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German Lexical Items Among Iraqi-Arabic-German Bilinguals: Code-Switches or Borrowings?

Abstract

The question of what is the difference between borrowing and code-switching has attracted the attention of scholars far and wide and gave at the same time rise to a plethora of publications in order to draw a boundary between these two terms. In the most recent of these publications (Grosjean 1982, Poplack & Meechan 1995 & 1998; to name but a few), it has been often argued that borrowings are donor-language items that are integrated in the grammar of the recipient language at a community level, while code-switches take place at individual level and they retain the grammar of the language from which they derive. However, the current political and economic uncertainties in various regions of the world have been found to cause mass refugee movements to conflict-free places, where contact between newcomers and locals usually lead to some kind of linguistic interinfluencing. The current study discusses the contact-induced German-origin lone lexical items used by Iraqi-Arabic-speaking refugees in Germany. It is the aim of this study to show whether or not these lexical items can be considered as code-switches or established borrowings. The data I am analyzing come from spontaneous and elicited conversations of the first and second wave of Iraqi-Arabic-speaking refugees and asylum seekers to Germany as well as from online- and paper-pencil-questionnaires.

Keywords

Iraqi-Arabic, German, borrowing, code-switches, language contact, bilingualism.

1. Introduction

Due to a bundle of reasons such as poverty, sectarian-confessional conflicts, ethnic tensions, threat of war, and other cases of force majeure such as the bloody eight-year war (1980–1988) with neighboring Iran, and some years later the Gulf war in 1990 and 2003, whose heavy social consequences may continue

for generations, Iraq remained exposed to political unrest and instability for nearly four decades, from 1980 until now.

For these reasons in particular, the country has always seen a tremendous increase of both forced migration and internal displacement. Between 1980 and 2003, thousands of people fled isolated Iraq to escape life of conscription and poverty, target countries were at that time neighboring Iran, Jordan, Syria, and, to a limited degree, Turkey. Moreover, since the beginning of 2003 there has been an unprecedented internal displacement and massive waves of refugee triggered by the armed sectarian conflict between the two main religious groups in the country, Shia and Sunnah.

These ongoing acts of internal social violence have profoundly changed the demographic make-up of the country so that the distribution map of the population has been entirely reorganized in such a way that the commonly accepted sectarian and ethnic diversity is no longer present in many places of the country. In the midst of this social chaos, and due to the fact that new sectarian and civil unrests seem to be flaring up from time to time, people found themselves forced to seek refuge and to move away from conflict areas to conflict-free places in Europe in order to assure themselves and their children a future in human dignity.

For certain reasons such as the strong economy and the comparatively marked differences in the quality of social security systems, Germany was and still is the preferred and most important target country for Iraqi asylum seekers. From 1991 onwards, Iraq has seen two big refugee waves to Germany which will be briefly discussed below.

1.1. The first big wave (1991–2003)

The first major wave of Iraqi-Arabic-speaking asylum seekers to Germany was from 1991, when the second war started in the Gulf region, until the outbreak of the sectarian violence in 2003.[1] According to the Federal Agency of Migration and Refugees (BAMF, henceforth), Germany received a large number of requests for asylum in 1990, Iraq was among the main countries of origin of those asylum seekers (Schutt 1990, BAMF 2015). Between 1991 and 2003, the number of Iraqis seeking protection in Germany has doubled compared with the previous years to reach 95.000 asylum applications (BAMF 2009).

Due to the fact that there was no safe "direct route" open to Europe at that time, Iraqi asylum seekers had been forced to cover a long and exhausting distance from Turkey via Greek through Balkan to Germany. As most of them spent months or even years in each country they arrive in to work illegally or

[1] In 1990 a massive number of Iraqis and foreigners left Iraq to Jordan (Chatelard 2013 & 2009, UNCHR 2007).

to find a reliable smuggler to complete their journey, they were compelled to learn the language of the host country to learn about ways of doing things.

In so doing, they were exposed to several foreign languages, especially English as it was the common language used,[2] and some other languages like Turkish, Romanian, Greek, Polish, Czech, among others. Based on a survey of participants and their own observations, I have found out that the highest percentage of the first wave of Iraqi asylum seekers had become either bilingual or multilingual during their journey to Germany.

