USE OF THESESES

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LANGUAGE AS TOPOS: A STUDY OF TURKISH POLYSEMY

Margaret Burns

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of the Australian National University.

December 1992
Declaration

Except where otherwise indicated
this thesis is my own work.

M. Burns
December 1992
Acknowledgements

This thesis would not have become a reality without the help of many people.

Within the Melbourne Turkish community I received immeasurable help from every quarter. In particular, I would like to thank Demet Ersoy for her unstinting hospitality and friendship. It was Demet who guided me through the intricacies of Islamic rites and lifeways, and who patiently tolerated my faltering efforts to acculturate myself. Thanks also to Orhan Akan for help in coming to grips with some of the complexities of Turkish politics, as well as for his generous advice on all aspects of Turkish cultural life. Salih Polat was kind enough to read a draft of my thesis and so save me from many errors.

I would also like to thank Aynur and Kenan Beton for their untiring assistance in unravelling the intricacies of Turkish political and cultural life. I owe an enormous debt to Kenan for his help in understanding much of the rich idiom of Turkish. I am also greatly indebted to Aynur, Pamela and Cemal who helped me to understand some of the complexities of modern Turkish political life. Others cannot be mentioned by name. They know who they are.

Had my Turkish friends not said such memorable things, this thesis would not exist.

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Abstract

The study of polysemy contributes to our understanding of different topologies of language. Polysemy implies metaphorical richness and provides clues to linguistic ontology in that it effects translation between the verbal and the non-verbal, linking the articulated and the tacit, i.e. language and silence. Implicit in the Turkish saying *bir dil, bir insan* (one language, one person) is an image of language as at once the mark of humanness and the defining feature of human variation, while another formulaic saying, *dilin kemigi yoktur* (the tongue has no bone(s)), implies a flexibility of meaning and intention which, without language, would be unavailable to humans.

Taking certain features of Turkish polysemy as a guide, this thesis steers an analytic pathway through the rich diversity of modern Turkish ideational culture as it is lived by various members of the Turkish community in Melbourne. Migration to a new environment entails not only physical relocation but also ideational adjustment to new thought worlds. Language is a key to this process of reorientation, as people living in different cultural niches have recourse to different epistemological moorings for reality construal. Changes in cultural niche, as in the case of migration, highlight changes in ideational orientation. Taking a phenomenological approach to language based on the sensory parameters of sound and vision, this thesis explores the various topologies inherent in language use by focusing on polysemy, against a background of multilingualism and literacy.

Turkish ideational life is an arena of contested realities. Polysemic terms such as *yol* (pathway), *gurbet* (temporary absence from home), *açık/kapalı* (open/closed) and *sağ/sol* (right/left) as well as the tacit *inside* and *outside* orientate meaning within and between different discursive practices. Polysemy points also to different concepts of knowledge and power, as well as to different metaphors of humanity. Language itself is a metaphor of humanity and of knowledge/power.
Notes on Turkish Orthography

Modern Standard Turkish is written in Latin script. The alphabet consists of 21 consonants and 8 vowels. The following are not shared with English:

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<th>Alphabetic Symbol</th>
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<td>c as in can</td>
<td>j in English jam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ç</td>
<td>ch as in chain</td>
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<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td>*(soft g) lengthens a preceding vowel; never occurs at beginning of a word</td>
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<tr>
<td>j</td>
<td>as in French journal</td>
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<td>o</td>
<td>as in French eau</td>
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<td>ö</td>
<td>as in French jeux</td>
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<tr>
<td>ş</td>
<td>as in English shall</td>
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<tr>
<td>ü</td>
<td>as in French tu</td>
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* The Turkish term hoca is often transliterated as hoja. Throughout my thesis, I use both terms according to linguistic context.
### ABBREVIATIONS

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<th>Description</th>
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<td>ABL</td>
<td>ablative</td>
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<td>AUX</td>
<td>auxiliary</td>
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<td>bur.</td>
<td>bureaucratic</td>
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<td>CAUS</td>
<td>causative</td>
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<td>DAT</td>
<td>dative</td>
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<td>eski</td>
<td>old Turkish</td>
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<td>lit.</td>
<td>literally</td>
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<tr>
<td>LOC</td>
<td>locative</td>
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<td>NEG</td>
<td>negative</td>
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<td>PRES</td>
<td>present tense</td>
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<tr>
<td>PROG</td>
<td>progressive present tense</td>
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<tr>
<td>POSS</td>
<td>possessive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PST</td>
<td>past tense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REMPAST</td>
<td>remote past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1sg</td>
<td>1st person singular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3sg</td>
<td>3rd person singular</td>
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<td>yeni</td>
<td>new Turkish</td>
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1. I have adopted most of these abbreviations from Foley and Van Valin, 1984.
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CHAPTER I

1. Language as Topos

Heidegger: *Speaking about language turns language almost inevitably into an object.*

Tezuka: *And then its reality vanishes.*

(Heidegger, 1971:50)

Language is a mobile home.

(Rom {Gypsy} saying)

This thesis is a topological exploration of the ways in which viewing language as a metaphorical entity, against a background of polysemy, can throw light on crucial aspects of linguistic reality. The term topological is used in order to focus on the ideational space created by language, as well as on the ways in which physical or geographic space in turn impinges on language use. Through focusing on polysemy, language reveals its iconicity and its interdependence with non-verbal forms of communication. The polysemic nodes of language are sites at which, to use a Heideggerian turn of phrase, *language speaks* most eloquently. Literacy and literality interfere with polysemy and tend to mask the essential metaphoricity of language.

This thesis invites readers to listen to some of the playful *saying*¹ of Turkish: to take metaphor literally and literacy metaphorically. Taking a phenomenological approach based on the sensory parameters of sound and vision, the thesis explores the ideational space inherent in polysemic language, and illustrates the epistemological gains to be made by viewing language as topos. What emerges from this exploration is a sense of alternative degrees of anthropocentrism and word-centredness as language shapes realities and is, in turn, shaped by ideational contexts such as political, religious and gender ideologies as well as by language events themselves. Through focusing on polysemy and on the overlaps between verbal and non-verbal ways of construing reality, one can discern different processes of shaping ideational space.

The above exchange between Heidegger and Tezuka highlights the impossibility of talking about language except in its own terms. Any attempt at finding a neutral

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¹In Heidegger's (1971:139) sense of *...allowing to appear....*
metalanguage faces the paradox of being constrained by assumptions that are themselves linguistic in nature. In order to speak about language, we must bring language into conscious focused awareness, and we can do this only through using language itself. This twofold operation involves simultaneously language as instrument and language as object. In philosophical terms we face a methodological paradox. Any attempt at grasping linguistic reality must take into account both articulated and tacit aspects of language. Moreover, the very notion of language itself must be viewed in different metaphorical lights. The debates within linguistics about the imposition of Indo-European categories on languages from other areas of the world are testament to the seminal importance of these semantic moves. See Becker (1979), for example, and Wierzbicka (1989). Benveniste (1973) discusses the Greek origins of Western linguistic categories.

Proverbs and other formulaic sayings obviate some of these philosophical difficulties and suggest alternative ways of approaching linguistic reality, and I suggest that we pay attention to the polysemy inherent in the lexemes which make up such sayings as well as on their overall sense.

1.1. Dis-placement and Dis-location

The Rom saying points to a metaphor where the focus on mobility says something about the charge of language when its speakers are not sedentary and tied to place. Here language takes on a heightened topological quality of its own. When geographical space is restricted or lost, as in the case of migration, language space takes on added importance. It is this notion of linguistic topology which forms the leitmotif of my thesis as I explore the ideational realities shaped by verbal and non-verbal metaphors in Turkish, against a background of literacy, multilingualism and code-switching.

Ricoeur (1978:143) has drawn attention to some of the subtle linguistic encodings of displacement: is not the word 'metaphor' itself a metaphor, the metaphor of a displacement and therefore of a transfer in a kind of space? The changing topology of Turkish linguistic imagery can be discerned by paying attention to polysemy, and for this reason I turn to proverbs and other aphoristic sayings for clues to the topos of language.

First, however, let us consider some received academic views of what language is. There are many different approaches to language reality. Most linguistic textbooks, for example, describe language as a symbolic system of communication or as a vehicle for thought, while anthropologists tend to submerge language in social processes, stressing
its phatic nature or its function as symbolic capital. Ethnographers of communication point to the discourse strategies used in different speech communities, while philosophers of language have historically directed their attention to linguistic referentiality, and more recently, to questions of speech acts and translatability in seeking to understand what language is. There is a tendency for philosophers to deal with a highly abstract notion of language rather than with specific languages. Edie (1963:549), however, claims that (t)he empirical basis for serious linguistic analysis must be multilingualism, while Rorty (1989:20) claims that ...we can only compare languages or metaphors with one another, not with something beyond language called "fact". Cross-cutting these varied disciplinary approaches to language runs a tension between a logocentric focus on language as an autonomous entity on the one hand, and an anthropocentric or reocentric focus on the relationship between word and world on the other. The first instance stresses the primacy of language while the second casts language as epiphenomenal. By viewing language as topos, both foci can be accommodated, as indeed they are in any non-contrived linguistic situation.

Some of the problems in talking about language in English result from the polysemic nature of the term itself, and it is instructive to turn to even as closely related a language as French for clarification of different nuances of meaning. Not only is the Saussurian distinction between langue (language system) and parole (individual spoken or written utterance) of crucial heuristic importance, for example, but also that between langue and langage (the faculty of language). In addition, language as amalgam of all three aspects functions alternatively as "instrument" and as "logos" (i.e. as a creative phenomenon which shapes the very realities we live by).

Since De Saussure (1916) articulated the distinctions between langue, langage and parole and pointed to the arbitrariness of the sign, there has been a tendency amongst scholars to adopt this notion of arbitrariness in an absolutist sense. In so doing, the arbitrariness of the term itself has been overlooked in that it means arbitrary in the sense of non-iconic. Iconicity in language is often construed at a superficial level of concordance or similarity between sign and referent. By construing arbitrariness and iconicity (in this restricted sense) as mutually exclusive, language has been artificially separated from other dimensions of life experience and has come to be seen as epiphenomenal and autonomous. It is instructive to explore questions of literacy and language standardization and their implications for changing linguistic iconicity, as well as for the ways in which these phenomena have shaped notions of what language is. For heuristic purposes, in a multilingual situation, where there are clear ontological variations
between different named languages, however, it is necessary to talk of particular languages as semi-autonomous vis-a-vis others. The important point to bear in mind is that language is polysemous.

There is much debate about whether langue (language system) is something real which has been discovered by scholars or something they themselves have created. The problem of defining distinctive languages and of articulating the borderline between a language and a dialect, for example, is an extremely complex one, and the balance between convention, arbitrariness and scientific basis changes over time as well as from case to case. All too often, the political context is ignored. Our everyday terms for talking about different languages are telling: world languages, classical languages, ritual languages, diplomatic languages; old languages and modern languages, to cite but a few examples. Anthropologists talk of field languages, as do militarists and linguists, while linguists, in addition to their various typologistic terms, use such popular notions as native languages, parent languages and dead languages. Militarists also talk of critical languages. Being the second language of the former Soviet Union, Turkish was one such critical language, at least for the United States (Newmeyer, 1986:56).

Illich (1988) argues that languages (in the sense of language systems) are created through writing, and the history of the standardisation of various languages, such as for example, Spanish, supports this view. But language systems are not only written into being; they are put on the international map through the acquisition of a technical, scientific vocabulary. This vocabulary is either borrowed from a pre-existing lexicon based on a world language such as English, or created through loan translations which, while drawing on the basic iconicity of the recipient system, nevertheless subvert its metaphorical integrity.

When distinctive linguistic systems come together in a language contact situation and borrowing occurs, the lexical item(s) borrowed have to fit into new linguistic niches. Associations with other domains in the source language may be lost and the semantic range may be restricted to more specialised meanings. When loan translations occur, a choice has to be made about whether to translate the word or the idea. This will depend largely on the domains within which it is expected to function. If communication needs are directed towards the inside of any given speech community, associations may be sought within already established metaphorical fields. If, however, communication is directed outwards towards another language community or another field of discourse, then choice will be guided more by associations within new metaphorical fields. The
topology encoded in language reflects these different orientations. Illustrations of some of these linguistic choices will be presented in Chapter II.

Scholars who focus on different language(s) (*langue(s)*) rather than on language (*langage*) reveal some interesting points of contrast and overlap between linguistic systems. Wierzbicka (1989:55) points to the different cultural universes associated with different languages, while Grace (1987:105) discusses the shared ways of talking and shared subject matters attached linguistically to different religions and philosophies which cut across individual language systems. These views need to be tempered by the particular historical background to distinctive languages and subject matters, because insights into cross-cultural and cross-linguistic semantic universes can be gained by paying attention to borrowings and loan translations and the ideational topography they create and shape in different speech communities. These issues will also be discussed in Chapter II.

Language as a whole shapes and communicates ideas, but individual languages differ in the emphases placed on different domains of experience. Since language and experience are acquired in tandem, the influences are intricate and mutual. The relationship between language and experience in the case of a native language learned in infancy, for example, is different from the relationship which emerges when a language is learned abstractly, in that the semantics of the latter is filtered through the medium of a first language and the focus on the second is more logocentric. There is hence a tendency towards reification and objectification. In multilingual environments, the distinction between mother tongues and learned languages is less salient, but patterns of multilingualism usually vary according to social domain.

The verbal iconicity of formulaic language subverts boundaries between such domains, however, and through focusing on formulaic language, we can find clues to different underlying metaphors of linguistic topology. This approach obviates the pitfalls of attempting to assign referential meanings to lexical items directly. Alongside academic traditions of analytic philosophy, oral modes of philosophising build on memorable ideas cast as proverbs or other formulaic sayings. The Analects of Confucius, for example, were designed to be learned by heart and turned over in the mind so as to reveal and test their validity. Steiner (1989:9) draws our attention to the embodiment of this kind of knowing: *what we know by heart becomes an agency in our consciousness.* As such,

\(^2\) See also Goody (1977:112) for an example of the importance of learning by heart in seventeenth century England.
formulaic sayings embody ideas in units larger that the one-word concepts so prevalent in contemporary speculative philosophy. Moreover, the individual lexical items which make up such sayings are generally polysemous and thus give rise to multiple interpretations simultaneously.

Before developing this exploration of polysemy further, however, it is instructive to consider other perspectives on language itself. Harris (1980, 1981, 1983) has paid attention to cross-cultural approaches to language. His views are summarised succinctly by Benjamin (1988:5):

*Roy Harris has argued (1980) that people's ideas as to the nature of language itself differ fundamentally. Nowhere is it possible to talk about language in its own terms, for we do not know what those terms are. Instead, we employ surrogates to serve as models of what language is "like", what it "does" and how it relates to the "really real". It is the latter notion, in particular, that varies. Where the West has historically taken the path of "reocentric" surrogation by holding that things are prior to language, and where the South Asian tradition has taken the "psychocentric" path of regarding subjective consciousness as the irreducible, the Chinese tradition has put words first, in a "logocentric" surrogation that leads people to hold that the possession of a name is the truest proof of existence.*

1.2. Voice and Vision

Harris is concentrating on philosophical views of language. His Chinese example is based on the Confucianist "rectification of names" (*cheng ming*) (1980:48). It is arguable whether the classical language of the Confucianist period ever was a spoken language (see, for example, Goody, 1980:129). Hence the question of writing and its linguistic effects is of some importance here. Jousse, Ong and Derrida have drawn our attention to the relationship between things, consciousness and audible words which is deeply affected by the synesthetic transformation of words into the visible, reified entities created by writing, where there is a subtle shift from ear to eye as the primary site of sensory perception. For Goody (1977:44) *writing makes speech 'objective' by turning it into an object of visual as well as aural inspection; it is the shift of the receptor from ear to eye, of the producer from voice to hand.* This synesthetic transformation of words gives rise to subtle variations in different conceptions of language. Moreover, this visual appreciation of language deflects attention away from language as sound and from the significance of listening as "the other side" of the *logos*. Fiumara (1990), following Heidegger, claims that Western philosophers have related to a one-sided notion of *logos*
and have overlooked the significance of listening. The salience of Heidegger’s (1962:206) emphasis on the priority of hearing is explicated by Ricoeur (in Murray, 1978:155):

...the first determination of "saying" is not to say something, but the pair, "hearing" - "keeping silent". Here ... Heidegger inverts our ordinary, and even our linguistic, tendency to make the operation of speaking primary (locution, interlocution). To understand is to hear... My first relation to speech is not that I produce it but that I receive it: Hearing is constitutive of discourse.

I shall return to this notion of the reception of speech in Chapter IV.

1.3. Anthropocentrism and Logocentrism

The alternating sensory pivots of language receive different functional loadings in different societies. In the history of human intellectualism, major changes have taken place from time to time in ways of conceptualising linguistic reality. Just as the changing relationships between the human body and the logos lie at the basis of different topologies of language, the linguistic imagery of anthropocentrism and logocentrism varies from one language system to another.

In discussing these different topologies the terms anthropocentric and logocentric will be used:

1. anthropocentric to apply to the social meanings embedded in language and also because of the importance of body imagery in creating ideational topologies, and

2. logocentric in order to draw attention to literacy and to writing as deeply embedded metaphorical underpinnings of linguistic topology. In the context of my thesis logocentric will at the same time relate to the reflexive function of language where, in a Barthian sense, language celebrates itself. This is different, therefore, from Harris’s usage of the term which applies primarily to naming.

First, however, let us consider some of the ways in which language is both visual and auditory.
1.4. The visibility and audibility of language

As well as being a prime tool of language standardisation and an agent of linguistic change, literacy is one of the most obvious means of making language "visible" for reflective scrutiny (Jousse, 1978; Goody, 1977; Ong, 1967, 1977, 1982). While these scholars and others have talked about literacy contributing to the "visibility" of language, however, they do not discuss bilingualism or multilingualism in this light. Goody does discuss diglossia but does not relate this directly to the notion of "visibility", whereas Ong (1982:67, 119) pays much attention to the mnemonic effects of the visibility of verbal imagery without linking his insights to differences and similarities between language systems.

We can agree with Ong that verbal language, although highly oral-aural, evokes also a direct visual appreciation through imagery. The metaphorical basis of this imagery provides clues to the nature of language and of languages. The anonymous comment (p)arlez, afin que je vous voie ((s)peak that I may see you), with which Courtine and Haroche (1988) preface their work on the history of the face, for example, points to speech itself as a marker of visibility. In Chapter VII we shall see this philosophical point articulated in a Turkish Muslim context of inter-gender relations of communication.

In instances of language contact, and in the bilingual/multilingual lives of individuals, the blending and juxtaposing of different languages makes each one "visible" as it is thrown into relief by the other(s). Spoken language carries different functional loadings in different societies since it must compete with other channels of communication, both verbal and non-verbal, such as art, dance, gesture on the one hand, and different registers used in such communication channels as radio, television and print, on the other. Literacy generally, and writing more specifically reifies verbal action, generalizing certain forms of language and muting others, but in any chirographic situation, writing and speech rarely are mutually exclusive. For Goody (1977:112), ...the formalisation of writing flouts the flexibility of speech, and it does so in a manner that is both distorting and generative. Goody's universalizing discourse and his characterisation of the contrast between writing and speech does not hold true for all chirographic situations, however, and much of the discussion of language by eye and by ear throughout this thesis points to some highly flexible and dynamic interplay between voice and vision.


4quoting Addison 1716 Le Spectateur ou le Socrate moderne, T.I, Discours LXVIII, p.439.
1.5. Silence and Sound

Silence too makes language visible as it frames verbal speech. In western academic discourse we have inherited a particularly decontextualised view of language, but in other parts of the world where multilingualism is the norm and individual languages are deeply enmeshed with other social institutions, there is often a smaller referential loading placed on verbal communication per se in everyday interaction. This interplay between verbal and non-verbal communication, or speech and silence creates and recreates different ideational topologies. Silence is shaped and circumscribed by what is sounded just as negative space in visual art is shaped by the form and content of the "worked" art. Written language, on the other hand, appeals superficially to vision but evokes sound and tone by choice of style and register. Silence simultaneously connotes and disguises listnership. To quote Steiner (1989:7), ...silence can ... be of the most active, answering quality.

Silence can have many meanings: it may correspond to those parts of cultural life that are so taken for granted they are part of the given, naturalised reality. Silence may be a marker of power. If women are silent in the presence of men, it may mean that they delegate power to men to speak on their behalf, or alternatively that men have usurped that power in their society; or it may mean that women's knowledge is being kept from men. Likewise, if subordinates are silent in the presence of their superiors, this may connote similar patterns of power. Silence may mark transitional or liminal periods of life such as adolescence or mourning. It may serve to shape the seriousness or formality of an event such as a funeral or a public speech in that a period of intense silence often surrounds these events. In these situations silence, as well as marking respect and throwing verbal speech into relief, makes a statement about ineffability. Silence here is like an auditory counterpart to the veil.

Grace (1987:103/4) points to something peculiar to Western societies with his observation that:

*developing ways of talking about things is more characteristic of our culture than of most... our proclivity for analysis which leads to an ever-increasing encroachment upon the domain of the ineffable is one of the characteristics of our culture which is most often cited as objectionable by members of other cultures.*

"Developing ways of talking about things" fits in with our technologically shaped communication needs and our relative lack of reliance on face to face communication.
Computerised communications technology, for example, requires that we spell things out in a way that leaves no room for ambiguity whereas natural unalienated language thrives on ambiguity. Polysemy can convey several shades of meaning at once. Through the use of various technologies of the intellect\(^5\) (literacy, print, computer technology), our language has become increasingly alienated from the human life-world, and our various intellectual technologies have themselves become new bases for the generation of metaphor.\(^6\) These technologies also serve to silence language in a profound way. Attention to different conceptions of language and, in particular, to polysemy, is important at a time when knowledge and information is being encoded in ways further and further removed from the pulse of the human lifeworld.

1.6. Literacy, Script and the Word

One major focus of this thesis is the alternation between divine word (in visual as well as in sonic form) and human embodiment, both of which serve as technologies of the intellect in Turkish culture.

Writing and literacy are not coterminous, and it is important to pay attention to the way these notions are captured in different languages. The Turkish term for literacy, okuma yazma (lit. reading/reciting (and) writing) draws attention to the multifaceted nature of this phenomenon. Both elements of this composite term are polysemous: okuma relates to voice and to vision; yaz(ı) (NOM) (writing) also means destiny. The connotative ranges of these terms contrast with Ong's characterisation of writing. According to Ong (1982:78,82), writing: (t)he reduction of dynamic sound to quiescent space has transformed consciousness more than any other human invention. Ong is talking about deeply internalised knowledge of writing, but in human life generally there are many different levels of intellectual involvement with literacy. Some of these levels will be discussed in Chapter VII. A more tangible aspect of literacy is the choice of script or scripts for a given language, and the ways in which this choice can bind particular linguistic groups into specific spheres of influence and information-sharing. In the case of Turkish, for example, script is an important political issue and, as we shall see in Chapter II, changes in script can have far-reaching metaphorical implications.

With an increasing focus on dictionary meanings as literacy spreads, the metaphorical

\(^5\)This term is borrowed from Goody, 1977:151.

\(^6\)See, for example, Edge, 1974:135 and my own exploration of a joke about computer translation in Chapter VIII.
potential of different languages to convey extratextual meaning is eroded. The translation of oral expression into literate form affects the connotative range of language, as writing imposes its own constraints on what can be said and generates a notion of "correct" usage. Auditory aspects of language such as melody, rhyme and reduplication risk becoming redundant as language is standardised according to literate criteria.

Schieffelin and Gilmore (1986) discuss various ethnographic approaches to literacy. According to Schieffelin (op. cit.:viii), literacy has been considered as ...a way of knowing, a way of "speaking", an economic necessity, a cognitive advantage, a political excuse. Throughout this thesis, we shall see that all these views of literacy have a certain social relevance and can be used to rank languages on an epistemological scale and their speakers on a political hierarchy.

To date, studies of the perceptual aspects of literacy have reached but embryonic stages. Scribner and Cole's meticulously detailed studies of the psychology of literacy amongst the Vai provide a clear indication of the complexity of this area of research. It is evident that no integrated theory of literacy and its implications for cognition and knowledge can be formulated until much more is known about the specific skills that are generated (or enhanced) through particular literate practices. The Vai study has raised questions about the interrelationships between literacy and particular scripts; about the connections between literacy and schooling in general; about the mutual influences operating between urbanism, modernism and other social factors which frequently accompany the introduction of literacy into an oral society, and about the complex cognitive interaction between different graphic symbols in the case of individuals/groups who are biliterate and/or bilingual or have command of a variety of languages and scripts.

Another important aspect of literacy is the state of linguistic methodology obtaining at the time a language is committed to writing. This is particularly important if the script is borrowed from another language community. It may well be that the more localised the appreciation of linguistics, the more successful the fit between script and speech.

Scripts are generally considered to have either a semantic or a phonetic base, but it is evident that the (visual) aesthetic dimension of certain scripts also at times dictates content. An example can be quoted from Heyd (1954:12), commenting on Ottoman poetry in which rhyme had been for the eye; only words ending in the same letters in the Arabic script could rhyme with each other. This raises the complexity of the interrelationship between writing and spoken language. Writing can no longer be seen as merely speech without an interlocutor (Vygotsky, quoted in Scribner and Cole,
It is also clear from historical studies of other languages that writing can exert subtle influences on speech at lexical, semantic and syntactic levels as well as in questions of style (see Goody, 1980:128). Although Goody (1977:151) demonstrates the importance of writing and other "technologies of the intellect" as contributing factors in what he calls the domestication of thought, his works appear to overlook the important morphological differences between various language systems. Literacy in itself does not provide an adequate explanation for the different topological models enshrined in different languages.

There is a clear need for anthropologically-informed studies of cultural literacy in order to recontextualise the various specific practices of technical literacy. Although writing obviates the need for a direct social relationship in order to transmit information, it is nevertheless underpinned by cultural literacy which enshrines the worldview necessary for the successful semantic decoding of much written information. These tensions between cultural and technical literacy will be explored in Chapter VI against the background of three graphocentric events, and again in Chapter VIII in the context of metaphor and polysemy.

Yet another important aspect of literacy is the style of writing adopted by different speech communities. It is significant that many newly-literate individuals adopt a style closely modelled on speech, and another important feature of their writing is that they tend not to leave spaces between words. Many archaic bodies of writing, of course, share this latter feature, and it may be that the concept of the "word" as we know it today is a consequence of literacy. Many languages distinguish between a social and a technical sense of word. I shall return to this issue of words below. This, in turn, has important ramifications for the philosophy of language in general and also for epistemology. Emphasis on the textual word points to writing as the basis of the philosophical distinction between ontology and epistemology, at least in Western traditions.

1.7. Multilingualism

Levi-Strauss has talked about the awe with which people in oral societies confront writing, but I contend that a similar awe is shared by literate, monolingual people when confronted by multilingualism. Many literate monolinguals find it difficult to relate to new words, particularly names, unless they see them in written form. It would seem that

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7Even phoneticians, who specialise in treating words as sounds, transform these sounds into images through the use of sophisticated technologies such as spectrographs.
high degrees of literacy encourage a dependency on writing and influence our conceptions of language in profound ways. The mystique attached to written language can also be assigned to foreign concepts, especially where their transparent meanings (in the parent language) are not understood, and they are related to primarily as sounds. Language as sound (i.e. as an aural-oral phenomenon) encompasses power in the words and can be construed as a specific kind of logocentrism. According to Stoller (1989:112), for example, in his discussion of Songhay incantatory speech forms, *words are powerful and sounds carry force*. I would like to raise the question of whether we should see power and force as being restricted to certain speech situations or as inhering in language in general (see also Sherzer, 1987).

The creative role of language in shaping consciousness and experience is again being recognized by scholars. If our realities are defined through the language(s) we speak, then in a language contact or multilingual situation, people have access to different realities by reason of the different languages they are exposed to. Wierzbicka (1985d) has probed some of these different realities at a social level. At a more ontological or epistemological level, different configurative patterns in language reveal ways of saying which provide important clues to linguistic reality. Anthropologists and other academics delight in revealing meanings hidden in foreign concepts, particularly ones to which they have privileged access through fieldwork. Others locate themselves within literary traditions and use weighty concepts such as *Dasein* and *episteme* to indicate their intellectual moorings. The awe inspired by the written word is not restricted to oral societies.

The relationship between language (system) and reality is never a straightforward one, however, since different discursive universes are available within one named language. In a multilingual situation, mutual influences across language systems provide extra choices for expressing shades of meaning. The question of code-switching points to some interesting issues in this respect. Speakers of two or more languages or two or more codes may vary language use according to interlocutors and often with the same interlocutor. In some milieux it is socially important to keep individual languages distinct, while in others there are important social reasons for interlingual speech. Symmetry in multilingualism is rare. Most multilingual individuals have greater competence in certain domains in one language than in another. Some individuals are highly adept in translating from one language to another, usually with greater efficiency.

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8See, for example, Grace (1987) as well as the renewed general interest in Whorf and Vygotsky.
in translating from the second language into their native tongue. Again to some degree this depends on domain of language use.

While the pragmatic nature of language in controlling and/or instigating action is constrained by the classificatory powers of the particular language in use, in a multilingual situation, choice of language can be a diacritic of social values and identity. Multilingualism provides speakers and interlocutors with further multiple choices for manipulating communicative codes. This manipulation may be conscious or unconscious. The choice of language spoken between multilingual individuals is believed to be interlocutor-orientated, but there are significant exceptions to this general rule as when, for example, the speaker wishes to retain precise command over what is being said and therefore chooses the language best suited to his/her individual abilities and to the topic being discussed. Choice of language can also serve to exclude or include others in the conversation.

While literacy and multilingualism make language visible, so also does wordplay within any given language. For this reason, jokes are very telling, in that they often reveal profound semantic ambiguities. Wordplay would not be possible without polysemy, and attention to polysemy is crucial in understanding language visibility.

2. Polysemy

According to Derrida (1991:97), (p)olysemy is a multiplicity of meaning, a kind of ambiguity, which nevertheless belongs to the field of sense, of meaning, of semantics, and which is determined within the horizon of a certain grouping, gathering together. Derrida's distinction between polysemy and dissemination, which forms the larger context of his discussion of meaning, need not divert us here. It is this very ambiguity I would like to focus on.

In a language-contact situation there may be significant clashes in the polysemic ranges of words from different language systems. My thesis is not about the generation of abstract meanings from concrete ones, however, because I believe that we erroneously assign concrete meanings to foreign lexical items due to our lack of proficiency in the use of polysemy in other languages. In other words, we underestimate the power of polysemy to generate abstract meanings and therefore impoverish our understandings of other cultural and linguistic lifeworlds in the process. Some of our misunderstandings are prompted by our focus on technologies of the intellect and by privileging vision to the detriment of the other human senses (see Ong, 1982; Serres, 1991; Stoller, 1989). The
ambiguity of the relationship between word and polysemy is worthy of attention. We should ask ourselves whether polysemy indicates the same word with different meanings as the etymology would suggest, or whether the different meanings constitute different words. In Turkish, for example, *sag* means both "right" and "life". During the course of my fieldwork, when I talked to Turkish people about this one word with two different meanings, however, I was corrected: "They are different words" I was told.

Mitchell (1988:145), following Derrida, discusses words and meaning: *... even when we insist on something's identity as 'the same word', it is in fact something reiterated on different occasions, in different contexts. The simplest identity of a word, its self-sameness in this sense, is formed out of differences, the difference of reiteration. This "trace of sameness" (Mitchell, loc. cit.) is what constitutes meaning. Other aspects of the notion of the word will be explored throughout my thesis, since the textual word cannot be assumed to be coterminous with the social or cosmological word. A polysemic focus on the meaning of meaning would indicate a notion of centring, finding the mean or the middle as in the German *Mittel und Wege* (means/middle(s) and ways/means).*

2.1. Polysemy and Translation

Translation of polysemic terms from one language to another often results in loss of semantic richness through separation into different ideational domains. As Benjamin (1988:15) claims, *(t)he more condensed ways of speaking allow the hearer to construct a more elaborate range of possible meanings, while the more articulated ways tend to restrict the hearer to a single understanding.* From a literalist viewpoint, polysemic connections or associations can be said to be "conflated", "fused" or even "confused", while from a metaphorical stance lexical unity is bracketed to different degrees by individual speakers and hearers, depending on context. From the former vantage point, lexical elaboration marks degrees of ideational discrimination while from the latter, single polysemous lexemes are played off against different contexts of usage according to the intention of the speaker and the shared assumptions of parties to a speech act.

Traces of sameness can be discerned at the level of the word or at the level of metaphor. It is at the level of conceptual metaphor⁹ that we can hope to find universals of human language. In spite of the western penchant for analysis, the underlying metaphors sedimented in our philosophical as well as in our everyday use of language, which orient

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⁹The term *conceptual metaphor* is from Lakoff and Turner, 1989:50
meaning in subliminal ways, have received relatively little attention. Exceptions are Edie (1963), Ricoeur (1978, 1979), Sacks (1979), Ortony (1979), Lakoff and Johnson (1980), and Lakoff and Turner (1989). Calame-Griaule's (1966) interpretation of Dogon linguistics reveals the centrality of polysemy to any discussion of language and metaphor.

Metaphor is a way of understanding the implicative powers of language and of bridging the chasm between the notions of linguistic relativism suggested by Sapir and Whorf and the universalistic views of Chomsky. Levi-Strauss in his various anthropological works has demonstrated the power of metaphor in human culture and has linked this with ways of thinking. Edie has pointed to the metaphorical nature of philosophical language, and Derrida has used metaphor overtly to point to the sedimented metaphoricity of philosophical language. Steiner (1969:31), however, cautions: *we should not assume that a verbal matrix is the only one in which the articulations and conduct of mind are conceivable.*

### 2.2. Polysemy and Topos

By shifting the emphasis from ways of thinking to ways of linking, we can explore transfers in a "kind of space" (Ricoeur, *loc. cit.*) and illuminate our conceptions of what language is. Polysemy is an ideal signpost for guiding us through ways and means. The primary focus of this thesis will be the polysemous configurations inherent in formulaic sayings, both verbal and non-verbal (*sic*) and the topological orientations they reveal. Since it is crucial to keep in mind the distinction between verbal metaphor and metaphor underlying and sedimented in language but not necessarily in words, my exploration of polysemy in this thesis will span both verbal and non-verbal facets of ideational life. Therefore, in addition to the distinction drawn by Lakoff and Turner (1989:50) between linguistic and conceptual metaphor, my explorations include gestural and sartorial ways of signifying. My aim is not to focus on the nature of metaphor *per se*, however, but to be guided by polysemy as a way of exploring linguistic reality.

The notion of transfer or translation is crucial. De Man (1978:15) reminds us that metaphor is translation: *(i)t is no mere play of words that "translate" is translated in German as übersetzen which itself translates the Greek meta phorein or metaphor.* His use of the word *mere* invites us to take metaphor(s) literally, and to heed what they have to tell us. De Man is concerned with separating translation from definition. Metaphor itself is a phenomenon which defies easy definition; in many senses it is anti-definitional, relying as it does on polysemy and multivalency. Beck (1978:83) reminds us that *metaphors need not always have a verbal form.* She follows Fernandez in focusing on
movement: for Fernandez (1986:12) *metaphor is, like synesthesia, the translation of experience from one domain into another by virtue of a common factor which can be generalized between the experience in the two domains.*

The privileging of experience, however, is a move which casts language as epiphenomenal, and I would argue that language is to some degree constitutive of experience in that it is through our linguistic topologies that we distinguish different domains. Experience can be construed as being beyond *langue,* but not beyond *langage.*

The notion of a domain is salient in that it too suggests ideational spatialization. The social domains of our linguistic lives, for example, constitute different contexts of meaning.

### 2.3. Polysemy and Writing

Awareness of the subtle polysemic encodings of different speakers, listeners, writers and readers into the fabric of written texts provides insights into older ways of construing reality. According to Edie (1963:561), *(m)etaphors are the storehouse of the previous thought of mankind.* Our metaphors of reality are both embedded in different cultural histories and transcend these histories, and can be uncovered by examining linguistic usage in consort with non-verbal ways of signifying. As our modes of action in the world change, so too do our concepts of reality. The copious notes and glossaries which attend the hermeneutic endeavours of scholars are witness to the graphic untamability of polysemy.

### 2.4. Polysemy and the Senses

Different sense modalities are used in structuring and interpreting different culturally bounded perceptual and social domains. Different languages too provide different lexical strategies for expressing or talking about the senses. The French *sentir* (to smell), for example, means also "to feel" and thereby overlaps with notions of tactility and emotion. The English "see" covers visual as well as intellectual understanding, whereas in many languages this latter is expressed as "hearing" as in the French *entendre* in the non-reflexive, transitive form (*entendre ce que quelqu'un veut dire*...). In German, hearing (*Gehör* shades into notions of belonging (*Gehören*). It is no accident that the French *sens* means both sense (*Sinn*) and direction and links with the notion of a path(way) (*sentel/sentier*). On his way to language, Heidegger is guided by *tao,* a Chinese philosophical way. This way is often glossed in English as *the way that cannot be told,*
which implies that it must be sensed and learned in an intuitive or participatory way.

The interplay of different sense perceptions is of paramount importance to understanding the ways in which people in different societies use the various facets of visual, tactile and oral-aural communication. Not all communication is or can be mediated by words: music and ritual, for example, are forms of communication, which employ different media and engage the senses in different ways. Steiner (1979:44) gives the example of Schumann who, when asked about the meaning of a piece he had played, simply played the piece again. There is a danger, however, in singling out the human senses as if they were entirely separable as we pursue a kind of somatic fundamentalism. The unity of the senses guarantees the human being as a complex site of synesthetic transformations enabling a simultaneity of sensory apprehension. It would be a mistake to privilege one sense over another and simply to close our eyes in order to picture sound. In Stoller’s work, for example, there is a justifiable antipathy to sensory hierarchies, but his insistence on singling out certain senses and keeping them distinct subtly reinforces the very hierarchies he is seeking to topple. In my view, the differences have to do with varied patterns of lexical elaboration. Tacit meanings are essential to language: it is patterns of verbal nomination which render them tacit and allow them to be taken for granted. Likewise, Serres’ (1986; 1991) discussion of the senses overlook the diversity of ways of naming the senses across languages. Many languages name three senses, not five, but indicate the linguistic derivation of some from others.\textsuperscript{11} Lexical dissemination within any given language would reveal the routes these notions have travelled.

In Turkish, for example, sweetness applies equally to sound and to taste, and this is central to such formulaic sayings as tatlı yiyelim, tatlı konuşalım (let’s eat sweet things and talk sweet things). Serres seems to expect language to operate at the surface level of lexeme, on a univocal or monosemic basis of relationship between word and thing, sign and referent. Because it is inherently polysemic, language does not operate on such a superficial level of articulation: it is nuanced and suggestive and respects sites of ineffability. Serres (1986, 1991) appears to want to universalize French patterns of lexical elaboration and ignores the constraints of different language systems. There is not always a need to name the smell of a rose, because to speak of a rose suggestively evokes a sense of fragrance. It is precisely the lack of lexical elaboration which enhances the power of this fragrance, but this is not to say that language does not matter. It is simply

\textsuperscript{10}See Chang Chung-yuan (1975:3) *The Tao that can be spoken of is not the Tao itself.*

\textsuperscript{11}See Williams, 1976:464/5.
that the workings of language are extremely subtle and deictic, rather than reocentric and referential.

2.4.1. Sensory Dissemination

With the advent of various communication technologies, the human senses can be extended visually and acoustically beyond the here and now, and can be influenced in turn by the different forms of electronic media to which people expose themselves in their everyday lives. We shall see in Chapter IV that radio and television are two important technological means of maintaining a Turkish soundworld in Australia. Television and film, moreover, maintain constant visual images of a Turkish geographic reality telescoped into a mobile, ideational topos. In this way, screens become miniature, mobile homes. As a television is switched off after a Turkish program, people have a sense of eviction or exile.

Carpenter (1976) discusses the freeing of spirit through various forms of technological intervention in communication: telephones and tape recorders capture disembodied voices, cameras capture disembodied images. My claim is that any language acquired abstractly (as opposed to mother tongue(s)) effects a similar disembodiment. Languages learned in decontextualised situations are experienced first as abstractions, even though they themselves may be, or may have been in the past, natural languages or mother tongues to another speech community. This distinction applies not only to individual named languages, but to different class codes or different registers, to gender-related language use or to different cultural forms of language. The connotative ranges of language acquired in these two different ways vary considerably and affect the possibility of attaining semantic equivalence in translation. Moreover, learned languages promote logocentricity.

2.5. Polysemy and Knowledge

Just as the English notion of language is highly polysemous, so too is the English notion of knowledge. Different epistemologies are implicated in cross-linguistic problems of semantic equivalence. Goody (1987:148, 163), discusses the different paths to knowledge shaped by orality and literacy and raises the question of different epistemologies when he distinguishes between experiential knowledge and book knowledge in his own society, or Lo Dagaa concepts of knowledge which he has studied as an outsider (1987:156/157). His emphasis is, nevertheless, on modes of acquiring knowledge rather than on the intrinsic features of different bodies of knowledge.
Likewise, Ong (1982:44) is concerned with the epistemic effects of writing: writing he claims...*separates the knower from the known...*

A further insight into this separation of knower and known is provided by Davidson (1978:29) whose focus is on metaphor:

*Metaphor is the dreamwork of language and, like all dreamwork, its interpretation reflects as much on the interpreter as on the originator. The interpretation of dreams requires collaboration between a dreamer and a waker, even if they be the same person; and the act of interpretation is itself a work of the imagination. So too understanding a metaphor is as much a creative endeavour as making a metaphor, and as little guided by rules.*

I would suggest, however, that the making and interpretation of metaphor has much to do with the particular cultural histories of different speech communities, not least with the kinds of writing/literacy involved. By paying attention to polysemy in the chirographic domain of literacy and script, some of the dreamwork of language becomes amenable to scrutiny and to auditing. What is important in Davidson's statement is the dialectic between different modes of consciousness. This dialectic is similar to that between preformulated discourse segments of a language and expressions chosen freely for a specific speech interaction, and hinges on the tensions between a logocentric and an anthropocentric focus on language itself. Moreover, like other linguistic philosophers, Davidson's concern is ultimately with verbal metaphor.

