

Features of Bilingualism
in the
Zaza Community

by

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1 Introduction

“Our civilization has become aware of the need to preserve animals in danger of extinction and conserve forests, flora and fauna. We are in danger of failing to preserve the beauty of diverse languages and cultures. Languages are an important contribution to the richness and variety of our world [...]”
(Baker 1998:VII).

If languages collide, they compete with each other. Minority languages face a struggle of survival by being surrounded and dominated by majority languages.

The concern of this paper is to give insights into a matter of which most people think is only evident in Africa or Asia. However, the issue of bilingualism faces even our Western world through globalization and immigration.

First of all, it is necessary to get the basic terminology and definitions about bilingualism, borrowing and code-switching, which are some of the main representatives of language contact phenomena. One focus lies on the “matrix language frame model” from Myers-Scotton for better understanding and analyzing of code-switching. Subsequently, it is very interesting to look at the *mental* processes of bilingualism and code-switching. The fundamental question for Psycholinguistics is, how the two different languages in the brain are organized and how they influence each other.

These theories run parallel in applications of language contact phenomena to the bilingual Zaza community which is resident in East-Turkey. The indigenous language of the Zaza people is called *Zazaki*. Through my personal involvement, serving in Language Developing Projects (literacy, dictionary making, etc.) for *Zazaki*, I possess a personal interest and some understanding of the Zaza culture and language.

However, this paper will pay no attention to bilingual language acquisition and neurolinguistics.

All three illustrations in this term paper are the results of my personal pencil and hopefully the reader will find this useful.

2 Three Effects of Language Contact

Language contact phenomena constitute a relatively new linguistic research field¹, which is of great interest to sociolinguists and psycholinguists as well. Language contact could be defined as, “the contact between speakers of different languages, particularly when they are in the same region or in adjoining communities” (Baker 1998:702). Language contact proceeds from natural borders of languages, colonialism, or in recent times, by migratory movements and inevitably, leads to bilingualism.

2.1 Bilingualism

It is a fact that more people in the world are bilingual than monolingual. Baker and Jones give the estimation that around two-third of the world’s population is bilingual (1998:VII). Bilingualism is not meant as the use of *only* two languages; the prefix *bi-* is misleading. Furthermore, bilingualism is used as a cover term for “multilingualism” or “plurilingualism”. Both are used synonymously.² The opposite term would be “monolingualism”.

There is a simple definition on bilingualism given from Myers-Scotton: “Bilingualism is the term for speaking at least two languages” (2006:2).

Bloomfield demanded a higher focus from bilingual speakers: “A Bilingual should possess native-like control of two or more languages” (1933:56, quoted in Appel 1987:2). However this paper will refer primarily to Myers-Scotton’s view that most bilinguals don’t speak two languages in equal proficiency.

One important additional element from Weinreich (1953:5, quoted in Appel 1987:3) to the above definitions would be the *regular use* of two or more languages *in alternation*.

The first language that is acquired as a young infant is called L1 [language 1], the later learned language is called L2 [language 2]. *Later acquired* is defined as acquired

¹ Einar Haugen (1906-1994), son of Norwegian immigrants; seen as a leader in research on bilingualism and language contact (Baker 1998:161).

after early childhood (~six years old). In this case, this person is called “late bilingual”. McLaughlin call the process “successive language acquisition”, if one language is already established at the time when a second language is introduced. If a child learns two languages at the same time in early childhood, he calls this process “simultaneous language acquisition” (1984, quoted in Albrecht 2006:30). However, this paper will not refer primarily to early bilingualism, but to late bilingualism.³

The “individual bilingualism” contrasts with “societal bilingualism”, where a society as whole functions with two or more languages (Appel 1987:1). They are two different research topics. The first is of interest to psycholinguists; the second is of greater interest for sociolinguists.

Every language of the world, despite the extinct languages, will face continuous “language change”, a gradual change of vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. (Baker 1998:705). From time to time, every language is under the influence of other languages, which are dominant in some thematic areas. For example, terms of classical music from Italian, “high cuisine” terms from French, and technical terms from English came into the German language.

We need to contrast language change versus “language shift”, where a language of a certain community goes toward the end of its vitality in favor of speaking only L2. In opposition to language shift, the term “language maintenance” describes a stable situation of societal bilingualism, where the speakers use their languages without shifting to a weaker degree of proficiency in one of the languages.

2.1.1 The Bilingual Zazaki Speaker

The societal bilingualism of the Zaza community is very interesting to study. No publications could be found which paid attention to the degree of bilingualism in the Zaza community living traditionally in East Anatolia.