1.2. The second big wave (since 2003)

In 2003 began the decisive war under the leadership of the USA to remove Sadam's regime and to establish an alleged democracy in the country. But in contrast to all expectations at that time, Iraqi peoples are still suffering the consequences of the post-Gulf war in 2003. Pure chaos, insecurity, unemployment, poverty, and a spectacular social regression appear to reign almost everywhere. In addition, terrorist groups have occupied portions of the country and threatened the capital Baghdad and its many ethnic and religious minorities.

As a result, a second great wave of asylum seekers began and is still continuing until now; it actually differs from the first wave in some aspects: Though asylum seekers of the second wave have a "direct route" to Europe via Turkey which had been later as the main country of stay for Iraqis, it was not without risks for them, as they must leave Turkey by sea. In contrast to the experiences of the asylum seekers in 1991–2003, those of the second wave witnessed terrible experiences while crossing the sea; hundreds of them drowned, many of them were missed and feared drowned while some of them were picked up.

Until today I receive queries from families who are still looking for missing persons, and who have not received any details yet. After asking the so called "Marin Rescue Group", a voluntary group of young Iraqis in Turkey, I have been informed that hundreds of Iraqi boat peoples are still being sought by Turkish and Greek authorities, many of them were washed up on Turkish shores, "We do not know if they have drowned or if they have been able to survive", a member of the Marin Rescue Group says.

Boat peoples who succeed in crossing the sea had been directly transported by bus and train from Greece via Austria, Hungary and other countries throughout the Schengen Area to Germany. Driven by the enthusiastic statements of the German Chancellor Angela Merkel, asylum seekers saw Germany as the promised land, where they can complete their life's dreams. The most recent statistics show, therefore, that Germany was and still is one of the top destinations by Iraqi asylum seekers after 2003 (Chatelard 2008, Sperl 2007, BMF 2014).

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[2] The foreign language most taught from primary schools to University in Iraq is English.

2. Participants

My study participants were Iraqi-Arabic-German bilingual asylum seekers and refugees from the first and the second wave with different ethno-linguistic backgrounds, they came from different regions of the country. At the time of writing this paper, they all live and work in Germany for different periods of time. At least some of them are bilingual in childhood, they command in addition to Arabic, the official language of Iraq, an indoor language such as Kurdish, Turkmenish, Chaldean, Assyrian, among others.

Due to mixed marriages, a small proportion of them grew up in bilingual families and acquire two first languages; later, they were exposed to Arabic as the shared outdoor language to become trilingual. It has moreover been noticed that trilingualism is most common among participants coming from the northern part of Iraq, where people of different ethnic groups and of various cultures and religions have always lived there since centuries.

Bilingualism among the participants from southern Iraq, in contrast, is restricted to the small Christian and Mandaic communities. However, due to religious and commercial reasons with neighboring Iran, some of my Muslim participants from the southern region, have a good command of Persian language. Thus, almost all the participants of this study are either bilingual or trilingual, before coming to Germany.

3. Data Corpus

The material I used in this study has been mainly taken from online- and paper-pencil-questionnaires. The paper-pencil-questionnaires have been distributed to bilingual participants from the two waves of asylum seekers and refugees, the online questionnaire, on the other side, was created and posted on the biggest Facebook groups of Iraqi-Arabic-speaking asylum seekers. Both types of questionnaires contained only the following question: Which German words do you often use when speaking Iraqi-Arabic with your Iraqi mates?

The answers supplied by the participants were surprisingly similar. All participants, balanced and nonbalanced bilinguals of different ages and of both sexes, were agreed on the words listed in table (1) bellow. The resulting corpus contains thirty nine words of German origin adopted by Iraqi-Arabic bilingual asylum seekers and refugees.

1)	’nta	’byā	*Heim*	ḏabūk
	2.SG.MASK.	PREP	refugee home	let: PERF.2SG.MASK

“To which refugee home have you been sent?”