The distance between knower and known is increased yet again with computer technology which uses second order codes calqued on natural and/or mathematical language. This distancing is of considerable philosophical interest. The distancing mechanisms and storage capacities afforded by electronic memory banks are enormous, but nevertheless are ultimately dependent on human capacities for understanding their inherent limitations. Computer "languages" grow out of consciousness: as Ong (1982:7) remarks, *...rules... are stated first and thereafter used.* Similar second-order codes are also implicated in the acquisition of language(s) in decontextualised situations and will be illustrated in Chapter V below. The tensions between an idiomatic, anthropocentric focus on language and one which is literal and logocentric will be highlighted in a joke about computer-based translation, discussed in Chapter VIII.
3. Language and Topos

Semantic or ideational space is intimately connected with language in different ways. Bickerton (1981), for example, locates semantic space in syntax. His focus is on grammatical case endings and inflections. Apart from this linguistically constrained notion of semantic space, the political and social ranking of different languages creates other spaces which become salient in instances of language contact and multilingualism generally. In the past, colonial governments sought to impose their languages on subject peoples and thereby created an implicit hierarchy whereby different languages were ranked according to the perceived relative power and prestige of their speakers. In some cases this resulted in the internationalisation of languages such as, for example, French and English. Historically, Sanskrit and Arabic owed their diffusion to religion.

Irrespective of whether the power attached to such languages is secular or religious, much of their prestige is due to the fact that they are written languages. Writing appears to reduce language to a monodimensional phenomenon which encourages monosemic meaning, and the intrinsic value of multilingualism and polysemy is prone to be overlooked in such a view.

For people like the Dogon, to speak another person’s language when s/he does not know yours attracts the vital force of the interlocutor to the speaker (Calame-Griaule, 1956:71). The Dogon encourage multilingualism since each new language acquired means an increase of vital power (op. cit:72). Calame-Griaule’s exposition of a Dogon esoteric view of language is mediated by French, (in this instance, the scholarly language of transmission to the academic world) but the imagery is strikingly Arabic/Islamic when one compares it with Nasr’s (1976:34-5,51) exposition of Islamic science. Mutual influences across languages and philosophies occur both at verbal and non-verbal levels. Ideas can be translated, and their translation disguised by different lexical patterning and different iconic configurations across languages. Becker’s (1979) disclosure of the figure a sentence makes testifies to this deeper sense of translation.

Asad (1986) has recently raised the issue of uneven languages. For him (op. cit:157), "weaker" languages, that is weaker in relation to world languages like English, are more likely to submit to forcible transformation in the translation process than the other way round. He links this firstly with the differential distribution of politico-economic power and secondly with knowledge: Western languages produce and deploy desired knowledge more readily than Third World languages do (ibid, p.158). This is consistent with Grace’s point about the development of ways of talking quoted above, but the notion
of knowledge calls for critical evaluation, and Chapter VIII explores various dimensions of knowledge intimated by the noetic vocabulary of Turkish.

3.1. Polysemy, Synesthesia and Translation

Theories of linguistic translation depend on theories of language. If language is seen as purely instrumental, i.e. as a neutral, transparent medium through which experience is communicated, then translation will be seen as the transfer of data from one language medium to another. If language is recognized, however, as being generative of thought and experience, then translation will need to encompass the creative potential of each language by paying attention not only to verbal communication but to various kinds of paralinguistic communication as well. Translation from one language or cultural context to another must take into account different patterns of articulated and tacit meaning. By treating language as a metaphorical entity and focusing on polysemy, we can come close to understanding some of these basic differences.

The implications of Vygotsky’s (1962:126) observation that the external and the semantic aspects of speech develop in opposite directions - one from the particular to the whole, from word to sentence, and the other from the whole to the particular, from sentence to word point to other important issues, such as whether the "word" is the proper basic unit in the task of translation. By grasping the polysemic dimensions of meaning embedded in formulaic sayings and in non-verbal tropes, language users equip themselves with the semantic means for making sense of the world, as well as for communication with others. Translatability across different languages requires at times transcending literal meanings and focusing instead on metaphors, verbal and non-verbal, deriving from domains of shared experience, and at other times paying due attention to the linguistic shaping of this very experience. Polysemy implies metaphor.

Steiner (1969) has claimed that all communication is translation. One of the main aspects of ideational topology I would like to focus on in this thesis is translation as

1. synesthesia: the translation of experience from one sense modality into another.12 My thesis will be restricted in the main to sound and vision.

2. cross-modal translation from one medium of communication to another; for example, calligraphy may appeal primarily to the visual sense but bring other senses powerfully into play through style and form; patterns of sound, on the other hand, may evoke visual topologies

3. linguistic translation itself, e.g. Turkish into English or vice versa, and
4. cultural translation, which is the task proper of anthropology.

The first two instances of translation occur at the level of perception. The more socially salient levels of translation relate to the latter two instances. Percept and concept differ in that the former is tacit while the latter is verbally articulated. Polysemy reveals synesthetic linkages between percept and concept which vary from language to language.

When oral language use clashes with literate styles, translation processes may succeed or fail in this complex interplay of sound and vision. Orality is sound-orientated but may rely on configurative patterns of meaning as well as on the visual appreciation of accompanying gesture, while literacy involves vision in language-specific ways that incorporate sound at tacit and inchoate levels of perception. Sound is harmonized to greater degrees in some languages than in others. Oral usage highlights the importance of melody and harmony. Literacy promotes grammatological cohesion.

Through a constant oscillation between the different vantage points of language as object, language as *logos* and language as instrument, my thesis will map the "transfers in a kind of space" effected by the polysemy inherent in metaphor (both verbal and non-verbal), while the tensions between logocentrism and anthropocentrism in language will be examined in different contexts of language use.

My approach to linguistic topology is that of a polyglot rather than that of a linguist, and semantic (iconic) considerations take priority over formal ones. Throughout this thesis the focus will range from language in a Saussurian sense to language as *logos* as I explore different scripts, registers, vocabularies and meanings, and illustrate the encompassing salience of language as topos.

4. Fieldwork

The research on which this thesis is based was carried out in the Turkish community in Melbourne, Australia, from April 1986 to June 1987, and throughout a further intermittent three months in 1988. My contacts with Turkish people were both formal (e.g. contacts with various community leaders, both religious and secular), and informal (e.g. visits to people's homes). Formal contacts also encompassed Arabic and Turkish

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13 I had already studied Turkish formally for one year at the *Club Turc* (a workers' club) in France in 1970/71, and had visited Turkey regularly for lengthy periods between 1968 and 1972.
literacy classes, Qur'an recitations and lessons, poetry readings, craft exhibitions and joint prayer gatherings throughout Ramadan. Some of these events are described in detail in my thesis. Informal contacts involved participation in and observation of everyday family life in both religious and secular milieux, and I have drawn widely on the experiential knowledge gained in these situations in contextualising these events.

Since my focus was on language, this required paying close attention to the spoken and written word as well as to contexts of usage. Wherever possible I made tape recordings of conversations, as well as of monologic explanations by individuals of aspects of religion or of historical tradition. It was not always socially appropriate to make recordings, however, since this stilted the flow of conversation to some extent. When I asked to make a tape recording of religious talks by a hoja, moreover, my request was refused, but I was invited to interrupt the talk with any questions I might have. For these reasons, I tried always to be a good listener: that means showing that I was attentive by stance and gesture, but by participating as a speaker only when I was drawn into a conversation. In this way, I sought to minimise my own (observer’s) influence, and to conform as closely as possible to Turkish cultural values regarding speech and silence.

My own outsiderness was at times shaped by my non-Muslimness and at other times by having Turkish as a second rather than as a first language. The degrees to which an anthropologist can participate in the lives of others rather than observe these lives from a distance are always circumscribed by our hosts and by emic notions of where boundaries lie. This insider - outsider topological orientation is essential to the different linguistic foci on polysemy and on anthropocentric versus logocentric approaches to language. Some of the implications of insiderness and outsiderness will be apparent in my descriptions of certain events (such as the healing ritual in Chapter V, and the interpretation of a story in Chapter VIII).

5. The Linguistic Politics of Scholarship

One of the most difficult decisions I have had to make about presentation of material has been as to how much Turkish to include. Turkish people had asked me if I would be writing my thesis in Turkish. This raised the question of international academic conventions concerning scholarly world languages. My response was to say that I would be expected to write in English, and that my knowledge of Turkish would, in any case, be insufficient for such an endeavour. English is the language of tertiary education in Turkey too, a telling political indication of the linguistic state of scholarship
internationally. Contemporary academic Turkish would, in any event, mean *kibar* Turkish (an elaborated code), and would in turn preclude access by *kaba* Turkish speakers of (rural, Anatolian) restricted codes (see Chapter II).

My compromise was to aim at a degree of bilinguality by including sizable chunks of Turkish text, but finding the most appropriate level of balance posed other dilemmas. Anthropologists tended to expect a minimal amount of Turkish lexicon, whilst linguists tended to expect maximal original data. The result is a compromise: where translation would have put meaning at risk, I have resisted translation. Where meaning has transcended lexical constraints, I have used English. In addition to terms discussed in the body of the thesis, the glossary includes other related terms which give a fuller indication of the richness of Turkish verbal imagery.

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The following chapter begins with an account of language reforms throughout Turkish history and explains the different speech levels and registers implicit in contemporary language use, and their importance in creating and maintaining ideational space. There is also a mapping of the constant oscillation between an anthropocentric and a logocentric focus on language. This is followed by an exploration of some Turkish formulaic sayings about language which illustrates the topological importance of the polysemy inherent in metaphor, both verbal and non-verbal.

Chapter III provides a linguistic profile of Turkish speakers in Melbourne. In this chapter I describe the distribution of languages in different social domains and the separate and overlapping topologies created by literacy and multilingualism. Patterns of language use connote alternative conceptions of humanity. For some people, code-switching and language-mixing is offensive to the ear. For *kaba* Turkish speakers, whose language is posited implicitly on a cline of animacy, English-Turkish code-switching, called *Tarzanca*, tacitly flouts and displaces the human/animal point of disjunction.

The following chapter develops the exploration of logocentrism and anthropocentrism in Turkish, and links this with a probing of the importance of silence in Turkish soundspace. In addition, different social emphases on the human senses are discussed here because of their significance in understanding cultural silence and the synesthetic nodes which connect language and body. Throughout this chapter, there will also be a focus on semantic slippage in translation. This focus is designed to draw attention to the topologies shaped by different patterns of linguistic imagery.
Chapter V contains ethnographic descriptions of three graphocentric events in which I explore different aspects of technical and cultural literacy. Against this chirographic background, I discuss patterns of agency in language use. The latter part of this chapter introduces Turkish notions of openness and closure which are elaborated more fully in Chapter VII.

Chapter VI returns to the question of topology in Turkish idiom and provides details of the polysemic richness of some key orientational terms in Turkish. As will be seen, orientational notions are also implicit in the iconicity of verbal and non-verbal metaphor. Ideational landscapes can be viewed from the right and viewed from the left.

Chapter VII takes up the semantic polarity open/closed in Turkish ideational life, and shows its topological importance in shaping linguistic soundspace by attending to different patterns of interplay between voice and vision. The human body is at the centre of this polarity, which hinges on a notion of hiddenness and revelation. The second part of the chapter shows how the open/closed contrast is complemented non-verbally by inside and outside spaces.

Chapter VIII discusses different notions of reality through an exploration of orality and literacy. Hermeneutic and semantic discrepancies can be seen to emerge in cross-linguistic encounters, as well as between different domains of discourse. Tacit notions of hiddenness and revelation inform different linguistic notions of knowledge, which are also examined in this chapter.

Finally, chapter IX shows how language is a mobile home. This chapter gives an account of the connections between topological orientations (logocentric and anthropocentric; inside and outside) implicated in formulaic sayings, and in turn links these notions to a general discussion of different conceptions of linguistic reality.
CHAPTER II

6. A Linguistic Topography of Turkish

Biz bize benzeriz...
We resemble ourselves...

Ataturk

Turkish and turkicised languages are spoken from South-Eastern Siberia (east of Lake Baikal) to Macedonia in Eastern Europe. Since the advent of largescale labour migration in the latter part of this century, Turkish is also spoken in many urban centres of the Western and Middle Eastern industrialised world(s). The concomitant migration of Turkish intellectuals (aydınlar) means that Turkish is an important noetic medium for the transmission of scholarly knowledge in many academic centres around the world, although this is often masked by bilingualism, and by the exposition of that knowledge in an English or French language medium.

Turks have been treated in historical and travel literature predominantly as a linguistic grouping, i.e. as producers of Turkish language texts, and as speakers of Turkish language(s).

These languages are classified generally according to four main "dialects":
1. the Central Asian dialects (including Uzbek, Kazakh and others)
2. the Eastern dialects of Altay
3. the Western dialects of Kirghiz and Tatar
4. the Southern dialects of Anatolia and Azerbaijan; Crimean, Turkmen and Ottoman Turkish (Osmanlıca).

Osmanlıca (the court language of the Ottoman Turks) is the forerunner of the standard language spoken in present-day Turkey and of the urbanised kibar Turkish spoken within the secularised sections of the Turkish community in Melbourne. Anatolian Turkish informs the speech of religious Turks and of Turkish Cypriots.

Estimates of the numbers of Turkish speakers in the world range from forty to one

13 The English language distinction between Turkish and Turkic hinges on political distinctions, as does the russification of Central Asian languages.
hundred and fifty million people. Leclerc (1986:94) gives a figure of 40 million, while Mehmet Ali (1991:202) quotes figures ranging from 45 million to 150 million. The discrepancies in the figures would appear to reflect an alternating emphasis on Turkish (as the national language of Turkey) and the more widespread Turkish language "family".

6.1. Language Reform

One of the most important changes which has taken place in modern Turkish culture has been the reform and standardization of language. Since the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire in the early 1920s, the diglossic situation of a courtly form of speech/writing used by the rulers, and colloquial forms of Turkish varying according to region and social status and spoken by the population at large, is being supplanting gradually by Modern Standard Turkish, otherwise known as "new" or "reformed" Turkish.

Within contemporary Turkish there are different discursive universes which are distinguished as eski (old)14 Turkish on the one hand, and yeni (new) or öz (pure) Turkish on the other. Cross-cutting this continuum is a distinction in speech levels known by the emic terms kaba (coarse, common) Turkish and kibar (polite, refined) Turkish.

Nevertheless, at a general level, old Turkish tends to be spoken mainly by rural people in the older generations, who hold to a religious (i.e. Islamic) worldview, and both urban and rural people of the younger generations who are taking part in an Islamic renaissance. New or reformed Turkish is, on the other hand, the language of urban secularism, of "scientific" education and of nationalist and leftist (i.e. Marxist) political ideologies. While some people use the terms "new" and "reformed" Turkish interchangeably, others restrict the term "new" to neologisms and "pure" to vocabulary that is etymologically Turkish. My use of the term "purism" throughout this thesis relates to etymological transparency, and is designed to draw attention to the contrasting opaqueness of borrowed terms. The dividing lines between these emic terms are by no means clearcut, however, and the overlaps and intersections between these areas relate to context of use as well as to code-switching and polysemy. Polysemy and code-switching provide examples of some of the complex ways in which language encodes and creates social and ideational realms of lived experience.

The emic distinction between kaba Turkish (the so-called "coarse", "unrefined"

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14 The terms "old" (eski) and "new" (yeni) will be used throughout this thesis, not to imply temporal ordering, but in order to remain close to emic terms.
language of the population at large and of popular literature) on the one hand and kibar Turkish (polite, refined, formal Turkish of the educated, urban elite) on the other is another salient feature of linguistic differentiation. The distinction applies to differences in pronunciation, syntax and lexicon. Topologically the difference between kaba and kibar language stands to Turkish linguistic culture as a metaphor of hierarchy. Rural male Turks, moreover, claim that kibar Turkish is effeminate, and refuse to adopt these speech styles. The standard language was, in fact, modelled on the speech of upper-class Istanbul women (Heyd, 1954:18). The distinction between kaba and kibar Turkish relates not only to pronunciation but to voice levels. Kibar Turkish is spoken softly; voice levels are louder with kaba Turkish. The symbolic power attached to these respective speech forms is another instance of the power inhering in language in general and has implications for different conceptions of what language is. The gendering of kaba and kibar subverts any hierarchy modelled on class.

Turkish itself bears signs of the different kinds of influence which have been brought to bear on it throughout history as it overlapped with indigenous languages of the Ottoman world on the one hand, and submitted to the pressures of Islamic civilization through Arabic and Persian on the other. In recent centuries Europeanizing influences have come from French and German, and to a lesser extent from Italian and Greek, but close contact with English has been increasing since the 1950s in Turkey itself. As in many other countries around the world, English is the dominant medium of tertiary education in Turkey. In Australia, contact with English is assured in every facet of life.

Using the idiom of language families, it can be said that Turkish (a Uralo-Altaic language) has undergone sustained contact with Arabic (a Semitic language) and Persian, English or a number of other Indo-European languages. Contact between languages from such differing origins together with the long, historical vista of change provides a rich linguistic background for this study of ideational topology. Throughout my discussions of language reform, it will be noticed that changes have occurred on a variety of levels: social, political and cultural, that have all either facilitated or impeded language changes imposed by planners.

As far as can be known from archaeological and historical records, Turkish-speaking people originated in the central and inner regions of Asia. The early evidence we have comes mainly from inscriptions (Orkhon and later Uighur), and from oral traditions collected and written down during the last few centuries. These portray the lives of nomadic pastoralists in the form of confederacies, who nevertheless had significant areas
of contact and alliance with sedentary Turkish states ranging from China to Persia at various times throughout history. Lattimore (1962:414) points to the Turkish origins of the T'ang dynasty (618-907 A.D.). The early Turks also engaged in hunting, the bear being a significant animal of prey. The horse was their most prized animal ally, and many of their songs and stories boast of their horsemanship.

Turkish oral traditions comprise a very rich repository of a wide variety of oral genres: *destan* (epics), *sağı* eulogies, *küşök* (ballads or folksongs) and *şiir* (poems). In addition there is a wide usage of proverbs (*atasözler*) and aphoristic sayings (*deyimler*). Literary traditions are equally rich, ranging from 14th century *divan* literature (see Menemencioglu, 1978) to contemporary literature of exile (see Halman, 1985:81).

The *Book of Korkut* (the earliest book-length text written in Turkish), exists in facsimile form in two separate manuscripts, one in Dresden and the other in the Vatican. These date from the sixteenth century and are believed to reflect the Oghuz poetical tradition of the fifteenth century (Chadwick and Zhirmunsky, 1969:308). Other written accounts stem from the travel descriptions of Radkow and Vambery in the 19th century, as well as from some of the ancient Chinese annals which, apart from histories of the Yuan dynasty, describe the raiding propensities of their nomadic neighbours.

Many of the written sources have come to us through Islamic scribes (and through the filter of Islamic cosmology) but other religious traditions have been very important in the ideational life of Turks. Meillet and Cohen (1952:346) mention the discovery in Chinese Turkestan of multilingual texts concerning Buddhist, Greek, Turkish and Iranian civilization. Some of the proverbial sayings in contemporary Turkish, such as the tenet of the sound of one hand clapping (see Chapter III) suggest Buddhist origins. Buddhism was influential during the Turko-Chinese T'ang dynasty (Lattimore, 1962:178).

Since ideas of origins are of crucial importance to subsequent trends in language reform, I shall begin with a very brief outline of the *Bozkurt* myth.

### 6.2. Dis-placement and Directionality

The experience of movement from place to place is immortalised in Turkish history and mythology, and is epitomised by the *Bozkurt* myth. Hence the metaphor of the pathway (*yol*) and the significance of directionality generally has deep cultural resonances. For Heidegger (1971:92), *(t)he word "way" probably is an ancient primary word that speaks to the reflective mind of man.* The *Bozkurt* myth is one of the most commonly-related
myths of origin of the Turks as a distinctive people. The *bozkurt* was a grey wolf which led the mythical ancestors of the Turks out of a drought-stricken valley in the Altai region of Turfan. These ancestors were stranded in a high impenetrable valley and would have perished in the drought had not the grey wolf shown them a way out towards the west, along a narrow and treacherous mountain pass. Eventually they settled in present-day Anatolia.

This movement towards the west has important metaphorical dimensions of meaning in later Turkish ideologies. This particular myth was very popular during the latter half of the nineteenth century and was linked with the notion of Turan (the purported place of origin of Turks as a people) and a pan-Turanian identity for all Turkish-speaking peoples. *Turan* was a topographic counterpart to the Jewish notion of Zion. In the early 20th century, the name *Bozkurt* was applied to Ataturk. The revitalization of this myth reinforced the idea of Ataturk as a modern-day saviour leading his people towards the west and secularization. In the contemporary Turkish-speaking world, the name *Grey Wolf* has been adopted by right wing political groups (Magnarella in Kağıcıbaş, 1982:395). Leftists see such moves as a misappropriation of a common Turkish cultural heritage.

6.3. Language as a Mobile Homeland

Czaplicka (1973:19) saw Turanian as a primarily linguistic term. According to a publication of the Turanian Historical and Cultural Association (in Australia), however, *Turan as a geographical term, indicates the plains around the Aral Sea*. This publication claims that the Turanian people belong together because of their common origin, not necessarily linguistic affinity (1977:23). Turan is explained as being a Persian term meaning "not Iran" in an old English language reference dictionary, (Newnes, n.d:1185) and as applying to "those parts of the Sassanian Persian empire beyond the Oxus". It is not my intention to attempt to resolve this issue, but to focus attention on the ambiguity inherent in the nexus between languages and their speakers on the one hand and language and place on the other. Some of the importance attached to Turanian ideology derived from the notions of romanticist linguists. Scholars had recently discovered linkages between the ancient or dead languages of the Indo-European world. Owing to the prestige of Darwinian ideas at the time, these connections were cast in the idiom of genetic links between languages, and the classification of languages into various families.

This "genetic" nomenclature is still in use and, although linguists and other social scientists are profoundly aware of the separability of language(s) and people, the social
and the ideational are often fused in language, notably through the power of metaphor. This fusion in turn rests on the dual aspects of language as *langage* and language as *langue*. It is this very fusion which is so powerful a tool in the hands of ideologues but which also yields clues to the nature of language itself in that as far as linguistic metaphors are concerned, it is at this level of language use that we find recurring cross-linguistic analogies. On the other hand, if we take the view that language subtly defines people, for example through the construction of the subject, or focus on linguistic constraints such as compulsory categories, then we have to recognize also the limits of such separability. Thus, in the latter part of the nineteenth century, the idea of Uralo-Altaic, Semitic, Dravidian and Indo-European language families signified for many people different social or even racial groups. Its primary importance in Turkish political usage at the time was in providing a non-Islamic, but also non-European identity which would mark Turks off from other secular nations around them and justify their own demands for nationhood status (see Başkan, 1986:102).

Having briefly mentioned various influences on language use, I will devote the remainder of this chapter to the language reforms which have taken place in Turkey, concentrating mostly on the period from the creation of the Republic in 1923. Throughout the preceding few years, the Ottoman Empire had been disintegrating rapidly. Russia, France, England and Germany vied with each other for economic privileges and rights, with Germany allied to the Sultan against the other Europeans. The Sultan, for his part, played the European powers one against the other.

It was in this climate that Turkish nationalism strengthened and crystallised around the militarism of Mustafa Kemal (Ataturk) and his advisers, and vied with the ideology of Turanism as espoused by Enver Pasha and his followers. In the aftermath of the First World War and the Russian Revolution, the allied powers set about carving up what remained of the former Ottoman Empire, and finally in 1923 the present-day boundaries of modern Turkey were fixed and under the control of the republican Kemalists.

Throughout the following two decades, Ataturk and his regime instituted a number of reforms:

1. the state became a secular as opposed to an Islamic one (this was hailed by the reformers themselves as a great step forward towards secularism, but in fact politics and religion had always been reasonably separate throughout Ottoman times)

See Ullmann (1984:19) for examples of parallel metaphors across different languages.
2. the Islamic legal code (or Sharia) was replaced by the Swiss legal code in 1926 (this meant, for example, that marriage became a civil rather than a religious affair - at least officially - and that inheritance laws as well as divorce laws were changed, both in line with the principle of equality for women). This change also had repercussions in the economic and trading spheres of life.

3. Land reform and the settlement of nomadic groups

4. Dress reform: discouragement of the wearing of veils, the fez and Muslim style robes. There was a vigorous hat campaign early in the 1930s to encourage people to wear European style headdress (which some people referred to as Christian hats)

5. Arabic was replaced by Latin script in 1928 and the phase of ongoing language reform started at that time continued until the early 1980s, when the Türk Dil Kurumu (Turkish Language Society) was officially subsumed by the History Society.

Other changes made at that time were the adoption of the metric system and the Gregorian calendar, and the change from Friday to Sunday as the official day of rest (Başkan, 1986:101). In this way, even time and space were de-Islamicized and a new secular topology was created. This new topology was maintained through language reform.

Each of these separate issues underlies particular tensions that still preoccupy Turkish people in their different ideological orientations. The reforms marked a major turning point in opening up alternative politico-religious pathways (yol): in promoting new aspirations of equality anchored at a secular rather than at a religious level; in stemming free physical movement amongst pastoral groups and in promoting new dress styles tied to secular rather than to religious identity. The changes were inscribed topologically in consciousness through language reform and anchored visually in the new script. Modern Standard Turkish became the official language of the Turkish nation-state.

Contemporary Turkish scholars take these reforms as a focal watershed in modern Turkish political life. Başkan, for example, (1986:100) sees the renunciation of the Caliphate as a very radical act of renunciation because of the immense political prestige that could have been enjoyed among Muslim nations had it been retained, while Dumont (1987:2) points out that, unlike western secularism, the State, in Republican Turkey, has the jurisdiction to exercise almost unlimited control over all the religious matters in the
The present revitalization of Islam in Turkey draws on these tensions as well as on dress, particularly headdress for women which also emerged as a crucial political issue in the 1980s. Religious people claim that wearing the headscarf is Allah’s command: başörtüsü Allah’ın emridir. These issues of dress will be explored in Chapter VII. My purpose here is to focus on issues of language and script.

From the thirteenth century onwards, Ottoman literary language had contained much Arabic and Persian, which of course were the Islamic languages par excellence. Arabic terms were used widely in theology and religion, while Persian terms featured largely in literature and the arts (Başkan, 1986:95/6). These were also the languages of government and administration in areas of Turkish settlement, and therefore had much prestige attached to them, in contrast to kaba Turkish, the language of the masses. Persian and Arabic loanwords had penetrated the "native" vocabulary too, however, along with many syntactic features. By the end of the nineteenth century, as Başkan (1986:97) points out, an imperial style had developed which, because of its tortuous syntactical constructions... had resulted in a categorically disastrous means of communication. During my fieldwork I was told by one Turkish man that in his opinion this "confusion of tongues" (i.e. the intricate intermixing of Persian, Arabic and Turkish which constituted Osmanlıca), was partly responsible for the downfall of the empire itself: for him, there had been an extreme breakdown in communication. A modern Babel...?

A similar sense of linguistic "corruption" had manifested itself as early as the late fifteenth century, when the Türk-i basit movement, designed to maintain linguistic purity, failed to arrest the intrusion of loanwords, and from then until the nineteenth century Ottoman Turkish remained heavily influenced by Persian and Arabic. According to Heyd (1954:10), the

study of these languages and their literature formed the central part of the curriculum in the religious college (medrese) and the Palace school (Enderun mektebi), the graduates of which were the intellectual leaders of the country.

From about the middle of the eighteenth century onwards, cultural and trade contacts with Europe had increased, and by the Tanzimat (reform) period of the nineteenth century, various changes in commercial law were made as trade with Western European countries grew. This ushered in new ideas and new language influences (notably from French). There were debates about whether these were desirable influences, and from this time onwards language again became a sensitive political issue for Turkish intellectuals. In the following chapter, we shall see that similar concerns about language mixing are voiced in the contemporary Melbourne community.
After a brief phase of advocating and implementing a simpler and purer form of Turkish, during which time the literary and spoken languages (at least those of the middle classes) moved closer together, the spread of secular education (and hence written technical language) meant that foreign words were once again adopted to cope with the new concepts and ideas being propagated. A few writers tried to replace these with genuine Turkish words borrowed from the old literature or from other Turkish dialects, or to create new words from Turkish roots, but there was very limited support for these measures.

During the conservative reign of Sultan Abdul Hamid II at the end of the nineteenth century, there was a strong movement against these purification/simplification measures. Coinciding with the art for art's sake trend in Europe, writers and other intellectuals placed aesthetic refinement before social realism and deliberately isolated their works from the wider public. Form took precedence over intelligibility. In their cult of beauty, they turned again to Arabic and Persian, and reintroduced many rare words and expressions. What is important in all of this is the power and status attached to languages with an influential body of literature, and the autonomy accorded language as a sphere unto itself.

Since these years were years of war and conflict, however, they were also times for patriotism (and later nationalism). By the time of the Young Turk revolution of 1908/9, there was a need to rally the political allegiance of the masses and to arouse a national consciousness. This second phase of language reform started seriously in the provincial centres of Salonika (in present-day Greece) and Izmir, away from the conservative influences of the literary circles of Istanbul. Heyd (1954:16) describes the situation as follows:

In these efforts, the press was called upon to play a major role. Its language had to be intelligible... even to the uneducated, especially the soldiers, and to the non-Turkish minorities or... to all Turks as far as Manchuria and to Muslims everywhere.

This suggests the topological importance attached to re-creating and maintaining a Turkish soundworld over a vast geographic region. During this time there was a constant tension between Muslim religious ideology which legitimised the power and authority of the Sultan-Caliph as head of the Ottoman state, and a Turkish nationalist ideology justified by historical recourse to pre-Islamic culture. In 1911, a group of writers and the
sociologist Ziya Gökalp\textsuperscript{16} put forward several demands for linguistic change, along clearly formulated lines - the elimination of Persian and Arabic lexical items for which exact Turkish equivalents were already available, the rejection of non-Turkish grammatical rules, an end to the coinage of new words from Turkish roots and to the borrowing of terms from old manuscripts or from other Turkish dialects. In addition, they advocated the coinage of technical terms from Arabic roots or their adoption from European languages if there were no Turkish equivalents available (Heyd, 1954:17). Thus linguistic purity was tempered by pragmatism.

In the early twentieth century when these reforms were instituted, their aim was to bring the Ottoman language of the rulers and ordinary everyday Turkish closer together and obviate the situation of extreme diglossia which had developed throughout the period of empire. As Heyd (1954:18) points out, however,

\textit{In practice... these writers did not use the vocabulary of the common people but that of the educated which was strongly influenced by the old literary language.}

\section*{6.4. Literacy and Script}

Turkish has been a written language since the 6th century according to Meillet & Cohen (1952:345), while Bazin (1968:171) gives a date of 700 A.D. Throughout history, Turkish has been committed to a variety of scripts ranging from the early Orkhon script to various forms of Arabic, and within the last century to Cyrillic and Latin. The Turkish languages of Central Asia have been written in Cyrillic from 1939/41 (Bedford, 1981:79; Bremmer and Naimark, 1990:85) but are once again being adapted to Latinised script. From the 10th to the 20th century, Arabic was the dominant script for Turkish.\textsuperscript{17} The scripts which are of concern to the Turkish community in Melbourne are Qur'anic Arabic (which is of especial relevance to the religious side of the community), and Latin script for modern Turkish and English. Thus Turkish has a long literary history, dating back to the 6th century and entailing a variety of scripts. These early scripts were of Semitic origin and were written from right to left.

Literacy has been instrumental in transforming the rich spoken language of the rural areas of Turkey into a standardised, grammatologically elaborated type of speech

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{16}It was Ziya Gökalp who devised many of the reforms which were later translated into political action by Atatürk.}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{17}Turkish was also written in Syriac, Tibetan and Brahmi in ancient times, and in Armenian, Greek and Hebrew in the modern era (Meillet and Cohen, 1952:346).}
amongst the educated elite of the cities and small towns. Notwithstanding this, Turkish oral traditions are flourishing and have influenced modern Turkish drama and literature quite profoundly. This variety of discourse styles is replicated amongst Turkish migrants in Melbourne. The question of literacy will be discussed more fully in a later chapter in the light of different uses of writing and script.

For now, I would like to focus on the visual and ideological impact of different scripts. A Turkish language written in Cyrillic and a Turkish language written in Arabic, for example, can appear to be two clearly distinct languages, whereas modern standard Turkish can look like, say, German or Spanish because of a shared script and/or diacritics. Hotham (1972:18) quoted the London Times as claiming in the 1930s, for example, that Turks were not European because of their use of Arabic script. As Hotham rightly pointed out, even if the validity of the claim were accepted, the basic premise was false, since the Latin alphabet had been adopted in Turkey in 1928. Just as Cyrillic script linked Central Asian Turkish to Moscow, Latin script severs these ties but replaces them with links to "market" economies and the I.M.F.

Some of the subtle influences of script on our ideas of what language is are suggested by the following examples. Many English-speaking colleagues have commented to me on what they called the "harsh, gutteral"\textsuperscript{18} sounds of Turkish, but it transpired that they had never heard the language spoken. It turned out that their assumptions about Turkish phonology were based on seeing the language in written forms, replete with diacritics. They were surprised to learn that the diacritics, instead of adding, say, complicated pharyngeal sounds, actually marked points of phonology where the rounded sounds of Turkish were not captured by the basic Latin alphabet. It is precisely such seemingly trivial examples of perceptual transference (i.e. from sight to sound) which point to the salience of synesthetic functions in imagining and conceptualising linguistic reality.

6.5. Script as Political Topos

After the creation of the Republic in 1923, a series of concerted social and linguistic reforms was instituted (see above). The main aim of this phase of language reform was to create a standardised national language which would be understood by all Turks. The wider social and political ideological context was orientated towards creating and maintaining a \textit{nationalist, secular, revolutionary and étatist republic} (Heyd, 1954:19).

\textsuperscript{18}I am grateful to Lys Ford (pers. comm.) for a linguist's comment on this term as: \textit{...the unmarked term for "strange sound I'm intimidated by" amongst linguistically naive speakers of English.}
This was posited on a complete break with the Islamic phase of Turkish history. Since Osmanlıca came to be looked upon as a class language moreover, it could not serve as the basis for a national one. Because of its association with westernization, secularism became manifest in the written language through the adoption of the Latin script. This is how Sebüktekin (1969:vii) describes the current orthographic system:

The orthographic system of Turkish was designed in 1928 on phonemic principles. It is a near perfect representation of segmental phonemes. That is, each vowel or consonant sound is represented essentially by one letter in the alphabet.

The question of whose vowels and whose consonant sounds is pertinent here. The disjunction between the urban, middle class pronunciation permeating modern standard Turkish and the varied rural accents of Anatolian Turks will be dealt with in a later chapter.

Through this change in script, the reforms were meant to appeal to the naked eye as well as to the inner vision of the intellect. This violated the attachment to Arabic script considered by religious Turks to be a sacrosanct symbol of Islam (Başkan, 1986:100). In the same year (1928), Turkish replaced Arabic as the language of religious services. Thus, sonically too, the mediation of religious cosmology through Arabic was violated. This break with the optical and soundworld of Arabic marked a crucial disjuncture between religious and secular ways of being Turkish.

6.6. Topos and Language Ranking

Shortly afterwards, these changes were followed by a new series of linguistic reforms closely related to a revisionist approach to history. A Society for the Study of Turkish History was founded in 1931 and the Turkish Linguistic Society was founded in the following year. The aim of this latter society was

to bring out the genuine beauty and richness of the Turkish language and to elevate it to the high rank it deserves among world languages

(from Article 2 of the statutes, quoted in Heyd, 1954:25).

This reflected an overt concern with language ranking and also with the perception that linguistic resources were powerful tools of nation-building. With the aim of replacing words of foreign origin with genuine Turkish equivalents and with the backing of the government, language committees were established in every province and people (mostly
teachers) were appointed to collect linguistic material in the form of wordlists, customs, proverbs, folktales and so on. The status of this formulaic language within Turkish as a whole, therefore, is of considerable political significance. Formulaic language, moreover, rests somewhat uneasily with Saussurian-derived notions of *langue*, *langage* and *parole*, but fits more readily with Heidegger's concern with *wie die Sprache spricht* (how language itself speaks).

Within a year the first stage of this work was completed, scientific exactitude (especially in the area of phonology) being sacrificed to expediency. At the same time that material was being collected from the spoken language in the provinces, old Turkish literature of various periods and in various dialects was examined. These sources ranged from ancient inscriptions and dictionaries in different Turkish languages to translations of Persian and Arabic classics, Sufi poetry and commentaries on the Qur'an. The material was subsequently published throughout the 1940s and early 1950s, and this ushered in a new phase of correcting and completing the material. Alongside the assimilation of local dialects to the standard language through radio, the press and film media and the spread of formal secular education, amateur and scholarly linguists continued to collect the colloquial speech items of the rural people.

The extreme puristic element in all of this was at its most heightened pitch throughout the 1930s and 1940s. For a period of three months in 1933, daily lists of Persian and Arabic words were published on the front pages of newspapers and the public was invited to suggest Turkish equivalents. In this way, the exorcism of Islamic influences was a very public affair. The *Halkevi* (people's houses), the party (Turkey then had a one party system) and the radio all co-operated in this venture and the public response was very enthusiastic. The results of these efforts were combined with the material collected by the schoolteachers.

Again, this purism was posited on a rejection of everything Islamic. This reflected what was happening to block religious pathways at a wider social level. According to Heyd (1954:30), the Theological Faculty of Istanbul University was transformed into an Islamic Research Institute between 1933 and 1935, many mosques were closed and religious instruction was struck off the school curriculum. A ban was imposed on wearing ecclesiastical garments outside places of worship and traditional civilian and religious titles were abolished. Religious practices were thus muted and relegated to a closed sphere.

The vernaculars of Anatolian villages and remote Turkish groups in Siberia were now
preferred to the classical languages of Islamic civilization, but at certain times throughout
the reforms it became apparent that purism taken to an extreme would be self-defeating.
At these times, a distinction was made between trying to replace foreign words in the
spoken language and those appearing in written language. Writers and teachers were
urged to bring their language as close as possible to the language of the people, but there
was no longer the emphasis on the linguistic purity of the vocabulary. This meant that
many Arabic and Persian words were retained after all, especially since it was discovered
that they had in any case already been absorbed into the everyday language of the people.

The place of Kurdish in all of this is very unclear. Kurdish is the first language of the
largest minority group in Turkey. It is an Indo-European language closely related to
Persian. Kurdish is not mentioned specifically in accounts of language reform. This is
one political consequence of singling out language as an autonomous realm and of
according the status of language (rather than dialect) to written and not to oral forms.
According to Leclerc (1986:237) the teaching of Kurdish was banned by government
decree in 1924. The same thing happened in Iran the following year (Leclerc, op.cit:239). Kurdish people I have spoken to in Melbourne consider that the reforms were in
part designed to replace their language with Turkish and to eclipse their culture through a
form of "linguicide". The role of literacy is crucial in understanding the ideology of
language here, and I shall return to this issue in Chapter III.

6.7. Gűneş dil teorisi: the sun language theory

Coincident with the first major retreat from purism a new linguistic theory, the sun
language theory (gűneş dil teorisi) made its appearance. According to this theory,
Turkish was the ultimate protolanguage (anadil) and all other languages were derived
from it. In this protolanguage, words were created through various permutations of the
initial word for "sun" (and the praxis in which this language was embedded was sun-
worship) (Hazai, 1970:755). The logic of this theory meant that since all words could be
traced to ultimate Turkish origins, there was no need to replace any items in the lexicon.
We shall see in Chapter VI the importance of solar symbolism in underpinning linguistic
notions of directionality, and the metaphorical underpinning of topological imagery in
shaping ideology.

Most commentators believe that this theory was launched with the aim of stemming the

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19The historical notion of millet (religious minority) has given way to the contemporary notion of azınlık
( secular minority).
tide of purism, and if a theory can be judged by its effects, then this one was very successfu
From this time on, linguistic attention was turned to questions of technical and scientific termin
ology, and some of the earlier changes which had been made during the turkicization trends we
reversed. After the death of Ataturk in 1938, however, his successor Inonu launched a new puristic drive when he called on intellectuals to create a truly national language and eliminate foreign elements.


There followed a new campaign for the turkicization of language, in which the press and broad
casting institutions became very active. The aim now was to induce the public to adopt the changes formerly proposed by the Linguistic Society. This was accompanied by stronger efforts to impose secularism and to implement new secular laws. The penalties for non-observance of laws banning Islamic headdress and Arabic script were increased, and it became a punishable offence (entailing up to three months' imprisonment) to pronounce ezan (the Islamic call to prayer) in Arabic. Instead the wording of the call became Tanrı uludur, Tanrı uludur, hadi namaza, in Turkish. This translates as "God is great, God is great. Come to prayer/worship." This turkicization of ezan constituted a special form of muting where the effect was a levelling of religious cosmology through language. I shall return to this issue of ezan in a Chapter IV.

In 1942, the Linguistic Society published a list of new philosophical, pedagogical, sociological and grammatical lexemes to replace many of the formerly-adopted international terms. This attracted a lot of public criticism, and clashes with academic institutions ensued, notably with the various faculties of Istanbul University. While the university favoured the adoption of many items from the international language of (western) science which is characterised by Greek and Latin-based terminology to a very large extent, the Linguistic Society preferred to follow the example of the Japanese, Finns, Hungarians and Germans who had created a mainly national scientific language.

The cognitive advantages of linguistic purism are that lexical items are more etymologically transparent than loanwords and allow for greater clarity in this sense. Arguments for linguistic purism can be bolstered by the transparency provided by the basic syllables and the word-building potential of, say, a mother tongue. The meaning of

20Like Japanese, Finnish and Hungarian are not Indo-European languages, and this may account for the reluctance of language planners in these countries to adopt an "alien" vocabulary, while German is distinctively non-Graeco-Latin in its basic vocabulary.
German *Selbstmord* (suicide), for instance, is self-evident to a young native speaker of German, whereas the meaning of the Latinate English "suicide" for a native speaker of English is relatively opaque and needs to be learned logocentrically. The polysemic fusion which is often an integral feature of purism, moreover, while not affording the same degree of clarity, does allow for greater economy in linguistic expression and for subtler negotiation of meaning between interlocutors.