² Another term “diglossia” is used in its narrow sense for speaking two related varieties in the same society in complementary allocation. (Like Classical Arabic and a regional Arabic dialect.)

³ Some researchers prefer the expressions “simultaneous bilingual” (both languages acquired at the same time) or “sequential bilingual” (one language acquired before the other).

The total number of the Zaza ethnicity is likely 1.5 to 2.5 million people (Paul 1998:xiii), but not all members are mother-tongue speakers any more due to assimilation policies of the Turkish state for many decades. Today, half of the population live in exile in the Western world (Germany, Netherlands, Sweden, USA, Australia) or they have moved to the Turkish metropolis (Istanbul, Adana, Izmir) outside their traditional home areas. Some are forced to leave their country for political reasons; the majority migrated because of economic reasons⁴. Paul estimated that 200,000 to 300,000 Zaza were living in Germany by the end of the 20th century (1998:xiii).

The Zaza ethnicity is divided religiously and linguistically into two major groups. The Northern-Zaza group follows the Alevi religion (a branch of the Shiite Islam), the Southern-Zaza group practices the Sunni Islam, the official religion of Turkey. The two main varieties represent a morphological diversity of about 30 percent (Stoodley 1991:4). The separation of the group probably happened around 500 years ago⁵, when the Northern-Zaza people became followers of the less-strict Alevi religion; the Southern group remained Sunni.

The bilingualism rate in Kurdish was high until the 1980s. Kurdish was important to know for cattle dealing and selling of farm products for the Zaza (Kurds are typically livestock holders; Zaza are farmers). However, over the last 20 years, the Kurdish language lost its influence in the Zaza society, but the influence of Turkish increased steadily.

Since the times of Atatürk (Constitution of the Republic of Turkey in 1923), assimilation policy of the Turkish state toward the use of Turkish was forced. Zazaki as well as other minority languages in Turkey have been suppressed. Thus, today, they perceive themselves as a marginalized ethnicity. Zazaki is only used privately. Yet, in some European-published magazines, music and television programs, Zazaki is utilized.

Usually, the Zazaki speakers are late bilinguals in Turkish. Turkish serves as a *lingua franca*, the language used for communication *between* speakers of different language groups, exemplified by the Turks, Zaza, Kurds and Arabs.

⁴ They started to immigrate to Germany in the early 70s as “guest workers,” by getting work and residence permits through contracts with big companies in West Germany.

⁵ This date is an estimation, made by an Orientalist (Christine Schirmacher) when I discussed the matter with her in 2006: In the 15th century the Alevi missionaries were very active and wandered around in Minor Asia.

From here on, the mention of Zazaki or the Zaza people group will refer to the *Southern-Zaza* group only. This group has higher language vitality than the more assimilated Northern-Zaza group.

2.2 Lexical Borrowing

“Could I borrow your automatic screw driver?” would imply a conscious, time-limited exchange of a tool. However, lexical borrowings occur unconsciously, without reconsiderations, and the “borrowed” words are retained forever. The Latin and Greek loanwords, which came in ancient times into the European languages, are not recognized any more as foreign words, and are difficult to identify today.

Myers-Scotton states some generalization about lexical borrowing: It is never a reciprocal process, and always a one-way street. The recipient language takes a word from the donor language, but not vice versa, because the direction of borrowing is a question of prestige or influence. Nouns are borrowed more frequently than other categories (2006:211).

Generally, languages that are widely spoken as second languages become the donor languages of borrowings. But in different epochs, or for different fields, the direction can change easily. Today, English is a typical donor language for technical terms.

Grammatical borrowings, which could also happen if a grammatical feature, like word order, appears in the other language, will not be discussed in this paper.

Lexical borrowing can be divided into thirds: cultural borrowings, core borrowings, and calques.

2.2.1 Cultural Borrowings

Words, which are borrowed because they fill a semantic gap in the recipient language, are called “cultural borrowings”. An example would be the use of the words *car* and *automobile*. We can easily comprehend that borrowings will not always remain in their original sense when they are incorporated into the recipient language. In Turkish, we find *otobüs* meaning ‘bus’, but *otocar* meaning ‘luxus travel bus’.