Table 1. German nouns and verbs used by Iraqi-Arabic-speaking asylum seekers and refugees

NOUNS			VERBS		
SIMPLE	DERIVED	COMPOUND	SIMPLE	DERIVED	COMPOUND
Akte	Duldung	Abmeldung	melden	Ø	abmelden
Camp	Heizung	Anmeldung			anmelden
Caritas	Kündigung	Arbeitsamt			staubsaugen
Heim		Aushilfe			ummelden
Hotel		Ausländeramt			
Sozial		Ausländerbehörde			
Stadt		Ausweis			
Ticket		Autobahn			
		Bahnhof			
		Jobcenter			
		Kindergeld			
		Nebenkosten			
		Rathaus			
		Früh, Spät and Nachschicht			
		Sozialhilfe			
		Sperrmüll			
		Stadthalle			
		Straßenbahn			
		U-Bahn			
		Verkehrsamt			
		Wohnamt			
		Wohnungsamt			
		Wohngeld			

The selected words in table (1) can be divided into these two classes:

Nouns: The German nouns in table (1) can be grouped in simple, derived, and compound nouns as shown in examples (1, 2 & 3) respectively. German words are indicated by italics.[3]

[3] The transliteration system of Hans Wehr's Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic (1961) will be employed throughout this paper.

2) ilyūm riḥit waqqa‘it *Kündigung*
ADV go:PERF.1.SG. sign:PERF.1.SG. Notice of termination
“I went today to sign a notice of termination.”

3) abū-i gām yistilim
father-POSS.1.SG. start:PERF.3SG.MASK get:PRES.3SG.MASK.
Sozialhilfe
social benefits
“My father started receiving social benefits.”

Moreover, these nouns can further be divided into several semantic categories such as abstract administrative nouns in table (2), concrete administrative nouns in table (3), and service-related nouns in table (4).

Table 2. German abstract administrative nouns used by Iraqi-Arabic-speaking asylum seekers and refugees

NOUNS		
SIMPLE	DERIVED	COMPOND
Ø	Duldung	Abmeldung
		Anmeldung
		Ummeldung
		Aushilfe

Table 3. German concrete administrative nouns used by Iraqi-Arabic-speaking asylum seekers and refugees

NOUNS		
SIMPLE	DERIVED	COMPOND
Akte	Ø	Arbeitsamt
Camp		Ausländerbehörde
Caritas		Ausweis
Heim		Kindergeld
		Nebenkosten
		Rathaus
		Stadthalle
		Verkehrsamt
		Wohnamt

Table 4. German service-related nouns used by Iraqi-Arabic-speaking asylum seekers and refugees

NOUNS		
SIMPLE	DERIVED	COMPOND
Ticket	Heizung	Autobahn
		Bahnhof
		Jobcenter
		Sperrmüll
		Straßenbahn
		U-Bahn

Specifically mentionable is that the number of the concrete nouns in table (1) is much more than the number of the abstract nouns, a fact which speaks against van Hell and de Groot (1998) who assume that concrete nouns have more direct translation and are therefore more integrated in the bilingual lexicon.

Verbs: it has frequently been pointed out that nouns can be borrowed more easily than other lexical categories (Whitney 1881, Haugen 1950, Singh 1981, van Hout & Muysken 1994, Apple & Muysken 2005, Poplack 2015). The collected data in Table (1) supports this view as there is only a tiny percentage of German verbs that have been adopted by Iraqi-Arabic bilingual asylum seekers and refugees. Based on this, one can assume the following hierarchy for the German words used by Iraqi-Arabic-German bilinguals:

NOUNS { simple / derived / compound } ⇨ **VERBS** { particle verbs / compound verbs }

However, the German verbs are derived by a variety of tools such as affixing (4) or compounding (5), among other things. Consider the following frequently-heard expressions:

4) arūḥ asawī *Abmelden*
go:1SG.PRES. to do.1SG.PRES cancel
"I am going to cancel (e.g. a flat)."

5) ḫalī-na inkamil *Staubsaugen* w
let:2SG.PRES.-1PL to end.1PL.PRES hoovering and
inrūḥ ba'dīn
go:2PL.PRES. after
"Let us end the hoovering and then we go."