In the debates which followed, it was the boundaries between the natural and scientific languages for the one part, and those between different national languages for the other which were of greatest concern to the planners. Should one burden the student with one kind of language for primary and secondary schooling and another for tertiary scientific education? Or should linguistic continuity be ensured from the student's point of view, at the expense of a barrier between Turkish scientific endeavour and that of the international community? The question of audience is important here, but semantic and cognitive entailments are also crucial. In topological terms, the boundaries between different ideational domains and the boundaries between different linguistic universes did not coalesce.

The *Türkçe Sözlük* or Turkish-Turkish dictionary published during this phase of extreme purism contained many neologisms and reflected a fairly drastic break with the Turkish of even the fairly recent past. One of the fears of writers and other people propagating language forms was that their writings would become unintelligible quite rapidly with the constant changes being made in the language. This constant oscillation between those who favoured and those who opposed linguistic purism reflects their different attitudes towards the role of language in society. For the purists, language use could entail changes in (national) consciousness and unite different social classes; for the conservatives, language should reflect practical use and hence support the hierarchical status quo. This subverts the usual tendency to couple linguistic "purism" with retrograde politics. It is instructive to parallel this kind of purism with feminist linguistic purism (e.g. the work of Irigaray) to see how subjective notions of progressiveness and retrogression may be.

This dialectical relationship between language and society can be construed differently by linguists too, depending on whether they see their task as description or prescription. The issue hinges on the question of whether people speak language or language speaks (through) people. In the case of the former, the Saussurian distinction between langue and parole is important, while in the case of the latter, Heidegger's probing of how language speaks (*wie die Sprache spricht*) is paramount.
At a more overtly political level, it was at about this same time that the constitution was re-translated into purer Turkish, and this in turn exerted considerable influence over the language of government and the media. The original Teskilât-ı Esasiye Kanunu or constitution of 1924, became the Anayasa (lit. mother law = constitution) in 1945. Without any changes being made in the substance of the document, the wording had altered considerably. The only foreign terms which were not changed were those which had become charged with the fervour of republicanism in the early years of the new Turkish nation-state. Even today, the Arabic-derived term inkilap (revolution) means a secular nationalist or bourgeois revolution, while the Turkish term devrim is reserved for the "real" socialist (i.e. people's) revolution. Any other inconsistency in the nature of the vocabulary was considered to be the result of a compromise between the opposing sides in the debate about language. As Heyd (1954:43) points out, for example, war is still expressed by a foreign word (harb), but peace has found its Turkish term (barış). Harb was subsequently superceded by savas, and these lexical pairs are now coupled separately, i.e. harb with sulh (both derived from Arabic), and barış with savas (both 'pure' Turkish). This lexical slippage in pairing, seen here in historical perspective, is paralleled in the contemporary Melbourne community by the mixing of Turkish and English vocabulary as well as by the strategic mixing of eski and yeni lexemes.

The translation of the constitution marked the end of the series of revolutionary changes carried out under the one-party system. In 1945, the Democrat Party was officially constituted as an opposition party, and from this time onwards resistance to the efforts of the purists was more obvious and more vocal. Criticism was voiced through the press and the universities. This coincided with a relaxing of anti-religious measures, and religious instruction was reintroduced into schools. Preachers and prayer-leaders could again be trained, and a theological faculty was founded at the University of Ankara. That a democratization of politics meant a re-introduction of religion in Turkey, shows that the people still held values that were strongly permeated with Islamic principles. The linguistic counterpart to this was the reluctance to adopt changes in speech and writing.

Compared with the changes in dress or even the changes in script, which are both far more exterior to consciousness, changes in the interior, ideational aspects of language are much harder to accommodate. Başkan (1986:102) talks about the limits of the information processing speed of the human mind being challenged by too many

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21 At a linguistic level, we could draw a parallel here with movements for plain English, and evoke Wittgenstein's concerns with jurisprudence and natural language.
neologisms appearing together. According to him, (loc. cit.) *renovation of vocabulary entailed a novel world-view through language, a new esthetic appreciation, and a different set of verbal and mental habits.* Some Turkish scholars believe that the language reforms effected a far-reaching cultural revolution and revolution in consciousness (Yalman, 1973; Dumont, 1987).

These constant historical oscillations between purism and borrowing have served to cast language as a particularly focal marker of Turkish ideational topology. Conservative people feel that a break with the Arabic and Persian elements in their language would mean a break with their religious and cultural traditions. The reformers, on the other hand, stress the importance of their pre-Islamic origins and their non-Islamic cultural traditions. For most people the disjunction between the two styles of discourse (*eski* and *yeni* Turkish) means potential practical obstacles in their daily lives and the experience of a language barrier between those who are secularised and those who look to their religious traditions for ontological grounding. From the vantage point of the 1990s, the language reforms instigated in the early decades of the century provide a rich body of historical material for reflection on different aspects of linguistic reality.

Reflection on language is an integral part of the Turkish ideational climate, not only amongst intellectuals but also amongst those who have been exposed to relatively slight degrees of institutionalised education. The reforms have widespread influence in consciousness-raising about Turkish (national) culture in general and about language in particular. This influence is still evident at present, and language issues are kept alive too by the various minority groups within Turkey, notably the Kurds. The present-day linguistic lives of Turks in Melbourne are influenced by these historical factors. The different ideational pathways open to individuals and groups are simultaneously constrained and altered by the flux of their linguistically-shaped worldviews.

Since my overall task in this thesis is to focus on the meanings sedimented in Turkish formulaic expressions, particularly those relating directly to language and speech, and to explore the clues they provide to different conceptions of language, the remainder of this chapter concerns the role of polysemy in Turkish ideational topology. These formulaic expressions will include aphorisms, proverbs and other preformulated discourse segments, as well as some poems, jokes and stories. I will not concern myself with the differences between these genres or speech types, but with their polysemy and their potential for guiding us metaphorically to different conceptions of language.

The wordlists, customs, proverbs and folktales collected from provincial areas of
Anatolia during the 1930s were considered by the intellectual elite at the time to be very useful in terms of concrete objects, but lacking in abstract terminology. This, I would suggest, constitutes a misunderstanding of polysemy in language.

7. Polysemy and Language

* Dilin kemiği yoktur.  
  *(The tongue has no bone.)*

The flexibility inherent in language to inform as well as to deceive, to transform reality as well as to capture and shape it, is summed up in the Turkish formulaic expression *dilin kemiği yoktur* (the tongue has no bone). Bone (*kemik*) is here an anthropomorphic metaphor of stability or durability. Along with flesh (*et*) it lies at the basis of the kinship lexicon and defines impartability (in the form of patrilineality) while *et* (flesh) defines what can be divided and dispersed. Another formulaic expression: *eti senin, kemiği benim* (the flesh is yours, the bone(s) is/are mine), for example, is used by Turkish parents to delegate authority to their children’s teachers. This saying connotes an insider/outsider dichotomy based on an unspoken metaphor of kinship. Gökalp (1987:83), for example, discusses Turkish kinship traditions in the light of such tropes.

*Dilin kemiği yoktur* can be used to talk about someone who is inconsistent. At a more general level, it can also imply that words are frequently ambiguous and liable to many interpretations, or that words can be used lightly. Because the notion of bone lies at the basis of the kinship lexicon, the expression also suggests that words have no traceable pedigree or genealogy. In this sense, the aphorism frees meaning from etymological constraints and implicitly recognizes semantic shift. In terms of concrete imagery, the aphorism is highly anthropomorphic but, unless one focuses on a very literalist interpretation of meaning, it must be recognized that this imagery evokes very abstract and nuanced levels of signification at a metaphorical level.

The Turkish expression *dilin kemiği yoktur* (the tongue has no bone) is mirrored in Greek: the tongue has no bones, but it can crush bones (*I glossa kokala then ehi ke kokala tzakizi*).\(^{22}\) In light of this Greek parallel metaphor, there are intimations of power involved.

Moreover, the tongue can move without necessarily implicating other major body parts

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\(^{22}\)This parallel was pointed out to me by Vassiliki Chryssanthopoulou.
and hence in terms of anthropomorphic articulatory imagery is semi-autonomous. Although philosophically this saying can be construed as an argument against etymological meaning in language, pointing rather to meaning in use, my argument here is that the polysemy inherent in the conceptual metaphors underlying Turkish speech forms the "bones" of Turkish language. Meaning here operates at tacit, unspoken levels. Turkish scientific vocabulary is not built out of these same conceptual metaphors, but relies instead on loan translations borrowed from articulated, lexicalized levels of language.

Another well-known Turkish formulaic expression (deyim) pertaining to language is: *bir dil, bir insan*23 (one language, one person). Turkish speakers usually explain the meaning of this saying in terms of multilingualism being a good or desirable thing. Although the saying translates literally as "one language, one person", through the repetition of the lexeme *bir* it connotes a relationship of sameness or identity. A less isomorphic and more semantic translation would be "same language, same personality". Because of the very polysemous nature of the notion of "*insan*" (person, human), moreover, the saying could also be translated "same language, same humanity" or, less suggestively and more propositionally as "language is the defining feature of humanity". This Turkish aphorism also implies that each language has its own genius. It can also mean that language is a marker of humanness or that the persona is created through language. Moreover, it implies that each new language learned creates a new personality and, in this respect, it comes close to the Dogon view of multilingualism cited by Calame-Griaule above. We should not ignore the possibility that both the Turkish and the Dogon views have a common grounding in Arabic/Islam.

In a textbook designed for teaching Turkish to foreigners, Sebiûktekîn (1969:v) had this to say: *On the content side, Turkish is tradition bound. The mere mention of a single word referring to a cliche, a proverb, or an anecdote, of which there are thousands, often suffices to activate complex meanings stored in the mind of every Turkish speaker.*

These cliches, proverbs and anecdotes are part of a condensed say of speaking which rests on metaphorical relationships between different domains of experience rather than on a reocentric language schema or on a conception of language which rests on a *langue*/parole dichotomy.

23 An alternative rendering of this idea is *bir lisan, bir insan*. Here alliteration which enhances memorability is even more pronounced. For further discussion of *dil* and *lisan*, see Chapter IV.
Formulaic language is used widely by rural and religious Turks. These uses of formulaic language metaphorically capture meaning in an elliptic linguistic economy of words that allude to hidden referentiality rather than spell it out explicitly. In Turkish, for example, those formulaic sayings employing body imagery overtly display their anthropocentricity, while others point explicitly to Allah as transcendental source of wisdom and blessings. The use of these expressions, therefore, often implicates unseen interlocutors in specific speech acts and points to some of the complexities involved in locating agency in language. I shall return to this issue of agency in Chapter V.

In the traditional use of formulae, language itself is power, whereas in secular usage language is reduced to a tool, or to a medium of communication. These opposed views of language have different implications for language use and for the ways in which translation across linguistic and cultural boundaries is accomplished. Tannen and Özték (1981:38) talk about the "compulsive aspect" of situation formulas in Turkish and comment (if we consider the function of formulaic expressions, we can see something about the relationship of people to their world. Having developed for many centuries in a part of the world where belief in the creative power of the word is particularly strong, language use is influenced for many Turkish people by ideas of the inherent power of the word, both written and spoken.

This focus on the power of words has not been displaced entirely by the Saussurian inspired views of language derived from the linguistics (dil bilimi) taught in Turkish universities which is implicated in the creation of modern standard Turkish. Amongst rural people, for example, verses of the Qur'an in Arabic script are formed into amulets called muska (an Arabic word glossed in Turkish as yazili şey meaning literally "written thing") and work to avert the evil power of the gaze (göz nazari), while the dangerous power of words (dil nazari) is averted by invoking the power of Allah in such expressions as maşallah or averting the power of Şeytan (Satan) by saying, for example, kulağna kırşun! (lead [a bullet] to [his] ears) in instances of verbal ritual. Speech act theory comes close to explaining the force of performatives, but does not deal adequately with notions of agency.

Dil nazari may be involved, for example, when one has vainly boasted of having produced wonderful crops, only to find that the following year the crops fail to grow. Dil nazari is also involved in dedikodu (gossip) or in exchanges of insults. The power inherent in dil nazari is alluded to in a Turkish proverb: kılç yarasi onar, dil yarasi onmaz (the wounds of a sword will heal, verbal wounds will not).
Formulaic expressions reflecting these notions of power also appear now as car stickers:

\emph{Nazar eme ne olur, çalıṣ seninde olur.}

\{(Please) do not put the evil eye on me; work and you will have \{this\} too.\}

The hermeneutic act\(^{24}\) prefigured in the coupling of \emph{naz} \(\text{a}r\) with notions of work in this formula effects a transfer in a kind of space, where \emph{naz} \(\text{a}r\) is dislodged from its predestinative connotations and reinserted into another ideational space anchored to a trope of work or labour (\emph{emek}).

Tannen and Oztek (1981:43) claim that \textit{(a)ll these formulas dealing with good and bad events strive to overcome human powerlessness. Two sources of power are appealed to: God and the magical power of words.} The question of whether words are powerful because of their internal nature or because they imply a sacred source is relevant here. We should also ask if words are more powerful in written than in auditory form. The power attached to writing is reflected in the polysemy of \emph{ya}z\(\text{i}\) (writing) which in Turkish also means destiny.\(^{25}\) These issues of words and agency are extremely complex and will be explored in Chapter V.

As my field research got underway, it became apparent that it would be impossible to do semantic justice to a study of Turkish linguistic topology without paying attention to a range of contextual factors. My discussion of these factors will be restricted to those which are directly relevant to language issues, and I shall not attempt to do ethnographic justice to descriptions of community life. The most dominant contextual factors were:

\begin{itemize}
  \item[(1)] religion/politics \ which generate much of the
  \item[(2)] space \ metaphorical richness of
  \item[(3)] dress/gender \ the language
\end{itemize}

\text{as well as the linguistic factors of literacy, script and multilingualism.}

\begin{itemize}
  \item[(5)] literacy and script, in that they provide a tangible, visible form for language as well as a subtle shaping of our notions of what language is, and
  \item[(6)] multilingualism, through which separate languages are thrown into relief on a cline of translatability.
\end{itemize}

While metaphor and literacy can be seen as bridges between language and these other

\(^{24}\)The notion of a hermeneutic act comes from Becker (1979:246).

\(^{25}\)See Chapter I.
contextual factors, multilingualism forms a bridge between separate speech communities, and highlights the linguistic idiosyncracies of different language systems. Metaphor links the verbal with the non-verbal through polysemy; literacy provides clues to synesthesia, and multilingualism and code-switching point to clashes and overlaps in metaphorical topology across different linguistic systems.

By following the etymological path of the Turkish language notion of metaphor one achieves a very similar result as in tracing the English language concept: mecaz, an Arabic-derived term is cited in the Redhouse bilingual Turkish-English dictionary (1968:742) as having the following meanings:

"(1) metaphor, figure of speech;

(2) (lrnd) path, way, passage."

This second set of meanings is particularly salient in view of the high incidence of Turkish formulaic sayings involving the notion of a pathway (yol). This corresponds, moreover, with De Man’s and Ricoeur’s characterisations of metaphor discussed above, and would suggest a polysemic congruence of concrete experiential image and abstract logocentric one. In English, we talk about "ways" of seeing, doing and so on, and readily assign abstract meanings to this notion, but all too often characterise other languages as being very concrete in their imagery because of our monosemic focus on meaning.

What are the main parameters of metaphor in Turkish culture? I would suggest the following on the basis of the imagery of their language: kinship, the human body, labour, migration, place and time. While the body, migration and place give rise to topological imagery readily, metaphors of kinship, labour and time suggest different patterns of social topology. Polysemy ensures the condensation of meaning across ideational boundaries and obviates the separation of signification into autonomous categories. Collapsed within these parameters are clusters of concepts which are used polysemously within the language. As we shall see, these metaphorical parameters provide different senses of ideational topology. My contention is that these parameters are used as templates for interpreting and generating meaning at the level of language (langage), and that they are much more deeply embedded in semantic processes than are social or contextual speech situations alone. They are also used in an interlocking or overlapping way rather than in contrast and opposition.

In formulaic Turkish, kinship is frequently invoked in terms of body imagery, as are
notions of social hierarchy. The natural environment too may be construed through anthropomorphistic imagery. Kinship with the land may be expressed through the same image of fertility and reproduction that informs human life, as well as through the bonds created by the sweat of human toil (altın teri: "the sweat of the brow"). A pastoral lifestyle generates alternative metaphors of migration, temporality and place, as does one of military service or international wage labour. The notion of gurbet (temporary absence from home), so central to Turkish migrant communities, is imbued with the meaning of absence (from a homeland (yurt)). These terms will be discussed more fully in Chapters V and VI in the context of orientational metaphor.

Within different social groupings there is bound to be a different emphasis on these varied parameters, but within a given named language (langue) such as Turkish they are collapsed and condensed. As symbolic capital, these formulaic sayings are available to all Turkish speakers, but they are more salient for some speakers than for others.

8. Language as Topos

A focus on language as topos enables us to view such linguistic features as speech levels (kaba and kibar) Turkish, vowel harmony (ses uyumu), as well as gender and borrowing as creating alternating patterns of hierarchy and symmetry, in addition to inside and outside spaces.

8.1. Kaba and kibar Turkish

When rural Turkish people distinguish their own speech from that of urban people they themselves refer to it as kaba Turkish. They thus employ an exogenous and largely negative term which is implicitly contrasted with the kibar speech of urban Turks. They use these terms in the knowledge that they are not their own categories but those imposed from above. Concomitantly, when kaba speakers chide somebody for speaking kitap Türkçesi (book Turkish), this implies a deprecation of the speaker for using a formal code which is inappropriate to the situation. Another such expression used in similar instances is edebiyat yapmak (lit. "to make literature"): to intellectualize. These latter terms are at the nexus of oral and literate forms of language, since they point to effects of writing and literacy on everyday speech.

On the other hand, those kibar Turkish speakers who have received a western-style education and are involved in professional positions (as well as many who have similar qualifications but work in factories), pride themselves on speaking/knowing Turkish
better than their less formally-schooled compatriots (i.e. *kaba* Turkish speakers). This stance implicates a certain reification or objectification of language. Speakers of *kibar* Turkish who have read part of my thesis, for example, find many of the examples "incorrect" or "bad" Turkish. Most of the Turkish examples are verbatim quotations from rural *kaba* speakers.

At the level of *logos* one of the major differences between speakers of *kaba* and *kibar* Turkish is the semantic loading placed on verbal communication. People from rural backgrounds often commented disparagingly on what they perceived to be the excessive verbalizations of some of their urban, *kibar*-speaking compatriots who indulged in long monologues. Thus, patterns of voice and silence vary considerably from one grouping to another. Usually, in Turkish contexts, silence is explained as a mark of respect for superiors. Within the ideal Turkish family and among those who adhere to a traditional mode of communication, age is a very important factor in influencing all aspects of linguistic exchange, i.e. in turntaking, form of address and reference (i.e. familiar or formal styles of language), how much is said by each speaker and why and when s/he remains silent.

8.2. Gendered word or gendered world

Gender is not marked in Turkish pronouns. The third person singular pronoun *o* (which would be translated into English alternatively as "he", "she" or "it" is also the demonstrative "that" as in *o zaman* (at that time) or *o kadın* (that woman). Gender is, however, usually made obvious in the context of language use. The gendering of Turkish communication is deictic rather than referential. One of the main difficulties faced by Turkish people attending an Arabic class, for example, was to grasp the different nature of gender expression in that language where in addition to third person pronouns, it is marked by reference to interlocutor, i.e. in second person pronouns. The point is interesting in view of the strict gender segregation in religious Turkish culture generally where women and men lead spatially separate existences to a greater degree than do their Anglo-Australian counterparts. The fact that this distinction has not entered abstract Turkish grammar in spite of such a high degree of absorption of Arabic religious culture is something which offers clues to the nature of the cultural and linguistic contact between the two groups. Physical segregation obviates the need for grammatical marking at the level of linguistic topology. In the case of the Turkish word and world

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26See, for example, Abboud *et al*, 1975:3.
relationship, grammar and proxemics complement rather than mimic each other. This issue of grammatical versus semantic gender will be discussed in Chapter VIII in the context of narrated events.

As in many languages, reality is topologised to a high degree in Turkish, not only through the use of honorifics and pronouns, but also through inflection. The language used between individuals and within groups encapsulates the degree of formality or intimacy which obtains between the participants in their daily lives. At the level of individual utterances, choice of pronoun (for example, sen (you sg.) and siz (you pl.)), honorifics: Hoca, Efendi, Hanım or other forms of address or reference can convey subtle shades of intimacy or social distance between speaker(s) and interlocutors. Patterns of voice and silence, therefore, reveal a social topology of linguistic exchange.

The social spatialization encoded in language use can be hierarchical or alternatively it can be based on an inside/outside continuum or both. By looking at the some of the imagery sedimented in Turkish, it is possible to gain some insights into the kind of linguistically given realities available to Turkish speakers. Turkish is an inflected language which requires of the speaker/writer that s/he state a number of relationships between the subject of a proposition and the other elements. Case marking carries meaning to a higher degree than, say, word order which is a major vehicle of meaning in English.

Syntactically, Turkish is an agglutinating language. This is one of the features which distinguishes it morphologically from Indo-European languages on the one hand and Semitic languages on the other. We have seen that throughout the long period of Ottoman history, borrowings from Persian (an Indo-European language) and Arabic (a Semitic one) have been extensive. Because of the clash with Turkish phonological and morphological patterns, loanwords retained their distinctive orthographies in the Ottoman classical literary language. These foreign forms did not penetrate into the everyday spoken forms of popular Turkish.

8.3. Ses uyumu: Vowel harmony

One of the main distinctive features of Turkish is the so-called "law" of vowel harmony (ses uyumu). Vowel harmony privileges sound as an alternative perceptual and semantic medium. If the stem of a word contains a back vowel, for example, yap... any suffixes will contain similar sounding back vowels: yapmak. If the stem vowel is a front vowel, the suffix will contain a similar front vowel, for example ye... yemek. This imbues the
language with a certain melodieusness and for some people it is the Italian of the East and for others like Turkish delight... sweet and melodieus. (See, for example, Mardin, 1961:1). The importance attached to vocalic sound linguistically is one instance of the salience attached to sound (ses) in general. The polysemy of the term ses will be explored in Chapter IV.

Loanwords which have entered the language through writing generally retain their original orthography, which seldom conforms to this vowel harmony. This means that inconsistency of vowel sounds may indicate that the word is of foreign origin. In turn, the nature of the lexical item itself may provide clues to the kinds of social/cultural contact which initially gave rise to the borrowing. On the other hand, words which have been adopted orally into the language have submitted to modern Turkish orthography and may look quite different from cognates in other languages. Some examples of cognates disguised by orthography are contained in Chapter VII. Vowel harmony therefore maintains a subtle marking of inside and outside linguistic topologies.

Another sign of the foreign origin of lexical items in Turkish is the occurrence of two consonants preceding the vowel of a syllable. Examples such as spor and gram have both entered Turkish through French. Yet another such sign is the occurrence of two successive vowels as in words like saat (clock, watch, hour) from Arabic and şiir (poem), also from Arabic. Lêf (from Arabic la'af) (talk, conversation), however, is turkicized and is associated more with oral usage.

8.4. Dissemination and Borrowing

Turkish is an extremely flexible language and can readily adopt words of foreign origin through its suffixing system. The history of words is shown in the orthography generally. The English word "shop", for example, has been adopted into the speech of Turkish people in Australia. The Turkish equivalent dükkân, of Arabic origin, is not widely used. This is one instance of transference from English replacing, not Turkish lexicon, but prior borrowings from other languages. This is important for glottochronology and shows that any simple correlation between the appearance of new vocabulary and the origin of actual referents is not possible. It is also important in that it indicates a core of relatively unchanging lexical items and an outer margin in which lexemes have a more contingent and shorter-lived currency. In the case of "shop", related meanings have been extended by adding standard Turkish suffixes, and in this way "shopkeeper" becomes sopcu and "shopping" becomes sopculuk. This latter term is used more widely than the Turkish expression aliş veriş (lit. taking {and} giving) which would be the formal translation of "shopping".
8.5. Literacy and Script

Earlier in this chapter we saw that Modern Standard Turkish came into being as a literate language. As with other written languages, it tends to be posited on decontextualised forms of language use, where conventional syntax and standardised pronunciation are of considerable importance. In contrast, the older forms of Turkish used by people from the rural areas of Turkey fit better with oral dialogical forms of communication where speakers draw heavily on metaphor. This latter style of language is also characterised by a high degree of polysemy, which can be exploited to enrich, subvert or transform meaning. Face to face conversations can be elliptic and allusive as contexts are part of the taken-for-granted world of everyday reality. Divisions between oral and literate forms of language and old and new Turkish are not coterminous, however.

8.6. Script and Topos

Even though most Turkish people in Melbourne belong to a primarily oral lifeworld, Arabic script has impinged on their consciousness and is familiar from their experience of religious life, while the Latin script is part of urban life in general. The reform of the script in 1928 resulted in a reversal of the direction of the written word, i.e. from left to right instead of from right to left. This reversal in directionality has important symbolic implications for the ways in which the respective scripts are perceived by religious Turks, in view of the importance of the underlying orientational notions of sağ and sol (right and left). Some examples of the symbolic significance of script and directionality will be discussed in Chapter VI in the light of orientational metaphor.

The Latin script in Turkish and in a variety of European languages has predominated in commercial contexts due to increasing trade with western Europe, and has entered even the remotest rural areas of Turkey on labelled commodity items, often as brand names: Çiklet (Chicklet chewing gum), Cilet (Gilette) razors and so on. Even though the majority of people in these areas may not read and write in a technical sense, they nevertheless recognize and interpret familiar words and signs. Concomitantly, within a Turkish-speaking context, Arabic script has been restricted more and more to a uniquely
religious domain. Exceptions are the *kasaplar*\(^{27}\) (butchers) and other foodshops which display their shopnames in both Arabic and Latin script. On the other hand, there is a strong association between Latin script and secularism, since reform of the script was but one of the many secularising reforms in the 1920s and 1930s.

9. Summary

A topological approach collapses and condenses logocentric and anthropocentric leanings in language, and allows us to map visual and auditory hierarchies and symmetries. In addition to standardization, literacy and gender, factors such as class have affected changes in linguistic styles. Sebüktekin (1969:vi) recalls that (Standard Turkish) *is also called "Istanbul Turkish" since it originated as a prestige dialect in Istanbul, the cultural center of Turkey for many centuries.* Başkan (1986:109), however, argues against those who would claim that new Turkish represents a new form of class dialect since he claims that *the concepts represented by these new words happen to designate novel distinctions of perception and cognition.* Nevertheless, since it is predominantly upper and middle class urban Turks who have espoused the reforms and secularisation generally, this has resulted inevitably in a cleavage between standard Turkish and rural, oral speech varieties. This hierarchical cleavage is highlighted by taking an anthropocentric approach to language.

For some linguists, language has a life of its own and is best left to develop in its own way, while for others language use can be prescribed. See, for example, discussion by Edwards, 1985. Başkan (1986:104), referring to the former view as "linguistic Fabianism", argues that Turkish language reform was necessary for Turkish speakers to cope with *incoming waves of Western concepts.* These new concepts were transformed into Turkish equivalents by creating neologisms. This view places language reform on a cognitive rather than on a socio-political plane, as it focuses attention on logocentric aspects of language.

It is necessary to understand these issues of linguistic change in historical context, and we have seen that language reform in Turkey alternated between phases of purism and

\(^{27}\)It could be argued that *kasaplar* are religious specialists in a very real sense although this may not be given any formal recognition within Islam. They cater to all Muslims and are key nodes in information networks within the community. Most butchers deal in a wide range of food items and are not restricted to meat alone. They are therefore specialists in providing not only ritually slaughtered animals but *halal* food generally. Many Turkish Muslims, for example, will not eat bread, cakes or creams that are labelled as containing animal fats because they may contain pork or the fat of other animals that have not been slaughtered ritually.
phases of borrowing. Given the emphasis on özleşme (keeping pure) in the early stages of the modern phase of Turkish language reform (see Heyd, 1954), the creation of a national, secular topology in Turkey owes some of its successes to language change, while many of the continuing Islamic influences are maintained linguistically through Arabic.

We have seen in this chapter that in addition to the tensions between purism and borrowing, there has been a constant tension between insider orientated and outsider orientated language use. When communication was directed towards the inside, i.e. culturally inside groups such as the rural population, soldiers and Turkish minorities, pure Turkish was advocated, but to maintain communication with the international community it was necessary to allow some language mixing, either at the level of lexical borrowing or through calquing from foreign languages, in other words through loan translations. Apart from literacy, multilingualism, silence and polysemy, therefore, the phenomenon of language reform itself has ensured the visibility of language for Turkish speakers and has illustrated the topologizing effects of language use.

At a community level, the Turkish spoken in Melbourne is an amalgam of old (eski) Turkish, heavily influenced by Arabic and Persian loanwords and phrases, and new (yeni) Turkish in which foreign lexical and syntactic influences are kept to a minimum and loan translations feature more prominently than either loanwords or loan phrases. Some examples of lexical differences between eski and yeni Turkish are: gavur versus yabancı for "foreigner"; hürmet versus saygı for "respect"; elbise versus giysi for dress; millet versus halk for people, and hoca or muallim versus öğretmen for "teacher". These lexical contrasts are not altogether indexical of salient distinctions in worldview.

The correlations between discursive universes and linguistic registers or speech levels is not reflected in clear correlations between the type of language spoken and the social background and/or ideology of individual speaker(s). These relationships are not fixed, since speakers may adopt different speech styles and codes according to context, interlocutor and audience. Amongst members of the younger generation, moreover, there is considerable language mixing (between Turkish and English).

In the following chapter, I shall present a linguistic portrait of the Turkish speaking community in Melbourne through a description of various socio-linguistic domains.
CHAPTER III

10. Ideational Soundscapes

Biz topraktanız, maymundan değiliz...
We are from the earth, not from monkeys...

Avrupa mı, İslam mı belli değil...
It is not clear (whether we are) Europeans or Muslims...

By examining language usage in a number of different social domains, this chapter provides a linguistic profile of Turkish speakers in Melbourne against a background of literacy and multilingualism. The ideational topography of Turkish Muslim life in Melbourne forms a cultural ground against which figures of Turkish speech and patterns of verbal interaction can be examined, as well as a context in which to view polysemic meaning in linguistic usage. Whereas the language of secular Turks is built on new Turkish, the Turkish spoken by religious people is heavily impregnated with Arabic vocabulary and expressions which reflect the creationist conception of human existence they adhere to. This distinction between secular and religious will be maintained throughout my thesis as a convenient way of talking about surface differences. The distinction should be understood as marking relative points on a continuum rather than as denoting diametrically opposed groups.28 Yaratmak (to create) suggests alternative etymologies of yer(e) atmak (to throw to earth) or yer(i) atmak (to throw/cast earth).29 If we accept the former meaning, we gain a sense of "creation" as positing or positioning, while the latter suggests a sculpting image derived from the action of casting clay.

Within the community,30 there is evidence of ideological struggle within and between Islamic sections of the population on the one hand and Marxist-orientated political activists and their followers on the other, while in between the large majority of Turkish

28The Australian Bureau of Statistics gives figures of Turkish-born people in Australia as 24,529 at the time of the 1986 census. (Young, quoted in Akcelik and Elley, 1988:35). Over 50% of these Turkish-born people live in Victoria. The 1986 census figures for this state are 12,454. The majority of these people (some 94.5%) live in Melbourne. Apart from Sydney and Melbourne, other cities with significant numbers of Turkish-born residents are Adelaide and Wollongong. Cypriot Turks have been coming to Australia since the 1950s, while people have been migrating from Turkey in large numbers only since the bilateral migration agreement between the Turkish and Australian governments signed in 1967. My thesis is concerned mainly but not exclusively with rural Anatolian Turks.

29What prompted me to see these etymological possibilities was the recounting of an aetiological myth about the horse in a film of that name, in which one of the characters, talking of Tanri (God) said: yer aaldi ve atta yaratılı (He took earth and created the horse).

30By community here, I mean simply a Turkish speech community.
people are Kemalist (nationalist) in political outlook. Overlapping the Islamic and the nationalist groupings are the Turanists, who look to Central Asia as their source of origin. Other Islamic groups focus their attention on social issues such as poverty, and here there is an overlap with the concerns of Marxist-inspired groups, but with divergent ideas about remedies for social ills. Within all major sections there are numerous substrands of ideological orientation which are created, shaped and subverted by discursive practices. These discursive practices in turn, reflect the ways in which individuals and groups situate themselves vis-a-vis the prevailing political or religious, local or world order.

Class boundaries coalesce with urban/rural divisions and relate to the emic linguistic distinctions between *kaba* Turkish and *kibar* Turkish. Gender segregation occurs on the religious side of the community and, as will be seen in Chapter VII, has important implications for language use. Islamic influences are discernible in language too, both in the greater incidence of Arabic-derived terminology and in patterns and topics of conversations. Grammatically, there is greater use of the passive, and people tend to use a collective rather than an individual subjectivity when speaking.

The differences between old and new Turkish are never construed as implying mutually exclusive forms of language, however. The idea of Turkish as an integrated language system is accepted by all sides of the speech community. As a friend commented one day, *Atatürk created the Turkish language*. When I prompted him to elaborate, he said: *before Atatürk there was only Osmanlica (Ottoman speech/language); everybody mixed Persian, Arabic and Turkish. It wasn't a proper language. Osmanlica incorporated many syntactic features from Arabic and Persian, whereas in Modern Standard Turkish borrowed lexical items have been assimilated and turkicized so that they no longer count as loanwords in any immediate sense, and syntax has been standardized. In spite of this extraneous provenance of many contemporary lexical features, which can be traced historically, therefore, modern Turkish is recognized as a discrete linguistic system. The optical effects of a standardized script add to this sense of uniformity.*

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31 The vast majority of people adhere to various blends of these worldviews and individuals, families or groups identify primarily according to friendship and kinship ties and allegiances. Friends frequently are people from the same region, people who came to Australia at the same time or made the pilgrimage to Mecca together, people who work together or were in the army together.

32 Those Turks who arrived in Australia in the years immediately following the migration agreement were largely of rural origin, though most had spent some years in urban centres prior to migration. Some came after living for a time in Western Europe, for example, under the West German guestworker scheme. Many of their expectations concerning life in Australia were shaped by the experience of those earlier worker emigrants.
Those who are highly conscious of language, however, vary their use of Turkish according to audience as when, for example, addressing the community as a whole, but speak their preferred style of Turkish when addressing people within their own ideological domain. One speaker at a mixed public meeting of secular and religious Turks, for example, made a point of using both *cemiyet* and *dernek* interchangeably when he spoke of local Turkish associations. The former is an Arabic-derived term used in old Turkish and the latter is its new Turkish counterpart. Both terms translate into English as "association", but the former has religious and the latter secular connotations. By using the two terms interchangeably, the speaker signalled a wish to be heard by both sides of the political spectrum. It was, therefore, a conciliatory, unifying choice of lexical items designed to shape a common ideational space. This kind of pairing signalled a sensitivity to interlocutors and to listenership. By using the other's way of naming in addition to his own, the speaker posited a level of symmetry or equality between the respective ideologies.

11. Language maintenance

Language maintenance is of great importance to Melbourne Turkish people generally. Language functions as symbolic capital and as a practical medium of communication, and different groups and individuals within the community stress these different aspects. We have seen that Turkish Muslims occupy a religious-secular continuum, and that different discursive universes overlap with different language systems and codes. These divisions and overlaps are reflected in language topography. In the case of Turkish-English bilingualism, Turkish connotes *insiderness* and a reality grounded in the historical experience of Turkish secularism. When English becomes the dominant language, this connotes *outsiderness* and an orientation towards internationalism.

Code-switching and language-mixing, whether under conscious control or not, signal a collapsing of boundaries and a synthesizing of linguistic space. While literacy is an obstacle for many people right across the community, knowledge of new Turkish is something which has to be learned either through schools or through others who learned it from school. The role of literacy will be explored in Chapter V. It is a marker of secular education. Teachers of Turkish now find it necessary to "mix" the language of education, i.e. to incorporate old and new Turkish lexically, in order not to appear to be anti-

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33It may seem contradictory to speak of "secular Muslims" but, as a Turkish friend pointed out: *we are all Muslims, but we are not all religious*. This, in turn, draws attention to the Judeo-Christian nature of mainstream Australian secularism.
religious, and also to provide a "mixed" range of bourgeois and socialist realist themes in literature for their pupils. In addition, much of the older literature is seen (by teachers) to be permeated by gender bias and this is another point of contention with regard to the transmission of knowledge.

Language is the principal means through which Turkish people in Melbourne are anchored in a Turkish "national" perspective on the world. Although religion is a powerful force in their lives, Islam binds them into a world which is ideationally centred outside Turkey, and people are highly aware of the exogenous source of their religion. Turkish people frequently stress the differences between their civilization and that of Arab and Iranian peoples. These differences are usually talked about in the idiom of religious differences, for example in terms of the different religious traditions or schools (mezhep), or through focusing on Ottoman historical traditions, particularly on Ottoman rule in Europe. For some people the conflict between Islamicizing and Europeanizing tendencies in contemporary Turkish culture is paramount, whilst others accept varying degrees of synthesis at a cultural level.

The idea of a common language and country of origin reinforces a sense of unity, even though there is ample evidence of divergent ideologies. Members of the community could, therefore, be situated on a continuum with purists at one extreme and synthesists at the other, with this range of divergence applying to social, ideational and linguistic life.

At a pragmatic level, the linguistic situation is even more complex. People who come from the southern and south-western regions of Turkey may use both Arabic and Turkish interchangeably, but this is more a reflection of their proximity to the Arabic-speaking world than to religious ideology per se. There is considerable overlap between their Turkish and that of rural Cypriots, since they share a particular culture area. They do not consider themselves to be bilingual, but simply to use a different kind of Turkish from their more northerly compatriots. A blending of different lexicons, therefore, is perceived here as constituting a different register or code from the standard one, rather than as signalling a mixing of different languages per se. It is at the nexus of Turkish and English that people talk of bilingualism or language mixing.

Towards the end of the 1970s and throughout the 1980s people left Turkey for political as well as for economic reasons. Teachers trained in Turkey during the 1960s had undergone considerable class-conscientization (a term I have borrowed from the works of Paulo Freire) and, with the renewed appeal of Islamic values and a strong manifestation of conservative political thinking emerging in the country as a whole, these teachers’ knowledge and skills became undesirable. It was impossible for them to obtain positions in the teaching institutions without jeopardising their own beliefs and values, and they chose to leave the country. Many artists, writers and lecturers also emigrated at this time, some to the United States, Canada and Europe, and others to Australia.
Patterns of bilingualism vary across generations, and give rise to much ambivalence. Turkish is the sole language of communication between members of the older generations (people aged 40 or more), and is the primary means of communication within the home until children reach the second or third year of primary school. It is at this stage that transference from English first becomes noticeable as children become more and more alienated from their parents' language. Parents complain frequently that they need interpreters to communicate with their children. This gradual muting of Turkish as the language of the home renders Turkish more and more "invisible" and parallels the muting of the familiar soundworld in general. This issue of silencing will be taken up again in Chapter IV.

Women and men of the older generations take pride in preserving Turkish as a sole means of communication. Suggestions that they learn English are often brushed aside with remarks such as *if I need English, my children are there to interpret for me.* Thus, there is a focus on interdependence with regard to knowledge and skills. When seeking help in understanding the wider society, these Turkish people rely on those they regard as knowledgeable, and this counts also for when they seek to inform others about themselves. *Bir bilene sor...* (ask someone who knows...) they say, in recognition of a division of knowledge and differential access thereto. While they are proud of their children's acquisition of English, they are simultaneously threatened by the generational sound barrier.

Over 80% of Turkish people interviewed during a survey of the N.S.W. Ethnic Affairs Commission (1985) in the Sydney and Wollongong communities claimed language to be a major problem in their daily lives in Australia. Many of these people were unable to attend language classes because of domestic commitments, childcare or shift work, while others were unaware of the facilities available for learning or improving English. This situation also applies to the Melbourne community, and language problems have engendered the need for translators and interpreters. Many people occupying these positions are in fact Cypriot Turks whose style of language is very different from that of Turkish Turks. These differences gave rise to misunderstandings and as time went on, there were complaints of dishonesty and inadequacy aimed at many interpreters. It subsequently became difficult to find such employment without formal qualifications. It was at this stage that the cultural context of language use became the focus of much attention. According to various interpreters in the community, the present problems in the translation area stem from a lack of people qualified to translate from Turkish into English.
More recently, high unemployment levels in Australia have given Turkish people the necessary time to invest in learning English, but one factor which still mitigates against this quite strongly is the lack of literacy amongst large slices of the Turkish population. Many courses provided for migrants assume basic literacy skills. We shall return to this issue in later chapters. Added to this, the fact that many of these courses are held in the evening when Turkish women at any rate prefer to be and are expected to be with their families, it remains very difficult for people to gain access to English. Nevertheless, the situation now is that there is a much greater awareness right across the community of the advantages of having English, not only for life in Australia but also in the event of returning to Turkey. In many instances now, people pay more attention to gaining proficiency in English than to accumulating monetary capital alone.

The prestige attached to different languages internationally and the political motivations for language ranking affect people's attitudes too. Language itself is much talked about within the community. People assess the bilingualism and general language abilities of others, and the intellectuals involved actively in promoting a Turkish and/or Islamic worldview (to the younger generations, for example) make skillful use of the varied abilities of different individuals. Some people have considerable passive knowledge of English, for instance, but find verbal communication difficult because of the differences between the English taught in Turkey and the English used in Australia. They are easily discouraged by the seeming lack of tolerance towards foreignness amongst Anglo-Australians. Other Turks have little difficulty in attaining fluency in spoken English, but great difficulty in writing well, partly because of the syntactic differences between written and spoken language in general, but also because of a prior lack of access to formal education.

This social sketch is being provided as a context in which to view polysemic meaning in linguistic usage which will be outlined in later chapters. Turkish Muslims occupy a religious-secular continuum: different linguistic and religious domains overlap with different ideologies or worldviews. Cross-cutting these discursive universes are different patterns of multilingualism.