One cultural borrowing in Zazaki is the Turkish word *yatak* for bed/bedstead. Zazaki has its own word for sleeping place, a mattress rolled out by night and put away in the

morning. This Zazaki word *ca* has a broad literal meaning of ‘place’, however, bound with the adequate pronouns like ‘my place’, it means ‘my sleeping place’. The Turkish word *yatak* is incorporated because of a lack of an adequate word for bedstead, made out of wood or metal. It is being assimilated to the Zazaki pronunciation and therefore, it is found today in the Zazaki vocabulary as *yatax* (word final stop is changed into the fricative).

2.2.2 Core Borrowings

If the recipient language incorporates words from the donor language although its own words were existent for the same concept, we call these words “core borrowings”. This happens in communities where one language has a more dominant position in public discourse. The recipient language loses some of its vitality due to these processes.

Typically, Zazaki incorporates concepts from Turkish, which already exist in their language as well. The cardinal numbers are a good example of core borrowings. Surely all names for numbers exist in Zazaki, but numbers are said in Turkish if their use is a technical one, like birthdays, dates, registration numbers of vehicles, even telephone numbers. The vernacular numbers are used in phrases where the number serves as a modifier: *I have three children* or *Fifty people were invited to the wedding*. So both Turkish and Zazaki numbers are used in tandem in monolingual Zazaki conversation, but they apply to different purposes.

2.2.3 Loan translations or calques

Calques are borrowings of word senses without taking the L1 gloss. The *concept* of the word, mostly a compound, is taken from the donor language. The English word *skyscraper* is a famous example. The concept from English came into German and is called *Wolkenkratzer*, literally ‘cloud scratcher’.

In Zazaki, the semantic concept of the Turkish word *önsöz*, literally ‘word ahead; foreword’, was translated into Zazaki *ver-qisa*, *ver-vatik* ‘before-word, before-speech’, and used in some published books and magazines.

2.3 Code-switching

I heard the following hodgepodge of German and English recently on German radio some weeks ago: “Let’s talk about *was wirklich zählt im Leben!*” meaning, ‘let’s talk about the real important issues of life (German is italicized phrase).’ An American bilingual announcer of the Hessian radio program was talking in poor German (often wrong inflections) and additionally sprinkled his speech with simple, understandable English which obviously was his mother tongue. This was arranged just for the amusement of his German audience. I found myself very much attracted by it, too.

Thirty years ago, Haugen gave an interesting definition on what belongs to the elements of code-switching: “The alternate use of two languages including everything from the introduction of a single, unassimilated word up to a complete sentence or more into the context of another language” (Myers-Scotton 2006:256). Albrecht gives additional hints by claiming, that the alternate language use in a single conversation is marked by a clear break and fulfils specific functions (2006:43).

Code-switching (CS) takes place if the speaker uses more than one language in the same conversation. This can happen *intersententially* or *intrasententially*. The intrasentential phenomenon is most interesting. The elements that make a conversation bilingual may be surface-level words or underlying phrase structures. We will only refer to the surface-level words in intrasentential CS from here on.

2.3.1 Code-Switching versus Code-Mixing

Many people think of CS as a bad or broken language with no rules by mixing two or more languages together. But CS has principles and rules that hearers and speakers are not equally aware. However, *code-mixing*, the absence of rules by using two languages together, is relevant in bilingual language acquisition of children. Elements of two languages occur in one utterance without a clear change from one to the other language. Language gap and salience are certainly reasons for code-mixing according to Albrecht (2006:42).

2.3.2 Factors Influencing Language Choice

In most CS situations, the language choice does not occur without reason. For Appel and Mysken, languages carry *social meanings* and language choice will be dependent on different factors (1987:12, 23-30), mostly the register and the degree of formality (style of speech).

Even if CS is utilized in many cases unconsciously, it is not used without reason.

2.3.3 Matrix Language Frame Model

This model helps to examine intrasentential CS; it was developed by Carol Myers-Scotton between 1993 and 2002.⁶ It builds upon the idea of the unequal participation of languages in CS. Therefore, this linguist describes the “matrix language” as the frame-building language which represents the speaker’s L1; The matrix language is responsible for the morpho-syntactic frame of a bilingual speech like word order, inflections, and discourse markers.

The “embedded language” is the participating language, which is the speaker’s L2. The embedded language (or languages) is spread into the L1 conversation, mostly in forms of islands. Within the island itself, the morpho-syntactic dominance of the matrix language does not apply. According to Myers-Scotton (2006:261-264) these “embedded language islands” show four features:

- a) The islands are phrases within a bilingual clause,
- b) they are often adverbial or adjuncts,
- c) they are often collocations (words that usually occur together),
- d) their words show hierarchical structure (head and modifiers).

