.

The data reveals that CK typically borrows English words as nouns, then applies native affixes to mark number (-*an*), definiteness (-*eke*) or to create new categories. For instance, words like *pakêc*, *proje*, *otombêl*, *perlemtar*, *part*, *şêf*, *rêstorant*.

Adjectives can be derived from borrowed English nouns by adding the -*î* suffix, as expressions from the first article: *bandekanî tawan* 'criminal gangs', *tekînelojiyayi sinûr* 'border control technology' and *pakêcî bazirganî* 'commercial package'.

Also, many English terms can be turned into verbs by adding the general verb *-kirdin* کردن 'to do', showing a deeper level of morphological integration.

Occasionally, a loanword which has been borrowed from different languages is used together to show a greater degree of clarity or since one version may be more understandable by the reader as in the third article the words *meykap* (from English) and *makiyac* (from Arabic) which refer to the same concept are used side by side, they both denote the same concept.

Acronyms such as UKEF and 5G are typically integrated into the text without significant change. They are often written in both their Latin script, followed by Kurdish transliteration and embedded directly within the Kurdish sentences. In some occasions there is no Kurdish transliteration; only the original acronym appears in its Latin form, as in the first article, the text goes on with UKEF presented as it is, functioning as a noun. Similarly, تۆرى 5G '5G network' utilizes the English number and letter string without any phonological interpretation in Kurdish (e.g., no attempt to spell it as پىنج جى). The main justification for this could be the fact that such a term is globally recognized and in formal texts such as news articles, this is important to preserve the clarity. Such terms

in Kurdish are fixed; they do not take Kurdish suffixes like the plural marker or other markers.

Proper nouns such as personal names, country names and names of international organizations are typically integrated through phonological approximation, with minimal or no morphological adaptation. For instance, names like *kîyer stammer* 'Kier Stammer' کیهیر ستمەر, *donalld tiremp* 'Donald Trump' دۆنالد ترەمپ and *frêdîş mîrtzî* 'Friedrich Mertz' فریدریش میرتسی. Similarly, country names like *ellmaniya* 'Germany', *ferenisa* 'France', *rusiya* 'Russia' and *berîtaniya* 'Britain'. These are mostly adapted previously into Kurdish through Arabic or Persian and they are consistently used in media discourse. An example of a name of an international organization is seen as *kompaniyayı brîtîş ptiroliyom* 'British Petroleum Company' which also uses the same words in the Kurdish alphabet or Kurdish approximation as کۆمپانیای برتیش پترولیوم.

Conclusions

The findings of the study reveal the following conclusions.

1. The study demonstrates that the adaptation of English loanwords into Central Kurdish follows certain identifiable phonological and morphological patterns, influenced by the phonological inventory and grammatical rules of Kurdish.
2. The vast majority of English loanwords in Central Kurdish throughout all the news articles are nouns, confirming that lexical borrowing mainly targets referential items related to abstract concepts, technology, institutions and political terms.
3. Verbs and adjectives are less commonly borrowed directly. They are typically integrated morphologically through native auxiliary verbs like *kirdin*, *bun*, *kraw* or derivational suffixes like *-î*. The borrowed nouns can be the source for creating verb or adjective categories.
4. Loanwords from English undergo phonological changes or adaptation patterns such as sound substitution, simplification of syllables, changes in stress pattern, and monophthongization.
5. Borrowed English stems are often combined with native Kurdish inflectional and derivational morphemes to ensure grammatical compatibility. Also, grammatical

structures like the Ezafe construction and plural suffixes are essential for loanword integration into Central Kurdish.

6. Borrowing can be motivated by sociolinguistic factors such as prestige, modernity or the need for terms in other words, the lack of equivalents contributes to direct adoption of English terms in basic domains, for instance, words like *kompaniya*, *meykap*, *mîdiya*, *ofîs*, *aytî*, *aytî*, etc.

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Appendix 1

Unified Kurdish Phonetic Alphabets based on International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) depending on (Kurdish Academy of Language, 2025)

Appendix 2

Link to the articles where the data was collected.

Channel8.net (2025a). بەپیکور: لە زیادکردنی تیچوی بەرهەمەتیانی نەوت ئاگادار نەکراوینەتەوە. [online] Available at: <https://channel8.com/kurdish/news/104766> [Accessed 9 May 2025].

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