35Many monolingual Australians admit that it is only after they themselves have lived abroad and tried to learn a foreign language that they can really empathise with non-English speaking Australians and their linguistic difficulties.
12. Multilingualism

At a general community level, Turkish people in Melbourne have access to a broad linguistic repertoire in their daily lives. Arabic, English, Kurdish and Greek are the dominant second languages spoken, followed by German, French and Albanian. These languages have different symbolic meanings for different speakers. English and French may be seen as vehicles for social mobility whereas Greek may signify a regional or national attachment and Arabic a regional, national or religious one.

Given the present climate of multiculturalism within certain parts of Australia, and the threat to this diversity from conservative Anglo-Australian circles, rural Turkish people’s consciousness of their identity within Australia is that of a minority, migrant community with a vastly different language and worldview from that of the mainstream. Their conceptions of this minority status are shaped to some degree by their own vision of minorities in Turkey. It is important to note, however, that it is not a question of a cultural minority interacting simply with a predominantly Anglo-Australian majority, but also with other cultural minorities. Religious Turks seek bonds with other Muslim groups, (Indonesians, Fijian Indians, Pakistanis and so on) while leftists create links with other socialist groupings (e.g. Chileans, Greeks, Italians), and nationalist Turks, perhaps more than any other, seek integration within the dominant society.

Some members of the Balkan minorities also have Turkish as a first language: for example, Bulgarian Turks. Bulgarian Turks have maintained Turkish as their mother-tongue in spite of efforts by the authorities there to assimilate them to a Slavic identity. This struggle to maintain Turkish has influenced people’s attachment to language as an emblem of identity. Amongst some Turkish speakers from the Balkan countries, however, Turkish may be a second language as, for example, among Albanian Turks. For instance, when I visited Hava and her family, who come from Kosovo province in the former Yugoslavia, she spoke Albanian to her husband and Turkish to me, while her husband spoke Albanian to her and English to me. Thus, for a conversation between three adult individuals, three separate languages were needed. Hava and her husband both spoke Serbian too. This was the main language of their larger home region in Europe. Due to their life experience, they accepted multilingualism as a given and considered the stress on monolingualism in Australian (public) life as something requiring explanation. The focus of their identity was on religion rather than on language and they talked about the importance of their children’s Muslim names.

Many monolingual Turkish people, even though they themselves know only one
language, are quite at home in multilingual public environments in that they do not feel threatened by hearing languages they do not understand. Many Anglo-Australians in contrast, feel that new migrants should speak English and a knowledge of English is an essential criterion of the immigration platform of the conversative political parties. Turkish speakers, like other linguistic minorities are aware of this entrenched monolingualism, which some of them view as a kind of totalitarianism. Those who see language as an expression of identity do not like the feeling that English is being imposed on them.

12.1. Names and Semantic Topology

Those on the religious side of the community are used to a pattern of bilinguality involving (Qur’anic) Arabic and Turkish. Qur’anic names are key elements in the semantics of this bilinguality. The following is an example of linguistic interaction between Muslims from different speech communities, which took place during a Qur’an lesson. It was at the home of a Fijian Indian Muslim whose main language of communication was English. The teacher was a young Lebanese Muslim whose mother tongue was Arabic and whose main languages of communication were Arabic and English.

The Lebanese teacher read a Sura from the Qur’an in Arabic; she and the Indian woman translated it into English together for the rest of the group. A bilingual Turkish woman (Turkish and English speaking) translated this in turn into Turkish for the monolingual Turkish women present. The younger Turkish women in this group were new to Qur’an lessons and listened attentively, but an older Turkish woman was quite impatient with this drawn-out translation procedure and insisted that she had already understood the Sura. She had recognized key Qur’anic names and that particular cluster of names and the order in which they were presented enabled her to infer the content/meaning, which was already familiar to her. The importance of names as landmarks on an ideational map will be discussed in Chapter IV, while the issue of logocentric versus semantic focus in language will be discussed in Chapter VIII in relation to different conceptions of knowledge.

This pattern of multilingualism is representative of much linguistic interaction between Muslims from different language groups who do not always have a common lingua franca. In these situations the Qur’an is a vehicle for a specific form of interlingual communication which is intricately bound up with religious meaning. It is often a prelude to more mundane forms of intercommunication: once contact has been established in this way, it creates a bond for other forms of interaction such as visits to families.
At another religious gathering, for example, a Singaporean, English-speaking, Malay Muslim woman prayed alongside Turkish women in the home of a Turkish family. The focus on Qur'anic Arabic bonded them in their linguistic interaction even though they had no common language for ordinary conversation. Nevertheless, the religious bond provided a sound basis for much shared meaning and enabled the women to communicate with each other, albeit telegraphically. One such conversation, for example, was about dress colours: the Singaporean Muslim wore black whereas the Turkish women were dressed in a variety of muted colours. They conveyed their approval of her dress by touching it, by making appreciative facial gestures and speaking Turkish. The meaning here was carried more by gesture than by speech. But gesture gradually gave way to speech as people provided words - Turkish and English: elbise "dress", siyah "black", güzel "good", "beautiful", Avustralya'daki giysi hiç güzel değil "Australian dress is not nice", açık saçık "too open" (i.e. immodest). This last item is an example of reduplication; the "s" in the second word is added for euphony; reduplication here intensifies the connotations of immorality attributed to "open", "immodest" and is used to convey moral distance. The moral and epistemological connotations of terms such as 'open' and 'closed' will be dealt with in Chapter VII. What I would like to draw attention to here is the tacit sense of (Muslim) insiderness connoted by the communicative exchange, and the casting of the topic of Australian dress as a mark of non-Muslim outsiderness. Co-religionists are known as dindas in Turkish, and this term will be discussed in Chapter VI in the context of verbal imagery and consociality.

Another such telegraphic conversation concerned fund-raising for Afghanistan. The Turkish women had procured foodstuffs at wholesale prices and were selling this in small portions and collecting the profits to donate to the poor and needy families of the Mujahideen. Against the background of their economic exchanges it was necessary only to mention the name Afghanistan for the implication to be understood, since there was already a basis of shared meanings and assumed politico-religious attitudes. As Grace (1987:105) has pointed out:

*Ways of talking about something that far transcend any individual languages are exemplified by sciences, religions such as Christianity or Islam, or political philosophies such as Marxism.*

One might add, in the light of the above examples, however, that ways of talking are often circumvented by such shared meaning which may remain unarticulated because it is taken for granted. The potential divisiveness of multilingualism here is circumvented as it
were by the tacit meanings assumed in shared subject matters - in this instance Islam. Unlike the generational language-barrier discussed earlier, shared values override the significance of lexical differences here, and the isolating potentialities of monolingualism are transcended.

Patterns of multilingualism vary from one social domain to another. By examining language use in a number of specific domains it will be possible to discern different patterns of multilingualism, and the different loci of communication barriers which are situated sometimes at the level of the word and at other times at the level of the world. The topologies created by language boundaries are nowhere coterminous with the boundaries between different social domains.

12.2. The home as a domain of language use

Within the majority of Turkish homes, Turkish is still the primary medium of communication, but some English is spoken in most homes. The balance between the two languages depends to a large extent on the ages of the children in the family and on parental attitudes towards language use. I shall describe the situation in two families I visited regularly.

The first family consisted of a young couple (in their twenties) and their small daughter, Hacer, aged about 7 who was attending primary school. Handan, the mother, spoke Modern Standard Turkish. She also had a reasonable, passive knowledge of English, but she spoke English only when shopping and then in a highly elliptic style: How much? You sell layby? You ask too much money, for example. Although she is a fairly devout Muslim, her ordinary everyday Turkish was not permeated with Arabic, as she had grown up in an urban centre in the Western part of Turkey and received a very secular education. She had studied French at high school in Turkey, and many of the loanwords which permeated her speech were of French provenance.

Ahmet (the father) spoke a more colloquial form of Turkish. He had come to Australia as a teenager with no knowledge of English. He had worked in a factory since his arrival ten years earlier and now spoke English very fluently. Because his knowledge of the two languages was acquired in different domains, however, he found it very difficult to translate from one language to the other.

Both Handan and Ahmet felt it was important to speak Turkish at home. They envisaged a future divided between Turkey and Australia. Handan’s family lives in
Turkey, while Ahmet's family is settled permanently in Australia. Handan would prefer their daughter to grow up in Turkey; she was dissatisfied with the kind of education she was receiving in Melbourne: she felt that Hacer was losing her Turkish fast, there was not sufficient emphasis on reading and writing whereas in Turkey, Handan claimed, children were taught these basic skills before they were encouraged to explore the world. In her view, Australian schools lacked discipline and encouraged children not to respect their parents.

Hacer, in her second year at primary school, now spoke more English than Turkish. Handan reprimanded her for this, whereas Ahmet often spoke to her in English and encouraged her to use both languages. Hacer's Turkish was often a Turkicised form of English rather than conventional Turkish, most noticeable in word order. Her speech was lexically English and syntactically Turkish, but nevertheless showed a move towards isolating forms where inflections were dropped. It was these instances of "bad Turkish" which caused Handan so much concern.

Both Hacer and her father had constant exposure to the outside world: Hacer through her school and Ahmet through his work and shopping for instance. Handan was sheltered in her dealings with the wider society; her own restricted knowledge of English and her daughter's increasing use of this language had created an incipient barrier in family communication, and Handan already had a strong sense of loss. Handan spent many hours at home alone during the day and she sometimes found this solitude barely tolerable. She expressed much of this loneliness through writing poetry and reciting the Qur'an. In this way she maintained a familiar sound world around her.

In the second family was an older couple in their forties with four children: two boys (aged 12 and 14) and two girls (aged 6 and 8). Only the 6 year old was completely monolingual in Turkish. The parents, Fatma and Salih, spoke only a smattering of English, but their three oldest children spoke English amongst themselves and reserved Turkish for their parents and other Turks of their parents' generation. This caused considerable anguish to their parents as they felt they had little control over, and access to, their children's lives. They could not understand what was going on when their children conversed together and were especially concerned when their children quarrelled. When this happened, they asked another child to interpret what was being said.

As in these two families, it was common to find the languages distributed on a generational basis, since English was the language of instruction for the children at
school. The one salient difference between the two families was Ahmet's fairly balanced bilingualism in contrast to Salih's monolingualism. Ahmet had grown up with younger brothers and sisters who had received their education in English (in Australia), and had been exposed to the language constantly, whereas Salih had come to Australia as head of a family and had had no contact with English speakers on a constant basis. Ahmet's exposure to English in the home, through hearing his siblings converse, had provided a constant English language soundworld within which he was able to attain bilingual competence.

The outside physical space available to Turks is circumscribed by their language abilities and also by their moral values. We shall see in Chapter VII that conservative or religious Turks avoid Australian beaches and other places where people in general, and women in particular, are likely to be dressed in a way that is considered immoral (generally referred to as açık ("open"). Depending on their knowledge of English, they may be able to enjoy the cinema and theatre, but this does not seem as popular for most Turks as television is. During the last few years there has been a steady supply of Turkish films and concerts available on video cassettes and most Turkish homes have televisions and video recorders. The Turkish video provides a very efficient means of preventing or controlling the influx of gavur (foreign, non-Muslim) ideas into Turkish homes, and people can choose their videos according to the degree of "openness" they see fit. Some families prefer not to watch any films that treat the subject of sexuality in an overt way, and if such a film is being shown when visiting neighbours, for example, they turn their heads away at the offending scenes.

Video recorders are a means by which people re-Turkicise their lives, and some intellectual leaders in the community see this as one of the most efficient means of keeping the language alive and viable for Turkish people in Australia. Some of the more religious members of the community who might be thought not to favour such a "foreign invention" (gavur icadi) as television, value the possibility of being able to watch religious films and use video in teaching children about Islam. Other members of the religious community, on the other hand, feel that the use of the human image through depiction of Muslims practising their faith, is against the teachings of Islam, and there is much divided opinion on this topic. I shall return to this issue of Islam and the image in Chapter IV.

For people who live alone, or who spend a lot of time alone, television or video provides company. When visiting a friend one day, for example, she left me alone in the
living room for a short time with the words: *ben gelinceye kadar arkadaş olur...* (it will be a friend {for you} until I come) as she turned on the television. Consociality is evoked again here by the notion of *arkadaş* (friend). Solitariness is hardly considered normal or human: only Allah is one (singular, peerless): *yalnız Allah tektir*. Other instances of the use of this ubiquitous formula will be discussed in Chapter VII.

Today there are almost as many Turkish video stores as there are Turkish restaurants in Melbourne, and orders are placed frequently by telephone for the latest Kemal Sunal film, or films starring Fatma Girik, Tanka Akan or Türkan Şoray. As with British or American popular films, it is the actors who draw the viewers. For people on the political left however, the ideology of the film-maker is all important, and socialist-realist filmmakers such as Yılmaz Güney (known internationally for films such as *Yol*) are appreciated for their portrayal of modern Turkish social and political reality, irrespective of who is acting the leading parts.

Most of the religious films watched throughout Ramadan are dubbed into Turkish from Arabic, whereas the vast majority of films viewed on an everyday basis come from Turkey itself. In this way, the Australian reality of Turkish peoples’ lives is transcended increasingly by music and film from their home area. In addition to providing images of different ideological realities, the video effects a significant spatial transfer in the lives of Turkish people. It is instrumental in transforming the outside, public world of an absent Turkey into an inside, domestic transient presence. This telescoping of space constitutes at the same time a cultural intensification of Turkishness in a variety of ideological forms.

### 12.3. Religion as a domain of language use

It is mainly in the domain of religion that Arabic is dominant in the linguistic lives of Turkish people. Most devout Melbourne Turkish Muslims attend one of two Turkish mosques, in Broadmeadows or in Coburg. While prayers are in Arabic, sermons (*vaiz*) are given in Turkish and most of the social interaction between people at the mosques is conducted in a heavily Arabicised Turkish. At prayer gatherings there is a mixture of Qur’an recitations in Arabic and chanting of *ilâhî* (hymns) in old Turkish, while amongst themselves people speak a highly formulaic style of Turkish. Although their spoken language is also a form of old Turkish, it differs from the language of the *ilâhî* by being of a greater admixture of Arabic and new Turkish lexicon and expression, and also because it takes on the cadences of everyday speech rather than those of the ritual, stylized language from Ottoman times. There is a distinction, therefore, between the
modern idea of "old Turkish" (correlating roughly with the label secular people use when talking about the speech of religious people or how urban people talk about rural people’s speech), and the older idea of "old Turkish", which is old Ottoman Turkish (Osmanlıca).

Just as the home overlaps with the outside ideational world in this way, religious and educational domains merge and split along ideological lines. Some Turkish children now attend the Islamic school in Coburg where they are taught their religious traditions through the medium of Arabic, and other subjects through English. Amongst religious members of the community, many children36 also attend Islamic classes on Sundays in addition to secular schooling throughout the week. In this way, religious children attend school seven days a week. Although this puts a strain on family life as well as on the individual child, parents feel they have little choice but to pursue both strands of education.

Within the inner Melbourne metropolitan region, there are two schools which teach a variety of subjects through the medium of both Turkish and English. Apart from these truly bilingual institutions, many schools throughout Turkish residential regions play host to Saturday classes in Turkish (these are known popularly as "ethnic" schools), while in a number of primary schools with a high enrolment of Turkish pupils there is what is called a "mother tongue maintenance" program, and these schools provide one or two hours a week for Turkish language and culture.

At a tertiary level, there is a three year training course for interpreters and translators, in a variety of languages, at Victoria College. The Turkish/English course is based on a thorough grounding in the language and culture of Turkey and (Turkish) Cyprus, and is aimed at students who are already fully bilingual. The R.M.I.T. (Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology) also provides training in interpreting and translating, but this is done on a language-priority basis, and Turkish, being the language of a relatively small migrant community, is not offered annually. Philip Institute offers a course on multiculturalism which includes a Turkish component. There is no chair of Turkish at any university in Australia despite attempts by Turkish intellectuals to have one established.

It is usually at school that children without older siblings first encounter English on a constant basis. Prior to that there may have been exposure through television or family friends, but this is often fragmented and sporadic. As English is the dominant language

36and adults
at school, being the primary means of communication and the medium of instruction, small children learn it very quickly, although there is always some transference from Turkish. It is this constant exposure to a language which naturalises it as a medium of communication. Absorption of the cadences of a language occurs generally at a tacit level. Unlike pronunciation, intonation or syntax, it is not something which is consciously taught.

The choice of school Turkish parents make for their children is influenced partly by the area in which they happen to live, but partly also by the choices they envisage for the children's future prospects of adaptation to the dominant society, or of entering a successful career. Whether or not Turks envisage a future in Australia, English is considered to be an important career asset. Thus, while some Turkish children may attend mainstream schools where no language other than English is used, this may be because it happens to be the local school, or because their parents have chosen a monolingual school and trust that the children will not lose their Turkish through continuing to use it at home.

On the other hand, children may be enrolled at a bilingual school outside their area in order to maintain their proficiency in Turkish and also to maintain it as a viable language of education. Usually, but not always, the latter choice is made by the more intellectual members of the community who value bilingualism for its own sake. These parents also feel that it is one way of creating a possibility for their child to excel in one area (language) and thereby counteract the social disadvantages the child might have through being a new migrant. If they attend one of the many multicultural schools, where one can hear languages like Spanish, Vietnamese, Mandarin, Serbian and Croatian, amongst others, the schoolchildren will be aware of many other languages. This exposure to the idea of several languages prompts an acceptance of linguistic relativism in children and they are less likely to grow up with monolingual, positivistic and reocentric views about language and reality.

Given the current emphasis on foreign language learning in Australia, such children might well benefit from their early bilingualism, although it is probable that they will be encouraged to learn one of the prestige foreign languages rather than Turkish. It remains to be seen what the break-up of the former Soviet Union and the concomitant "revelation" of the significance of Turkish as a regional language will mean in strategic educational terms. This new focus on foreign language learning in Australia does not coincide with the arguments for multilingualism and multiculturalism referred to in Chapter II, since
the dominance of English as the tacitly accepted official language of Australia is ensured. In political terms, multilingualism and multiculturalism are about "community" languages, whilst foreign language learning is aimed mainly at "prestige" languages such as, say, Japanese.

12.4. The workplace as a domain of language use

While many Turks are highly proficient in English and work, say, as engineers or computer programmers in a totally English language environment, many others seek positions where their knowledge of Turkish is a career asset as in interpreting, translating and teaching, for instance, or in social work where such bilingualism is necessary. Yet others again, because of an insufficient knowledge of English or because of having skills which are not marketable in Australia, find themselves doing factory work where a knowledge of English, although useful, is not considered to be essential.37 Here they come into contact with other workers from a variety of national backgrounds and a varied, multilingual environment.

Generally in these situations, people in managerial positions are English-speaking Australians, and often intermediary positions such as that of foreman are held by people who are bilingual, say in Italian and English. The English of these bilingual people is thought of as "migrant English" and is therefore perceived to be a more effective medium for communication with other migrants than mainstream English. Through this kind of linguistic segregation, people are not exposed to the interactional mode of English necessary for life in Australia. Although my knowledge of this inter-language situation is based on accounts by Turkish friends rather than on personal observation, it would appear to be characterised by a high degree of "command language", i.e. imperatives: do this! do that! work a bit faster! don't take so long over smokos!

It is my contention that this intermediate use of bilingual migrants to interpret between bosses and workers on the hierarchical work ladder has shaped attitudes towards multilingualism in post-1788 Australia, where monolingualism is the norm for people in the historically dominant spheres of society, and generally bilingual or multilingual people have historically been in subordinate social positions and stigmatised for any trace of a foreign accent or speech style. Many multilingual people complain about exploitation as they say their linguistic abilities are often capitalized on, without their

37This situation is now changing with the introduction of government-sponsored language programs emphasizing English learning in the workplace.
being given any formal recognition. They are frequently asked to interpret or translate in work situations, but at the same time their linguistic skills are underplayed and treated as incidental. Business people exploit the linguistic skills of bilingual migrants, and advertisements such as "Turkish spoken", "Spanish spoken" in department stores can mean that Turkish and (Central American) Spanish-speaking migrant employees are contributing in largely unrecognized ways to their employers' potential business success.

12.5. Language as a domain of isolation

The degree to which new migrants are isolated from the English language soundworld can be illustrated by one language-related incident described by a young Turkish man, which is worth relating in full. He arrived in Australia at about the age of 19. His younger brothers were still attending school and they continued their education here. He did not know any English, but was determined to learn the language as well as his brothers who were picking it up quite quickly at school. He got work in a factory and went off each day armed with a pocket Turkish-English dictionary. He listened carefully to conversations around him, and when he caught words and began to recognise the sounds he tried to look them up, but never had any success in finding them.

He asked his friends about this and was warned that English is rarely written the way it is pronounced. He got help from his Turkish friends in looking up the "words" he had heard, but to no avail. This situation continued for some time, and one day when he was desperate enough to ask one of his work colleagues to help him with the dictionary, he discovered that it was not English he had been listening to at all, but Greek. Most of his workmates were Greek Australians.

13. Language as Topos, Language and Topos

This brief discussion of domains provides a sense of the complex diversity of linguistic and ideological niches within the community. Some of the lexical terms used for marking insider and outsider groups show the alternating significance of placeness and of language. As an overseas community, Turks in Melbourne are part of what is known in Turkish as \textit{yurttışındakılar} (those who are outside the homeland).\footnote{Turkish people, like any other minority within Australia, see themselves at once as part of an international community - of Turks, of migrant workers, of Muslims - and at the same time as part of a migratory destination which happens to be Australia, but could well have been Canada, Sweden, Holland or the Gulf States. Turkish industrial workers were not given a choice of destination when they decided to leave Turkey: they went where their labour was needed.} Their self-ascribed
identity, therefore, is centred in their country of origin. Unlike the ambiguity of Turanism which stresses both the linguistic unity of Turks, and Turan as remote place of origin of Turks as a people, it is a notion of homeland (yurt) rather than language which forms the epistemological ground here.

A new term in use in the community is Türkiyeliler (people from Turkey) as opposed to Türkler (Turkish people) in order to include minorities such as Kurds, Armenians, Greeks and so on. This deflects attention from language as a marker of identity, and focuses instead on place. Yurtdışındakiler and Türkiyeliler are quintessentially topocentric terms, used here to evoke a common geographical provenance. At the same time, this emphasis on place as the ground of identity has the potential to provoke a new cleavage between people from the northern part of Cyprus and people from Turkey, whose notion of common identity is fostered by certain political elements, for imperialist as well as for international socialist ends. Türkiyeliler is, however, sufficiently multivalent to convey the geopolitical idea of a greater Turkey which would extend to historically grounded links, say with the Turks of Central Asia and/or those of Cyprus, and the name itself is a site of ideational contest.

In the discourse of secular Melbourne Turks, outsiders are known collectively as yabancılar (foreigners), (as opposed to the old Turkish gavar) but this category can be broken down further into Avustralyalılar (Anglo-Australians), diğer etnik gruplar (other ethnic groups) yerliler (lit. people of the place) (local, indigenous people, i.e. Aborigines) and so on. The Arabic-derived vatan is used at a more formal level to signify Turkey as political entity. Kinship terminology adds a familiarizing sense of closeness as in anavatan (which means literally mother nation) while Cyprus is known as yavruvatan (child nation) in relation to the Turkish mainland within this same politically-motivated metaphor.

When the focus is on language rather than on place as the ground of identity, the effect is potentially divisive. Mainland Turks39 claim that Cypriots do not know new Turkish: Kibrıslar yeni Türkeçyi bilmezler. As seen in Chapter II, one of the most important changes which has taken place in modern Turkish culture has been the reform and standardization of language. This has happened within the Turkish nation-state and has not affected the Turkish spoken in Cyprus to the same degree. Cypriot Turkish, on the other hand, has changed on contact with English and Greek. Unlike the language of

39 This term does not imply any political meaning. I am using it to distinguish between Cypriot Turks and Turkish Turks.
modern standard Turkish, Cypriot Turkish has retained a greater volume of Arabic vocabulary. Certain distinctive syntactic features such as suffixing, which is obligatory in Turkish Turkish, are omitted in Cypriot Turkish.

Due to their higher proficiency in English (at a group level), Cypriot Turks occupy many of the intermediary professional positions between Turks and the wider Australian community, such as interpreters, social workers, tax consultants, translators and so on. Many have become representatives of the Turkish-speaking community as a whole, but their different style of language and their lack of familiarity with cultural developments within Turkey lead to tensions with those they seek to represent. It is at the bilingual level of language choice that differences between the two speech communities are most marked. Cypriot Turks are much more likely to speak English in an interlingual environment.

Towards the end of 1986, for example, SBS (the Special Broadcasting Service) recorded a program about the Turkish community in Melbourne. The recording session was attended by people from a wide social spectrum, including Cypriot and Turkish Turks, both religious and secular. There was much debate behind the scenes about which language bilingual speakers should use. This was one of the rare occasions open to the community for presenting their views to a wider Australian audience. A Cypriot man who addressed the audience in English was criticised by mainland Turks: *he calls himself Turkish, but he speaks English*. The implication was that to assert one’s Turkishness it was necessary to speak Turkish. The Cypriot man, however, had already explained to me that he had seen himself as *showing Australians how well Turks could speak English*. The question of audience was crucial in understanding these different views about the nexus between language and people. The Cypriot man had directed his choice of language towards potential television audiences who were physically absent, while the mainland Turks focused on communicating with the studio audience who were all Turkish speaking. These different perspectives also reflect concern with proficiency in English as a perceived criterion for acceptability as Australians.

This congruence of bilingualism and contextual meaning draws attention too to language about language. The difference between the usage of preformulated discourse segments and the deliberate choice of words to convey meaning, in other words, the differences in meaning between language used spontaneously and language used reflectively, also highlights the theoretical issue of whether people speak language or language speaks (through) people. This contradiction becomes "visible" when we focus
on language as logocentric, and resolves itself at a more semantic level of contextual meaning.

If Turkish people make disparaging remarks about another’s use of language, they may use the idiomatic expression: Kibrışlı gibi konuşuyor... (s/he speaks like a Cypriot). When Aynur wanted an interpreter one day, however, she insisted on calling Ahmet. She explained that his language skills were far more professional than those of other interpreters, and added that he was Cypriot and Cypriots were very skilled as interpreters. Only minutes earlier she had spontaneously used the above disparaging (preformulated) remark about an acquaintance.

For many people there is a certain degree of shame attached to not speaking one’s own language. Ayıp olur (it is shameful) people said, for example, about Filipinos they observed speaking English on television, especially since they usually spoke with American accents. This was a cogent reminder to Turks of their own military domination by the United States. Some people observe strict taboos on language-mixing because "Turks should speak Turkish". Speakers are frequently corrected for using English or French expressions. A literacy teacher (and speaker of kibar Turkish), for example, corrected her (Turkish) students for using Australian English expressions like "no worries" and encouraged them to learn kibar ingilizce ("polite" English) instead. Some foreign expressions fit more readily than others, however. A young girl was corrected for saying "excuse me". She was told she should say afedersiniz - "a perfectly good Turkish equivalent", "but", it was added, pardon da olur (one can also say "pardon"). Pardon had entered the language from French at a time when there was much greater acceptance of foreign vocabulary.

Thus in an Australian Turkish context there is a sense of threat of language attrition unless anglicisms are kept at bay. There is also an element of class code involved here, however, as French is the favoured foreign language of middle class Turks, whereas English is being adopted by all classes. Since in Australia Turkish is a small "community" language whereas in Turkey it is a firmly established "national" language, some people comment that although they go to great lengths here to preserve the language from transference from English they observe that the Turkish spoken in Turkey is heavily permeated with loanwords.

The tensions between language and placeness are critical in the context of Kurdish-Turkish linkages. Most Kurdish people are bilingual (in Kurdish and Turkish) and many speak English as well. Their language is not taught in schools in Turkey, where Turkish
is the medium of instruction. Kurdish is, therefore, a first language for many Turkish Kurdish citizens, and Turkish a second. In Australia, Turkish Kurds speak Kurdish in the home, Turkish as a second language within the Turkish-speaking community, and English at school, whereas, in Turkey, Kurdish is spoken at home, and Turkish is first learned in school. Within the Melbourne context, Kurdish community leaders are pressing for recognition of their separate identity along with fellow Kurds from Iraq and Iran.40

As Grace (1987:70) points out, the modern world is a world of shared subject matters and shared ways of talking about them, i.e. ways of talking about them which are diffused in large part by calquing from one language to another.

The relationship between word and world is of great political significance in the case of Kurdish. The issue of "intellectualization" of languages which have not been standardized along "Western, scientific" lines is salient here.41 According to some Turkish leftist political activists sympathetic to the Kurdish separatist cause, the Kurdish language is not sufficiently developed to express political facts, but will have to develop artificially. In other words, to borrow Grace's terminology, Kurdish will have to develop shared ways of talking about shared subject matters, in order to absorb the discursive ideologised patterns of international politics. In developing such shared ways of talking, however, Kurdish risks losing much its own distinctive force as a separate (national) language, as the imagery of the lexicon assimilates international rather than indigenous views of reality, and indigenous modes of abstraction are subjected to forcible transformation in the process.

On the left of the Turkish political spectrum, for example, activists have adopted neologistic terms calqued on the international vocabulary of Marxism: kitle (the masses), işçi sinifi (the working class), üstüyapı (superstructure), sinif bilinci (class consciousness) and so on. Just as these terms have been calqued from German to English, so they have been calqued to Turkish. Language use is one of the principal means through which a sense of a socialist reality is created and maintained and it is with this kind of focus in mind that Turkish leftists see the need for an internationalist "development" of Kurdish. (Other discursive sources of internationalization are discussed below).

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40 In 1991, the Turkish parliament debated a repeal of the 1924 decree (see Chapter II) to permit the public use and teaching of Kurdish (from SBS television documentary about Kurds in Turkey, shown on Dateline, 25 March, 1991).

41 The term is discussed critically by Gonzalez, 1992:301, who details the history of its usage within the sociology of language.
Alongside this debate about "intellectualization" or "development", however, Kurdish language segments appear in leftist Turkish political journals, and these are often proferred as proof that Kurdish is a written language. This is seen to be necessary in order to counteract the popular Turkish belief that Kurdish lacks a written medium. Remarks about Kurds such as *okuma yazma yok, sadece konuşurlar...* (they do not read and write, they just speak...) are common. Such remarks fuel the popular notion of literacy as a marker of sophistication and as metonymic of "civilization". In Schieffelin's terms (see Chapter II) an erroneously assumed lack of literacy here is a *political excuse* for denying that Kurdish is a "real" or "proper" language. In this way, the visualist perspective on language as a script-based phenomenon prevails in much of the debate about the relative social prestige and ranking of various languages.

13.1. International vocabulary

One of the first things a listener to (new) Turkish as spoken in Melbourne will realise is that it is liberally peppered with international secular words such as *normal, actif, enternasyonal, demokrat, endustri* and so on. Some of these lexical items may have come about directly from language contact between Turkish and English (either through militarism (*sic*) and tourism in Turkey) or through migration of Turks to English-speaking countries, but it is more likely that they have been adopted from French. In a recent article on the influence of English on Turkish, Tietze (1986:402) claims:

*despite the increased influence of Anglo-Saxon culture, economy and politics, and despite the fact that the knowledge of English has won far and away the first place among the foreign languages today studied and understood in Turkey, French still remains the medium for receiving words and expressions borrowed from Europe and the West.*

Other "Western" lexical items have a longer heritage and have been adopted into first *Osmanlıca* and then into modern Turkish through contact with French culture and technology and later through contact with Germany. The linguistic routes through which these items have entered Turkish vocabulary are marked both in pronunciation and in written forms. The phonotactic 'fit' between Turkish and French is another linguistic criterion for preferring French to English as a source of internationalization, as the frequent consonant clusters of English often constitute obstacles to pronunciation.

The lexicon of modern medical science, for example, has entered Turkish via French and has retained French pronunciation. In written form, however, the words which
marked this lexicon as external no longer look French because of the phonetic exactitude with which they have been transcribed into Turkish. Many examples could be cited such as anjin, apandisit, grip and so on.

On the other hand, similar items of vocabulary have been adopted into English from Latin through the written medium and while the original spelling has been retained, the pronunciation has been anglicised. This means that both literacy (and more narrowly writing) and language contact have played a role in the resultant disjunctions between, say, the technical language of one specific domain, medicine, as it is used in the context of two divergent languages today, causing Turkish speakers difficulty in seeing the similarities between English and Turkish medical terminology. This points to the effects of literacy in disguising common origins, even within one script.

As seen at the beginning of this chapter, different groups of people within Turkish society in general and the community in Melbourne in particular distinguish themselves in terms of religion and secularism, and these two dimensions of Turkish ideational life give rise to different metaphors of humanity: the religious notion of earth origins and the secular notion of primatological evolution. At a linguistic level, the nexus between these different metaphors is epitomised by language mixing and code-switching.

14. Code-Switching (*Tarzanca*)

The linguistic phenomenon of code-switching has been given a name in Turkish: it is called *Tarzanca* on account of its halting, elliptic, non-fluent nature, and because of its perceived resemblance to the speech of the film persona, Tarzan, and his mate, Jane. Another example of film as a source of linguistic expression is the term *Kunta Kinte olmak*, used for someone who has become alienated from his roots. The term *Tarzanca*, is used widely, and is particularly salient in the context of *gurbet* (i.e. absence from home) where people are confronted by an alternative way of life to the one they have grown up with. As well as highlighting the nexus between religious and secular metaphors of humantiy, *Tarzanca* marks a liminal, transitory space between *insiderness* and *outsiderness* at the level of language.

Code-switching and language-mixing are very obvious in the speech of bilingual Turks. The domains of English most prominent in their speech reflect their overall social interaction with the wider Australian community. Greetings, numbers, monetary terms, for instance, and lexical items like "boss", "strike" and "holiday" are known even to the most monolingual Turkish speakers, and reflect their interaction in the workplace or
marketplace. Expressions such as *notis vermek* (to give notice) or *partaim olarak* (on an part time basis) similarly provide clues to the changing nature of their working lives. Loanwords here indicate dis-location. On the other hand, the relative paucity of kinship terminology in English becomes apparent as they grapple to translate their family relationships in terms understandable to the wider community, and find ultimately that the most efficient way is to use the Turkish terms.

Some examples of *Tarzanca* are

1. *bana bir LIFT ver* (give me a lift);
2. *DRINKçi geldi* (the soft drink seller has arrived);
3. *biraz DARKça yap* (make it a little darker);
4. *EXPLAIN yapmak* (to explain);
5. *bana bir TURN ver* (give me a turn);
7. *hiç TROUBLE istemem* (I don’t want any trouble)
8. *bugün OFFdayum* or *bugün OFFim var* (today’s my day off)

These expressions are used consistently by people who deal with the two languages constantly in their daily lives. One frequently hears parents telling their children: *Tarzanlık yapma!* (Don’t talk/act like Tarzan). The choice of this name, *Tarzanca*, posits it by implication as "close to ape-language". For conservative Turkish people, this "mixed" linguistic code fits metaphorically with a notion of animal origins and animal-like behaviour and evokes a context of evolutionary rather than creationist ideology. *Tarzanca* does not fit with a Turkish notion of *mediniyet* (civilization) which is epitomized in everyday behaviour by the use of courtesy codes at varying degrees of elaboration. It is common also for bilingual people to switch to English for arguments, and in this way they avoid the constraints of the Turkish code of *saygi* (respect).

*Tarzanca* need not necessarily draw on the lexicon of both languages, however. For example, an expression such as "you spend plenty money ticket" is recognized as accommodating the English meaning "you have spent a lot of money on tickets" in an elliptic economy of words which draws simultaneously on the morphology of Turkish grammar and on English lexicon. Whether one calls such language mixing *Tarzanca*, transference or code-switching depends largely on generational and epistemological perspectives. For older people in the community, the mixing of language was not really
desirable in spite of the fact that it happened all the time. For schoolchildren, on the other hand, for whom it was a common medium of communication with their Turkish peers, its effectiveness was unquestioned. Cognitively, such code-switching mirrors the lexical slippage between old and new Turkish discussed in the previous chapter.

As we have seen throughout this chapter, Turkish intellectuals tended to lean to linguistic purity whilst others accepted the mixing of codes as an unavoidable and often even as a necessary part of social life in a language-contact situation. These varied influences are manifest throughout the community in Melbourne and are constantly being negotiated and renegotiated in the process of adapting to Australia and of adapting Australian social environments to Turkish linguistic needs.

The relationship between people's linguistic choices and sociolinguistic domains is a flexible one. While Turkish may be the dominant language of the home and English the language of the school, some people may endeavour to speak English rather than Turkish in the home because they feel it is better to adopt one language than mix two. For other people it is important to send their children to Turkish language classes at the weekend because of the high value they place on language as a medium of culture, or as an aspect of identity. In inter-cultural situations, a variety of linguistic strategies is available: use of English as the dominant language of Australian society and therefore as a kind of lingua franca; use of foreigner talk to bridge the competence gap between one speaker and another, or communication through interpreters.

Apart from the above factors of internationalization and code-switching, others which can influence verbal communication between people are the various contexts of the speech event itself. The following chapter is an exploration of logocentrism and anthropocentrism in multilingual contexts of language use, and the explains the importance of silence in Turkish soundspace. Different social emphases on the human senses are also discussed in this chapter because of their significance in understanding language as topos.
CHAPTER IV

15. Linguistic Soundscapes

Bir elin nesi var, iki elin sesi var
The sound of one hand clapping...

Voice and Vision

This chapter is an exploration of sound and visual imagery in Turkish conceptual orientation. As with visual imagery sound creates and shapes ritual landscapes, while absence of familiar sounds and images creates a phenomenal void. Apart from lexical imagery, the topology of language itself emerges through the spatializing effects of voicing and listening as well as through different voice levels. Anthropocentric aspects of language overlap with other aspects that are more clearly logocentric. The pivotal visual and acoustic images informing Turkish linguistic topology are the human body and language. Language is connected to the body in a twofold way: orally through the mediation of the human voice and ear, and visually via script through the mediation of the eye and the hand. In turn, oral language inscribes itself on the body as a whole through a gestural topography as well as through lexical and sonic imagery.

After a general discussion of sound in Islamic and secular Turkish contexts, I describe some aspects of this linguistic inscription on the body as well as some of the body imagery sedimented in Turkish lexicon. Topological images of closeness and distance are then explored through a brief discussion of naming and kinship metaphor. Naming is a prime way of topologizing ideational realities, while kinship idiom imbues them with affective meaning. Finally, the chapter returns to the tension between spoken and written forms of language. There are thus alternating emphases on lexical and semantic areas of topology. Issues of translation will serve to highlight differences in linguistic imagery.

Emphasis on the word and on sound in Islam transcendentalis reality. Since reality is encapsulated to a large degree in sound, particularly in Qur’anic sound, Islam is a highly logocentric religion, and hence a highly logocentric domain of Turkish culture. Turkish people relish stories, proverbs and idiomatic sayings as repositories of received knowledge. These linguistic resources are rarely seen as the final word on any specific situation but are frequently juxtaposed by speakers, or used to draw attention to aspects of a situation which they wish to highlight. During a discussion of appropriate gender behaviour, for example, I was told that, according to a Turkish proverb, there are three beautiful sounds in the world:
Translation of these terms into English poses considerable semantic problems owing to different polysemic patterning in the two languages. In these three instances ses can be translated as "sound", but ses also means "voice". To translate "the sound of a voice" back into Turkish isomorphically would result in *ses sesi which would make only tautological sense. Thus ses (voice and sound) cover different semantic ranges across the two languages. The polysemic Turkish ses (voice, sound) thus links anthropofocality and logofocality.

Sound symbolism, particularly as encapsulated in the human voice is, along with anthropomorphism in general, a powerful dimension for generating social meaning. Human language as well as the human voice is at once both anthropofocal and logofocal. Apart from language itself, the sound world in general is important for Turkish people. In a multilingual situation, such as within the Turkish community in Melbourne, each language can define a different topos.

The transcendentalization of secular Turkish reality is also inscribed in sound. Through being able to view films and listen to radio programs in their own language, Turkish people in Australia have regained some of the soundspace formerly monopolised by English language media. The following example is an illustration of the emotional attachment to one's mother tongue and its power to evoke memories and feelings of place. This is how Aysen reminisced about the first Turkish language radio program in Melbourne introduced several years ago:

*I remember the first time a radio program was broadcast (in Turkish) in Australia. We were working at the factory at the time and we all gathered round to hear the program start. When we heard the voice coming over the radio, speaking in Turkish, we all cried... it was very moving, we all felt so homesick...*
16. Ezan sesi duymuyoruz: we miss the sound of Ezan

Social appropriation of sound is endemic to every society. Religious Turkish people hold the sound of ezan (the Islamic call to prayer) to be one of the most beautiful sounds in the world, along with the sound of the recited Qur’an.

Religious Turks in Melbourne frequently comment that they miss the sound of ezan which in Turkey would herald the breaking of each new dawn and would re-confirm the Muslim reality of their lives. Ezan is an instantiation of esoteric language. This comment, ezan sesi duymuyoruz (we miss the sound of ezan), frequently reiterated, is a metaphor for the cultural void they feel in their new, largely non-Muslim environment. Turkish rural people in Australia also miss the sound of the drums heralding daybreak during Ramadan. Their Muslim sense of reality is muted by this absence, just as the stunted minarets on the Turkish mosque in Broadmeadows symbolise their sense of oppression as a religious minority within Australia.

Ezan thus marks an ambiguous soundspace between anthropocentrist and logocentrist language. Moreover, ezan Islamicizes space and links the cosmological with the social. Hence ezan is also topofocal. This lack of ezan in Australia at large makes it seem that Allah is not respected here. People who have made the haj to Mecca may have brought back clocks which sound ezan at the appropriate times and so, in their homes at least, they can enjoy an Islamic soundspace. The public muting of Islam is thus counteracted by its private intensification. In contrast, secular Turks in Melbourne (who are frequently anti-religious) say they are relieved that they no longer have to listen to what they consider to be an unnecessary cacophony: the discordant sounds of ezan emanating from a variety of mosques in close vicinity, all overlapping and never in harmony. They feel, for their part, that it is a good thing that community leaders are not allowed to impose an Islamic ideology on the people here in Australia.