Additionally, single-word occurrences of embedded language will be called CS.

Baker and Jones (1998:61) called it a “Grammar of Code-switching” when describing certain rules and constraints for CS. One main constraint for CS features clause elements, which are dependent from each other, like subject and verb, modifier and head, bound morpheme and lexeme. In these cases, no CS will occur. Referring to the

⁶ A newer approach, the “4-M model” was developed by Myers-Scotton and Jake in 2000-2001. It offers some more details for the divisions between content and system morphemes. But the Matrix Language Frame Model is sufficient to analyse classic CS.

example of the bilingual announcer, he would never have used: “Let’s *sprechen* about...”, or “Let *uns* talk about...” (again *italics* indicates the German gloss). Therefore, we cannot call a bilingual speech a hodgepodge or a mixture of two languages, but a rule-governed phenomenon.

2.3.4 Single Word Code-Switching vs. Lexical Borrowing

Sometimes it is difficult to distinguish whether we find a lexical borrowing or a code-switching of a single word in our data. It could be understood as a rule, if the word is integrated morphologically and (less often) phonologically in the recipient language, it can be called a borrowing (Myers-Scotton 2006:253).

Let us examine the word *e-mail* in the German language. Germans can easily build derivations from this noun, *e-mailen* ‘send an e-mail / to e-mail’, *er hat mir ge-e-mailt* ‘He has e-mailed me’. I just assume most Germans are not sure about orthographical issues (*e-mail* or *E-mail*) and the gender, *das* e-mail (neuter) or *die* e-mail (feminine) is not fixed either.⁷ It could be said that the incorporation process of this word is not completed yet. Because of its clearly morphological signs of incorporation (German inflections and derivations), the word could be identified as a lexical borrowing, not a code-switching.

Finally, one strong argument for or against CS, according to Myers-Scotton (2006:259), is that most embedded language words in CS are not predictable, but lexical borrowings are. A monolingual speaker would not use a foreign word in his communication (CS); as a matter of course, he would use a lexical borrowing in his speech.

2.3.5 A Short Prose Example in Zazaki

Here is an example of CS in an informal speech record of Zazaki. I recorded a Zaza friend in our home by asking her to explain to me what the “January-Bread” is. The recording was spontaneous as was her explanation. Having never attended formal schooling, her L2 competence is weaker than her L1.

⁷ “Duden –die deutsche Rechtschreibung”, 21. edition, 1996: E-mail is written with initial capitals, and stated as feminine.

The bold words show a CS into Turkish; the matrix language will be Zazaki. I also marked a lexical borrowing (from Turkish) in bold italics. In addition the intrasentential pauses of the speaker are indicated by number signs (# meaning one second, ## meaning two seconds). Appendix 1 will explain the grammar abbreviations.

- (1a) Mir-ê cı alawıt-ê,# dıma akerdê;
dough-EZ his knead-IMPF afterwards open(tr.)-IMPF
- (b) dıma mak dekerd-ê miya ew# pewt-ê.
afterwards button put.in-IMPF between and/thus bake-IMPF
'We have kneaded the dough, afterwards rolled it out, there after we put a button in the dough and baked it.'
- (2) **On-dan sonra** dıma geyray makı,# cı-kerd-ê.
that-from after afterwards look.for-PAST(pl) button, cut.off-IMPF
'Afterwards we looked for the button and cut the bread.'
- (3a) Kê rê şırê Aylin# ya **ışte** mı-rê amey-a
who to go (SJ)-pl prop.name.f or **indeed/well** me-to come-PERF(3sf)
- (b) ya bırar-dê mı-rê ya mar-da mı-rê,## ...eh...
or brother.OBL-EZ me-to or mother.OBL-EZ me-to ...um...
- (c) kê dı bêr-o *se*, o# rısk-ê cı boll-o,
who in/at come(SJ)-3s **if** he luck-EZ his many/much-is
- (d) ze ya # rıskê cı boll-o.
like (?) luck-EZ his many/much-is
'To whom the button will go, to Aylin, or indeed when it went to me, or to my brother, or my mother, um, to whomever it would go, s/he will have good luck, like, yes, s/he will have good luck.'

The Turkish adverbial phrase in (2) is an embedded language island. As stated above, all features apply to this collocation and it is an adjunct to the main sentence. I was wondering why my friend said the word in Turkish, although she repeated it in Zazaki immediately afterwards. (Maybe it had a pragmatic reason – filling a gap and/or transfer to a new topic.) The single CS word *ışte* (3a) was not predictable either, because in Zazaki, a corresponding word exists. The cultural borrowing *se* in (3c) is a high-frequency conjunction.