The German verb in (4) is created by means of attaching the prefix *ab-* to the verb *melden*, the verb *staubsaugen* in example (5), on the other hand, is composed of two different parts of speech (the noun *Staub* and the verb *saugen*).

In the light of the above, it is clear that the collected lexical items in table (1) display certain characteristics which can be summarized as follows: they are all *lexical items* that are adopted *one-directionally* (German to Iraqi-Arabic) to refer to *concrete* and *nonconcrete* nouns of *culture-specific terms* such as objects, places, institutions, among others.

4. Borrowings or Code-switches?

It is pertinent to address here the question of whether these German-origin nouns are types of borrowings or code-switches. In the specialized literature it is often argued that borrowing is a process by which a word from a donor-language is incorporated in the grammar of a recipient language, while code-switches retain the grammar of the language from which they derive (Haugen 1950, Weinreich 1953, Grosjean 1982, Poplack 1979, Romaine 1985, Poplack 2015).

Following Poplack (2015) and Poplack & Meechan (1995), I will offer some *generalizations* about the behavior of the German lone lexical items in Table (1) in otherwise Iraqi-Arabic discourse by means of discussing some of the *conflict sites* (Poplack & Meechan 1998) in both German and Iraqi-Arabic grammars to provide a proof of whether Iraqi-Arabic-German bilinguals treat such lexical items as code-switches or borrowings.

Due to the small number of the German-origin nouns in table (1), it makes no sense to deal with this issue quantitatively, therefore I will solely concentrate on sites involving the many qualitative (structural) conflicts between these two languages using some morphological diagnostics such as number marking on nouns, gender of nouns and definiteness.

4.1. Number Marking on Nouns

The plural formation in Arabic and its varieties is usually based on concatenative and non-concatenative modes of derivation (Wright 1971, Ratcliffe 1998, McCarthy 2004). The concatenative flexive plural markers in Arabic, on the one hand, fall into two classes: the regular feminine plural and the regular masculine plural. In either case, Arabic applies a linear suffixation of the long vowel [ū] followed by [-n] to indicate the masculine plural ending, and the long vowel [ā] with a final [-t] for the feminine plural formation such as in examples (6a & 6b) respectively.

6a) jāʼa al-fallāḥ-ūn
come:3SG.MASK.PERF. DET.-farmer-PL.MASK.NOM.
"The (male) farmers came."

6b) jāʼat al-fallāḥ-āt
come:3SG.MASK.PERF. DET.-farmer-PL.FEM.NOM.
"The (female) farmers came."

Nowadays, however, the flexive masculine plural [-ūn] of Arabic in example (6a) has been completely disappeared in Iraqi-Arabic and has been substituted by the accusative masculine sound plural ending [-īn] in example (7).

7) jāʼa al-fallāḥ-īn
come:3SG.MASK.PERF. DET.-farmer-PL.MASK.NOM.
"The (male) farmers came."

The non-concatenative plural formation, on the other hand, involves an internal modification of the singular stem (Levy 1971, McCarthy & Prince 1990, Ryding 2005). That is, to non-concatenatively mark the number of nouns such as *kitāb*/*kutub* (book/books), *insān*/*nās* (human being/human beings), *qiṭ*/*qiṭaṭ* (cat/cats), *jabal*/*jibāl* (mountain/mountains), *miṣbāḥ*/*maṣābīḥ* (lamp/lamps), their shape must be reshuffled by changing the patterns of consonants and vowels inside their singular forms.

Of all these plural forms, both Arabic and its varieties, including Iraqi-Arabic, almost exclusively adhere to the feminine sound plural marker [-āt] in example (6b) to mark established borrowings such as the common English lone lexical items *television-āt* (televisions), *radio-āt* (radios), *cinema-āt* (cinemas), *cream-āt* (creams), *taxi-āt* (Taxis), *virus-āt* (viruses), *liter-āt* (liters) etc. However, it was observed that this way of marking nouns also applies to the German-origin nouns in table (1), so that Iraqi-Arabic-German bilinguals opt for the feminine sound plural marker [-āt] when pluralizing German nouns such as *Bahnhof-āt*, *Ticket-āt*, *Heim-āt*, *Autobahn-āt*, *Hotel-āt*, *Camp-āt*, *Ausweis-āt*, *Stadthall-āt* etc.