Ezan is sound at the cosmological level; to illustrate a social level of meaning, we can turn again to kadın sesi (the sound of a woman’s voice). The social meaning attributed to the sound of a woman’s voice is of great cultural significance. It is considered to be na-mahram, that is forbidden to listeners of the opposite sex outside the intimate kinship circle. As one woman explained:

41 At the time of writing, the minarets on the Turkish mosque in Broadmeadows to the north of Melbourne were incomplete. This was due to a ban by the local council on constructions beyond a certain height. As a result, they lacked proportionality vis-a-vis the remainder of the mosque.
She then went on to illustrate the significance of this with a story of the Prophet Mohammad’s young wife, Ayse, who was at home one day alone:

There was a knock at the door, but no one else was at home and so she could not open it. She put a walnut in her mouth to disguise her voice and called out that the Prophet was not in the house.

When Mohammad returned home later in the day, having met the caller on the road and been told of his visit, he asked: “who was in my house when my friend called?”

Ayse explained what she had done.

Apart from underlining the importance attached to sound in Turkish Muslim culture, this story is a metaphor for gender relations where the ideal is for unrelated women and men to lead spatially separate lives. The symbolic gendering of space will be explored more fully in Chapter VII. The point I would like to draw attention to here is the gendered voicing and muting of vocal sound. In the story Ayse acted in an ideal manner: she did not open the door to the caller and she did not endanger him by allowing the beautiful (female) sound of her voice to reach his ears. Stories such as this, drawn from a wide repertoire of Islamic lore (in the sense of that which is learned), link the cosmological and the social: justifying the latter by recourse to the former while at the same time mapping a "right pathway" (doğru yol) for the continuation of ideal behaviour. The narrator’s final comment shows that Turkish Muslim people feel they need to justify their beliefs and actions in Australia. The fact that she drew on a religious story to illustrate her point suggests that the proverb as a whole may be of Islamic origin.

The spatialization of sound is paralleled in Turkish culture by the spatialization of vision, notably through the gaze. While the gendered gaze will be dealt with in a later
chapter, as will the dialectic between voice and vision, the culturally perceived primacy of different human senses concerns us here. According to Mevlana, the 14th century Sufi, humans are essentially visual creatures (*insan gözdur*). In contrast, the Turkish saying *bir dil, bir insan* (one language, one person), discussed in Chapter II, points to language as the marker of humanness, and shifts the sensory focus accordingly to sound and hearing.

### 16.1. Verbal Language, Gesture and the Sensory Body

Among the body terms most obviously linked with language are mouth, tongue, and ear. The following idiomatic sayings involving these terms are indicative of the richness of expression generated by human body imagery in Turkish, where the body as visually and aurally apprehended may be a matrix for generating social meanings. From these few examples, it will be seen that these polysemous terms mean both the organs of sensory perception and the senses themselves.

- **ağız Allah'ın yoludur** the mouth is the pathway to Allah
- **ağız** (mouth) can also mean language, dialect or folksong
- **dilin kemigi yoktur** the tongue has no bone
- **dil** (tongue) also means language
- **kulak misafiri olmak** (lit. to be an ear guest): to overhear someone's conversation
- **kulak** (ear) also means hearing

The iconic linguistic relationship between mouth, language (tongue) and sound (ear) will unfold throughout this chapter in the light of the polysemic nature of all three terms.

The symbolic meaning of the formulaic expression *ağız Allah'ın yoludur* (the mouth is the pathway to Allah) will be dealt with in a later chapter. Questions of translation detain us here: if we translate *ağız* isomorphically as mouth, language or dialect, we direct attention away from the "sound" orientation captured in the notion of voice. If we translate "voice is the pathway to Allah" back into Turkish, however, the isomorphic equivalent would be *ses Allah'ın yoludur*. As we have seen, the range of connotation of Turkish *ses* is wider than for English "voice", covering also the notion of "sound" (e.g. the sound of the wind as well as the cries of animals and so on.) From the point of view
of cross-lingual translation, therefore, ağız is more appropriate than ses to these particular Turkish meanings (in order to distinguish between human and non-human) whereas "voice" is more appropriate than "mouth" in English. Çevirince different olur... (translation changes the meaning).

The cline of animacy, which rests on a tacit distinction between canlı (lit."with soul") and cansız (lit. "without soul") means that there is considerable semantic slippage involved in translation at a lexical level, and the key to this slippage lies in the different polysemic nodes found across different languages.

In standard Turkish, the word dil means both "language" and "tongue". Dil as language, replaces an older term lisan. Therefore dil is tongue in both the abstract sense of language and the concrete sense of bodily organ, whereas lisan is an old Turkish (i.e. Arabic-derived) term for language. Lisanullah means, for example, the Qur'an (lit. the word of Allah). To think of lisan as tongue in this formulaic expression would imply a degree of anthropomorphism unacceptable to the idea of a highly transcendent God. Thus, although lisan also means language and is in current usage amongst rural and religious speakers, it does not mean tongue as bodily organ in Turkish, although it does in Arabic. As a loanword in Turkish, it no longer bears its anthropocentric meaning, just as the word "language" in English disguises its Latinate meaning of tongue. Although lisan belongs to the vocabulary of old Turkish and dil to new standard Turkish, all speakers will be familiar with both terms whether or not they employ them interchangeably or use one and recognize the other.

It was through sound that the word of Allah was revealed to the Prophet. The importance of sound within the Islamic tradition is highlighted by the prescribed absence of anthropomorphic visual embellishment. Visual Islamic art comprises instead very abstract forms, such as, for example, Qur‘anic names. The optical effects of these written names become inscribed in the visual memory of religious Turks since these are ubiquitous items in people’s homes, for example, on wall plaques. It is as if the visual forms are attempts to trace the dynamism of the word music of the divine revelation.

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42 This may be disguised by literacy and diglossia in the case of Arabic.

43 Goethe once described music as "frozen architecture" and it is perhaps significant that Muslims consider him to be a particularly inspired poet. I was asked many times by religious Turks, for example, if Goethe was a Muslim. I could only reply that I was not sure about his spiritual commitments, but that he may well have been influenced by Islam. Halman claims a Sufic influence on the philosophy of Hegel, for example. Relatively little attention has been paid to possible external sources for important changes in mainstream western philosophy, but this is a topic worthy of historical investigation.
The sensory fusion of sound and vision is captured in the polysemic notion of recitation (re-citation). In Chapter VII, we shall see how, during Ramadan, the human body becomes virtually closed to the outside environment through fasting. The only connection is through language, and ideally this is directed towards Allah through prayer and Qur’an recitation. It is significant that the notion of recitation is captured differently in various translations of the meaning of the Qur’an. In Turkish, the verb used is okumak (to read, to recite). This semantic fusion of reading and reciting in the translation is of considerable epistemological interest since in English the former implies a written, visible text, while the focus of the latter is the human voice. Arberry’s translation of the meaning, for instance, is “recite”, while Zayid’s is “read”. Sura 96:4 of the Qur’an refers to the Most Bountiful one, who taught by the pen, taught man what he did not know. (Zayid, p.457). Arberry’s translation reads: ...the Most Generous, who taught by the Pen, taught Man, that he knew not. In the Turkish interpretation, this is rendered: Senin Rabbin nihayetsiz kerem sahibidir. Ki O, kalem ile {yazı} öğretti, insana bilmediği şeylerı öğretti. (Your Lord of endless goodness, who taught writing {which we shall recall also means "destiny"} with the pen, taught things unknown to humankind.) Writing, therefore, according to this religious view, is a gift from Allah rather than a human invention. It is for pious Muslims a primordial symbol of revelation (dis-closure).

The semantic fusion of sound and visible (script-based) text is alluded to in popular oral versions of religious tradition. In conversations with Turkish Muslims, for example, it was frequently commented that Allah told Muhammad to write (yaz: imperative) the Qur’an. This is in clear contradistinction to (secular historical) literary sources which recall the writing of the Qur’an to have taken place in the 8th century, long after the Prophet’s death (see, for example, Cook, 1983:65), but nevertheless provides evidence for nuances of semantic shift as words cross language boundaries and the notions of reading, citing, reciting and writing merge and split in the process. As Nelson (1985:3) points out, Muhammad spread the message by sending out reciters, not texts.... The fixed, written forms of the Qur’an need to disclose their sound through constant recitation, and recitation thus blurs the conceptual distinction between oral and literate traditions.
17. Sound and Topos

Most people are born into a world of sound. Muslim infants, for example, born into a religious milieu, are greeted at birth with the sound of *ezan* intoned into the right ear by a patrilateral relative. Through the left ear they receive their *göbekadi* (lit. "womb name" or "navel name"). *Right* therefore, tends towards the cosmological, while *left* is sociofocal and tends towards the mundane realm. The *navel name* is the name given to the child when cutting the umbilical cord. It generally remains a very intimate name, unused in everyday interaction, where kinship terms are used instead. İsimler tek başına söylenmez (first names are not used by themselves), people say.44

*Göbek* also means "generation" as in the expression "yedi göbek" (lit. "seven generations") which encapsulates the principle of incest taboo, i.e. partners to a marriage must be separated by seven generational links. These names, therefore, encapsulate genealogical meaning.

Unlike the separation of names and "reality" implied by the reocentric *langue/parole* model of language, the polysemy of terms in Turkish oral styles preserves the integrity of meaning across the biological and the social (for example, *göbekadi*), the social and cosmological (for example, *ezan*) or across all three (as, for example, in *kadın sesi* (the sound of a woman’s voice)). As we shall see later on in this chapter, this polysemy applies both to personal names and to more generalised nominal functions in language.

In order to illustrate other aspects of the importance of sound in an Islamic context I shall now describe a prayer gathering of Muslim women. The formal part of the event began with listening to tapes of Qur’an recitations. The recordings were always of a man’s voice. I was told that although women do recite the Qur’an and chant *ilahi*, they should not record their recitations and chants since the sound of a woman’s voice is *na-mahram* (forbidden to members of the opposite sex outside the intimate family circle). *Na-mahram* therefore subsumes the notion of a gendered reality.

The women followed the recitations in their Qur’ans (if they were literate in Quran’ic Arabic) or otherwise listened attentively. Some of the Qur’ans were transliterated into

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44 Even when it is not economical, some Turkish people insist on using kin terms in telegrams: for example, a man sending a message to his wife’s brother who was getting married in Turkey insisted on putting *enisen Mehmet, aylan Fatma* ([from] your brother-in-law Mehmet [and] older sister Fatma) at the end of the message. It would not have seemed proper to have put simply the couple’s first names. Since this was a ritual occasion the kinship terms were better suited as they complied with the appropriate etiquette.
Turkish (Latinate) alphabetic writing, but most were in Arabic script. The non-literate women followed the cadences of the language with their eyes and this was evident in their head movements as they listened. The literate women also traced the sounds with their fingers as they moved along line by line. This produced a synthesis of sound and movement unmediated by literal or intellectual understanding. The body gestures assisted the inscription of the Qur'anic sounds "in the heart". The recording usually lasted for about one hour and was interrupted only when the women repeated Amin at the appropriate times.

The sound here was exogenous; the women were not instrumental in producing it. In contrast to this relatively silent celebration of sound, some of these literate women who led the prayers frequently recited Qur’anic passages and chanted other sacred language on other occasions. The rest of the women then participated as if they were instrumental in voicing the sounds, even though they were actually silent. Their participation was marked by their outstretched hands with up-turned palms. (Only afterwards, during the prayer for the dead, were their down-turned palms placed on their knees). Again, bodily gesture contributed to meaning, both through upper and lower body symbolism (hands raised at a level with the head or placed on the knees) and through orientation (upturned or downturned palms). The women’s attention to the sounds was marked also by focusing their gaze on the Qur’ans read by the other (literate) women. Gesture and orientation entered into tacit realms of meaning unmediated by logocentric understanding.

Great emphasis is placed on the pronunciation when reciting. Those who know the Qur’an by heart (hafizlar) earn merit by reciting it many times over, particularly throughout Ramadan. Unlike with Ong’s assumptions about the predominance of visualism in memory, here memory is aided through sound and rhythm, punctuated by body movement from prostration to erect posture, and from right to left. It is therefore something which involves the whole being as opposed to particular organs of perception. It is impressed on and expressed through the entire body. Visual images in human form are a hindrance to this process of experiencing and memorizing sound since they draw attention outwards towards otherness. While sound is inscribed in bodily movement, the intellectual, logocentric meaning beyond the sound is something which is discovered and debated separately.

\[45\text{Striking the knees is a gesture of grief. According to a Turkish proverb, if a daughter is not disciplined, her mother may later have to beat her (own) knees in despair: } k\text{azn}i \text{ dov}meyen, dizin}i \text{ d}o}ver.\]
Orientational gesture is not restricted to religious contexts. In Turkish culture generally, there is considerable emphasis on gesture as a coded source of signification. The centrality of the human body to the generation of non-verbal meaning is conveyed by the following allusion to the limitations of verbal language. In addition to using proverbs and stories Turkish people frequently tell jokes to evoke contextual meaning. One such joke is about an American student who had gone to Turkey to learn Turkish.\(^{46}\) After spending one year in the country he decided he knew Turkish very well and it was time for him to leave. He packed his bags and headed for the boat jetty.\(^{47}\) When he got there he asked what time the boat left, only to receive a rapid, upwardly rotating arm gesture accompanied by a long, low whistle in reply.

The reply meant that the boat had left ages ago, but the point that is made in telling the joke is that it is not enough to study verbal communication alone in order to learn a language. The student had missed the boat in a metaphorical as well as in a real sense. I interpreted this as a cautionary tale meant for my own good, and did not restrict myself to the words of the language alone. I shall return to jokes in a later chapter, since they have an important bearing on different conceptions of language.

In this joke meaning is carried largely by gesture. The arm movement and the long, low whistle replicate the departure of the boat and the sound of the siren. The spatial relationships and patterns of movement are situated on an up/down, front/back axis where the human body is a surrogate for the boat. The arm movement from below to above replicates the steam rising and the arm rotation suggests the wafting of the steam. The arm movement from front to back, moreover, suggests the passing of time: the body is the "here and now", situated vis-a-vis the moment of departure of the boat, which is in the past temporally, and behind spatially. The body simultaneously stands for the boat AND for the "here and now", and it is a site of condensed chronotopic signification.

Temporality and spatiality are also captured acoustically and verbally. The long low whistle (boat's siren) replicates the sound contours of the Turkish words çoktan geçti... (muchABL departPST3sg) (the boat) has long since left...). The second syllable of the

\(^{46}\)Sometimes, especially when the joke is related by older people, the protagonist is a French or a German professor, indicating that it is not new but has changed to fit the circumstances of the day. The changing identity of this linguistic outsider traces the history of linkages between Turks and their significant (linguistic) others.

\(^{47}\)When the joke is told by a Laz (i.e. Turk from the Black Sea region) the protagonist heads for the boat jetty, thus fitting the geographic reality of the Laz people. When told by other (inland) Turks, he heads for the train station.
first word is drawn out and therefore accentuates the temporal lapse since the boat's departure, and marks the instantaneousness of the departure itself with the brief and abrupt *geçti* (departPST3sg) (rather than *geçmiş* (departREMPAST)).

In Turkish a grammatical form called *mişli zaman* is reserved for reported speech and the narrative past (*geçmiş mişli zaman*). In narrating events, what is salient is whether the speaker has witnessed the event personally (or indeed whether the event is a witnessable one) or is recounting it hearsay. In English a variety of hedges such as "allegedly", "apparently", "it seems", "people say" "supposedly", "reportedly" function at an explicit level to translate what is implicit in the Turkish use of *mişli zaman*. Use of this particular suffix, therefore, encodes epistemological and temporal distance (see Sebüktakin, 1969:126-135). While the linguistic category *zaman* (originally a loan-word from Arabic) points to a grammatical sense of tense, spatially it encodes distance, either as distance in time or distance from an event, i.e. as epistemological distance.48

17.1. Polysemy, Topology and Sound

This is an appropriate juncture at which to return to some Turkish body-part terms in the light of polysemy. In addition to its temporal and spatial imaging qualities, the body is a locus of hierarchisation. The hand gestures used during prayer, for example, map cosmological hierarchies, while social hierarchies are mapped onto body imagery through such expressions as *göz öpmek* (lit. to kiss the eyes {of someone younger}) or *el öpmek* (lit. to kiss the hands) to show respect {for someone senior}. Hierarchy here is connotated through upper (eye), mid (hand) and a dialectic between upper and lower body symbolism, (bending to kiss the hand and then raising it to one's forehead: a gesture which, in terms of body hierarchy, says: my head is lower than your hand; you are twice my stature). These expressions have, or have had in the past, counterparts in the gestural language of greeting and parting. Thus relationships based on age and authority are condensed in the gesture or verbal expression; the human body is a measure for such

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48 Some examples of the temporal application of *mişli zaman* would be

*Geçen sene Türkiye'ye gittik*
*(We went to Turkey last year)*

in contrast to

*Dünya akşam televisyonu seyrettik*
*(We watched television last night).*
relationships, and provides a gauge for the relative social stature of interacting individuals. These gestures belong primarily to a non-gendered realm of secularism.

In contrast left and right orientational gestures serve to level relationships within separate gender domains. At the same time, however, this levelling is projected into a cosmological realm. Religious gestural greetings metaphorically egalitarianise relationships between individuals: women greet women by embracing and kissing on both cheeks: from right to left. Similarly men greet other men. This form of greeting does not cross the gender divide, in contrast to kissing the hand, which does.

Apart from cosmological and (socially) gendered divisions, different languages provide separate realms of topological meaning. The soundworld of religious Turks is divided up into Qur’anic Arabic on the one hand, and various forms of Turkish on the other. Use of the two languages (langues) marks different spheres of reality, the Turkish in this instance being close to the everyday life-world and relatively anthropocentric, the Arabic being more distant and logocentric. Visually too, given the emphasis on Qur’anic recitation during Ramadan, the focus of the gaze is on the word of Allah in Qur’anic calligraphic form. Thus, an important mediatory factor between everyday Turkish experience and religious reality throughout Ramadan is the increased use of Arabic and the multi-sensory focus on the Qu’ran. Qur’anic Arabic, being largely an esoteric domain of Turkish linguistic culture, encodes a striving towards the ineffable as it draws the human towards the divine in a celebration of sound that renews Islamic reality. It is as inspired word that pious Muslims experience the Qur’an. In-spired from Allah. Directionality is crucial here. Moreover, as Goody (1987:133) points out, the Qur’an, as book, is a mobile centre:

"For the Book persists, in whatever land or period Islam is found, as a permanent reference point - communication preserved as a material object and hence relatively immune to the transmuting power of the oral tradition, held only in memory, transmitted only in face-to-face situations..."

If we accept Nelson’s comments on reciting above, moreover, it is the sound of Allah’s word rather than the Qur’an as document or material object which is most salient to pious Muslims. The emphasis is on utterance rather than on text. The “transmuting power of the oral tradition” cannot be simply assumed. Orality and literacy are complementary rather than mutually exclusive. Degrees of variability within oral traditions depend on the authority of transmitters as well as on the medium of transmission. This "permanent reference point", therefore, is not wholly autonomous, depending as it does on being
voiced by human reciters. Since it is re-cited, however, its source is not these human reciters; in other words, linguistic subjects are not agents vis-a-vis the recitation, but rather act instrumentally. This point about agency and instrumentality will be taken up again in Chapter V in the context of a healing ritual involving Qur’anic Arabic.

Goody’s comments imply an over-reification of the book as material object which is not altogether representative of a pious Muslim sense of what the Qur’an is. One day, for example, my friend’s little boy was sitting on the floor playing with what was to me a Qur’an. When I pointed this out to his father he said it didn’t matter as it was not Kur’an-i Kerim (the Holy Qur’an), but merely an ingilizce açıklaması: an English translation (of the meaning). In contrast, on another occasion, when some women were settling down in circles to pray and one of them accidentally knocked a Qur’an onto the floor, she retrieved it hastily, kissed the cover profusely and said Estafurullah (asking Allah’s forgiveness) several times. This was an Arabic Qur’an, both in language and script. The importance attached to Qur’anic Arabic, both as esoteric language and as encapsulation of divine word at the level of sound, implies an ontological focus which transcends the material reality of book or document.

The book as document does, however, enjoy a certain didactic salience. Religious hojas stress the importance of living by the book and of not being like a donkey simply carrying a load on its back without understanding the nature of it. While the recited Qur’an is an important reference point for religious Turks, leftists also study the Qur’anic scriptures in order to know their adversaries, while religious hojas read Das Kapital in order to be able to show how they transcend its message. Opposition to the perceived central message of Das Kapital is often directed against the pivotal importance which Marxists attach to labour. Labour, the hojas say, is not an end in itself. Allah provides riches (bereket) for humankind. If people submit to the will of Allah they will be rewarded. Animals and plants are there to provide food for humans. Again a cline of animacy is implicated here.

For both groups, in studying these books there is a tacit recognition that the written word holds power: the effects of this power in terms of ideological and social divisions was obvious in the political events which took place in their country during the 1970s and 1980s, when Marxists, Kemalists and Islamicists struggled to achieve hegemonic positions. Given the social upheaval within Turkey throughout the last two decades, education has also become a site of intense ideological struggle. This struggle has repercussions within the Melbourne community in that Turkish schoolteachers have
problems knowing which books to recommend to children since they must take into account the political worldview of parents and community leaders. If they are seen to present the children with too many rural themes concentrating on social problems of poverty or on the gecekondu (shantytown, city slum) they may be branded as communists.

17.2. Visual and Verbal Imagery

In addition to the written word, power inheres in pictorial imagery. The following revelatory incident attests to the importance of visual imagery both as site of symbolic power and as a signifier of ideology. When Fatma (a religious hoja) and her husband came to visit, they commented on a picture on the kitchen wall. This picture was of a farmer ploughing a field and was accompanied by a short verse from a famous poem by Nâzım Hikmet:

Here is the furrowed earth,
Here is man:
Lord of the mountains, rocks, wolves and birds.
Here are the sandals,
Here are the patched breeches,
Here is the plough,
Here are the sad, frighteningly wounded oxen.

In evoking the cline of animacy which informs the view of man as lord of nature, the poet is drawing attention to the piteous state of man and his domesticated helper beast. The contrast between the "furrowed" earth and the (implicitly unforrowed) mountains and rocks is reinforced by the contrast between the "wounded" oxen and the (wild, free) wolves and birds.

Hikmet went into voluntary exile in the Soviet Union and died there in 1963. In spite of his own "bourgeois" background, he had become a hero of the people and is now one of the most important figures in Turkish socialist history. At a symbolic level, his intellectual successor might be said to be Yılmaz Güney, (the Kurdish, leftist filmmaker). The poem is highly visual in its imagery and the accompanying picture replicated this imagery. In ideological terms, the poem and the picture, through the condensation of rural imagery of poverty and exploitation, connoted Marxist themes and this is how it was interpreted by Fatma and her husband. The signature Nâzım provided the ideological closure for this interpretation since the poet's name has become synonymous with class struggle.
Other indications of ideological choices are the pictures and photographs displayed in people’s homes. Pictures of Atatürk and miniature Turkish flags indicate a commitment to secular, statist nationalism whereas posters of Yılmaz Güney point to a socialist realist ideology which cross-cuts Kurdish, Turkish and Cyriot identities and highlights class issues instead. Pictures of Lenin (and/or his collected works) allude to an intellectual lineage through which present-day promoters of change link themselves to the philosophy of Marx.

People who adhere to a religious ideology, on the other hand, tend to display few, if any, photographs or other anthropomorphic visual imagery. If any such pictures are displayed they are confined to the main living room where people dine and converse. They are absent from rooms which are used for prayer. During Ramadan, for example, pictures containing human imagery are covered up, and family photographs are removed from walls and tables. In this way, the sacred topos is extended to envelop the sacred chronos. This banishing of anthropomorphic imagery serves to place greater emphasis on the word of Allah (Allah sözü) as manifested in Qur’anic Arabic in calligraphic script. Some observations on the iconic dimensions of Turkish Qur’anic vocabulary are salient here. The pages yapraklar (lit. “leaves”) of the Qur’an are often coloured green. Pink secde gülü (tiny “roses”) mark key names which are important as ideational reference points. They are deictic too, in that they indicate appropriate body posture: secde means prostration. The linguistic symbolism here of “roses” and “leaves” suggests a metaphorical tree of knowledge.

The following incident will also serve to illustrate canonic Islamic attitudes towards the human image. One day during Ramadan, Gülşen, a newcomer, asked to join in a reading group. She had an Arabic Qur’an and was able to follow the script quite well. She received help in finding the relevant Suras and wanted to mark the place. On her way to the gathering she had collected her mail from the letterbox: all advertising material. She tore a strip off one of the pamphlets and was about to place it between the pages when she was teased by one of the other women: just make sure you don’t put a picture of one of your fancy men in there. This caused some laughter as Gülşen was a widow and was often teased about possible romantic liaisons. Another woman took it all much more seriously, however, and jumped to her feet, more or less grabbing the paper and

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49The alternative term sayfa (from Persian) is used when referring to a numbered page.

50Basso (1973:1017) describes a Western Apache (religious) writing system where some symbols tell what to do as well as what to say. These tiny Qur’anic roses would appear to serve a similar purpose.
scrutinising it carefully. With words to the effect that it would be sinful if the human image came into contact with the holy book, she assured everyone that the advertisements contained only pictures of furniture and therefore could be used as bookmarks. Revelatory incidents such as these point to tensions in focus with regard to the interpretation of Islamic principles governing the depiction of human forms.

17.3. Naming and Topology

The imagery of personal names is also important in creating and maintaining ideational space. Through naming and kinship terminology, Turkish people place themselves and others in ideational spaces. The tensions between anthropocentric and logocentric spaces are captured in formulaic language as people draw on metaphors of kinship, orientation and place to situate themselves and others in appropriate spaces. This is achieved through changing metaphors in different discursive strategies.51

Turkish people pay a lot of attention to personal names both in the older belief that a name is an integral part of the person52 (or person’s destiny) and in the newer observation that choice of name often reflects the ideology of those who bestowed the name in the first place. Naming is a way of constraining identity and of shaping interaction between people as well as a way of classifying kin relationships.

One young man, for example, told me he was originally named Emre by his father, but he became very sick soon after birth and a faith healer traced the cause of his sickness to his name, which was too heavy and was weighing him down. Emre is the name of a famous Sufi philosopher, Yunus Emre. The young man’s name was changed to Barbaros (the name of Sultan Suleiman’s chief admiral, who had led a courageous and adventurous life) and the infant soon recovered his health.

Some names are officially tabooed by the Turkish state and consequently take on a heightened political significance like, for instance, Deniz (because of a student by that name who was hanged for "subversive" activities during the 1970s). This is an example of an event-related name and in a tense political situation people with names such as these would be treated as if they are potential revolutionaries and, by force of persuasion,

51 My own alternating use of personal names and pronouns throughout this thesis is designed to reflect degrees of familiarity and formality. In the wake of Fabian (1983), anthropologists have been very intense about tense, but have paid less attention to textual naming strategies and their epistemological implications.

52 The English "person" comes from per sonare which implicates a semantic link with sound (Steiner, 1989:226).
often become just that. Within an Australian Turkish context too, such names would mark their bearers off as solcular (leftists) or komünistler (communists). Another significant political example of linguistic taboo is the name Evren. It is the surname of the former President of Turkey, Kenan Evren, but as a common term means "universe". Because of the potential for subversive joking inherent in this polysemy, the word is tabooed in its common form.

Children born to religious parents are given orthodox Muslim names: Abu Bekr, Muhammad, Mahmoud, Ramazan (if born during the month of fasting, in which case calendrical time is implicit in the name). Some families have children called separately Muhammed, Mehmet and Mahmoud, even though, from a logocentric viewpoint, they are variations on the "same" name. This practice calls into question any strong connection between naming and individuation. Turkish personal (first) names frequently have the meaning of a particular virtue: Mert (manly, brave); Ergin (mature); Derman (strength) or of poignant social ideas such as Devrim (revolution) or Barış (peace). Turkish schoolchildren in Australia, especially girls, like to anglicize their names: Aysun becomes Suzie and Lila becomes Lisa. Suzie and Lisa adopt these anglicized names for interaction with other schoolchildren, but their parents may be quite unaware that they are known by anything other than Aysun and Lila. The latter names are used in the context of family and neighbours whereas the former are used with non-Turkish outsiders and are linked with notions of friendship and Australianness. Until about ten years ago it was common practice in Australian bureaucratic circles to ask for people's Christian names. To Turks and other non-Christians who had to fill in forms, this was quite absurd, but it did lead to some Turks using the expression: my Muslim name is Mohammad simply to counteract this practice.

First names are not used widely amongst rural Turks, and surnames are still associated with officialdom. Rural people are known mostly by kin terms (ağabey/older brother, amca/uncle, teyze/aunt, abla/older sister, dede/grandfather) or by terms such as hoca/teacher preceded by the first name. Urban people who are more individualistic in orientation, may ask, for example, isminiz nedir? (What is your name?) or introduce themselves: İsmim... (my name is ...). In formal settings, soyadı (surnames) may be used. Urban people use first names as terms of address and reference. Terms of address, because they are contextualised in the speech event, are relatively unambiguous, but terms of reference need more precision and this often comes from regional identity tags such as İzmirli Ahmet/Ahmet from Izmir, Kıbrıslı Mehmet/Mehmet the Cypriot and so on. In this way, place is encapsulated in identity and names are topologised.
Apart from the classificatory function of kinship terminology, kinship in general enters into metaphorical language in order to give affective meaning to conversational interchanges. Someone who speaks in a quiet, subservient way can be told not to act like a new bride (*gelin*). Alternatively it can be said that someone spoke like a mother-in-law (*kaynana*) if she used harsh commanding language. These expressions are calqued on the stereotypes of such kin relationships but convey meaning in a way that is highly salient in a Turkish context. The relationship between *kaynana* and *gelin* in a patrifocal household is apt to be one fraught with tension, and *gelinler* (plural) are the subject of much conversation between older women. This particular relationship is symbolic of the nature of the relationship between the two families and is crucial for domestic harmony. It is also the subject of countless stories and films. The mother-in-law film constitutes a genre unto itself. Another metaphorical use of *kaynana* gives us pause: *kaynana dili* (lit. mother-in-law’s tongue) is a popular name for cactus. Turkish people often transfer these expressions to English, thereby imbuing English lexicon with Turkish metaphor.

Unlike this potentially fraught relationship, parental ties are idealised in many Turkish expressions. While *anadil* (protolanguage) captures the sense of "matrix", *anadili* (mother tongue) has all the resonances of intimacy accorded a mother. Similarly, *atasözü* (proverb) (lit. "father word" or "ancestor word") connotes a similar closeness. The linguistic imagery here enforces the notion that Turkish proverbs are the bones of the language, although there may be no explicit statement to this effect. Likewise, the state can be envisaged as a father as in *devlet baba*, while the earth is a mother: *toprak ana*. The nurturing qualities of motherhood and the authoritarian qualities of fatherhood are encapsulated in the idiom and say something about the relationship of speaker to referent when such idioms are used. Tone of voice can give the necessary quality of sarcasm, irony or sincerity intended.

The power of such imagery should not be underestimated. Responding to criticisms of the Turkish government for the state of their country, one woman vehemently asserted that it was not the government’s fault if Turkey was a poor country; if your parents are bad you still love them and show them respect, she claimed, and so it should be with one’s country. For other people too, loyalty to the country’s rulers was identical to loyalty to their country. Remarks such as *if the Turkish government is communist, then we will be communist* were representative of attitudes that stressed political loyalty to people over loyalty to abstract principles. As relationships are idealised through the idiom of kinship, political behaviour is rendered acceptable.
Political usage of kinship terms as in the earlier examples generally tends to be by conservative people. Kinship terminology suggests intimacy and social closeness. An example of the ways in which the potential for kinship ideals to inform social and linguistic action could be subverted was when Kenan left some chocolate on the table as he went to answer the telephone. It was part of his lunch. Left unattended, the chocolate was soon spotted by his hungry friends who helped themselves. By the time he returned there was none left and when he asked about it he was told that Ahmet had taken it.

*He said he was your relative so we didn't interfere.*

This comment on kinship as ideology operated at a metalevel of referentiality.

Another illustration of how the ideals of kinship can be invoked in language generally occurred when Handan and her friend were joking about a singer on television.

*Sana selam söyleyor... (he is singing for you) Neşe Abla*

said Handan.

At that moment Neşe’s young daughter came in from school. She overheard the remark and asked who this singer was and how her mother knew him. Handan replied quickly:

*He is a relative (of your mothers).*

Only kin (fictive or real) can communicate in this intimate way, particularly across a gender boundary. This speech event implicated the notion of *na-mahram* in a tacit way.

Within Turkish culture, these kinship metaphors (and proper names) vie with others such as the sound-based logocentrist realities of Islam and the spatial metaphors of *gurbet* and *yol* (see Chapter VI). Other topologizing effects of linguistic naming are less overt.

17.4. Trans-location: *yerleşmek, taşınmak*

Two of the Turkish terms most closely associated with changes of abode are *yerleşmek* (place.CAUS.INF) and *taşınmak* (stone.CAUS.INF). We have already encountered *yer* (earth, place) in *yaratmak* (to create) (see Chapter III). *Taşınmak* implicates the imagery of stones/rocks as ideational landmarks. The notion of stone will be explored further in Chapter VI. The Turkish *nerede* (where) is a contraction of *ne yerde* (which placeLOC). The ubiquitous *nerelisiniz?* (where are you from?) with which Turkish people in Melbourne start the process of getting acquainted, implicates place in identity. When Feride was asked this question, for example, she replied:
Beyim Adanalı, babam da Adanalı, fakat ben Erzincan’da doğdum... Ankara’ya yerleştim... en çok kaldığım yer Avustralya

(My husband is from Adana, my father is also from Adana, but I was born in Erzincan... I moved to Ankara... Australia is the place I have stayed the longest).

Feride’s reply is representative of many to the same question. Where she comes from is implicated in who she comes from; her notions of place of origin are androcentrically defined and encompass her own actual place of birth. Her own life experience has here been envisioned as one of re-location, first in Ankara and then in Australia. Place names map her itinerary and the topological yer simultaneously posits and positions her identity.

Lexicalised notions of place are also shaped according to different political and epistemological contexts. Like yurt (homeland), memleket (country: an Arabic-derived term) is a highly polysemous notion with deep emotional resonances in Turkish. Some of its emotive power derives from patriotic associations enshrined in well-known poems. When Turkish people from different regions gather together for the first time, part of getting acquainted is to enquire: hangi memlekettensiniz? (which part of the country are you from?) or siz hangi tarafstansiniz? (which side of Turkey are you from? Replies will usually focus first of all on a well-known town in the region and then on smaller and smaller points of reference in accordance with the interlocutor’s knowledge of the area. The following revelatory verbal event will illustrate the polysemy and attendant ambiguity of memleket and its dependence on context for clear referentiality.

When speaking about a singer on a video film, Hatice said:

o başka memleketten (he is from another country/region)... in order to explain his distinctively non-Turkish accent (he was in fact Kurdish).

Hatice was corrected by Fisün: biz hepimiz aynı memlekettentiz (we are all from the same country). The different shades of meaning range from nation (as in nation-state) to one’s own home area. It is quite common for people to refer to their homes as benim memleketim.

According to nationalist ideology, the south-eastern mountainous regions of the country {Kurdistan}53 are an integral part of Turkey. Kurdish people in Turkey are fighting for an autonomous homeland, in consort with fellow Kurds in Iran, Syria, Iraq and the

53Leclerc (1986:239), claims that the words “Kurd” and “Kurdistan” are forbidden in Turkey.
former Soviet Union. Others are demanding language rights (i.e. that Kurdish be recognized as the first language of the Kurdish people and that it be taught in schools in Turkey). They also want ownership of their land without necessarily setting up a separate state. To have admitted that the Kurdish singer was from another "country" or "nation" would have fuelled recognition of a separate Kurdish national identity, and the motivation behind correcting the first speaker was conspicuously political.

17.5. Voice and Vision: Literacy and Orality

Social distance and closeness are also salient in the choices made between oral and literate forms of communication. Even though people may be literate and capable of writing letters to family and friends they often prefer to telephone Turkey in order to have spontaneous, immediate contact and to hear the other person’s voice. Letter-writing is not satisfying in the same way, even though degrees of intimacy may be conveyed with warm salutations and greetings such as:

İyi günlerin sizin olması dileğiyle. (With best wishes/wishing you good days...)

Seni seven özleyen arkadaşın... (Your loving friend, who is missing you...)

or

Mutlu günlerin sizin olması dileğiyle, gözlerinden öperim...

(Wishing you happy days, I kiss your eyes...) (to someone younger)

Familiar voices are an eminently important part of the soundworld. It is quite common for ordinary families to receive telephone bills in the thousands of dollars, and it is also quite usual for them to be unable to pay and so have the telephone disconnected for some time. When this happens, they may go to a neighbour’s house to telephone Turkey, but this kind of resource sharing frequently leads to suspicions of unfairness and accusations of deceit about costs of calls.

Often when letters or phone calls have not been exchanged for some time, a relative in Turkey may send some family photographs. This is often interpreted as a rebuke. Hiç haber yok diye... (as if to say they haven’t heard from us...). It will, however, usually

54 The various Kurdish/Turkish demands for autonomy in terms of language, land and statehood are tempered by events on the world scene, such as the Gulf War, and the shifting positions of superpowers, as well as the more locally-grounded issues of access to and control over resources. At a local level too, intermarriage between Kurds and Turks means that families fear the implications of outright separatism.
prompt a reply. Through sending photographs, the recipient is visually reminded simultaneously of the sender's existence and absence. This use of visual imagery as communication marks a continuity with traditional rural forms of spatial interaction where people often choose to show what they mean through body posture, gesture or dress rather than articulate their intentions verbally. To use Reynolds' terms, photographs used in this way are about the coercion of mental imagery, as people's memories are manipulated in subtly created face-to-face encounters where the other is physically absent. Such interplay of visual and verbal language allows a Heideggerian saying based on a sensory complementarity, rather than on a definitive appropriation of the world by the word.

17.6. Topology and Polysemy

In summary then, in this chapter we have seen some of the importance of linguistic soundspace. Names create and maintain ideational space, while different emphases on voice and vision (the mouth/ear and the eye) phenomenologically capture alternating and interlocking realities. Sound and visual imagery are rarely mutually exclusive, but by concentrating on each in turn it has been possible to highlight separate aspects of embodiment and transcendence. The senses primarily engaged in language use are vision and hearing but other senses and emotions may be evoked through colour and imagery. These sensory media all play a vital role in the practice and experience of language. The topological implications for notions of language relate primarily to polysemy. Polysemic language condenses and collapses different spheres of reality, whereas articulated codes which strive for monosemic meaning isolate these spheres into separate discourses or subject matters.

Underpinning Turkish ideational life then, and informing linguistic topology are different epistemological bases which constitute separable but related anchors on the life world. While the (erect) human body provides above all a model of hierarchy, the prostrated body implies submission to a higher order. Language too (especially the esoteric model provided by the Qur'an) points to a transcendent reality but offers simultaneously the potential for a certain levelling, symmetry, or equality at a social level. The relationships between the two are situated along different sensory parameters. Finally, place (as shaped by migration and spatial orientation) and experienced by a

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56The notion of epistemological bases comes from the works of A.L. Becker.
dislocated migrant community becomes an encapsulating reality as Turks become a minority within a wider Australian space and their language becomes relatively muted within the larger soundspace of English. This in turn results in an idealisation of Turkey as yurdumuz (our homeland) and an incipient mythologizing of place as source as in the new identity category: Türkiyeliler (people of Turkey).

The social is inspired by kinship metaphors, but is also gendered and divided into religious and secular domains, while the cosmological spans the visual and the auditory. The "linguistic" needs to be broken down into logocentrist and anthropocentrist orientations, taking note of such phenomena as literacy and multilingualism. The realities generated by Turkish are both logocentric and sound-based. Anthropomorphism centred on the human body informs the colloquial speech of rural people, whereas the book (as mobile centre), auditory as well as tangible, provides a basis for the reality shaped by Islam. Over and above the fact that Islam is a "written" religion is the fact of re-citation.

The following chapter contains ethnographic descriptions of three graphocentric events in which I continue this exploration of the visual and semantic aspects of literacy and script.
CHAPTER V

Graphocentricity and Language

Kağıt insandan sabırlıdır...
(Paper is more patient than people)

In this chapter, I continue the exploration of sound and vision. By focusing on the interplay of orality and literacy in specific interlingual and graphocentric situations, I will highlight the different ways in which language is experienced - both visually and orally/aurally. At the same time verbal language, whether written or spoken, will be considered as part of a broader system of signification involving various topological facets of non-verbal communication such as orientation (especially right/left oppositions) and notions of enclosure or boundedness versus openness.

17.7. Scripts in a Melbourne Public Context

Within the public cosmopolitan areas of metropolitan Melbourne written language manifests itself in an array of scripts in a variety of contexts: on large notice boards at major street junctions, where bureaucratic social messages are displayed to the residents of multicultural areas, messages about the availability of various social services, in Chinese, Arabic, Cyrillic, and Greek. In libraries and newsagencies these same scripts catch the eye on noticeboards, newspaper titles and displays of books.

Certain scripts predominate in particular commercial areas of Melbourne: Chinese in Victoria Street, Richmond, or Arabic in Sydney Road, Brunswick. Due to their relative novelty in these environments, they are somehow more noticeable (to long-term residents of Melbourne, or indeed any Australian urban milieu) than the Latin script which is part of the Melbourne scene as a whole and has blended into the cultural scenery over decades. For the chirographically Latin-orientated residents of Melbourne, they are exotic scripts (to a degree that Cyrillic and Greek are not), and for speakers and/or writers of Chinese and Arabic, they are symbolic of their own intimate chirographic universe in a sea of otherness.

17.7.1. Script and the Turkish community

For members of the Turkish community (excluding those from the southern Arabic-speaking region of Anatolia), Arabic is a learned language/script. Qur’anic Arabic script can be used for old Turkish, such as in ilâhi (hymns or chants). Its relevance to Turkish people in Melbourne is primarily religious, but it is also symbolic of pastness,
particularly the Ottoman past. For people involved in the renaissance of Islam, it is also symbolic of a religious future. Familiarity with Arabic script does not necessarily entail being fully literate in Arabic. Apart from religious specialists, the large majority of Turkish people are not functionally literate in Arabic. Although some people learn colloquial Arabic if they have a lot of Arab friends, this is usually restricted to oral usage. Most literate Turkish people on the other hand know the Latin script either in modern Turkish or English or both. Cyrillic script is of no direct relevance to Turks in Melbourne, except to those researching Turkish history.