The question mark in example (3d) indicates that *ya* could be either a Zazaki word meaning 'or', or else the German word *ja*, meaning 'yes, indeed'. My friend does indeed speak some German, too, and sometimes our conversations switch to German.

2.3.6 Excourse: Matrix Language Dominates L2 Grammar

Allow me to state the following hypothesis: the matrix language, mostly L1, generally influences the speech production of L2. When mistakes are made in L2, they most likely can be traced back to the grammar of L1.

I came upon this assumption during the dictionary work with a Zazaki-speaking co-worker with a strong L1 ability and basic school education in L2. The following mistake in grammar, by translating an isolated sentence (as an example sentence in the dictionary entry) from L1 into L2, probably occurs because his “grammatical thinking” functions in L1.

The source sentence in Zazaki:

- 4) Dew-a Kaf-i, dew-da Gewrek **ra** nezdi-ya.
 village-EZ Kaf-OBL village-EZ Gewrek **from** near-is
 ‘The village Kaf is near the village Gewrek.’

The translated sentence into Turkish:

- (5) *Kaf köy-ü, Gevrek köy-ün-**den** yakın-dır.
 Kaf village-ACC Gevrek village-ACC-**from** near-is
 ‘The village Kaf is near the village Gewrek.’

The error (*) occurred in the Turkish sentence (5), where the ablative suffix *-den*, meaning ‘from’, is wrongly applied, but instead the dative suffix *-e*, meaning ‘to’, would be the correct case marking. In contrast to Turkish, Zazaki uses the particle ‘from’ when expressing ‘something is near to something’.

3 The Bilingual Brain

The field Psycholinguistics comes into play if the following questions are researched: Are both languages “turned on” in a bilingual’s mind, even if an individual uses at that moment only one language? Do one compound or two single lexicons exist in a bilingual’s mind? How are the lexicons organized? Are synonyms in both languages activated when a speaker wishes to say a word in only one language?

First, the mental lexicon is explained by several models which help to understand how two languages are structured in mind. Secondly, we will discuss the activation and inhibition of language, and see some results of linguistic experiments.

3.1 The Mental Lexicon

We all have stored immense amounts of information in our brains, huge knowledge bases. Some information is connected to language-specific features, like the “form lexicon” and the “lemma lexicon”. These include phonological, morphological, syntactical and semantic features of a given word or phrase. This dictionary contains abstract copies of words and all linguistic information is tagged toward each lexeme. The order of the entries are not like the order in book dictionaries, but organized as an interactive complex system.

Some stored information is independent from strict linguistic patterns; its information is conceptual, and Levelt calls this the “conceptualizer” (1989:9). It is the non-verbal knowledge of a) situational knowledge (where are the interlocutors, who will speak next, when is it my turn), b) encyclopedic (knowledge about the world) and c) episodic knowledge (how does the world function).

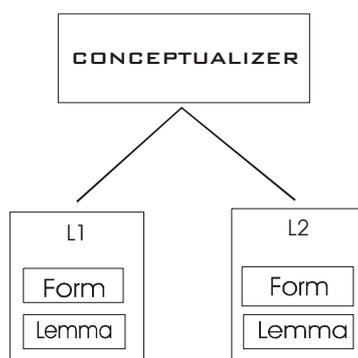
Handke describes these phenomena as three different levels of processing. The low-level processing represents the in- or outcome of speech, the linguistic processing represents the grammatical encoding and access of the mental lexicon, and the third level is described as the level of conceptualization (1995:35).

Because the conceptualizer is not bound to linguistic features of a given language, it is a common view of today's research that it is *not* separated by two different languages in a bilingual brain, but is a single system (Myers-Scotton 2006:298).

3.1.1 The Two-Store Model with Shared Roof

In 1979, Paradise favored the idea, accepted today by a wide range of psycholinguists, that bilinguals have one single conceptual system; it is connected to *two* lexical stores, representing the two languages (1997:335).

This illustration represents the two divided lexicons connected to a shared roof.