The only exception here are the words *Nebenkosten*, *Müll* and *Geld*, they do not take the plural suffix [-āt] or any other Arabic plural marker. The first two words have nevertheless a special status in German: according to the German grammar, *Müll*, on the one hand, is a singular-only noun which does not take a plural marking, therefore it always appears zero-marked (Duden 2014, Langenscheidt 2010), the word *Nebenkosten*, on the other hand, is a plural-only noun, i.e. it has only a plural form (Duden 2014, Langenscheidt 2010). Depending on context, the word *Geld* can be pluralized in two ways: with and without plural marker, *Gelder* and *Geld* respectively (Duden 2014, Langenscheidt 2010).

The Iraqi-Arabic counterparts of these three German lexical items are *zbāla* (Müll), *flūs* (Geld) and *takālīf* (Kosten). Like their German counterparts, the word *'zbāla* is a singular-only noun, while the word *flūs* (Geld) is most commonly used as plural. *Takālīf*, on the other hand is the plural form of *taklufa*. It is formed according to the patterns of the so-called broken plural and used almost always as plural. It is, therefore, not surprising when these three words remain morphologically unchanged when used in an Iraqi-Arabic-German bilingual discourse.

4.2. Gender of nouns

In Arabic and its varieties, nouns are either masculine or feminine, there is no gender-neuter gender for nouns. According to the views of traditional Arab grammarians, the grammatical gender of nouns in Arabic can be indicated by either the presence of a marker or by convention, whether they refer to animate or inanimate objects (Al-Zajjaji 2003: 38, Al-Sarraj 1999: 31).

Moreover, there is a general consensus among Arab grammarians that masculinity is the unmarked grammatical gender of all nouns unless they have a feminine marker (Sibawayh 1983: 241–242). Femininity, in contrast, is usually marked by the most common feminine ending /-t/ such as, among others, in *fallāḥa-t* (*fallāḥ*: male farmer, -t: feminine marker) and *jamīla-t* (*jamīl*: beautiful (masc.), -t: feminine marker).

In addition, there are some nouns which are feminine by convention such as some countries and towns names, proper names, parts of human body, and specific nouns like sun, soul, earth, fire etc., while other countries and towns names, proper names, parts of human body, and specific nouns such as moon, sword, mountain are strongly associated with masculinity (Al-Sarraj 1999: 38). The assignment of the grammatical gender for nouns in German, on the contrary, is mainly based on the three definite articles, namely *der* for masculine, *die* for feminine, and *das* for neuter (Duden 2016, Helbig & Buscha 2001).

Based on the assumption that borrowings are patterned according to the morphology and syntax of the embedded language (Haugen 1950, Weinreich 1953, Poplack 2015), the German lone lexical items in table (1) have to carry one of the just mentioned gender markers when used in an Iraqi-Arabic discourse. However, elicited and spontaneous conversations with Iraqi-Arabic-German bilinguals have shown that all German-origin nouns in otherwise Iraqi-Arabic discourse occur bare, a fact which according to Budzhak-Jones & Poplack (1997) complicate the *language membership* of these lexical items.

Following Budzhak-Jones & Poplack (1997: 237–38), I will make use of the two Iraqi-Arabic demonstrative modifiers (the masculine modifier *hāḏa* and the feminine modifier *hāḏi*/*hāi*) to prove whether Iraqi-Arabic-German bilinguals follow their native gender assignment rules for nouns or not. That is, when

the German-origin lexical items agree with the Iraqi-Arabic demonstratives in gender, then the German-origin items are borrowings, but when bilinguals tend to transfer the original gender pattern of the donor-language, then these items are code-switches.

Through spontaneous and elicited conversations with Iraqi-Arabic-German bilinguals, I have found out that they employ several gender assignment strategies for the German-origin lexical items in table (1). Most important among these strategies is the use of the masculine demonstrative pronoun *hāḏa* of Iraqi-Arabic as the default strategy for a great number of the neuter, feminine and masculine German-origin whether these nouns refer to concrete or abstract items.