There are three particular uses of written language in the community:

1. the first is instrumental: a medium of curing in the case of personal or social disorders. This involves the use of Arabic writings from the Qur'an or from other sacred sources; knowledge of the writing itself is not transmitted;

2. the second is a seemingly passive submission to the (written) word of Allah as manifested in the Qur'an in what amounts to a celebration of sound: a singing of the universe, i.e. language as logos in the full sense of saying and listening;

3. the third is functional and is aimed at enabling people to use everyday Turkish and/or English, and to provide access to the respective bodies of literature in each language.

The first two uses are restricted to religious people, while the third is important to secular and religious Turks alike. I shall attempt to spell out some of the ways in which these scripts impinge on the lives of Turkish people in Melbourne, by providing detailed ethnographic data from three graphocentric events, focusing on the different roles of written language in each.

In my descriptions of these events I am using the term "graphocentricity" to refer specifically to written language rather than to visual imagery in general. This term is preferable to "literacy event" because it focuses narrowly on script. It is also preferable to "logocentric event", since it has to do with written language rather than with language in general.

1. a healing ritual involving Qur'anic Arabic,

2. a religious gathering of Turkish women for a Qur'an recitation, and

3. a literacy class where Turkish women gathered to learn to read and write their own (standard) language.
The location of agency in the three events is highly problematic. The instrumentality of writing in the first event hovers too on the brink of a special kind of agency as it becomes empowered through breath. Again in the second event the location of agency in language itself calls for more detailed discussion, which I shall defer until after I have given a detailed description of the event. The location of agency in the third event is less problematic as it is most obviously social, and located in the participants.

17.8. First event: Healing ritual

 Ağız Allah'ın yoludur... (Language/the mouth is the pathway to Allah...)

We have seen in Chapter III, that according to the above Turkish saying, the mouth is the pathway to Allah. Recall that in colloquial Turkish the word ağız means both language and mouth, although within Modern Standard Turkish the meaning is restricted to mouth. Thus, language too is a pathway. The mouth is a pathway in that nefes (breath), which is symbolic of the soul (can) expires through the mouth at death. The linkages between the notions of can and nefes are extremely complex. Both words are highly polysemous. In Turkish the word can means self as well as soul. People say canım istemiyor (my soul/self does not want {it}), for example, as a polite way of declining an offer of food. Nefes is a cognate of the Arabic nafs (soul) (see Nasr, n.d.:50). According to the same Islamic scholar (ibid:28, n.4), Sufis speak of the very 'stuff' or substance of the universe as the 'Breath of the Compassionate' (nafas-archahman) which passing through the 'essences' produces created beings like the human breath which produces words and sounds by passing through the vocal cords (sic). In Turkish, nefes etmek means to cure by breathing on the sick.

The healing ritual involves the mediation of a muskaci (faith healer). The word muska is an Arabic loanword; when used in Turkish it is glossed as yazıl şey (a) written thing), an amulet. Because yazı means destiny as well as writing, the muska evokes too an association with destiny. These written things or pieces of writing are from the Qur'an or from other sacred sources such as dualar (prayers) or Hadith (sayings of the Prophet

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56 Can is of Persian origin and nefes is Arabic.

57 As Nasr (ibid. pp 160/1) points out, in Arabic as in many other languages... the words for breath (nafas) and soul (nafs) are related. Nasr (ibid: loc.cit.) sees in this a profound cosmological principle which is also related to the invocation of the Name of God...
Mohammad). They are written (but never authored) by people called *muskacı* usually to cure some disorder which manifests itself psychologically and/or physiologically and also to avert *nazar*. *Muskalar* (plural) are also sometimes used to predict events in an individual's life (*kismet açmak için*...). *Açmak* means literally "to open" and its usage in this kind of set phrase points to a semantic overlap between notions of opening and notions of revealing or dis-covering. The healer who performs the writing/curing is a medium through whom order is restored, but the power inherent in this restoration derives from the sacredness of the words as they are voiced by the healer. The issue of where we are to locate agency in this situation: in the act of writing, in the writing itself (*qua* object), in the empowered breath of the healer or in a transcendental locus of power such as *nafas-al-rahman* will be addressed later in this chapter.

The word *nazar* comes from Arabic and means gaze, opinion, view. An example of idiomatic usage would be "*Benim nazarında*"... (in my opinion), but when used in a healing context the notion has deep emotive power. The Turkish word *göz* meaning eye or gaze has a very similar semantic range and is often used interchangeably with *nazar*. Religious Turks claim the surrounding world to be inhabited by invisible yet seeing creatures (*cinler* or *periler*) who have power to affect the lives of human beings. This power can be averted by proper dress and modest behaviour on the part of adults (particularly women) and by protecting children through the use of a particular blue stone (known alternatively as *nazar boncugu*,58 *nazar taşı* or *mavi boncuk*). This stone is pinned onto the cradles of infants, for example, or suspended over the doorways of bedrooms where infants sleep. According to Turkish religious hojas, however, belief in the power and efficacy of these stones is not an integral part of Islam but a false belief or folk superstition. There are, therefore, significant differences between the beliefs and practices of religious hojas and those of the bulk of the population.

This practice of healing is banned in Turkey and there are severe fines and/or punishment for practitioners, since it is felt by proponents of the secular state to play on the "superstitions of (uneducated) simple people".59 Nevertheless, this kind of healing is practised widely in the rural areas of Turkey and amongst Turkish migrants abroad. In Australia, the Sydney Turkish press frequently advertises the services of various healers and there are several practitioners within the Turkish Melbourne community. According

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58 *Nazar boncugu gibi* means single or conspicuous.

59 A young woman who called on the mother of a new-born baby, for example, was reluctant to look at the child because she was menstruating. The mother told her this was superstitious nonsense and not an integral part of Islamic beliefs.
to Turkish hojas, this practice can only be directed to beneficial purposes, whereas harmful uses of hidden power are made by a cinci hoca (someone who invokes the power of the djinns in order to harm people). Other informants have stressed that in certain instances the Qur'an can be read backwards (i.e. from left to right) for malevolent purposes but that their knowledge is based on hearsay and not on direct experience (i.e. they have not witnessed these practices directly). I shall describe the activities of one healer (a woman), who is also a religious hoja. For her, such healing is a vital and integral part of the Turkish Islamic tradition. She is Sunni Muslim. Most of her clients who come to her with health and family problems also are Sunni Muslims.

The women who come to her may be suffering from headaches or sleeplessness, or because of family tensions. The power first to comprehend and then to deal with these problems is channeled through the muska or writing as manipulated by the healer. The client explains her symptoms and is questioned by the healer about her family situation. When the discussion has reached a point where the healer has a fairly clear picture of the situation, she is able to select an appropriate piece of writing. This may be a verse from the Qur'an, one which is selected because it has a direct bearing on the essential axis of the problem.

If it is a problem that rests on an underlying tension between a woman and her husband because of their daughter's behaviour (for example, she is going out with her Australian friends too much and is not to be trusted in preserving family honour (namus)), then a verse which alludes to the proper respect relationship between children and parents may be used. Alternatively, it may be a problem that involves unresolved tensions between the families of the woman and her husband, such as unpaid bridewealth or an elopement.

After the muska has been selected it is written out (in Arabic script) on a small piece of paper, this is folded and refolded into a particular shape. I have been told that the shape is not important but my observations have been that those pinned onto the clothes of small boys (to avert nazair) were triangular, while those made for women were oblong. Once folded, the muska is put inside a piece of plastic or a small piece of cloth and sewn up. It is then pinned onto the underclothing (usually at the back), or knotted into the corner of a headscarf. Before the muska is given to the client in this way, however, the words are recited over and over again in a low voice by the healer. She sits opposite the client and

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60 Some Turkish people reserve the title hoca for men only, whilst others use it in a non-gendered way. This healer was always addressed and referred to as Fatma Hoca. Hoja is the common English orthography; hoca is the Turkish orthography.
looks straight into her eyes first and then begins to recite. The language of the *muska*, therefore, manifests itself both visually and aurally/orally. The recitation induces yawning on the part of the healer and I have been told that this is a sign that there is *nazâr* or malevolent power involved.⁶¹

In the case of the healer yawning, the stifling of breath and vocal sound is brought about by *nazâr*, the *nazâr* of a man's gaze being particularly strong. The kind of yawning induced by the healer reciting is significant. If the breath expires easily it means that the *nazâr* is caused by a woman's gaze; if it is stifled by excessive yawning, it is because of the *nazâr* of a man's gaze. Once the gender of the agent/instrument of the *nazâr* has been established it provides further evidence of the hidden nature of the problem. It appears that at this stage the healer receives further visual clues concerning the agent/instrument of *nazâr*.

In one case I witnessed the healer recited the verses and was quickly overcome by yawning: that meant that something was being revealed. She saw a man first. Later after a second or third yawn, she saw he had greeny blue eyes. His gaze showed he was jealous. The healer then blew out her breath two or three times, then she breathed onto her hands and stroked the woman client from the head down the arms and legs. After that she drank some water from the glass and it was passed to her client. The water had been placed next to the healer before she started reciting.

According to the healer, the man in question turned out to be the father-in-law of her client and the problem stemmed from the fact that he was attracted to her. Bridewealth had not been paid by her husband's family as she had eloped with him. Both her parents and his had been opposed to the marriage but his family accepted that the young wife was a very hard worker and eventually welcomed her. But now her father-in-law desired her for himself.

The woman had come in the first instance complaining of persistent headaches. The *muska* was not at first effective. She returned a second time and this time another woman accompanying her was asked to leave the room, as was I. The reason given was that my hair was not covered and that this might have hampered her recovery the first time. Also

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⁶¹Djéribi (1988:44) writing about the evil eye, sees in the act of yawning an incontestible sign of *exorcism* ("... le bailement, cette bouche qui s'ouvre et se referme sur son vide, n'est-il pas le signe sans conteste de l'exorcisme achevé?")
I was not a Muslim. The healer herself developed a bad headache after the session and that night she slept very badly. She claimed this to be a result of the struggle to discover the source of nazar. On some occasions a small payment was made. At other times it appeared to be understood that some kind of reciprocity was involved. When the healer accepted the payment it was usually with words to the effect that this money would be put towards the expenses of the mosque. In this way, the ritual was further sanctioned as an authentic Islamic practice.

For the healer in question the muska was powerful because of its sacred source; it worked through the word of Allah (Allah sözü), whereas for historically minded secular Turks, the practice is (like belief in the evil eye) based on empty superstitions propagated by tricksters to exploit the gullibility of "naive/simple {rural} people" (saf insanlar). Because the power of cinperiler and nazar and the efficacy of muska are questioned, practitioners feel constrained to declare their belief in them: mutlaka görenler var... ((these) seeing {creatures} definitely exist...) they say.

The material substances involved in this ritual are the Qur'anic writing (on paper) and the water. The human breath of the healer has been imbued by the Qur'anic sounds and transformed into a healing medium. Breath is the spirit of life. Through reciting the words of the muska, the healer's breath has become the vehicle for the healing power of the sacred word of Allah. People claim that "every word in the Qur'an is the word of Allah" (Kuran’daki her kelime Allah sözüdür). Differences between kelime (word) (an Arabic loanword) and söz (word) (which is "pure" Turkish), were explained thus: kelime, being an Arabic word, should be used for talking about the Qur’an, whereas söz should be used for talking about ordinary words (collectively) and sözçük for individual words. This was not always borne out by observed usage, however, since Allah sözü is a relatively set phrase in Turkish. Kelime has a strong association with writing (the related kalam, for example, means both "pen" and "theology", whereas the overtones of söz are oral (e.g. in the sense of giving one’s word {of honour}. Söz vermek (lit. to give {one’s} word) means to promise. The modern term sözçük captures the notion of word as linguistic unit (lexeme, textual word) at both the level of writing and the level of sound.

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62 I believe that it was partly out of politeness that I was not asked to leave alone, but the second woman also wanted to question me about my other contacts with the Turkish community. In addition, it is considered unwise for people to be left alone (tek başına) as it leaves them conspicuous and prey to Satan. Since I was under constant pressure from this particular hoja to become a Muslim, however, her comment could also be interpreted as a hint directed towards me, since most persuasion of this sort is indirect persuasion. The hoja often claimed to have had recurrent dreams in which she saw me dressed in Muslim clothing.

63 Rural Turks frequently employ the notion of cinperiler as a contraction of cinler (djinns) and periler (fairies).
17.8.1. Dis-closure/En-closure

In the process of healing her client, the hoja dis-closes or reveals what was formerly hidden. Intimations of the causes of the client's problems are apprehended after having first indicated their presence by interrupting the healer's vocalization.

The water is the material force which carries the healing power of the word to the client. As people drink from the same glass it is said this power is dispersed amongst them. The flow of breath, the flow of speech, the flow of power and the flow of water all become contained, first by the writing itself, which fixes the verbal utterance in visible form, then by enfolding and enclosing further within cloth or plastic and sewing up, and thirdly by the imbibing of the water by those present and its containment (as a vehicle for the word) within the human body. As the healer strokes the head and limbs of the client's body with her breath-empowered hands, the body's extremities are sealed, and the healing power enclosed. Throughout the performance of the ritual, the vocal tract of the healer is the site of the principal facets of healing qua act: as the locus of the recitation, yawning, blowing and imbibing, and as the pathway or channel of the healer's breath. In this way, the mouth is the pathway to Allah.

By having recourse to such healing rituals, parties to a potential quarrel are able to have tensions deflected and diverted away from the source of disorder, in this case the client's father-in-law. Tensions which might otherwise have resulted in angry words are averted through the efficacy of the muska worn by the client. Writing, as Ong points out, slows down the thinking process, allowing the writer time to reflect. In this psychological sense, paper is more patient than people: Kağıt insandan sabırlı... : writing can thus indirectly exorcise anger and other strong feelings. In the ritual, the muska, although written down by an intermediary, is instrumental in exteriorising and slowing down the emotional response, and in the process heals.

Through its association with breath, the locus of the power of words here is clearly in the oral dimension of language. Language in turn is instrumental or vehicular. As muska qua amulet, on the other hand, the vehicle of power is written language, in this instance in Arabic script written from right to left. Within the context of the entire event, however,

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64 There are strong taboos amongst conservative Turkish people against intimate commensality with strangers. To drink from the same glass is to share the same fate (kader).

65 Demet recounted how her parents had prevented her from attending school in Turkey; they feared that if she learned to write and read she would be able to exchange love letters with young men from neighbouring villages.
the relationship between language and power hinges on the agency of language, the instrumentality of the healer and the passivity of the client as receptacle of the empowered word and as locus of the *musa qua* object.

The oral and written dimensions of language are patterned differently in the next event. The contextual dimensions of the event are focused less on the body *per se* than on larger topographical aspects of voicing and gesture, such as orientation and enclosure as well as on the formulaic framing of verbal action.

The word "görenler" (those who see) does not clearly indicate whether agents are human or non-human seers. This is an instance of Turkish participles facilitating the creation of opaque meanings which allow for a multiplicity of interpretations depending on the speaker(s)'/hearer(s)' knowledge and shared ideas. Successive orientations towards reality are contested by alternative views, usually by focusing on key aspects of noetic behaviour. These are signalled linguistically by polysemous lexical items such as *nazar* and *göz* and by nuances of meaning grammatically encoded in participles.

**17.9. Second event: religious gathering**

*Milletimiz Türk, dinimiz İslam, kitabımız Kuran-i-Kerim*

*(Our nationality is Turkish, our religion is Islam, our book is the Holy Qur’an)*

For people on the religious side of the Turkish social spectrum, the above slogan encapsulates their sense of identity vis-a-vis the world at large. What will concern us in the discussion of graphocentricity in this event is the relationship between these Muslim women participants and their holy book, which will be examined within the context of different phenomenological aspects of language. Since the revitalization of Islam during the past two decades or so, stricter adherence to the Qur’an is advocated amongst Turkish Muslims along with stringent concerns about staying on the the "true path" that leads directly to paradise. As will be seen, symbolic aspects of orientation and spatial interaction are an important part of the overall meaning of Qur’anic recitation.
17.9.1. Spatio-temporal location of the event

The religious gathering which I shall now describe took place during Ramadan. It was one of a number of such gatherings held by a small group of women in a private home every Friday (Cuma). Friday is, of course, the Muslim holy day and the name Cuma is derived from the word cemaat meaning gathering or community. The timing of the event, therefore, has considerable bearing on the use of interpersonal space on this occasion. The women involved in this event had been gathering every Friday for two months already prior to Ramadan. Their objective was to jointly recite the Qur’an, in Arabic, and for this reason many of those present had also been attending Arabic classes elsewhere. The women wanted to improve their competence and be able to recite the entire Qur’an during the holy month. This is one way open to Muslims of accumulating religious merit (sevap). The event, therefore, was part of a sequence which intensified during Ramadan itself.

This intensification manifested itself in many ways. Firstly, the readings were more strictly organised. The division of reading was more sharply defined. Each little grouping was allotted a mixture of "strong" readers and "weak" ones; pages were counted and set stretches of reading allocated for each Friday of the holy month. The groups all read different parts of the Qur’an and so the effect was cumulative. If it seemed that one group was getting ahead of its quota, an individual from that group would move to a lagging group. Supervision of the whole process was carried out by a hoja and her assistant (neither of whom was a hafiz kadın however). There was therefore frequent consultation of the Qur’an qua written text as a guide to the recitation. The togetherness and bonding achieved by jointly reciting Qur’anic verses is not specifically named in Turkish: its efficacy is taken for granted.

The only (partial) segregation of people throughout this event was between those who were holding the fast and those who were not. At the prayer gathering, women who were not fasting because they were menstruating or breast-feeding or because they were sick, ate out of sight in the kitchen at mealtimes. The flow of body fluids: the blood of menstruation or the nurturing breast milk, meant that the body was not fast (closed). There will be a fuller discussion of the body fast in Chapter VII where the focus is on aspects of Ramadan in Australia. Moreover, it is considered shameful to eat in front of others who are fasting. Otherwise they mingled with the praying women and took charge of looking after their children too.

A woman who knows the Qur’an by heart.
The particular house where the gathering took place had been selected because there were no men presently residing there. Space was, therefore, appropriately gendered. The house was situated on the corner of a fairly quiet junction. It is considered quite auspicious to be situated thus at the meeting of the ways. Traditionally crossroads are sites of meeting and parting and therefore resonate with social meanings. Turkish Islam is a syncretic religion, having incorporated much of the indigenous symbolism of the Anatolian region. A more practical reason for selecting a corner house, however, is the separate entrances it affords for women and for men. At this house, the women came and went through the side gate, through the back garden, and entered the building itself through the kitchen.

The place was furnished mostly with very low divans and cushions, and one or two bookstands for the Qur'an. There were also one or two small round tables on which the women rested their books whilst reading. The emphasis was on mobility and there were few items of furniture. On the walls were prayer charts, some with highly stylized key Qur'anic names.

The Qur'an readings and namaz (ritual worship) took place in one of the bedrooms. The mirror on the dressing table was covered with a sheet, since people should not pray before a human image. I was told that angels will not enter a room which contains such images. Prayer rugs or small babies' blankets were spread on the floor and these defined spacial directionality. Since the kible (direction for praying) happened to be orientated towards a window looking out over the street, the window was heavily curtained to block out passers-by. Because of the demands on space, people generally took it in turns to perform namaz, and it was performed only in this room. Although it is usual for one room in a house to be set aside for the purposes of worship, it may also be used as a bedroom or as a guestroom. What is axiomatic is that it be kept spotlessly clean at all times. Therefore, unlike mosques and saints' tombs which are considered to be permanent sacred places (kusus yerler), there is no strict permanent division here between the sacred and the profane in terms of physical space, except by the placing of the prayer rug during namaz. Instead the boundedness of religious space was articulated through orientation, voice and gesture.

As the women arrived, they greeted each other by embracing and kissing on both cheeks from right to left. They then joined hands in pairs and said a short prayer together,

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67 The tables, for example, were not used for food at mealtimes, when people sat on the floor and ate from large, circular copper trays.
sharing life breath, and stroked their own faces with their "emprayered" hands. Even women who had arrived together greeted each other anew in this way. The greetings therefore marked the occasion as a specific communal event, and separated it from the everyday social flow of interaction.

Throughout the Qur'an readings, the women sat in small circular groups, very close together "in order" as they said "to leave no room for Satan." They sat on the floor in a lowly, humble position so that the Qur'ans were level with the upper body. When not in use, the Qur'ans were was always placed aloft, often in specially woven white lace bags, patterned with sacred names in Arabic calligraphy. Each group decided amongst its members who should begin reciting. This nearly always seemed to be an arbitrary choice, but sometimes the hierarchy of everyday family life was reversed by choosing the youngest woman, or the newest arrival to the group. The recitation then proceeded in a clockwise order, that is from the right of each individual in turn. When questions were raised about the order for turn-taking, it was resolved on the principle of right to left (sağdan sola). Turn-taking was sometimes marked by one person getting out of breath or stumbling with the pronunciation. Interruptions to the smooth flow of recitation never escaped attention. At an analytic level, they are evocative of the nazar described earlier.

As each woman took her turn, she started with the Besmele: B'ismillah-i-rahman-i-rahim: (in the name of Allah, the merciful, the compassionate). Separate actions were always marked in this way as the intention (niyet) of doing is of paramount importance to the doing itself. If actions are not performed in the name of Allah, Satan could lead people into working for him. In reciting the Besmele, the actor/speaker/reciter brings the action to mind, to focused consciousness. In this way what is tacit becomes articulated, not directly through spelling out verbally, but indirectly through being formulaically framed.

17.9.2. Voice and Silence

As each reader took her turn, the rest of the women participated as if they were instrumental in voicing the sounds also, even though they were actually silent. Their attention to the sounds was marked by focusing their gaze on the Qur'ans read by the other women.

Throughout this event the written Qur'an was the primary focus of visual attention. The lack of anthropomorphic imagery, the spatial separation of fasting and eating and the closure of open spaces into tight circles prevented distraction and constituted an ideal
instantiation of Islamic order. The dynamism of Allah's word was celebrated vocally through the women's recitation and the Qur'anic names, dynamically displayed through the curvilinearity of the calligraphic script in the wall charts reinforced the patterns of sound at a visual level. Sound in turn marked invisible boundaries as space was delimited by the circles of reciters intoning/voicing the Qur'an in flows of sound from right to left and from the divine to the human.

These reciters were all insiders: in terms of religion, in terms of gender and in a spatial sense. The outside world of men, non-Muslims and Satan had been effectively sealed off, and angels had been enticed in through Qur'anic sounds and symbols, the lack of anthropomorphic imagery, modest en-closing dress and the togetherness expressed through the community of women. When husbands arrived to take the women home, this was announced by a young boy, while the men themselves stayed at the entrance gate or in their cars outside. Within the group, sameness was visually accentuated by dress, which varied little from one person to the next, and social hierarchy was thereby muted. Social hierarchy was also muted by the women's gestures of greeting as they kissed not three times but twice.

In spatial terms, sameness or equality was symbolised by grouping in circles and the principle of right-to-left orientation in turn-taking shifted the human interaction from a social to a religious level of equality before Allah. When not directed towards the Qur'an, the gaze of one individual could be met openly by another, since all were women insiders. The only voice raised above others was that of the hoja as she directed the recitation. This was for purely technical reasons, since considerable care needed to be taken to perfect pronunciation as the women were reciting the word of Allah.

We have seen in Chapter III that during Ramadan, language/the mouth as (sonic) pathway is accentuated through the emphasis on prayer and on Qur'anic recitations. As Nelson (1985:xiv) points out, the Qur'an is not the Qur'an unless it is heard. This celebration of sound blended with silent dimensions of communication such as orientation and dress, and also with contextual aspects of spatial surroundings such as the Qur'anic names in the wall charts and the absence of visual anthropomorphic (facial) imagery. The overall meaning derived from a conflation of these extra-linguistic facets of signification rather than from the lexical meaning of the Qur'anic message. Moreover, the temporal situation of the event within the month of fasting has some bearing on the role of the written word on this occasion due to the intensification of the recitations.

For Muslims, Qur'anic Arabic is the language of paradise. Even though Turkish is
heavily influenced by Arabic loanwords and phrases, the sound structures and syntactic morphologies of the two languages are distinctively different. The foreignness of Qur'anic Arabic to the Turkish women involved in the event provided a sense of remoteness or otherness which neatly symbolised the vast chasm between human and divine reality. The pharyngeal sounds which form one of the key phonetic differences between Arabic and Turkish give an impression of imbibing rather than of expressing the language, and this aptly captures the notion of the human voice as a receptacle for the divine word and reinforces a view of language as logocentric.\textsuperscript{68}

17.9.3. The Qur'an as book; the Qur'an as guide, the Qur'an as sound

We have seen that the written Qur'an provides a visual focus for pious Muslims who recite the word of Allah, and therefore involves the gaze as well as the auditory-vocal tract. The Qur'an is their \textit{kutsal kitap} (holy/sacred book). Due to proselytising within the community, there is concern amongst some people that they have strayed from their religion in the past and must atone by being as fastidious as possible in their observation of Islamic principles in their lives now. It is predominantly within orthodox Sunni Islam that the book, the Qur'an, is the supreme guide. Orthodox Muslims recognize only other monotheistic religions of the book (for example, Judaism and Christianity) as proper religions. Issues of non-translatability are germane to the ontology of the Qur'an.

The issue of translation and transliteration causes some uncertainty amongst Turkish Muslims. One woman attending a Qur'anic Arabic class, for example, asked for help in reciting prayers in the right way and was worried in case it was sinful to read the Qur'an in Latin script or in the Turkish language. Many transliterations of the Arabic Qur'an do exist but, like translations, they are not considered to be \textit{kutsal} (sacred). She also requested guidance on the correct way of pronouncing the words and seemed impatient with having to learn the written forms of Arabic in order to do this. Her distress culminated in an outburst one day as she saw me copying words down from the blackboard.\textsuperscript{69}

\textit{How will it be when this gavur (foreigner, non-Muslim) can speak Arabic? She will understand what is going on in paradise and I will not!}

\textsuperscript{68}My use of the terms "impression" and "imbibing" is quite deliberate, since it is the notion of agency which is at issue here.

\textsuperscript{69}My own knowledge of Arabic is minimal. My objective in attending these classes was to gain some insights into Turkish people's relationship to Arabic, a language which many experience uniquely as auditory and/or optical effect without understanding the lexicon in a logocentric sense.
She was comforted by another woman:

*Understanding the language is not the important thing: Allah will show the right way {Allah doğru yol gösterir} if you desire to know in your heart.*

It was not permissible to read a Turkish translation (*Türkçe açıklaması* literally, a "making open" i.e. exegesis, explanation, commentary), while listening to the Arabic. When I attempted to do this for example with my bilingual Qur'an, the book was taken from me and handed to someone who could follow the Arabic. This split focus, i.e. the separation of ear and eye, would cause distraction.

In the layout of this bilingual Qur'an the Arabic was inset in the centre and the Turkish translation (of the meaning) was peripheral, visually symbolising the inner/outer, enclosed/disclosed distinction. Again, the women explained that the literal meaning disclosed in Turkish was less important than the understanding felt in the heart.

This is how one woman attempted to explain the issue:

*If our book had been translated like the Bible, then of course our beliefs would be different. But it is impossible not to believe. For centuries we have been reading the same Qur'an, the same Qur'an... it hasn't changed. When translated into Turkish... that is why we read it in Arabic. That is the most appropriate because the exact meaning cannot be grasped in Turkish.*

*People write exegeses, of course, well it has been translated into Turkish; exegeses have been made because the Turkish Qur'an and the Arabic Qur'an are the same. However, they are a bit different.*

*The other (Arabic Qur'an) is more, more appropriate...*

The halting, hesitant nature of this statement points to the fact that the perceived difference is not easy to articulate. The difference lies at the level of inchoate, tacit knowledge. To say that it is the rule that translations or transliterations of the Muslim Holy Book are not the Qur'an or simply that the Qur'an should not be translated as if it were an arbitrary taboo, is not a sufficient explanation of this difference. The issue is inherently linguistic and conceptual, if not also perceptual. As secular speakers of English, we bring to the notion of translation and transliteration an intellectual perspective which sees these as neutral transformations. Westerners by focusing on the Qur'an as book see it as source: to Muslims it is a guide. To a pious Muslim,
transformations brought about by translation or transliteration implicate human agency, and the resultant text unavoidably incorporates change. Following this logic, Latin script and/or a foreign language cannot convey the word of Allah.\textsuperscript{70} Qur’anic language and script are not neutral vehicles or tools of communication, but embody creative agency. To say that Allah revealed the Qur’an in Arabic implies to speakers of English a disjunction between a reified Qur’an and the language of transmission: Arabic. For pious Muslims this disjunction does not hold.

Ortega y Gasset’s observation (1957:246) concerning the profound difficulties of translation is apposite here: \textit{translation is a matter of saying in a language precisely what that language tends to pass over in silence.} Qur’anic knowledge is talked about as \textit{din bilgisi} in Turkish, and people pursue different noetic pathways to this knowing. This issue will be taken up again in Chapter VIII.

When young people attend their first Qur’an lessons, sounds and meanings are learned separately. Sounds are memorised through constant repetition; meanings are explained in dialogic exchanges between teachers and children (or adult novices) and are reiterated in \textit{vaiz} (sermons). Skilled interpreters explain the meanings, taking into account the social and cultural changes which have taken place over the centuries. Polygyny, for example, is explained as having been necessary at a particular time and place: after the first series of \textit{jihad} in Arabia. Polygyny was necessary in order to rebuild the population after the battles when many women were widowed and children orphaned. This social form of alliance is no longer necessary or desirable in an over-populated world and so monogamy is advocated.\textsuperscript{71} Meaning is, therefore, not confined to the literal word but to social contexts as they have changed over time and across cultural boundaries.

Both events described so far involve Qur’anic Arabic, a learned language. We have already noted the distance symbolised by intoning the sounds. The otherness of this language, whether experienced as sound or as script, is encapsulated in the disjunction between signifier and literal meaning, the latter being totally inaccessible to most of the participants involved. In the former event, the healing ritual, the language of the \textit{muska qua} writing is at once mediatory and empowered, whereas in the latter the written word either as visible sign or as a crystallization of sound, is in itself agentive \textit{vis-a-vis} the

\textsuperscript{70}This is the claim of many commentators on the Qur’an. See, for example, Yusuf Ali, 1934.

\textsuperscript{71}Not all Turkish Muslims agree about the desirability of monogamy. This tension between religious and civil law, be it in Turkey or in Australia, often means that religious marriages (\textit{imam nikâh}) and civil marriages co-occur.
"receptive" human participants. In contrast, the role of writing in the next event involves a far lesser degree of distancing, and as agency is located in human speakers language takes on an instrumental role.

Compared with the healing ritual described in the first section of this chapter, the celebration of sound in the Qur'an recitation symbolically disperses agency in language. These sounds are intoned not in accordance with the cadences of everyday speech but in musical patterns that evoke the divine. The overlapping sounds of the different groups reciting the holy word produced a polyphonic effect akin to that of the overlapping calls to prayer from mosques in close vicinity. At another level, the topographical effects of this sounding symbolised a flow of voices from right to left of each individual in circular movement with the Qur'an (as material object) in the centre. The formulaic pronunciation of each Besmele framed each sequence of elements of the recitation and marked these sound sequences off from the sounds of everyday conversation. This framing also served to focus attention on the recitation and to project the agency of the speech act onto the level of language itself.

17.10. Third event: literacy class

Unlike the temporal and cosmological distance implicated in the use of Qur'anic Arabic, Turkish-language literacy creates and maintains political and social distance. Modern Standard Turkish is the language of statecraft and of the upper social classes. Its imagery is predominantly urbane, decontextualised and disembodied, i.e. logocentric. Agency is social and writing is instrumental.

The following description of a literacy class will serve to illustrate some of the ways in which social aspects of reality are thrown into relief with the transmission of this new kind of knowledge or skill. It is important to distinguish literacy as knowledge and literacy as skill, since these different approaches have different implications for the teachers and students involved. Social role reversal is marked by code-switching, and technical logocentric aspects of literacy are subjugated by social attitudes to learning.

The teacher in this instance was a young, secular woman in her 30s. She was a businesswoman, running three or four grocery stores in the northern suburbs of Melbourne. She imported foodstuffs from Turkey and was therefore in contact with the Turkish business world as well as with the Australian one. She used mostly Turkish in her daily life, however, since nearly all her customers were Turkish-speaking. She preferred teaching, as this was her professional training, but it was hard to get work as a
Turkish teacher locally because of the competition for jobs. She had been trained as a primary school teacher in Turkey, but here in Australia her students were adult women who had not had the opportunity to learn to read and write before. She was from the western regions of Turkey, which are generally more urbanised and industrialised than the regions in the east.

With her were about six Turkish women learning how to read and write. They were in their 30s and 40s. They came from different regions of central and south western Turkey, but one had spent several years in Istanbul. They were mainly housewives. One woman, Ayşe Hanım stood out from the others in that she was a very successful business woman. In contrast to the other women, who were all very secular in outlook, moreover, she was a devout Muslim who displayed her religiosity through dress and discursive style. She had an astute business sense and her reason for wanting to learn to read and write was to be able to manage her business affairs without being dependent on others for these skills. At a noetic level, her approach to literacy was an instrumental one, whereas most of the other women wanted to be able to read and write in order to help their children with homework and to maintain contact with the younger generations who they perceived were moving into a different ideational world from their own. Ayşe Hanım was more concerned with literacy as a technology of the intellect since she already had a specific area of knowledge (business and finance) which she wanted to encode chirographically; the other women saw it as facilitating social binding between the older and younger generations and as an integral part of a new area of knowledge (roughly equated with a general secular education) which they wished to comprehend.

The actual teaching was done on a syllabic basis, going from single syllables to two- or three-syllable lexemes. The process is called hecelemek (to read out in syllables). The students were given simple illustrated books to read and they also took it in turn to read individual words from the blackboard and then write dictated syllables and words into notebooks. At one stage there was a list of two and three-syllable words on the blackboard and the women were asked to take turns reading them. Some of the women were already quite proficient.

Ayşe Hanım was lagging behind somewhat and was practising aloud for when her turn came.

POR-TA-KAL, LI-MON, MAR-UL, LA-HA-NA,
KE-RE-VIZ, DO-MA-TES, BI-BER...

The list read: orange(s), lemon(s), lettuce, cabbage, celery, tomatoes, pepper/capsicum,
i.e. all common everyday words which the women used constantly in their workaday lives. Despite their familiarity as everyday words, however, as logocentric units they are quite opaque. Breaking them down into syllables does not yield etymological clues to a Heideggerian kind of saying, as more transparent terms such as *yaratmak* (to create) (see Chapter III) might do. Transparency in itself thus rests on a tension between reocentric and logocentric meaning. The social salience of these lexemes did not go unnoticed by the students, however.

*It's easy to tell she's a shopkeeper,*

teleased Ayşe Hanım (referring to the teacher)

*she's trying to sell us things even here.*

Ayşe Hanım in turn was teased by the teacher:

*tembellik yapıyör... (she's being lazy...).*

Ayşe Hanım nudged me and told me to say the *Besmele:*

*Bismillah çek...*

before putting pen to paper.

This religious formula would enclose our action within a framework of *sevap* (merit): our acquisition of this skill or knowledge would accordingly be done in the name of Allah.

The teacher drew attention to the desired phonetic fit between sound and script. In this way, pronunciation took on a bookish tone, and literal form took precedence over the rhythmic cadences of oral speech. *Okurken hep harflar söylersiniz... (when you read, enunciate every letter)...* she reiterated constantly.

Compared with English, the disjunction between written and spoken Turkish is slight. In Turkish, the script units are clearly paralleled by morphemic structure. Nevertheless, there is a greater degree of ellipsis in the oral language of rural speakers than in the standardised speech of urban, literate people. Notwithstanding the close fit between Turkish grapheme and morpheme, however, all the women had trouble pronouncing the word *domates* (tomatoes) and relating this pronunciation to the way they were used to
hearing the word: domatzz. This particular word, (domates) like many fruit and vegetable items, has entered Turkish through a Mediterranean lingua franca.

Apart from the teacher the women were all of rural origin, and their use of Turkish reflected the more pharyngeal sounds heard in these areas. The one exception was the woman who had spent some time in Istanbul:

Türkçemiz ayr... (our Turkish is different) she said confidently,

boş ver...(don’t let it worry you...).

Having had some prior knowledge of literacy and been exposed to different kinds of Turkish, she was satisfied that one style of pronunciation could be used within the classroom and another in everyday conversation.

The literacy class was also a stepping-stone to learning English. Some of these women had already attended English language classes for new migrants. Many of these classes assumed basic literacy skills and taught the language in an abstract, bookish way through writing. They catered for people from a wide range of cultural backgrounds but without paying particular attention to the specific learning problems of different linguistic and chirographic groups. For many Turkish people, the focus on written language meant that they could not participate.72

A major problem for Turkish people who want to acquire knowledge of written English is the different relationship obtaining between Turkish orthography and the spoken language on the one hand and English orthography and pronunciation on the other. At the level of the two language systems there is far greater concordance between Turkish grapheme and phoneme (due to the relatively recent script reform for Turkish) than there is in the case of English where the fit between orthography and pronunciation has become conventionalised over a vast period of time according to national, class, regional and other historical factors. American English spelling seems more "logical" than English English in that there is greater concordance between phoneme and grapheme but it is the

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72Migrants from most Asian backgrounds, on the contrary, appear to relate with relative ease to a written language medium. Teachers of ESL (English as a second language) have remarked on the relative ability of Asian students to become competent in the written language fairly quickly whereas the spoken language creates many problems because of the tonal differences between many of their languages and English. On the other hand, they comment on the relative ease with which Macedonian and Greek students, for instance, absorb the sounds and meanings of spoken English but have greater difficulty with the written language. The contrast is also an indication of the degree to which literacy is restricted in different parts of the world and of the class and occupational and educational backgrounds of migrants from different countries and regions.
latter that forms the basis of Australian standard English. Turkish people learning English in Australia, therefore, need to pay attention to these writing conventions. Knowing the conventions is a large part of knowing the language and a lack of this tacit knowledge is a reason for discouragement in attempting to learn English. It is for these reasons that many Turkish people have decided to become literate in Turkish first and then to transfer these skills to English.

Within Turkey itself, exposure to English has been through popular films and television series as well as through the activities of bodies such as the British Council, various Christian missionaries and the U.S. military. Turkish people pay considerable attention to the kinds of English available internationally, and upper and middle class people go out of their way to learn British English. In this way, Turkish people transfer their class and regional attitudes to language and the distinction between kaba and kibar codes onto English. Some of these social attitudes were evident throughout the literacy course.

Before each lesson began there was a lively conversation during which topics ranged from health to politics and from the cost of living (in Turkey and Australia) to the latest Turkish video to arrive in the local stores. There were whispered conversations going on some of the time during the lesson. Ayşe Hanım (the businesswoman) often practised reading aloud whereas the other women worked mostly in silence on the task at hand, but there was no verbal exchange between Ayşe Hanım and the others. Instead two separate semantic enclaves existed. Although sounds overlapped, they did not intersect.

Even within this small group there were salient distinctions along the lines of generation, class and religion. These distinctions were manifest in dress styles as well as in patterns of voice and silence. When the women did speak, Ayşe Hanım ignored them and either voiced words aloud as she wrote her lesson, or cut through their words and addressed the teacher about points of literacy. When Ayşe Hanım spoke on a general topic, the other women listened and showed that they were listening by directing their attention towards her, but they did not follow up her comments. She was an authoritative figure and she expected others to listen when she spoke. The silence of the other women was a tacit acknowledgement that they belonged to two different worlds, hierarchically linked by power and wealth.

The contrast between Ayşe Hanım’s dress and speech style and theirs also set them apart. She displayed her Muslim identity through her religious style of dress; their dress was "open": they were in Western style clothes with their hair uncovered. They were the wives of workers: class too set them apart. Ayşe Hanım was somewhat older than the
other women and a generation senior to the teacher. She was, in fact, the teacher’s
landlady and rented the shops to her. The teacher, Hacer, drove her to the lesson each
week, while the other women walked there in a group. In this way also, Ayşe Hanım like
so many religious Turkish women, remained enclosed even while moving from place to
place.

Although Ayşe Hanım was higher in status both generationally and with respect to
class; within the context of this learning situation she was a novice who was acquiring
this new skill from someone who was otherwise her junior. There was, therefore, a
reversal of roles. Once she and the teacher stepped outside the classroom, the older
woman once again assumed a position of relative authority: she was senior in age and
was of the grandmother generation; she came from the industrial employer stratum of
Turkish rural society and had many important real estate assets in Melbourne. She was
the wife of an important mosque dignitary. Unlike her encounters with the other women
attending the literacy class, which did not have any abiding significance, her relationship
to the teacher was a constant day to day one. Within the classroom situation, their roles
were reversed and this gave rise to a lot of teasing on her part, often involving a switch to
English. "Yes teacher", she would say facetiously, "I will do all my homework", thus
drawing attention to the "abnormality" of the socially reversed teaching relationship.
Codeswitching, therefore, marked a social tension.

Ayşe Hanım was used to controlling business situations and did not like the seeming
advantage which her teacher/tenant had in relation to the business skills of literacy and
numeracy. She was adroit in appropriating literacy skills to suit her own knowledge
needs, and did not treat writing simply as a pathway to new bodies of knowledge. Others
were there for the reasons discussed above, but also because of the social nature of the
event itself: the opportunity of getting out of their homes, where they often felt very
isolated, and meeting other women in similar situations. The lessons provided a pretext
for the conversations they could enjoy and the opportunities these provided for sharing
problems and voicing opinions. They had come here during the late morning when their
children were at school and their husbands were out, and they had completed their
domestic duties. They were all very proficient in the various creative skills of cooking
and needlework, and through this their approach to domestic occupations was a highly
developed aesthetic one. Their aesthetic of script was assimilated to their general visual
and manual aesthetic and they took great care to produce very neat writing.