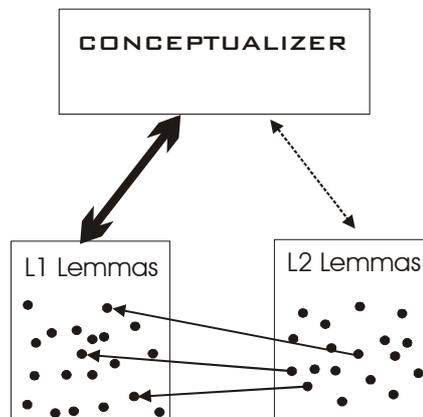


The following experiment from Potter (1984, quoted in Appel 1987:79) gave further evidence to Paradise's idea: bilingual subjects were asked to name pictures in the L2. The second task was to translate words from L1 into L2. The first task was performed faster than the translation. The underlying idea is that the translation task would require two steps: from *word* via *concept* to *word*. The naming task would only require one step: from *concept* to *word*. That means, even in translation processes, the detour over the conceptualizer is assumed.

The *Revised Hierarchical Model*, put up by Kroll and Steward (1994, quoted in Myers-Scotton 2006:309) proposes the idea that translation equivalents of L1 and L2 are connected between the two lemma lexicons. However, lemmas of L2 have a stronger dependency toward their L1 counterparts than the other way around. In addition to this, concepts in mind are more directly related to L1 words than to L2 words. That means L1 is the element mainly responsible for the construction of concepts in mind by the

precondition that the model relates to late bilinguals with higher proficiency in L1 than in L2.¹

The illustration symbolizes the dependencies of the Revised Hierarchical Model:



Aneta Pavlenko gave an interesting statement about how concepts are built by language:

“Conceptualization of space, time or motion across speakers of different languages have shown numerous differences. [...] that speaker’s construction of the world may be influenced by the structural patterns of their languages as well as by their discourses, and that it may be changed through participation in alternative discourses, such as schooling, or through additional language learning.” (Pavlenko 2005:433).

So even L1 is the major participant in building the conceptualizer, L2 as well has an influence. And this influence increases by increasing proficiency in the second language.

3.1.2 The Application to the Bilingual Zazaki Speaker

As far as the two-store model is concerned, we will now look to the bilingual Zazaki speaker. Does the form and lemma lexicon share some elements or are they absolutely distinguishable from each other? A typological comparison from Zazaki to Turkish will help to answer this question.

3.1.2.1 Typology

Zazaki and Turkish do not share many features in grammar; they are from genetically-different, language family branches.

The following table gives information about the basic typological features.

¹ Kröll and de Groot discuss “concept mediation” versus “lexical mediation” stating the following: “The results supported the hypothesis that bilinguals shift from reliance on lexical form to reliance on meaning with increasing fluency in the second language.” (Kröll 1997:174)

	Zazaki²	Turkish³
Language family:	Indo-European (North-West-Iranian)	Altaic (Turkic)
Phonetic features:	- Non-tonal Stress-timed	Vowel harmony Non-tonal Stress-timed
Morphological features:	Two genders Fusional Synthetic Split ergative system	Absence of gender Agglutinating Synthetic (polysynthetic) -
Syntactic features:	SOV ⁴ Configurational Modifier ⁵ follows head Some postpositions, few prepositions Additive clause order preferred Pro-drop +	SOV Non-configurational Modifier precedes head Many postpositions, few prepositions embedded subordinate clauses preferred Pro-drop +
Greenberg's generalization ⁶ :	SOV/Po/NG/NA/NReI	SOV/Po/GN/AN/ReIN

With respect to word and phrase order, these two languages face huge challenges in translation work. Below is an example of a sentence out of the New Testament by literal translations of Turkish and Zazaki. The English free translation of Luke 1, verse 21 is given in sentence (8).

(6) Turkish: The, for Zechariah waiting people, his [Z.] in the temple too long staying for, were wondering (Kutsal Kitab, 2001).

(7) Zazaki: The people who have been waiting for Zechariah were wondering because he too long in the House of God stayed (unpublished work, 2006).

(8) 'The people were waiting for Zechariah and wondering why he stayed so long in the temple' (NIV, 1984).

² The features for Zazaki were retrieved from Todd 2002, Paul 1998, and my own knowledge of the language.

³ The features for Turkish were retrieved mostly from Index of Languages (INT1).

⁴ Exceptions are predicates with goal (allative), i.e. "I go home": SVO

⁵ The term modifier covers descriptive and genitive/possessive modifiers.

⁶ (Comrie 1989:90+95)

This example demonstrates that in Turkish, the subordinate clauses are embedded contrary to Zazaki. In addition, Zazaki uses conjunctions and Turkish uses case marking to connect clauses.