Such a default to the masculine is most likely because of (a) the sex-gender incongruence of the definite articles of the German-origin nouns, and (b) the lack of the neuter gender in Iraqi-Arabic. In table (5) bellow, the Iraqi-Arabic masculine demonstrative *hāḏa* is overgeneralized for neuter, feminine and masculine German-origin nouns. The gender of German-origin nouns is indicated by asterisks.

Table 5. German-origin nouns, their original- and default gender

German Nouns	Neutr.	Masc.	Fem.	Default gender
Abmeldung			*	M
Ausländeramt	*			A
Autobahn			*	S
Caritas	*			C
Camp	*			U
Heizung			*	L
Hotel	*			I
Sperrmüll		*		N
Ticket	*			E
Heim	*			
Jobcenter	*			
Rathaus	*			

However, it has been noticed that some German-origin masculine lexical items keep their original gender when used in Iraqi-Arabic discourse, though their Iraqi-Arabic equivalents are considered feminine. Bilinguals therefore use the masculine demonstrative *hāḏa* to refer to masculine nouns such as *Bahnhof*,

Ausweis as well as to compounds ending in *–amt* such as *Sozial-*, *Ausländer-*, *Wohn-* and *Verkehrsamt*.

It can be clearly seen that *Bahnhof* and some compound nouns like *Sozial-*, *Ausländer-*, *Wohn-* and *Verkehrsamt* refer to *culture-specific* items and they are therefore considered borrowings (Romaine 1985: 131). This assumption can be supported by the fact that such institutions and places are alien for Iraqi-Arabic bilinguals, because whether they never exist in their country of origin or they are, on account of corruption, considered inactive governmental institutions.

The concrete noun *Ausweis*, on the other hand, has a direct translation in Iraqi-Arabic, but nonetheless it does not cover the sense of this noun. I looked it up in PONS (2012) Langenscheidt (2010) and Schregle (1974) and I found more than ten direct translation equivalents pointing to different entities, but none of them displays the meaning of *Ausweis* which is understood by bilinguals as an ID card for refugees. Such a difficulty of translation usually causes a competition in noun selection between Iraqi-Arabic and German, a fact which triggers cases of borrowings (Clyne 1967, Haugen 1953).

Furthermore, Iraqi-Arabic-German bilinguals have developed a phonetically-based gender assignment strategy for German-origin lexical items ending in –e. This strategy coincides with the modifier-head agreement grammar in Iraqi-Arabic according to which nouns ending in –e are usually coded as feminine. By analogy, all German-origin lexical items ending in –e in table (1) such as *Ausländerbehörde*, *Akte*, *Aushilfe*, *Sozialhilfe*, *Stadthalle* etc. are considered feminine, though they appear bare in an Iraqi-Arabic-German discourse.

4.3. Definiteness

In contrast to the German definite articles which can be declined differently according to the number, gender and case of their nouns such as in examples (8a–d), definiteness in Iraqi-Arabic is marked by the only indeclinable definite article *il* as can be seen in example (9a & b) below.[4] The definite articles in both languages are indicated by italics.

8a) *Der* Hund ist hungrig.
"The dog is hungry."

8b) Ich gebe *dem* Mann ein Buch
"I give the book to the man."

8c) Ich siehe *den* Man.
"I see the man."

[4] Arabic and its varieties are considered article languages, they have however no indefinite markers (Willim 2000, Schulz 2004).

8d) Ich fahre das Auto *des* Vaters.
"I drive the car of the father."

9a) *il*-kitāb *il*-qadīmah awrāqa-h
DET.-book DET.-old leaves-3SG.
"The book with the old leaves."

9b) *il*-banāt *il*-rāhan l-*il*-madrassah
DET.girls DET.-go:PST.3PL.FEM PREP.-DET.school
"The girls who went to school."