There was some evidence of a tension between the demands imposed by their domestic
responsibilities and the new area of knowledge their children had entered and which they wished to share, however, and this highlighted the fact that literacy classes were important in another socially salient sense: they provided the students with something to show for their efforts. Left without a teacher one day, one of the women was about to return home promptly but was detained by another woman.

*Don’t go home yet, you know how bored you get at home. Now that you’re out of the house, stay here and chat with us. I’ll give you sentences to write in your book. You can show them to your husband. He need never know our teacher (öğretmen) did not turn up.*

She proceeded to write some words down (imitating the teacher’s writing).

Given the restrictions on women being outside with others not intimately known to their husbands, the literacy class functioned as an alibi. The perceived newness of the situation was signalled by use of the term öğretmen rather than hoja when referring to the teacher. The new term signalled a new concept of the literacy teacher’s role, one to which the husband was expected to have a flexible attitude. Hoja (the older word) also related to an older concept of a teacher in which the process of learning was much more dialogic and took greater account of the social context of education/knowledge.

Through making language visible and an object of scrutiny, literacy classes also provided a forum for metalevels of communication about language.

One day the teacher did not turn up for the class, for example, and we received a call to say she was suffering from menstrual pain. "Geçmiş olsun!" (may it pass) said the women when the message was transmitted to them and relayed via the speaker into the telephone receiver. "There’s little point in saying geçmiş olsun" replied the teacher, "it will be back again next month and the month after that!" Geçmiş olsun is an formulaic saying roughly equivalent to the English "get well soon". It is used very widely in colloquial speech and Turkish people feel at a loss for words when they wish to express something similar in English. In English such conventional formulaic expressions are restricted more and more to written contexts such as, for example, greetings cards. In the cognitive ambience of a literacy class with its logocentric focus on language, these Turkish women jokingly used formulaic language to point to tensions between the literal and the metaphorically appropriate meanings through making the expression a subject of satire.

Formulaic expressions such as this fit uneasily with modernist conceptions of language
use, where the information conveying function of language emerges as the dominant view of what language is. The focus on language in this event made it pertinent to question the (literal) logic of formulaic expressions and the lack of cohesion between this and the referential situation. Although not articulated, there was a distinctive tension between received forms of language use and innovative, conscious choices. This revelatory event pointed also to the shift from language as logos (agentive language) to instrumental language as tool.

17.11. Summary

These three graphocentric events provide evidence too of different levels of involvement with writing. The degrees of attention or focus on the codification of language in written form vary greatly and, therefore, the effects of writing on consciousness cannot be considered apart from larger communicative contexts. Patterns of speech and silence need to be taken into account, as do the social relationships between participants.

In the context of the literacy class, separate semantic enclaves existed, the separateness maintained by lack of verbal communication between Ayşe Hanım and the other women. In the religious gathering, on the other hand, there were no such semantic divisions. The women attending the literacy class were all learning to read and write Turkish for secular purposes, but by reciting the Bismillah, Ayşe Hanım encoded the acquisition of this new technology of the intellect within a religious framework, while the other literacy students framed their noetic activities within an immediate context of mutual sociability and with the more distant aim of entering the noetic world of their children and of the wider Australian society.

Writing, therefore, occupies different ideational niches while at the same time creating different noetic spaces. Changes in directionality of script, nevertheless, fit with a broad symbolic framework marked by Turkish lexical terms. In the situations just described, the underlying notions of açık/kapalı (open/closed) and sağ/sol (right/left) inform basic metacommunicational modalities, both dimensions relating to writing/script, as well as to body symmetry and orientation, the former relating in addition to dress.

The following chapter returns to the question of orientational metaphor in Turkish idiom and provides details of the polysemic richness of some of the key topological terms in Turkish. Orientational notions are also implicit in the iconicity of verbal and non-verbal metaphor.
CHAPTER VI

18. Topological Metaphor

Yol içinde yol ararsın...
({You} seek the way on the way...)

18.1. Yol: the (path)way

This chapter deals with various lexical and grammatical features of Turkish which indicate orientational or spatial representation. The focus ranges from the names of the cardinal directions to grammatical particles such as en and an, suffixes such as daş and taş, words such as yol (pathway) and gurbet (exile) and set phrases such as sağdan sola (from right to left) and tersine döndü (things have been reversed). These logocentric features of Turkish culture are complemented in various ways by other spatial aspects of communication such as the imagery of bridges, centres and circles, and the social symmetry they connote. At a deeper level, many of these images, whether they are lexicalised or connoted obliquely, rest on a tension between notions of singularity (tek), and pairedness or equality (esitlik). As we shall see below, the cardinal directions in Turkish connote also ideological orientations. Etymologically, these directions are based on solar imagery. 73

doğu: east. The notion of sunrise/birth is associated with east (from doğmak: to be born).

batı: west. The directional notion of west is connected to the notion of sunset. The verb batmak means to sink or to set.

güney: south; towards the sun. The word for sun is günes (lit. gün (day) -eş (partner) = partner of the day).

kuzey: north; "sunless side of a mountain" (archaic).

In a discussion of corporeal asymmetry and the polarization of space, Chelhod

73 The Turkish words doğu (east) and batı west replaced the Arabic-derived şark and garp (Heyd, 1954:74) in the course of language reform.
(1973:248) demonstrates Arabic evidence for *a connection between a geographical location and man’s position in space* and links this at a universal level with *...diffusion of a solar cult...* (op. cit. p.254). Orientational notions are important to the history of Turkish because of the influence of such theories on conceptions of language. In Chapter II we saw that according to one theory, proto-Turkish was purportedly based on solar symbolism. What would seem empirically justifiable is the linking of some Turkish orientational terms with distant cosmological underpinnings based on celestial imagery. Old Turkish legends testify to the importance of celestial imagery in naming kin-based groups, *Gökhan, Günkhan, Yıldızkhan, Aykhan* and so on (Wittek, 1967:8).

As we saw in Chapter II, Turan, the mythical birthplace of Turks as a distinctive people, is in the east. Their movement towards the west metaphorically parallels the perceived movement of the sun. North and south are also etymologically linked with the position of the sun: a) as blocked by the mountain, and b) in the full light of day.

Directionality, whether heliocentric, graphocentric, geographic or body-centred, is a prime metaphor of Turkish political and religious orientation. During the social reforms of the 1920s and 1930s, Ataturk employed such orientational metaphors to justify rhetorically the westernizing, secularising reforms he was undertaking by claiming that Turks had *always marched from East to West* (Turkish Center booklet, 1981:6). This westward movement, implicitly drawing on the Bozkurt myth recounted in Chapter II, for example, can be counterposed to the Turanist slogan *reherimiz Kur’an, yolumuz Tur’an* (*our guide is the Qur’an, our path is Turan,* which symbolically implies a return to the (eastern) source, such as that envisaged by contemporary Turanists who look to Central Asia as an important site of pan-Islamic and pan-Turkic fraternity, and more recently the state-based secular Turkish thrust into these regions.

This notion of the "way" or "pathway" (*yol*) is a key notion in Turkish ideational culture, both secular and religious. The notion of *yol* has replaced in new Turkish the term *tarikat* (an old Turkish, Arabic-derived term) as in Atatürk’s claim that *(t)he straight and true Path (tarikat)* was the *Road to civilization* (ibid. 1981:6). The contemporary term for "straight and true path" is *doğru yol*. As a word, *yol* has mainly

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74 These names are derived from the words for sky, sun, star and moon respectively.

75 Some Turkish people claimed that the word *bâlt* (*ba’alt*) is derived from *ban*, but others shrugged it off as a false etymology. The notion of the sun rising in the west is symbolic of utter dis-aster. My own contention is that these etymologies are salient in that they point to perceived connections. They fall into the kind of etymology Becker talks about as "etymology B" (1979:236) and evoke the kind of multi-conscious thinking which led to the linguistic imagery in the first place.
secular connotations. When linked with *doğru* (true, right, straight), it takes on more symbolic meanings, either political or religious. It is the name of a contemporary right-wing, political party, for example. *Doğruluk* signifies truth as in *doğruluk hasinedir* (truth is a treasure). Politicians of the right frequently employ religious idiom in propagating their political messages.

In religious terms, this pathway is talked about as being "thinner than a hair and sharper than a sword" and is defined by right living in accordance with Islamic principles. The following example from a religious pamphlet will illustrate the contextual usage of such a term:

*Bizim için en şereflı ve kıymetli tek YOL vardır ki, o da din YOLu, ahlak YOLudur. Bu YOLDa bulunanlar hiçbir vakit doğrultuktan ayıramazlar.*

*(For us there is only one honourable and valid pathway: that is the religious, moral pathway. Those who follow this path will never stray from righteousness).*

The religious, moral road or pathway highlighted in the above statement is implicitly contrasted with another: *pişmanlık ve perişanlık YOLu* (the path of sorrow and ruin).

It will be recalled that other examples of formulaic language incorporating this key notion of *yol* already discussed elsewhere in this thesis are:

*Ağız Allah'ın YOLudur. (The mouth/language is the pathway to Allah).*

*Allah doğru YOL gösterir. (Allah will show the right (true) path).*

*Yol* has other semantic counterparts in the Arabic stratum of religious language, i.e. *sunna* and *şariat*, both meaning (path)way. The most common modern referent for the latter is the Islamic code of law, but originally it meant "pathway to a waterhole" (Geertz, 1983:185). The pathway metaphor is not, however, merely a loan translation from Arabic as it appears also in many non-religious Turkish idioms.76 It is the name of a powerful socialist-realist film directed by Yılmaz Güney, where both the film and the name stand as a metaphor for modern Turkey.77 *Yol* can also mean one’s life trajectory. It is, for

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76 It has, of course, counterparts in many other languages such as Chinese *tao*, German *Weg*, English *way* and so on.

77 In this film the main protagonists (five prisoners allowed to return to their homes for a week) explore in turn the five main contentious parameters of contemporary Turkish socio-political life: religion and secularism, Kurdish politics, gender relations, legal issues and poverty. Their journeys across Anatolia are metaphors for journeys into different Turkish ideational and social realities.
example, the title of the 1979 autobiography of Aziz Nesin, a contemporary Turkish writer.

According to Turkish Muslim cosmology the individual is a *yolcu* or traveller in this world. This life is a transition to the hereafter (*ahiret*). Modern posters aiming to interpret the Islamic philosophy of life for Turkish Muslims, for example, employ the imagery of the traveller or pilgrim (*yolcu*), and depict life itself as a road, a pathway or a journey. The word *yolcu* is also used to mean a child about to be born or a person at the point of death. Many Turkish poets employ symbolism of the journey to talk about death, for example, Yahya Kemal Beyatli in his poem *Sessiz gemi* (The Silent Boat):

...Hiç yolcusu yokmuş gibi sessizce alır YOL...

(... [The boat] silently sets forth as if there were no passenger...).

The essence of all these meanings is transition, i.e. movement or passage from space to space, in which social, cosmological and physical topologies are condensed. This condensation of meanings inheres in the one polysemous lexeme. When one particular spatial plane is selected for signification, this is connoted contextually through the use of idiomatic sayings such as *doğru yol*. The Turanist slogan cited above links the political notion of an eastern source with the religious notion of the Qur'an as guide. The social distribution of knowledge and power in traditional rural society necessitated a guide. While for orthodox Sunni Muslims, the Qur'an is a guide (*rehber*) along life's pathway, within the more Sufic practices of Turkish Islam, the guide is a saintly figure, often referred to as *dost* or *arkadaş*, both meaning friend. What is of lexical interest here is the suffix *daş* as in *arkadaş*.

19. The suffix *daş/tas*

This suffix appears in many Turkish lexemes. Fellow travellers, companions or friends can be referred to as *yoldaş*. This term is one which has strong religious connotations in the mystical Sufi orders within Islam. Because of its later adoption by communists as a term of address, however, it is now officially blacklisted and may not be used by the press or by broadcasting institutions in Turkey. In this respect it is the Turkish equivalent of comrade. As a word, its polysemy reveals itself contextually at the level of different discourses.

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78 The notion of a guide has a long history in Turkish cosmology. Prior to the adoption of Islam and state-based social organisation, Turkish nomadic pastoralists and hunters living in Central and Inner Asia had various forms of shamanic practice in which a spirit guide played a central role. The grey wolf of the origin myth recounted in Chapter II is one such guide.
To return to the suffix daş in yoldaş (comrade) and arkadaş (friend), this is of considerable semantic interest since it is imbued with notions of social acquaintanceship and implies consociality. It appears in many words where the notion of sharing or bonding is condensed in the meaning. As well as bonding, the suffix also implies the opposite meaning: bounding in the sense of separating off. The suffix daş is, I argue, is cognate with tas meaning stone. The alternating forms daş and taş change according to phonetic environment. Imagery of the stone as boundary marker and as symbol of consociality is widespread in many parts of the world. The Turkish proverb taş yerinde ağrur (the value of a person is appreciated where he is known (lit. the stone is heaviest in its place) highlights this meaning of social acquaintanceship. This suffix also appears in such Turkish words as oydas (person of like opinion); sirdas (sharer of a secret); çağdaş (contemporary); emektaş (fellow worker), dindaş (co-religionist).

Stone, like bone, symbolises durability, lastingness. Whereas iconically kemik (bone) links people in terms of kinship, taş (stone) links people in other socially salient domains such as religion and work.

19.1. The particles en and an

In contrast to the bonding and bounding connoted by the suffix daş/tas, the ebb and flow of daily life is captured in verbal participles such as en and an as in the following examples. These participles are roughly equivalent to the English gerund "ing" as, for example, in "Turkish-speaking".

Almanya'dan gelenler (the {Turks} who come [back] from Germany);
camiye gidenler ({the people who} go to the mosque);
Türkçe konuşanlar (Turkish speaking people);
köşede dönmenler (lit. "those who are turning the corner": upwardly mobile people);

dinimize ters gelen herşey yasaktır (everything that goes against our religion is forbidden).

The fact that different groups of Turkish people are often talked about in these terms

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79 It was interesting to find that not all Turkish speakers were familiar with this particular term. Some hazarded a guess that the meaning had something to do with playing or toys, since the suffix oy appears also in ludic vocabulary. These people suggested that hemfikir was a far more commonly used term for a person of like opinion.
rather than through the use of ethnic or religious labels points to the fluid nature of these Turkish social distinctions, which contrast with the stabilizing, concretising effect of notions like das/taş, and the imagery of bones. Social context is privileged over essentiality.

19.2. Gurbet

In a thesis describing the lives of Turkish immigrants to Australia, Elley (1985:304) discusses the various Turkish terms used for the different experiences of migration:

The words göc (change of abode) and göçmen (immigrant or settler) are used in the Turkish language, to describe the movement of nomad groups. However, these words were very rarely, if ever used to describe the movement of Turkish workers to other countries.

These terms are, however, used in the migration literature compiled on Turks in Australia. The introduction to the 1985 Ethnic Affairs Commission Survey, or the Department of Social Security Turkish glossary (1985:4) provide good examples of this. Bureaucratic usage demands a further degree of standardisation of language. The particular terms in question suggest dictionary meanings which are at a certain degree of remove from the lived experience of the people themselves. They suggest an abstract usage prompted by the need to provide Turkish equivalents to terms already there in Australian English. This is one route whereby semantic shift occurs as a result of language contact at the level of writing. By the time of my research in 1986/7, the term göçmen for migrant was in fairly widespread usage (but did not substitute for gurbet). This is an example of a bureaucratic literate tradition influencing spoken language.

Although Turkish people in Australia have adopted this usage and refer to themselves frequently as göçmen: ("nomads", "migrants") when talking to outsiders, this is far outweighed by the notion of gurbet (temporary absence from home) used amongst Turks themselves. Here the cultural resonances go much deeper and the emotional tenor of gurbet is inescapable. The notion of gurbet is more akin to the notion of exile than to the notion of migration, i.e. the absence is not voluntary. Traditionally, this notion was applied to being away on military service or to political ostracism. It has its roots in Ottoman rather than in Muslim institutions. Unlike its bureaucratic counterpart (göçmen), it has very deep emotive power. Its application now to the experience of labour migration evokes a sense of exile and casts the immigrants themselves as having little choice in the matter.
People also talk about themselves as being like gypsies (cingene gibi) and about the hardships of being far away from a cherished homeland. Many of the songs they listen to and sing are about hasret (yearning, longing) for this homeland. Hasret and gurbet are often paired lexically. Some people say they cannot bear to listen to Turkish music because of the nostalgia it evokes. In rural Turkish culture, there is an intensely close linkage between music and place. People claim, for example, that it is not acceptable for folksingers or musicians to sing songs and play music from any but their own region of Turkey. At the level of vocal sound, this complements the fusion of accent and region mentioned in Chapter III. Distinctive regional styles of singing add to the intensity of yearning for place. As styles become homophonised and commodified, this topological power of evocation is disrupted and the fusion of sound and place is shattered.

The following few lines of a poem by Kemâlettin Kâmu suggest something of the lived experience of gurbet:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Gurbet o kadar acı ki} & \quad \text{Exile is so bitter} \\
\text{Ne varsa içimde} & \quad \text{Whatever is inside me} \\
\text{Hepsî bana yabancı} & \quad \text{Everything is strange to me} \\
\text{Hepsî başka biçimde} & \quad \text{Everything appears different} \\
\vdots & \quad \vdots \\
\text{Ben gurbette değilim} & \quad \text{I am not in exile} \\
\text{Gurbet benim içinde} & \quad \text{Exile is in(side) me}
\end{align*}
\]

The poem effects a transfer of focus from an exterior state in which the poet is situated to an inner emotional state. Grammatically this is suggested by the use of the locative as in gurbetTE and içinDE. This inner space, shaped by absence, implies nevertheless an image of the absent. People refer to Turkey as yurdumuz (our homeland) when talking amongst themselves. This homeland has, however, different attributes for different groups.

As the ubiquitous statement *biz hem Avrupa, hem İslâm devletiyiz (we are both a European and an Islamic state)* implies, many Turkish people perceive themselves to belong to both Islamic and European ideational heritages. Depending on the direction in which their communication needs are pointed, they can stress their Muslim or their European identity. The justification for their links with Europe is to be found historically in the Ottoman statum of westward expansion and the secularisation of Turkish life in general. At a political level, Turkey can be characterized as a bridge between these two major culture areas. Some Turks, however, feel they have gone astray in adopting so many aspects of western culture. For them, the "golden age" of Ottoman power was attributed to following the path of Allah.
One pious friend, for example, talking of the Ottoman period, commented:

*Everything was much better in the old days. Everything was done according to our religion. Now times have changed... for that reason everything flourished in our country, how can I say... everything was much more beautiful...*

Because of their particular history as a nation, Turkish people are secularised Muslims. Some Turks have sought to undo the secularisation of Atatürk’s reforms by re-adopting Islamic dress or ways of talking and interacting, while others assert their Turkish Muslim identity as a cultural rather than as a religious phenomenon. People claim that, as Muslims, they are expected to worship, think, talk, eat and behave in an Islamic way. The interpretation of this "way", however, varies considerably from group to group.

From a global geopolitical perspective too, Turkey itself is frequently seen as a bridge between Asia/Arabia on the one hand and Europe on the other. Contemporary views of this situation are often cast in terms of the different ideologies crystallized in that region of the world. To the north, the former Soviet Union provided until recently a model of socialism; to the south and south east, Islam; to the west industrial capitalism and to the east the original source of the Turks: Turan. These different orientations all represented potential directions for the future of Turkish politics and/or religion. In the centre, of course, is the Anatolian bridge itself, which is an amalgam of these various trends, as well as the matrix out of which new directions emerge. As some of these ideological distinctions have collapsed with the transformation of the Soviet Union into the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Turanist link has strengthened and is cast as a new bridgehead between Central Asia and the old Islamic centres on the one hand, and Central Asia and Europe on the other.

While for religious Turks no other space in the world can compete with Mecca in overall importance, their focus may be directed towards other places across the globe: Ankara, for example, or West Germany, as they deal with the more political and economic aspects of their lives. Whilst there are attempts on the part of various power-brokers to divide the Turkish Muslim world into Shiite and Sunni camps, there is also a powerful countercurrent which draws on the political loyalty of Turkish citizens towards their nation-state. This loyalty has two main aspects - that felt and manifested towards the country itself, Turkey, as homeland and as cultural place: a very patriotic nationalism; the other aspect is that felt and manifested towards the nation's leaders. Adherents of the

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80 Hotham, 1972; Czaplicka, 1973 (1918).
former grouping see the present rulers as intruders into a political space which should be restricted to "real" representatives of the people, that is to democrats. For the other grouping, the perception is that the rulers have been forced into an unfortunate position of imposing military order on a formerly volatile, chaotic and dangerous situation. This tension is encapsulated in the kinship metaphors discussed in Chapter IV.

Thus Turkey as metaphor oscillates between the image of a bridge and that of a centre. When communication needs are directed towards the inside, it is this Anatolian centre which constitutes a vital catalyst for Turkish exiles and their sense of what it is to be Turkish. A linguistic illustration of Turkey as central vantage point for Australian Turks, for example, is their use of the term *yabancı* (foreigner). This is applied to mainstream Australians and defies the dominant Anglo-Australian perspective of other migrants as outsiders. In casting all other Australians as "foreigners", Turkish people in Australia place themselves at the centre of their ideational universe, with all non-Turks at the periphery.

Due to labour migration and the flight of intellectuals to various countries of Western Europe (notably West Germany), Melbourne and other Australian secular Turks look to the longer established communities in exile (*yurt dışındakılar*) in these places for inspiration and guidance. Members of these thriving intellectual communities in Western Europe frequently are invited to Australia as pace-setters for the local groups, where they are urged to share their accumulated wisdom on migration and political experience. It is often people from these longer established sites of exile where there is open racial hostility directed towards Turkish and other "guestworkers" who are responsible for restoring a sense of pride in people’s Turkish heritage.

As people from different regions of Turkey come together in Melbourne, points of the Melbourne urban landscape too are ritually appropriated as sites in a Turkish ideational universe, and while some of these are contained totally within a Melbourne Turkish context, others are part of networks that expand across the globe. The social salience of these various networks relates to the particular pathways (*yol*) being followed by the individuals/groups concerned. While Muslim religious pathways may have Mecca as their pivot, political pathways may be decentred but linked linearly to other older Turkish migrant communities around the world.

Few of these places are significant only in a very local sense. There is a popular picnic ground to the north of Melbourne, for example, known officially as Greenvale Reserve. Because it is situated at the back of the Ford motor factory, the workplace of scores of
Turkish workers, however, it is known in Turkish as Ford'un arkası (behind Ford). For secular Turks, given their experience (at a group level) as factory employees, largely in the motor industries, car factories become important landmarks. In many respects, they are the secular counterparts of the mosques. In this way Turkish people ideationally appropriate the Melbourne landscape for their own cultural purposes as language absorbs physical space. Since emek (labour) is metonymic of their identity as workers, car plants (in all the industrialised countries to which Turks have emigrated) have topologically shaped their experience of gurbet (exile).

The topology of Turkish ideational space also varies from one group to another. Partly due to the recent political and religious conflict within Turkey, and partly because of long historically-grounded political and religious currents and more recently by population shifts caused by international labour migration, the present groupings within Turkish communities in Australia have a hierarchy of distant focal centres depending on their various ideological orientations on the one hand, and their particular kinship and friendship bonds on the other. This hierarchy is not fixed, and particular configurations may change according to the contextual demands of any one situation.

19.3. Hierarchy and Symmetry

Apart from lexical and grammatical features of Turkish, topological notions can be projected onto tacit features of visual imagery, and the aesthetic features of calligraphic styles. In graphocentric terms, another important orientational symbol is the circle. In Chapter VI, we have seen the significance of grouping in circles to pray and to recite the Qur'an. Itzkowitz (1980:88), commenting on the Ottoman "circle of equity", explains the model of Islamic statecraft as predicated on a simple but all-encompassing formulation that embodied the ethical, political and social values of the Ottoman class. According to this formulation which was made up of statements usually written around the circumference of a circle, the state was identified with the human body. The four classes of Ottoman society, Men of the Sword, Men of the Pen, Men of Negotiation, Men of Husbandry (in other words, warriors, scribes, merchants and peasant farmers) were compared to the four bodily humors (phlegm, blood, black bile and yellow bile). Itzkowitz also points out that the function of the physician or the grand vizier was to maintain the necessary equilibrium among the humors and classes of society. The grand vizier stood in analogous relationship to the state as a physician to the body. This kind of pairing of the physical and the social, moreover, through focusing on the bodily fluids circumvents the formal hierarchy implicit in anthropomorphic images of the outward
(upright) appearance of bodily structure. Through the imagery of the circle, linear hierarchization was avoided and instead equilibrium, equality and interdependence were evoked. Here again the directionality of the written word was a primary metaphor of ideational reality.

In modern Turkish culture, eşitlik (equality) remains a powerful tacit notion underlying religious life. As in the political spheres of economy and gender relations it becomes a focus of overtly articulated debate when the ideal is seen to be thwarted. According to a religious hoja, for example, "all people are equal like the teeth of a comb": butûn insanlar tarağın dişleri gibi birbirine eşittir.... She commented moreover, "there is no racial (lit. black white) discrimination in our religion": siyah beyaz ayrım yoktur bizim dinimizde.

The unnamed antagonists evoked by such statements are, of course, the Christians as outsiders. When political activists demand social and economic equality, however, the antagonists are other insiders and the mere mention of the word eşitlik is sufficient to brand people as communists and hence as enemies of the Turkish state. These images of equality lack the cosmological underpinning associated with writing (as in the circle).

Social hierarchies constructed on principles of age, occupation or generation dissolve in a religious milieu only to be replaced by gender segregation. We have seen the analogy of the human body with society in the "circle of equity" described by Itzkowitz. These different notions of equality are not based on absolutes, but rely on various contexts such as the family, the nation or the global human community (within which human individuals are equal before Allah, and which reinforces the idea of his uniqueness as in the formulaic expression: Yalnız Allah tektir (only Allah is peerless)). These symmetrical images contrast with the various notions of hierarchy connoted by alternative features of topological orientation.

We have seen in Chapter II that notions of hierarchy are captured linguistically in the distinction between kaba and kibar Turkish and in Chapter V that notions of hierarchy are also expressed linguistically as well as gesturally through upper and lower body imagery. The gestural and linguistic topological imagery of right and left encodes intimations of both hierarchy and symmetry. In certain forms of Sufic dance, the right hand is raised and the left hand lowered to symbolise the flow of life force from the heavens to the earth.
19.4. Sağ/sol: Right/left

Connotations of right and left in Turkish culture vary according to political and/or religious usage, and both have strong moral connotations. The importance of right/left symbolism in Turkish ideational life and of the highly polysemic nature of the terms can be illustrated through the following joke. The joke was published in Göçmen Toplum (Migrant Society) (January, 1987), a left-wing Melbourne Turkish newspaper, but its prior source was a mainstream Turkish national newspaper called Hürriyet (5 Dec., 1986).

The joke is an illustration of the importance of directional symbolism and plays on the salience of right/left orientation in Turkish political culture. Turgut Ozal, then Turkish Prime Minister and leader of a right-wing political party, faces a screen on which the words: İRTICA VAR appear. İrtica means reactionism and var is the existential predicate. The utterance translates as "There is reactionism" or alternatively "reactionism exists". In the cartoon, the words are written from left to right in capital letters in Latin script. Ozal’s utterance (in the balloon) reads:

\[
\begin{align*}
 Sağdan sola okudum. \\
 \text{(rightABL leftDAT readPST1sg)}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
 RAV ACİTRİ yaziyor. \\
 \text{(*RAV ACİTRİ writePROG3sg)}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
 Nerde irtica? \\
 \text{(whereLOC reactionism?)}
\end{align*}
\]

(Trans: I have read from right to left. It says "RAV ACİTRİ". Where is (the) reactionism?)

[Cartoon image of Turgut Özal reading a screen with the words "İRTİCA VAR"]]
As this is a visual (pictorial) joke, using cartoon as a medium, it can play on spatial and orientational iconism directly. Ozal is situated to the right of the board thus symbolising iconically his right-wing perspective; the literal message is from left to right, thus intimating that reality is ideally perceived from the left. The idiomatic sağdan sola "from right to left" (which we have already encountered in Chapter VI) is here part of a larger literal statement, but visually it is inverted through being written from left to right.

İrtica is an Arabic loanword. This is signalled linguistically through the absence of vowel harmony. Its use here by speakers of new Turkish drives home the point that an Islamic worldview signified by an Arabic lexical item is (to secular Turkish eyes) imbued with reactionism. Within the context of the joke, ırtica is the key switch mechanism by which polysemic referentiality is triggered and different cognitive scripts are evoked by one surface meaning.

Through the use of mirror writing, the joke plays on the inversion of directionality of the (Latin) script. Script and its inherent directionality metaphorically draws on the tensions between the religious meanings of right and left in Turkish culture, and their transposition into political oppositions of conservativism and reformism. The use of capital letters iconically stresses how OBVIOUS the reactionism is, but through an inverted reading of the signs Ozal fails to see the message and sees instead only "nonsense" words. *Rav acitri has no referential meaning in Turkish.

Without cultural knowledge, the cartoon joke might suggest simply that Ozal was stupid to read the message backwards, but much of the symbolic political meaning would be lost.

The significance of right and left symbolism in traditional Turkish society generally is very broad. Right has connotations of goodness as well as health (saglık), while left connotes danger and disorder.

sağ:

sağ means "right" as well as "life/alive" and is associated with goodness

saglık health

başınız sağ olsun (lit. may your head be alive!)

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82I have borrowed these terms from Marino (1988:42).

83As seen in Chapter II, Turkish has been written in a variety of scripts throughout history.
(expression of condolence)

sag ol (thank you; lit. may you be well):

sagci (political) rightist

It will be noted that sag does not mean 'right' in the sense of "not wrong". This notion is covered by such terms as dogru (as in dogru yol) (right pathway) and hak (as in haklisiniz (you are right))

sol:

sol (left) is associated with impurity and danger
(see below)

solcu (political) leftist

solak left-handed

In Ottoman Turkish, solak meant the guardsman in attendance on the Sultan during processions. This suggests an association between left and danger or enmity.

sag, sol together:

saga sola bakma! don't look right or left!
(i.e. go straight there!)

sol saga, sol saga, yarin bayram olsa...
(children's rhyme)
left right, left right, may tomorrow be a holiday...

sagdan sola from right to left

Sol, however, does not have the same range of denotative meanings as sag. Neither does sol have a bounded nominative form, unlike sag. The relative loading on these terms, therefore, implies traditionally that sag was the dominant term, both linguistically and ideologically.

Within Islamic culture right and left symbolism is relatively explicit. When taking turns in communal Qur'an recitations, one proceeds from right to left, the direction of Arabic writing is from right to left, and the angels of writing (defter melekleri) (who keep accounts of an individual's deeds) come from the right or the left depending on one's sevap derecesi, one's balance of good and bad deeds in life. During prayers, one turns

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84See Chapter V.
one's head from right to left and back to the right again. This is in order to greet the
angels who sit on each shoulder. Günah melekleri (lit. sin angels) are on the left and are
symbolically shunned through turning back to the right. This orientational symbolism is
replicated corporeally. The right hand must always be used when eating. One should put
one's left foot first when entering a shower or toilet (i.e. when one is polluted) and put
the right foot first when leaving (i.e. when one is purified or cleansed). One begins ritual
ablutions with the right hand. With the exception of the nose, the right hand is used for
washing the upper body and the left hand for the lower body. Allah, I was told, creates all
parts of the human being, but the angels caress or stroke the face and that accounts for
differences between individuals. The nose, however, is shaped directly by Allah, and it is
sinful to change the nose in any way, for instance through cosmetic surgery. Here there
is again a linkage between left and the sacred.

We have seen in Chapter IV that Muslim infants born into a religious milieu, are
greeted at birth with the sound of ezan (the Islamic call to prayer) intoned into the right
ear while through the left ear they receive their gôbekadî (lit. "womb name" or "navel
name"). In this way, sound is spatialized vis-a-vis the human body and the individual is
positioned as the locus of both religious and kinship identities. Thus again, right and left
which, in anthropomorphic terms could
be
seen as symmetrical are imbued with an
ideational hierarchy which is culturally inspired.

While sag and sol have strong moral connotations particularly in the religious sphere,
connotations of right and left vary according to usage, and, irrespective of the lack of
symmetry between the two, sol and associated terms have positive connotations and saq
(particularly in its political meanings) has negative connotations for leftists. Leftists,
moreover, tend to use the terms gericiilik (lit. backwardness) and ilericilik (lit.
progressiveness or forwardness) when talking about political divisions, but have a
passive awareness of politico-religious usage, which they can exploit and undermine as in
the above joke.

Historically, symbolic classification in terms of right and left appears to have been
important within traditional Turkic culture as well as within Islamic contexts. To the
Oguz khans of Central Asia in times of alliance with China, for example, the Chinese
sovereign was on the right and obeyed the Oguz Turks, whilst the Byzantine emperor, on
the left, did not:

SAĞ yandakı Altın Kağan (Çin hükûmdarı) Oğuza itaat eti (right sideLOC.POSS
Chines*Sovereign Oghouz (Turks) obedience doPST3sg)
SOL yandaki Urum Kağan (Bizans imparatoru) Oğuz’un emrini dinlenmedi (left sideLOC.POSS Byzantine emperorGEN command listenNEG.PST3sg)85 In other words, allies were on the right and enemies on the left.

Alternatively, this may have been because of Islamic influences on rhetoric generally, or because of the imposition of a discourse from a later era on the beliefs and practices of a former time.

19.5. Tersine döndü... ...the world turned upside down

Another example of inversion is the notion of ters ("opposite", "contrary", "wrong"). The concept of inversion itself is captured in the expression tersine döndü (oppositePOSS.DAT turnPST3sg). Just as in the case of the Turkish participles en and an, people are identified by their actions and movement, people’s actions are judged morally according to orientational principles:

\[ \text{demizime TERS gelen herşey yasaktır} \]
(everything that goes against our religion is forbidden)

These images of reversal are related very directly too to the dislocative experience of migration and the particular paths open to individuals or groups in their new environment. For many the experience of migration has reversed the roles they were socialised into in Turkey. Parents of young children see their traditional power and authority being eroded in this new environment. They express their sense of loss through the idiom of respect (saygı) which is seen to be lacking in this "lost generation" of Turkish children.

Men too find their traditional roles as household heads and as guardians of family honour usurped by women as they enter into new relationships with the outside society. Moreover, people who may have been at the bottom of the social pyramid in Turkey, due to lack of educational prospects and land or other prestigious assets, may find themselves faring better materially in Australia, say, on account of having acquired English or computing skills which have opened doors to professional qualifications and employment. Very often it is the people from more prestigious backgrounds in Turkey who feel the brunt of this social inversion most formidably as they try vainly to assert their superiority over other Turks here. This sense of dislocation manifests itself most acutely in the realm of language.

85From (Türk Edebiyatı, Anon. p.229).
In a bilingual or multilingual situation, foreign and often incomprehensible language sounds can have an alienating and isolating effect for monolingual speakers. As the children acquire English as a dominant language, many parents feel they are left behind a sound barrier that can be very threatening. Situations such as this modify Ong’s (1982:72) dictum that sight isolates and sound incorporates. The role of language contact in turning the world upside down can be illustrated by an example drawn from the domain of education. We have seen in Chapter IV, that the school is one of the key domains in which the transition from Turkish mother tongue to English as a second language takes place. This transition also marks a disjunctive discursive space for parents and children in that it is the locus of an incipient inter-generation language barrier.

Some of the tensions and symbolic inversions created by language contact can be illustrated by the following example of a meeting of parents and teachers at a multicultural highschool. At the same time the event provides an instance of “the world turned upside down” for parents as their children acquire knowledge of English. The repercussions of this inversion of authority, in which language shift is deeply implicated, affect both family and group life.

The school in this instance was not officially a multilingual or bilingual school although it catered for a student population from 30 different “ethnic” backgrounds. It was situated in one of the inner suburbs of north west Melbourne. Such parent-teacher gatherings provided one of the few opportunities many Turkish people had for meeting people from the wider Australian community. For teachers as well as for parents it was an encounter with other languages and cultural arenas. Linguistically and culturally the participants belonged to two main groups: English-speaking and non-English-speaking, i.e. mainstream Anglo-Australians and "migrant Australians". In situations such as this, Turkish parents gained an awareness of their language as one of many vying for discursive space in interaction with English, but they also realised the enormous structural overlaps they shared with other minority language groups. Hearing, say, Cantonese-speaking parents talk of their language difficulties vis-a-vis English, they learned strategies for pinpointing and explaining specific problems which affected them also.

86 Unlike my earlier point that monolingual Turks are not threatened by multilingualism (see Chapter III), this is a situation where English is becoming dominant in the home, as opposed to a public arena of multilingualism.
As parents arrived at the high school they were directed to the library where the meeting would take place. The meeting was to discuss issues of concern to teachers and parents, such as school reports, uniforms and so on. As they arrived they were jokingly greeted by one of the teachers with the question:

*And which language would you like to speak tonight?*

Multicultural education is a relatively new experience for many Australian educationalists, and the greeting calls attention to the multilingual context of the event as well as to language barriers. Many of the parents would have been unable to reply to or even to understand the question. The speaker, moreover, was a monolingual Anglo-Australian. There was therefore an element of satire involved. 87

The parents were divided up into different language groups where there would be an interpreter to explain the issues in their own language and relay their thoughts on the matter back to the teachers. With one exception (see below) all of the teachers were monolingual English-speaking Australians. The interpreters were employed as teacher aides and were, therefore, in a subordinate position to teachers. There was one liaison officer whose job it was to communicate the school’s philosophy to parents and in turn voice the parents’ wishes for their children’s education.

Seen at a linguistic level, there was an inversion of hierarchy: in spite of the fact that this school catered for a highly multicultural and multilingual student population, monolingual teachers were institutionally superior to bilingual teachers (the official title of teacher aide hides the fact that the aide often is more highly qualified than the teacher except that the qualification was not obtained in Australia or in another English-speaking country). 88 The familial hierarchy of parent-child was subverted by the educational hierarchy of teacher-child because the teacher belonged to the dominant language group in Australia, and the parents to the various groups of newer migrants.

Some of the languages of the parents (for example, Italian, Spanish and Cantonese)

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87 Many Anglo-Australian teachers feel threatened by multilingualism as they begin to perceive their monolingualism in a restrictive light. Their anxiety reflects the attitudes of the wider English-speaking monolingual community, where remarks such as: *foreign languages sound interesting until you realise they are saying just the same old things as we are or you need to be bloody bilingual these days to survive in Australia with all those foreigners around* are commonplace.

88 In 1989, the Australian government finally proposed measures for solving this problem, i.e. the setting up of a task force to examine ways of recognizing officially degrees and other qualifications gained in non-English-speaking countries.
were being offered as subjects for students to study. This choice reflected the dominant second languages spoken within that area of Melbourne rather than the ethnic composition of the school's actual student population, as the choice of subjects was maintained over several years, whereas the linguistic backgrounds of the student population fluctuated considerably from year to year. The teachers of these languages (with the exception of the Cantonese teacher) were not bilingual, but had a book knowledge of the language they were teaching.

The meeting started with a discussion of the format school reports should take. All reports were in English regardless of the minority status of this language in terms of students' own linguistic backgrounds. In the past reports had been sent home with the children and many of them had taken advantage of their parents' lack of knowledge of English and had "interpreted" their reports very freely and always in positive terms. The teachers wanted to know the parents' feelings about how best the report could convey sound information to them about their child's progress, given that many of the parents had little or no knowledge of written or spoken English. Should they give an individual account based on each child? The danger here would be that the child's parents might not be able to understand the vocabulary used and would have no idea of the relative progress of the child. If, on the other hand, the report was prepared in simple English giving subject name and ticking boxes to show whether the child was excellent, good, fair or bad at a subject it would be easier for the parents to relate to this vocabulary since it would be repeated constantly in reports. By force of repetition the parents would be able to relate to key items of vocabulary, which for this particular graphocentric event could be like classifiers or categories. They would not have to find someone to interpret the report for them and could avoid the semantic vagaries of flowing English.

For most of the parents from the Turkish and other non-English speaking groups there was a remarkably unified response to such questions. They would like detailed information about their own child in simple English and would also like to know the child's place in class. Again, on the question of uniforms (which were abandoned by this particular school several years previously in order to break down the barriers between the school as institution and the wider community) the parents, especially the men, seemed to be in favour of re-introducing uniforms, and there were special requests from the Greek, Central American, Vietnamese and Turkish parents that this happen. This points to the focused awareness of the significance of dress as a marker of identity and its importance for many newer migrants. For the parents it signified their children's incorporation into the wider Australian society and subverted the school's (Anglocentric) intention of assisting this incorporation through non-use of uniforms.
For Turkish people, the barriers to communication existed not only across language and literacy boundaries, however, but from one Turkish linguistic style to another. Some of the language used in the school and in notes sent out throughout the year was strange to Turkish ears; often words are from Cypriot Turkish (originally from Arabic) and did not form part of the current style of language in use in the domain of education by Turkish speakers from Turkey. İhbarname (notice: a word of Arabic origin), for example, appeared in some of the school messages in place of the more commonly used duyuru (which is new Turkish). In modern standard Turkish words relating to secular education often come from French: grup, karne, konser, bale okul, form, okul konseyi. Some of the older style Arabic words in Turkish are best matched by the more complex Latin terms still in use in English, for example mufredat (curriculum) which has been rendered into new Turkish as eğitimi proğramı. The word for school itself, okul in new Turkish often appears as mektep (primary school), an Arabic-derived term, in Australia. Lexical shift in this domain does not always veer towards Cypriot Turkish, however: the French-derived lise (lycée), for example, vies with the English-derived haiskul (high school).

These are examples of severance from one semantic field and incorporation into a new domain of meaning. Again it is significant that English loanwords replace older Arabic or French loanwords. This signals the different routes whereby contemporary lexical items have entered the language. In the case of Cypriot Turkish, Arabic loanwords encounter English translation, whereas in Turkish Turkish the education lexicon was first filtered through French. Shared subject matters, therefore, may involve a varied vocabulary at any given time, depending on the cultural biographies of particular lexical items. Like formal medical terminology, the Turkish educational lexicon involves influences from two classical languages (Arabic and Latin) and two modern contact languages (French and English).