3.1.2.2 Lexical Semantics

What about the lexical semantic agreement of the two languages? Do they share most of their word senses? According to Myers-Scotton, this is an important factor dealing with whether two languages share one lemma lexicon or not.

The following tables exhibit how Zazaki and Turkish words share or divide their meanings. The first two tables show examples of less semantic accordance and the last table provides evidence of some overlapping in word sense:

Zazaki word	English gloss	Turkish correspondence	English gloss
(1) keye	house; family	ev aile	house family
(2) ji	also; even	da bile	also even
(3) kiho	green and blue	ye•il mavi	green blue

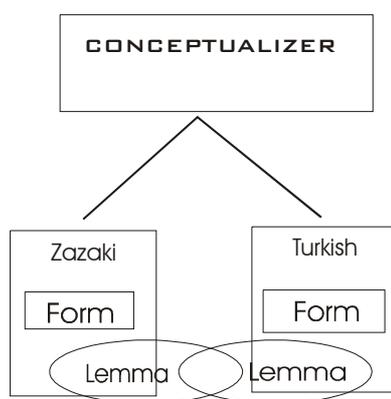
Turkish word	English gloss	Zazaki correspondence	English gloss
(4) ay	moon; month	a•mi meng	moon month
(5) baş	head; leader	serre serdar	head leader
(6) kardeş	brother; sister	bıra wa	brother sister

Zazaki word	Turkish correspondence	English gloss
(7) adır	ateş	fire; fever
(8) ma u pi	anne ve baba	parents (mother and father)
(9) girotış	almak	take; buy

3.1.2.3 Conclusion Regarding the Lemma and Form Lexicon

From the data presented above, one could assume the lemmas of Zazaki and Turkish would not join easily into one single mental lexicon, but they could. The pure semantic features of words could be overtly overlapping because the cultures have been in contact for such a long time and additionally, Zazaki and Turkish share many Arabic borrowings.

That means, from my point of view, the lemma lexicon could be shared to some extent, but the form lexicon, the morpho-syntactic system, is clearly *not* shared for Zazaki and Turkish.



3.2 Levels of Activation

In 1959, Penfield and Roberts proposed a theory, which was known as the “single-switch theory”. It refers to the idea that a switch operates in such a way that when one language is “on”, the other is “off” (quoted in Appel 1987:79). The “switch” is a metaphor for an unknown device in the brain.

According to Myers-Scotton, today’s idea of a language switch has been replaced by general agreement that both languages are always turned “on” (2006:299) in some way.⁷ The precondition is that, as for most of what is written about bilingualism, the bilingual speaker uses both languages with high frequency.

Researchers have tested bilinguals by “lexical decision tasks” which are used to study word recognition and comprehension. Furthermore, the use of “lexical access

⁷ See point 3.2.2 where an inhibition of one of the two languages is discussed. Turned “on” does not exclude totally the idea, that one language is more activated than the other.

tasks” studies speech production. The results of both testing methods gave evidence that the target language of the task is influenced by the other language to some extent, measured in response time in the tests. Therefore, it is assumed the two or more languages are active, turned on, even in monolingual speech.

3.2.1 Simultaneous vs. Selective Access in Comprehension

The central question for lexical decision tasks is whether the speakers have selective access to just one language at a time or simultaneous access. The hypothesis of simultaneous access is highly supported by the response time in testing. The responses could be slowed down by distraction from neighboring words of the *other* language than the target language. On the other hand, the response time could be accelerated by semantic priming of a language other than the target language in the task.

The “semantic priming experiment” is explained in more detail in the following example from Myers-Scotton (2006:301):

In monolingual English studies, if the word *dog* appears on the screen, followed by *cat* after a brief delay, response to *cat* as a possible word in English is faster than without the semantic priming of *dog*. Similar studies, for example English-French bilinguals, show that the response time is accelerated when the word *chien* (L2) is shown on the screen, followed by the word *cat* in the target language of the task. The word recognition of *cat* as a possible English word is quicker after presentation of a semantic priming of a French word with semantic relation to the tested English word.

The hypothesis of selective access is weakened by these experiment results because word recognition time is slowed down if the speaker has to “turn off” L1 and turn on L2 for word recognition in L2.

3.2.2 Inhibition of Non-active Language in Speech Production

The above statement concerning simultaneous access does not mean that all languages are equally active in speech production.