It has nonetheless been observed that when using the German lone lexical nouns in table (1) in an Iraqi-Arabic-German bilingual discourse, Iraqi asylum seekers and refugees tend to imbue them with Iraqi-Arabic morphology by prefixing the definite article *il* to them. Often enough, one hears examples like the followings:

10) ilyūm riḥit waqqa'it *il*-Kündigung
ADV go:PERF.1.SG. sign:PERF.1.SG. notice of termination
"I went today to sign the notice of removal."

11) abū-i gām yistilim
father-POSS.1.SG. start:PERF.3SG.MASK get:PRES.3SG.MASK.
il-Sozialhilfe
social benefits
"My father started receiving social benefits."

Moreover, due to the fact that some Iraqi-Arabic verbs including, among others, the main verbs *asawī* and *akamil* do not tolerate verb serialization, Iraqi-Arabic-German bilinguals tend to nominalize all the German verbs that follow these two Iraqi-Arabic verbs such as in examples (4 & 5 above) repeated here as (12 & 13).

12) arūḥ asawī *Abmelden*
go:1SG.PRES. to do.1SG.PRES cancel
"I am going to cancel (the flat)."

13) ḫalī-ni akamil *Staubsaugen* w
let:2SG.PRES.-1SG to end.1SG.PRES hoovering and
inrūḥ ba'dīn
go:2PL.PRES. after
"Let me end the hoovering and then we go."

In so doing, these nominalized German verbs will usually be treated as if they were Iraqi, their definiteness will be accordingly morphologically marked by the Iraqi-Arabic definite article *il* when the speaker believes that the listener already knows what he is referring to. The following are examples heard from Iraqi-Arabic-German bilinguals:

14) arūḥ asawī *il*- Abmelden
go:1SG.PRES. to do.1SG.PRES DET.-cancel
"I am going to cancel (e.g. a flat)."

15) ḫalī-na inkamil *il*-Staubsaugen w
let:2SG.PRES.-1PL to end.1PL.PRES DET.-hoovering and
inrūḥ ba'dīn
go:2PL.PRES. after
"Let us end the hoovering and then we go."

Such an integration of the Iraqi-Arabic definite article into the lone lexical items of German might prima facie give the impression that they behave as if they were borrowings. As far as the definite articles are concerned, it must be noted that the differences between German and Iraqi-Arabic are extremely deep: Although in both languages the definite articles are characterized by the fixed order before nouns, in German, unlike Iraqi-Arabic, the definite articles carry a lot more information than does the unique Iraqi-Arabic *il* (see examples 8a–d in contrast to 9a & b above).

Nevertheless, despite those functional differences of the articles in both languages, Iraqi-Arabic-German bilinguals have no real problem in article suppliance, that is first because Iraqi-Arabic and German are definiteness-based languages, a fact which following Master (1997) and Zobl (1982) facilitates at least the rapid acquisition of the surface morphological realization of the category of definiteness, and second, as proposed by the *Uniformity Assumption* of Avery & Radišić (2007) that learners with the same L1 show no marked differences in patterns of article suppliance, because the L1 exerts a uniform influence on L2 learners, Iraqi-Arabic-German bilinguals have therefore uniformly transferred the definiteness setting of the Article Choice Parameter (Ionin 2003, Ionin & Wexler 2004) in such a way that all above mentioned German lone lexical items are solely used in combination with the only Iraqi-Arabic prenominal definite article *il*.

Conclusion

As has already been indicated, the main task of this study was to show whether the German-origin items in table (1) are code-switches or borrowings. I have therefore used some morphological diagnostics in order to determine the language membership of these items. It seems, however, that Iraqi-Arabic-German bilinguals are mainly guided by their native grammar, that is, they tend to utilize what is available in their own language instead of adopting German grammatical rules. In cases where both languages are very diverging such as in definiteness and gender marking of nouns, Iraqi-Arabic-German bilinguals imbue the German lone lexical items with Iraqi-Arabic morphology, but there were nevertheless cases of *coincidence sites* where German and Iraqi-Arabic grammars partially follow, for example, the same number assignment rules such as in cases of singular- and plural-only nouns. On the basis of these considerations, it can be concluded that the German-origin lone lexical items in table (1) are types of established borrowings.

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