Meuter and Allport stated in 1999 that switching from L1 speech to L2 conversation costs time in terms of response. If the participant was asked in the context of an experiment to switch to the other language, the reaction time was slowed down. Meuter and Allport support the idea that a bilingual, while speaking L1, in some way suppresses

L2, and vice versa. To switch from L1 to L2 means to inhibit L1 and activate L2 for speech production. The experiment has shown no differences in the results whether the switch is done from L1 to L2 or from L2 to the mother tongue L1 (1999, quoted in Myers-Scotton 2006:308).

The model behind this idea is called the Inhibitory Control (IC) model, which was developed in 1998 by Green (quoted in Myers-Scotton 2006:308) and represents a “top-down model”. That means, the inhibiting or activation of a language depends on information, which flows from the conceptualizer to a supervisor (control station) which gives commands for lexical access of either L1 or L2. In this model, it is understood that the two mental lexicons are strongly divided.

In contrast, the Bilingual Interactive Activation model (BIA+), developed by Dijkstra and van Heuven (2002, quoted in Myers-Scotton 2006:309), is a bottom-up model, which means language selection starts by activation of phonological or orthographic features. This model rejects a powerful language-specific inhibition mechanism as found in top-down models. The assumption is that lexical access to both languages occurs at the same time. That means counterpart words of the two lexicons are activated together. This model tends toward the idea of a shared mental lexicon.

4 Outlook for the Zaza Community

Considering only the sociolinguistic aspects of Zazaki will give validation of it as an endangered language. The high bilingualism rate in the Zazaki community¹, the always-present dominant Turkish language², the status of Zazaki as a recipient language (referring to borrowing) with low social status – all these factors motivate observers to claim that a language shift from Zazaki toward Turkish already takes place.

However, no official numbers exist concerning language-use in today's Zaza families. I have known and listed nineteen families living in Turkey and also in Diaspora in Germany and Sweden (see Appendix 2). Nine of them speak Turkish, and ten families speak Zazaki at home. That means a 50% scale of Zazaki-use as a mother tongue for children who grow up presently. The inter-ethnic marriages seem to be the biggest hindrance in speaking Zazaki with the children.

If Zazaki is learned as the primary language at home (regardless whether Turkish is learned fluently at school-age), Zazaki is the most significant element in building knowledge and concepts, and serving as the matrix language for morpho-syntactic rules. Subsequently, Turkish will follow suit. The typological differences and the distinction of two lexicons (despite some suggested overlapping of lexemes) strengthen the idea that Zazaki is resistant against an easy take-over by Turkish.

If Zazaki continues to be taught to children as their mother tongue, Zazaki will remain a vivid language for generations.

¹ No official numbers available. My own estimation would be, that 70% of Zaza adults younger than forty years, 50% of adults older than forty years are in a way fluent speaker of Turkish.

² Evidently since the constitution of the Turkish state in 1923, the Turkish language has inevitably reached every villages even intensified by Turkish television programs where every household is connected to.

5 Appendices

Appendix 1: Abbreviations

3s	3. Person Singular
ACC	Accusative Case Marking
EZ	Ezafe: linking morpheme (6 different forms exist in Zazaki).
F	Feminine
IMPF	Imperfect Tense Ending (same for all persons)
OBL	Oblique Case Marking
PAST	Simple Past Tense Ending
PERF	Perfect Tense Ending
Pl	Plural
Prop.name	Proper name
SJ	Subjunctive verb root
tr.	Transitive

Appendix 2: Language Use in Families

The name of a person stands for a family. The language use should reflect which language this person uses at home with his/her children and spouse. Often this is dependent upon whether the spouse is Zaza, and where the person has grown up, not where s/he lives now.

Language use at home:	Zazaki	Turkish	Non-Zaza spouse (feminine=f.)	Grown up in: metropolis (m) small town (sm) rural (r)
M. (Diasp.)		x	Kurd (f.)	r
E. P. (Diasp.)		x		r
Mehd. (Diasp.)		x	Turk (f.)	?
S. (Diasp.)		x		r, m
A. (Diasp.)	X			r
M. (Diasp.)	X			r
Sa. (Diasp.)	X			r
Sul. (Diasp.)		x		?
Kez. (Diasp.)	X			r
Sin. (Diasp.)	X			r
Mem. (Diasp.)		x		?
Aliş. (Diasp.)	X			st
Ken. (Diasp.)	X			r
Fe.		x	Kurd (f.)	st
Ke.		x	Turk (f.)	r
Rem.	X			r
Xal E.	X			r
Ahm.		x	Kurd (f.)	?
Sed.	X			st

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