For the parents, then the world was turned upside down linguistically not only through a reversion to old Turkish but also through the encounter with English as the dominant language, and literacy as a relatively alien technology of the intellect. It was turned upside down socially through the children’s access to English which placed them ahead of their parents in this new environment.

Because of their perceived fluency in English, children are asked to interpret for adults, in many informal situations. This gives rise to various problems, however, as they do not share the adults’ understanding of language and adults’ meanings. Regardless of these tensions, however, bilingual competence results in childrens’ potential superiority over
parents. As we have seen, one area in which this superiority is exercised is between the school and the home, as children sometimes deliberately mis-translate their school reports. These language-based examples of the 'world turned upside-down' are indicative of a sense of dislocation and change in orientation for Turkish family life. The formulaic tersine döndü, therefore, as well as making a statement about reversal, connotes a negative level of signification.

19.6. Köşe dönenler: ("those who are turning the corner")

When people are seen to experience a positive change in direction, the term köşe dönenler may be applied. Those people who have succeeded in changing their status for the better in the new environment are known as köşe dönenler. There has been a change in their orientation. Köşe (corner) again implies a trajectory, and the imagery suggests that an obstacle has been overcome. The implications are not, however, entirely positive as sometimes their success is resented by others and they are seen as having compromised Islamic and/or Turkish principles held to be shared by all. At other times it is the köşe dönenler themselves who feel they have lost something in the process of change.

Gülsen, a young Cypriot Turkish woman in her twenties, for example, spoke of having lost her Turkish identity through adopting English as her first language. She now found that she could no longer communicate effectively with her parents and family in a meaningful way since her knowledge of Turkish was inadequate. In terms of the wider Australian society she had been very successful since she had completed tertiary education, but she said she felt 'empty inside'. The formal English she had acquired and the English she spoke with friends was not emotionally satisfying. It gave her a feeling of alienation from her roots (kök). Her discovery of her loss of identity, however, came in a climate of multiculturalism when bilingualism was being rewarded within the different 'ethnic' communities and access to many community-based jobs was virtually closed to monolingual people.

What little Turkish Gülsen did know was of the older style rural Cypriot Turkish which had not kept pace with the reforms of the language carried out in Turkey itself. Although she herself held a very secular outlook on life, the Turkish she did know and heard about her in her family situation was heavily Arabicised and fitted more readily with a religious worldview. She felt she was in a quandary: there were opportunities to study modern Turkish, but this language also felt somewhat alien to her.

89 Kök (roots) is cognate with gök (sky) and in this instance of polysemy (I use the term tentatively), there are etymological intimations of celestial origins.
One other successful university student, for example, felt she too had lost her identity in the process of gaining an education which had alienated her from her family environment. She could no longer communicate fluently in Turkish with members of her parents' generation and she now wanted very much to understand their world. The idea of studying Turkish social life in an abstract sociological way was distasteful and would be, in her eyes, a mark of disrespect to the older generations since it would mean disregarding their position as potential transmitters of such knowledge. Such noetic tensions are at the heart of much of the ambivalence felt by Turks towards institutionalized knowledge. The question of different noetic universes will be taken up again in Chapter VIII.

20. Summary

The cluster of terms examined in this chapter provides evidence of some of the polysemic richness of orientational imagery in Turkish. The names of the cardinal directions provide etymological evidence of a culturally salient connection between the celestial and the social which is at the basis of the notion of different pathways, which spans the cosmological, the social and the somatic), metaphorically evoked in various religious and/or political contexts. The pathway notion itself straddles both Ottoman and Islamic realities. Grammatical particles and suffixes reveal intimations of the relative flux and stasis of social life in general, while notions of exile such as gurbet assume a quality of placeness as Turkish migrants locate themselves in relation to their homeland. The imagery of right and left is open to potential inversion, whilst reversal itself is depicted relatively unambiguously through the notion of tersine döndû. The change of direction implied in 'turning the corner' intimates a positive advance, but at the expense of a certain degree of loss.

In contrasting the relative ideological and linguistic weight attached to right and left with that accorded open and closed in the next chapter, we can note the lack of symmetry in terms of linguistic and non-verbal marking across different orientational tropes.

Chapter VII deals with the semantic polarity open/closed in Turkish ideational life and its importance as an orientational metaphor in shaping linguistic soundspace. The second part of the chapter shows how the open/closed contrast is complemented by notions of insider- and outsidersness. These two chapters contain evidence of the degree to which language constructs ideational space and the role of language in highlighting dislocation. Topological imagery in turn serves to locate social actors whose geographical space has been lost or distanced through migration.
CHAPTER VII

Yalnız Allah tektir.
(Only Allah is peerless.)

21. Linguistic Soundspace

This chapter is about linguistic soundscapes, where I discuss language in (physical) space as well as the ways in which discursive patterns shape ideational space. Space is never static, but is shaped and reshaped by the relationships between physical entities (including human beings) as well as by movement and sound. My analysis will be confined to the dimensions of voice and vision since dimensions of culturally-construed interpersonal spatial boundaries in a Muslim milieu can best be understood by paying close attention to these two features of sensory focus. Topological aspects of voice and vision relate to emic notions of openness and closure, and the starting point for this exploration of soundscapes is lexicalization. Lexical meanings will in turn be related to non-verbal levels of signification. Lexical marking provides clues to tensions within a society, just as euphony, punning or linguistic taboo may do. Lexical pairing is a feature common to many linguistic systems, but the relative ideological weighting given to such terms does not correlate simply with verbal dominance.

22. Open and closed

The polysemous terms açık (open) and kapalı (closed) are two of the most commonly used descriptive words in the Melbourne Turkish lexicon. Given the strict gender segregation which is encouraged by Islamic proselytisers within the community, notions of "closed" versus "open" are implicit in prescriptive behaviour for women and men. These terms refer to belief as well as to behaviour. The lexical meanings of açık and kapalı are very broad-ranging: apart from meaning "closed", and hidden as in kapalı kutu (closed box), kapalı means "covered" as in kapalı çarşı (covered bazaar). Açık connotes immodest, open-minded, frank, assertive; kapalı connotes modest, narrow-minded, bigoted, according to context and speaker. At the level of descriptive terms for humans, açık and kapalı relate also to dress, but programs or films too may be described as açık, according to degrees of explicit sexual behaviour and dress, although I have never heard the contrasting term kapalı used in this context. It would seem to be part of the implicit ideal of how things should be.

Açık can also mean "on" in the sense of the radio or television being switched on. Kapalı can similarly mean "off" in these contexts. When not in use, television sets are
often covered with a lacy crocheted cloth. In this way the screen (or face) is symbolically subjected to purdah.

As Grosz (1989:27) comments, regarding the ideological deployment of binary oppositions,

"It is conceptually arbitrary which term has dominance, this is the effect of power relations, which entail that one set of terms always occupies the privileged position."

The question of determining dominance and "the privileged position" is fraught with difficulties, however, and hinges on the interaction between the verbal and the non-verbal in the underlying metaphorical domain.

Amongst Melbourne religious Turks, for example, the term açık (open) is used explicitly to a greater degree than the corresponding kapalı (closed), which is often implicit and unspoken. Given that açık has negative connotations for these speakers, can we still take this to be the dominant term because it is the explicit and most frequently articulated one? Or does dominance require a term with a positive value? In this case, the implicit kapalı, tacit rather than articulated, would be the dominant meaning. The question of dominance requires much more elaboration, since linguistic dominance does not always correspond to ideological dominance, and the power of the unspoken can often exceed that of the verbally articulated.

On the ideational level, there are many terms and expressions based on extensions of açık. Açık açık konuşmak, for example, means "to speak frankly or openly". Reduplication intensifies the sense of frankness or openness. The causative verb açıkلامak (lit. to make open) carries the meaning "to disclose" or "to explain". The related noun, açıklama means "an exegesis" and is used for a translation of the meaning of the Qur'an into any language other than Arabic. Some of these ideational levels of meaning will be explored in this chapter.

22.1. Somatic, Sartorial and Spatial Closure

There are three major levels at which people are "enclosed":

a) the level of the human body, which is highlighted during periods of fasting, b) the level of dress which encloses the body to a greater degree than in most other societies, and
c) the level of public physical space where Muslims contain their own cultural life in isolated pockets of social topos. The last level is again sub-divided through gender segregation.

22.2. Voice and Silence

In order to show how the notions of açık and kapalı articulate with the voicing and muting of language and silent visual communication, this analysis of topos will begin by examining the notion of closure, which I contend is epitomised by the fasting body during Ramadan. After providing the context of this unspoken metaphor through a detailed description of Ramadan amongst Turks in Melbourne, the remainder of the chapter will explore the spatial dynamics of voice and silence. My aim is to show that in the absence of physical boundaries, the human body extends itself outwards through voice and vision to create appropriate boundaries or limits to interpersonal space. The boundaries created by speech and silence serve to enclose separate domains of ideational space.

The various contexts which need to be taken into account to grasp the logic in the definition and orientation of spatial boundaries differ greatly from one situation to the next, and depend ultimately on the dynamic interaction between what I shall call the scope of the eye and the scope of the ear. I am not using these terms in a technical or bio-mechanical sense, but intend instead a fairly general meaning of the inner and outer aspects of looking/seeing on the one hand and discursive practice, including listening, on the other. The chapter will also serve to illustrate the interaction between voice and silence in maintaining Turkish Muslim ideational topologies in an Australian environment.

Traditional Muslim women’s dress, exposing as it does only the face and the hands, accentuates features such as the eyes and the mouth, while covering the ears. While the act of listening is, therefore, largely hidden, the act of speaking draws the gaze of the listener to the speaker and for this reason, in Muslim societies generally there are gender-related sanctions governing the voicing and muting of language (parole). Any attempt to come close to an emic appreciation of the dynamics of interpersonal space in a Muslim milieu must take into account the intricate nature of the relationship between the hidden dimensions of sound and the silent dimensions of dress and other visually observable features of the cultural environment.
22.3. The Body Fast

The justification for treating the semantic polarity *apık* and *kapalı* (open/closed) in the light of topological metaphor derives from aspects of dress and fasting in relation to the human body during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. During Ramadan, the fasting body is relatively "closed" sensorily to the external world. Moreover, Islamic dress prescriptions ensure the sartorial "closure" of the body. At the level of anthropomorphism, I would like to suggest a strong semantic link between the notion of fasting and the notion of closedness. Although the fasting body's closure is not captured linguistically in Turkish, it is implicit in dress and also in the body's relative lack of interaction with the external world. Ramadan epitomizes Islamic spacetime in the lives of Turkish Muslims. For those who follow the religious, moral or true pathway (*doğru yol*), observance of fasting therefore during Ramadan is compulsory, fasting being one of the five basic principles of Islam. It is during Ramadan that the phenomenon of "closedness" manifests itself most clearly. The choice of fasting or not fasting is a manifestation of how strictly one adheres to one's Islamic identity, and a blatant show of not fasting is a way of indicating one's secular worldview, and constitutes an implicit rejection of Islamic principles.

As we saw in Chapter IV, during Ramadan, the mouth is the "pathway of Allah": it is the transcendental orientation towards Allah which is highlighted through the emphasis on prayer and on Qur'an recitations. This is an example of metaphor operating at a tacit, non-verbal level, captured topologically in the directionality of spiralling flows of vocal sound from right to left.

The transcendentalization of sound is emphasized by the fact that during Ramadan many other forms of verbal communication are expressly forbidden (for example, swearing, cursing, insulting). The body's "closure" to the sensory world is also manifest in other proscriptions. Eating and drinking are restricted to the hours of darkness. Sexual relations are forbidden. There is considerable debate about whether or not smoking is forbidden or simply discouraged. For some people, smoking is allowed since tobacco was not known at the time of the Prophet; for others it is forbidden since it breaks the body's fast. These latter contend, moreover, that if tobacco had been known at the time of

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91 The importance of notions of closure in Muslim societies is borne out by ethnographic studies such as that of the Khroumirian (see Creighton, 1982). Judging by anthropological work amongst Greeks, moreover, it would seem that this metaphor may be of wider cross-cultural significance. See Chryssanthopoulou, 1984; Hirschon, 1978 and Herzfeld, 1986b. The link is captured lexically in English, for example: we *fasten* our seat belts; we use *zip fasteners* in our clothing; we hold things *fast*.
the Prophet he would surely have forbidden it during Ramadan. Women who may use lipstick at other times of the year refrain from wearing it during Ramadan because it might inadvertently get inside the mouth and break the fast.

This is also a time for harmonizing social relationships. People who are not on speaking terms are encouraged to make peace during Şeker Bayramı, the three day feast at the end of Ramadan. Children who have rebelled against parents, for example, come at this time to kiss their parents’ hands and show their respect. Taboos on divisive speech (swearing, cursing and so on) point to this concern with social cohesion.

At a wider community level, fasting is emblematic of one’s religiosity.

Within Melbourne, secular and religious Turks are at pains to be seen to ignore one another as much as possible (even though these divisions sometimes cut across family lines). People do, however, take considerable notice of who fasts and who does not. In Turkey, on the other hand, religious fasting has given rise to considerable strife, particularly between students in university canteens. This strife is a frequent topic of discussion amongst Melbourne Turks, and serves to heighten the intensity with which religious people adhere to their Islamic principles in Australia. Secular Turks (particularly political activists) often claim that their religious compatriots only pretend to hold the fast. One frequent rumour is that people get up before dawn and switch on their lights so that their neighbours think they are following their religious observances, when in fact they have gone back to bed.

The rules of fasting are discussed frequently also, and people make of point of letting their reasons for non-observance of the fast be known. Canonically, people who are not obliged to fast during Ramadan are those who are either very old or very young; those who are ill or those who are undertaking a long journey. In addition women do not fast when they are breastfeeding or menstruating. The flow of body fluids, milk or blood, mean that the body’s boundaries are in any case violated at these times. The fasting period itself lasts from dawn to sunset, and is therefore held during the hours of daylight.

Attention to the sun and its movement is at its highest during this holy month and Ramadan itself is calculated according to a lunar calendar. To echo Chelhod here, there is an obvious synchronisation of the human and the celestial. A light meal called sahur is taken just before sunrise and the fast is broken at dusk by another light meal called iftar. The fast is broken initially with olives and/or dates,⁹² and it is important that it be broken

⁹²The only reason I was ever given for breaking the fast with olives or dates was that "it is healthy".
at sunset and not later, since it is held to be detrimental to one’s health to hold the fast longer. This is held to be so even though the actual duration of the fast is quantitatively longer in summer than in winter. Because of their experience of having lived in the northern as well as in the southern hemisphere, Turkish people joke about arranging their lives so that they always spend Ramadan in a wintry climate where the days are shorter and the fasting easier.

The constant verbal articulation of Islamic prescriptions points to a perceived need to keep the rules in view. They cannot be taken for granted in a way that might be possible in a wholly Islamic environment. The dislocation caused by migration to a largely non-Muslim environment, however, gives rise to clashes in temporality. People working in non-Muslim environments, have experienced difficulties in impressing upon employers the need to break their fast at the right time (this rarely coincides with workbreaks in offices or factories). In general, however, it seems that there is a growing awareness of Islamic culture in Melbourne, especially in areas where there is considerable contact between Muslims and non-Muslims. During this month, there are special religious programs on Ethnic Radio (that come directly from Turkey) and greater evidence of an awareness of Islam on television (at least on SBS: Special Broadcasting Services, a multilingual, multicultural television channel). As far as the broadcasting media are concerned, SBS coverage of Muslim affairs is usually culturally sensitive. Other television channels indulge western myths of shrouded women, oil-rich sheikhs and terrorist hijackers. Moreover, the term "Arab terrorist" as a symbol of fear, has entered the colloquial speech of many Australians, and Turks and Arabs are often not distinguished since they are seen to share a common Islamic identity. One young secular man, for example, kept the Life World Library book about Turkey in his home to show to Australian friends. This is an illustrated book, published in 1966 which shows mostly urban Turks in Western style clothing, or rural people in the fields in traditional Turkish dress. There are few pictures of people in Islamic style dress except at the mosques. For him, it was important that Australians realise that Turkey is a secular state.

The actual duration of fasting may vary from one individual to the next. Many pious people fast for three months (the first for Allah, the second for Mohammad and the third (obligatory) month for themselves). The days lost (on account of menstruation, for example, or temporary ill-health) must be made up at the earliest possible opportunity. Some people say that it is necessary to fast only for the same number of days afterwards, but others believe that there is extra merit in fasting two days later on for every day lost during Ramadan itself. This is talked about through the idiom of debt (borç) and people
say they owe so many days or that they have repaid their debt. This relative weighting of Ramadan versus non-Ramadan accentuates the notion of sacred time, although this may not manifest itself greatly in public life. The city’s mosques are comparatively hidden and are located at considerable distance from each other, thus dispersing any strong visual public manifestation of Muslim religious activities in the city as a whole.

Because of lack of public Muslim space in Melbourne generally, pious Turks frequently gather in private homes for religious services. Lack of understanding of Islamic practices has led to many rumours amongst mainstream Australians, particularly with regard to pre-dawn prayers. Muslim visitors from out of town are often accommodated at mosques and other centres of worship and these "comings and goings throughout the night" have triggered rumours of moral impropriety in the wider Australian community.

Turkish people also talk constantly of the differences between Ramadan in Turkey and in Australia, as they bring to their new environment images and memories of their past experience - individual and collective. Overall, there is a sharp phenomenological contrast with Turkey itself where lights are strung between the minarets of adjacent mosques. These spell out religious messages such as Mubarek Ramazan: onbir ayin sultana (Blessed Ramadan: Sultan of the (eleven) months). This is not possible in Australia, as mosques are never in such close proximity. Also missing is the sound of ezan (the call to prayer).

The visual and sound imagery of the religious films watched throughout this month evokes these absences and engenders in Turkish Muslims a strong sense of loss or of restriction, as their once taken-for-granted Islamic environment shrinks to the size of their television screens and becomes enclosed and contained within a minority space. In this way, the public sphere of life in Turkey manifests itself within the private, muted sphere of domestic Turkish Muslim life in Melbourne through television, radio and Turkish-language newspapers. It is encompassed within a minority space, physically, sartorially and sonically closed off from mainstream Melbourne life. This telescoping of a familiar reality within a largely alien environment is, however, offset by contact with other minority groups who have experienced a similar dislocation. Within Muslim communities, therefore, irrespective of how secular one’s worldview is, one cannot ignore the fact that it is Ramadan. There is much more activity and movement around the

93 Since the time of fieldwork, Muslims have begun to celebrate festivals such as Kurban Bayrami (the Festival of Sacrifices) publicly in Melbourne.
mosques and other places where prayer gatherings are held, the *hehal* butchers' shops are more crowded than ever. Video stores have a greater turnover of religious films, and people's dress is modified to comply with the special religious significance of the month.

Traditionally, I have been told, the evenings after *iftar* and *teravi namaz* (the special evening prayers recited during Ramadan) would be taken up by story-telling and games. Within the urban context, however, these stories and games have given way to the print and electronic media, and in this month people are more likely to watch religious video films which are readily available from numerous outlets around the city.

These films often centre on the lives of saintly people who lived during the times of the Prophet. There are also films about Mevlana and other Sufis, however, and these portray a view of life which contrasts in many profound respects with that propagated by orthodox Sunni Islam. Here, for example, there is an emphasis on the individual rather than on the community, and gender distinctions are not elaborated. These films give rise to much discussion concerning the need for individual women and men to display their piety in the outer forms of ritual, and above all in their attitude towards the Qur'an.

Soundscapes too reflect this special timespace. Throughout Ramadan, Arabic greetings merge with Turkish ones in everyday interaction. Religious people greet each other: *Ramazan mubarek olsun*, wishing others a blessed Ramadan. The first two words are Arabic and *olsun* is Turkish. This contrasts with greetings heard on secular occasions which are lexically wholly Turkish: *Bayramınız kutlu olsun*, for example. Arabic is also the original language of most of the religious films people watch in the evenings after *teravi namaz*. These films are usually dubbed into Turkish. Thus, while the eyes are drawn to Islamic imagery, the ears are drawn to a Turkish idiom which is, nevertheless, heavily permeated with Arabic, whilst the contrast between religious and secular greetings in peoples' everyday lives is maintained through different lexical codes.

Since Ramadan is a time when community is reinforced and stressed, it is quite usual for two or three families to eat together at *iftar*, and families take it in turn to play host to others (who are generally close kin or friends, or sometimes neighbours). Women come together to prepare the food and sometimes spend entire days in the kitchen. Ideally a hostess would have the help of her daughter-in-law, but where this is not possible she may call on the help of a young neighbour or friend, who will also be invited to the meal, but primarily in the role of helper. Throughout Ramadan, some women prepare sweets in abundance and sell them to neighbours and acquaintances for *Şeker Bayramı*. 
It is especially important at this time of the year that the food be particularly *helal*. *Helal* means "lawful", "legitimate" and in the context of food it signifies meat which is ritually slaughtered, or any other food that is pure and not forbidden. If possible, people obtain their supplies of fresh fruit and vegetables from other Muslims. In this way they feel assured that the vegetables in particular have not been polluted by contact with household pets. There is a reluctance on the part of many people to buy their fresh produce in the mainstream markets as it is suspected that Australians allow their cats and dogs to roam in their vegetable gardens. When preparing the food it is important not to break one's fast by tasting or even by imbibing cooking aromas. If this happens accidentally, the fast is not broken if one immediately washes one's mouth out with water. In the case of aromas, one must blow one's nose thoroughly and wash with water, using the left hand. If possible, the house is perfumed with the fragrance of cloves or other aromatics when the meal is served.

The following is a brief account of the ways in which in Melbourne the month of fasting differs from the remainder of the year. At no other time throughout the year is the awareness of Islamic identity as heightened as throughout this month, Depending on the degree of piety of the participants, which may vary greatly from one grouping to the next, women and men eat in separate areas. Separate rooms are used if possible but if space does not permit this, then separate ends of a joint area. Sometimes areas are curtained off for this purpose. Where gender segregation is especially important, women eat in the kitchen, while men eat separately in the living room. As happens frequently in some of the government high-rise flats rented to low income earners in Melbourne, this may mean that groups of women eat in very tiny cramped kitchens. Where people have a greater degree of choice in selecting their own housing, the preference is for very large kitchens. These curtained-off areas are another form of enclosure. *Perde*, the Turkish word for curtain, is cognate with *purdah*.

There is also an emphasis on greater sartorial closure. women who do not cover their heads at other times will do so now (*Ramazan olduğu için*: because it is Ramadan), and styles differ to emphasize the importance of the occasion - more tightly bound round the head for instance, symbolising the idea of closing off or sartorial fasting.

For those who are very religious, however, dress does not differ greatly at this time of the year. The women, as always, wear long, light overcoats called *pardesû* which reach to their ankles; their headdress covers their hair completely and falls in a circle around their shoulders. Their feet are covered in knitted woollen socks, and indoors they also
wear knitted slippers. When going outside, they slip on clog-like footwear or simple flat-heeled shoes. The men mostly wear western style suits, but they do not wear ties. A small number wear long white Arab-style robes and small round skull caps called takke. Very often their shoes have the backs flattened in order to be able to slip them on and off with ease. Religious Turkish Muslims in Australia can dress in a traditional way that would be discouraged strongly in Turkey. These dress styles "enclose" the body to greater degrees than the western styles adopted by secular Turks.

It is in the domain of dress that the notions of open and closed are most explicitly lexicalised. The term 'open' is used for those who do not dress in an Islamic style. The focus is primarily on women who do not cover their bodies, and more especially their hair, in accordance with Islamic canons of modesty. The throat is considered to be the seat of desire and it is important that it remain hidden from view. Women’s throats should be covered by knotting their scarves in front. Although these features of morality may be shared throughout the Mediterranean region, they are talked about as Islamic, i.e. İslamiyete göre... or dinimize göre... ("according to Islam", "according to our religion") or alternatively as "customary": bizim adatlarımıza göre... (according to our customs).

For secular Turks the semantic focus is deflected onto the ideational level and the meaning of açık is a positive one of ideological openness or broadmindedness. People whom they describe as kapalı, on the contrary, are for them ideologically closed within an anachronistic worldview. While religious people are talked about in terms of degrees of closedness in relation to worldview as well as to dress and movement, secular people are said to be "open" in the same respects. Both terms are strongly imbued with moral connotations and have positive or negative meanings depending on the vantage point of the speaker. Religious people, for example, assign positive connotations to kapalı and do not use the latter senses (i.e. narrow-minded, bigoted), while secular people assign positive connotations to açık and disregard the meaning "immodest". The open/closed semantic polarity has a history in modern Turkish culture. According to Taner (1988:3) Turkish reformers of the 1920’s and 1930’s received advice from French intellectuals to "open the woman and close the Koran". This advice is now being reversed by religious proselytisers within the community. While from a religious perspective, a sense of proper order is now being restored, from a secular standpoint, this is an example of the world being turned upside down: tersine döndü.

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94 Film footage, contained in a program called The Crescent and the Star, shown on SBS (24 November, 1992), featured Uzbek Muslim women in Central Asia burning their veils in public during the same period.
The following incident illustrates contextual aspects of the relative weighting attached to the relationship between openness and closure. It is also indicative of the importance attached to dress and of the potential influence of religious hojas (teachers) on the local Turkish population. It took place at a rural orchard owned by some Melbourne Turks. There were trays of dried apricots piled up alongside a shed, and others spread out for drying on the surrounding grassy areas. Space was fairly constricted as as much land as possible had been planted with fruit trees. A young girl of about 11, a daughter of the fruitfarmers, got on her father’s tractor and drove around and around in circles, sometimes narrowly avoiding the piles of fruit. Most people found her behaviour amusing. The children certainly did. They seemed to be very impressed by the girl’s ability to drive this huge machine. Some of the adults nearby also commented on how strong she must be to handle a big machine like that. The hoja couple present disapproved, however. Their conversation went like this:

**Woman hoja** : *She’s not behaving like a girl. What a shameful way to carry on. I wonder how old she is...*

**Male hoja** : *I’ll talk to her father. He doesn’t come to the mosque. I’ll have to talk to him...*

**Woman hoja** : *I’ll tell her mother she should be covered... (KAPATMASI lazim.) how shameful... she’s behaving very badly...*

Here _kapatmak_ (INF: to close, to cover) meant to adopt Muslim dress and to constrain behaviour and movement in a gender appropriate way. The ideal of closure is lexically invoked here with the intention of bringing about a change. It cannot remain implicit since it is intended to correct a situation where this ideal is being violated. This conversational exchange is also illustrative of the gendered lines of communication which would be pursued to resolve the issue.

Apart from being invoked by such terms as open and closed, gender segregation is advocated and maintained through the use of the term _na-mahram_. _Na-mahram_ is a Persian-derived term with the following dictionary meanings: 1. canonically a stranger, 2. not intimate, not having access to the harem, 3. uninitiated (Redhouse, n.d:865). In everyday Turkish this term is used in a variety of ways in the sense of taboo. Just as parts of the body can be said to be _na-mahram_ (hidden from the gaze of members of the opposite sex), places in the physical environment are also _na-mahram_ for example, toilets or bathhouses of the opposite sex. Other places may be _na-mahram_ to women if men are already present, and vice versa, but it is a man’s prerogative to subvert this closure by
entering the space. This can best be illustrated by taking two contrastive variables at a
time, e.g. (a) space and gender, (b) language and space and (c) voice levels and silence,
as in the following examples which highlight the importance of enclosure with respect to
women's and men's space and bilingualism. Overall these examples will serve to
illustrate the importance of linguistic soundspace and the salience of the inside/outside
contrast.

(a) Gender and Space

Once after attending an Arabic class, two of the Turkish women present were reluctant
to leave the building\(^{95}\) because it would have meant passing in front of a man who was
standing at the (only) doorway\(^{96}\). They waited for about five or ten minutes, whispering
all the time about how they wished he would leave, and about how he had no right to be
there since it was a women's house. Eventually they decided to leave along with me. As
an obvious foreigner (obvious in dress style) I would provide a sort of alibi for their
behaviour, so with eyes averted and their scarves pulled well down over their foreheads
they slipped through the doorway and quietly hurried from the building. The man was a
Lebanese schoolteacher used to the mores of the wider Australian society and the secular
use of space in a school.

(b) Space and Bilingualism

On another occasion as a group of us walked to the main road after a class, I felt that I
was being encouraged to go my separate way by a young woman in the group. "You're
taking the train, aren't you? The station is over there." She seemed to be uncomfortable
in my presence and so I said my farewells and crossed the road away from them. Even
though my head was covered, I was obviously a foreigner and might attract attention to
the group if they encountered other Turks in the neighbourhood. Moreover, the young
woman was a proselytiser, which meant her own conduct had to be exemplary at all
times. Within the confines of the women's house and in the private homes we visited
together, her behaviour had always been very warm and welcoming. In this open area of
a public street, however, her conversation was restrained. She spoke to me in English for
the first and only time throughout our encounters. Speaking English would provide an

\(^{95}\) The building was a small house at the edge of the grounds of an Islamic school.

\(^{96}\) Much Australian architecture is considered unsuitable for Muslim needs. When selecting a house to
rent or purchase, devout Turkish Muslims pay great attention to the possibilities of having segregated
gender space, with different entrances for women and men.
alibi for her being in the company of someone who was not in Islamic dress, should she be noticed by other Turks. The choice of English would define the parameters by which her behaviour should be judged. In other words, English is the language of *outsiderness*, and its use here connoted a compromise with foreign behaviour or dress.

(c) Voice Levels and Silence

On yet another occasion, whilst sorting out a bureaucratic problem, the women gathered together in the office of the school building. While one woman went off to seek help, the rest of us sat around a table and chatted animatedly and in fairly loud voices. Suddenly a man entered the room and sat at a nearby table and proceeded to eat his lunch. The women all lowered their voices, casting sidelong glances at this intruder, and continued to talk in whispers. When it seemed apparent that he was not about to leave, the women left instead and gathered in a corner of the courtyard outside. There they talked about how shameful his behaviour had been in remaining inside when the room was so obviously occupied by women. Since we were in an Islamic environment, his behaviour contradicted expectations, whereas within the parameters of everyday behaviour in Australian schools generally, his actions were wholly in keeping with the norms. Codeswitching also created separate moral spaces which for these Turkish women marked degrees of closeness and distance. Voice levels, on the other hand, marked a gender hierarchy inscribed in sound. At the same time, the whispered conversations excluded the man from hearing range and therefore marked another *insider/outsider* divide. When voice levels were not sufficiently efficacious as exclusionary devices, these women relocated themselves physically in a geographically outside space.

23. Inside and Outside

Thus far, I have discussed the notions of *açık* and *kapalı* as relevant to different groupings of Turks, but these terms also apply to the various ways in which the wider Australian society is seen by Turks in Melbourne. For Turkish people in general, the Australian way of life is characteristically open or *açık*, but for some this has positive meanings while for others it is morally threatening. The "openness" relates principally to dress, but also to interpersonal behaviour in general and to inter-gender behaviour in particular. The positive meanings of openness relate mainly to ideology. Because of the supposedly pluralistic nature of Australian society, people say they feel freer to pursue

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97 It is significant that the intruding men in these examples were both Lebanese, and the perceived clashes in gender behaviour could possibly be explained in terms of cultural differences.
their political and religious ends without the hindrance of restrictive laws,\(^{98}\) and it is within the Turkish community itself that the road seems blocked through opposition from some of the "closed" groups. For these same people, however, Australian dress and behaviour generally may appear too open. Even for those who wear western style dress, care is taken to cover the body to accommodate Islamic ideals of modesty. For women, therefore, sleeves will reach well below the elbow and skirts below the knee. High necked dresses will be preferred to décolleté, but hair may remain uncovered. For men, modesty is similarly displayed and it is rare for Turkish men to wear shorts and short-sleeved shirts.

Even this degree of openness is morally threatening for those who adhere to a strictly Islamic view of life. People who dress "openly" will be avoided wherever possible. For example, very religious Turks will not go to beaches or to swimming pools,\(^ {99}\) and they will not watch television programs where actors are dressed openly. Succinct illustrations of their attitudes are provided by the following examples.

(a) Once after iftar during Ramadan, a small group of men and women sat around the living room conversing. Most of the talking was done by a religious hoja who was the guest of honour at the evening meal. The hosts were a modestly pious couple, and the other guests were a young neighbouring couple and the wife and daughter of the hoja. The television was on in the background but nobody was paying very much attention to the screen because of the animated conversations going on all around. At one point, however, the hoja glanced at the screen and turned his head away quickly. He then asked for the television to be turned off.

The offending scene had depicted a woman in décolleté dress standing near a doorway. A man's hand had entered the frame and caressed her bare shoulder. Even though, by mainstream Australian standards, it was lighthearted comedy, this degree of explicitness was deemed inappropriate for the viewers. The channel was changed by one of the young men, and on the screen we now saw a fighting scene between rival groups of soldiers and the fatal shooting of one. This scene did not seem to offend the sensibilities of the viewers in any way, and my interpretation of this incident is that the first scene was

\(^{98}\)Before the proclamation of the Turkish Republic, each millet (religious minority) within Turkey was subject to its own religious laws. Turks in Melbourne may draw negative or favourable comparisons with the hegemony of Australian law depending on whether the latter restricts or facilitates their aspirations.

\(^{99}\)Other religious Turks do not avoid beaches and similar recreation areas altogether, but they usually go there in family groups and sit at some distance from other people. They also choose their beaches carefully and generally opt for those frequented by families with very young children.
offensive not because the behaviour in itself was less moral than, say, shooting an enemy soldier, but because it was private behaviour being viewed in public. It was behaviour appropriate to a closed rather than to an open situation.

(b) The second example is illustrative of the degree to which the lives of religious Turkish people may be spatially circumscribed within Australia. As we were sitting on a riverbank watching young people water-skiing, I suggested that my friends (two religious hojas and their two small children) might like to go on a river cruise. This caused immediate consternation, since it would expose their gaze to nudity because of the proximity of semi-naked bodies on the boat. It was alright, however, to view the skiers from a distance, as the focus of the gaze was on the activity rather than on the body as actor. Moments later we had to move from our spot on the riverbank, since some scantily-clothed young people had come to sit quite close to us and their mildly flirtatious behaviour was considered unseemly and a bad example for small Muslim children.

24. Language as Topos

In order to illustrate the role of language in signalling interpersonal boundaries and in creating and recreating ideational topologies, the remainder of this chapter will be restricted to the discussion of two spatially circumscribed events, the former involving a religiously defined context and the latter a secular one. It will be seen that gender segregation operates albeit in a less focused way in secular Turkish contexts, despite the efforts of feminists to subvert such divisions. Even in the homes of very westernized, secular couples the ideational separation between selamlik (a term which means both the outer part of the house used for entertaining male visitors and the courtesy codes appropriate to such contexts) and haramlik (the inner parts of the dwelling where women gather) is often observed as a way of talking about segregation. This division is the subject of much complaint on the part of secular Turkish women who attempt to break down these barriers.

24.1. First Event: Apricot Cutting

24.1.1. The Spatial Setting

Small numbers of Turkish families have invested their savings in orchards in various parts of South Australia and have left Melbourne to live there permanently. During the summer months other Turkish families come out from Melbourne to help with the harvest. Most of these people derive originally from rural areas in Turkey or Cyprus, but
nearly all have since lived in urban environments for many years. The scenes depicted took place in and around the cutting shed on one of these orchards. The produce (apricots) was destined for the dried fruit market and had to be cut and placed on wooden trays to dry in the sun.

The shed was a simple, oblong structure, walled on three sides only, and facing onto the principal roadway and the orchards. It was situated at the juncture of two dusty roads, one being the main direction of arrival for the workers, and the other leading past the house of the owners. There were two separate workbenches which could accommodate about eight individual workers. When necessary, a further bench was placed in the shade of the building to one side.

The working couples arrived by car from neighbouring areas with their children. They included two religious hojas, a married couple. The hoja couple had gone to this small town because there were some forty Turkish families there deemed to have strayed from the path of Islam. A church building had been bought and transformed into a mosque, and the couple were proselytizing vociferously throughout the area. Their initial contacts with people were through working together at fruit harvesting times, and they steered conversations towards religion whenever possible.

The woman was the only one dressed in the long pardesû in contrast to all the other people present who were dressed in casual western style clothes. Care had been taken, however, to dress modestly according to Islamic values, which meant that most of the women covered their heads with scarves knotted at the throat. Also, women’s skirts reached well below the knee and sleeves were long. Men likewise dressed modestly in western style clothes and, in spite of the intense heat, for instance, no one apart from very small boys wore shorts.

There were about ten children running around and occasionally lending a hand, and two small children who needed fairly constant attention, hence a lot of to-ing and fro-ing.

The owners spent their time between the orchards and the shed. About half way through the morning the ev sahibe (woman of the house) brought us some Turkish coffee and water. Most of the people brought along large bottles of Coke or orange juice for the children to share. Everyone went home for a light meal in the afternoon.
24.1.2. Linguistic Topologies: Greetings and Metaphors

The hoja couple always used Arabic religious greetings: Salaam aleikum (Peace be upon you), but generally the others present replied with merhaba (an Arabic, but nevertheless not strictly religious greeting). The hojas marked each separate action with the Besmele which would encapsulate the action within a religious framework based on an ideal of merit. Within the group as a whole, however, secular Turkish greetings were more common than Arabic religious ones.

As couples arrived they greeted others already working: kolay gelsin! (may it be easy!) An alternative conversational opening formula was elinize sağlık! (health to your hands!) or (blessed be your hands!) which usually prompted the joking reply cebinize harçlık! (wealth to your pocket!). One implies or invokes the other. While some forms of greeting, günaydın, iyi akşamlar (good morning, good evening) subtly marked daily time rhythms, other forms such as kolay gelsin (may it be easy), said to people who are working, or elinize sağlık (health to your hands), said to someone who has prepared and offered food, or to co-workers involved in a task in which the speaker has participated, marked rhythms of shared social timespace and reciprocal social obligations. This use of formulaic greetings, as well as indicating ideational orientation, provided a characterisation for the event itself: the elliptic allusion to "effort" in the former and the reference to "hands" in the latter implied an underlying metaphor of emek (labour). It was the joint labour activity in which the couples were involved that would pattern their interpersonal involvement throughout the event. The subsequent gendering of these patterns came about through voiced spatial interaction as described below.

The importance attached to involving children in work from an early age is attested to by the Turkish saying çocuk emekle büyür: the child grows through labour. Another formulaic saying, emek insani yarattı (labour created humanity) points to the creative potential of labour.

Many Turkish people have found the translation of emek into English "labour" or "work" unsatisfactory, but have been at a loss to explain the semantic differences. It would seem that the Turkish and English terms connote different social relations between workers.

As they worked, people commented on the differences they perceived between (Anglo-)Australian workers and themselves on those occasions when they had found themselves outside a wholly Turkish working milieu. Australians, they said, worked
much faster but displayed an unwillingness to acknowledge the shared humanity of their fellow workers (because they did not attempt to converse) and also showed a reluctance to share tasks. While they made no explicit reference to gender, their remarks were usually about Australian women workers and implied a clash in work ethos.

24.1.3. Gendered soundspace

Couples worked together on opposite sides of the workbenches, facing each other. Men generally worked with their backs to the wall (in other words they were on the inside of the building) and therefore commanded a view of the outside area. It was therefore the men who dominated space with their gaze, and also with their voices as we shall see later. The men stopped for breaks much more frequently than the women did. As soon as there was any interruption to the work pattern, for instance, the owners arriving from the orchard with more fruit or coming to load some cut fruit, the men would move out to lend a hand and unload the tractor or pile up the trays of fruit, and then the women would re-form into working couples. This was always marked verbally with comments such as: "the trays will fill up faster if we're working together...". The point I want to emphasize here is the tension between the gender imperative for working together and the fact that these women were related only by circumstance, and in economic terms were competitors vis-a-vis one another. Payment was based on the number of trays filled by each couple and the workers were under no economic obligation to carry out the loading and unloading. The co-operativeness and gender segregation were both culturally inspired, and worked against any motivations for pure economic gain. Men took longer over their coffee breaks.

Much of this time was taken up in informal discussion and their voices were loud for all to hear. Most of the time the women worked in silence, and when they did speak it was in subdued tones, sometimes little more than a whisper. If only women were present on the other hand, as when the men had gone to the orchard, women spoke in very loud voices and discussed topics unsuited to men's ears (such as childbirth or health). To talk about specific subjects brings them to mind. To create images of women's bodies in the minds of men through discussion of such topics as health and childbirth is tantamount to displaying nudity. There is no logocentric disjunction here between language and an external, referential reality. Instead language IS reality.

As soon as the men got within hearing range on the way back, the women lowered their voices and their gaze. The men's return might be signalled initially through the sound of the tractor on some occasions, but by the sound of their voices on others. The cultural
elaboration of women's listenership was marked by their attention to sound which was
accentuated over visual perception. It was often a woman with her back to the orchards
who verbally announced their arrival: *adamlar geliyor* (the men are coming). At this
point also topics changed.

Although the women's spatial passivity in the presence of men was encapsulated in
their role as listeners, their active listening was hidden. At a general anthropomorphic
level, ears as body organs do not show that they are listening. In a Muslim sartorial
environment, their non-activity is further elaborated through their being covered. In
these inter-gender interludes, it was men who saw (recall that they commanded a view of
the outside whereas women did not) and men who spoke, and their seeing and speaking
were impressed with the stamp of cultural approval as was evident in the force with
which they expressed themselves. The work pattern was also broken by women going
off to the house to attend to small children, just as men usually went to work out
problems with the older boys. If it looked at all likely that one woman might be left alone
with the men, she would go off with the other women too. This was not marked verbally
as it was part of the taken-for-granted, appropriate behaviour.

Throughout this event, therefore, language use marked invisible boundaries not encoded
in people's physical movement. The Arabic greeting used by the hoja couple framed the
event within the orbit of an Islamic cosmology; the secular greetings used by the other
participants constituted a more social framework which was further framed at a
metaphorical level by an underlying notion of *emek* (labour). At a lexical level, these
formulaic expressions were overtly anthropomorphic and chronotopic. Voice levels and
conversational topics gendered these patterns of linguistic topology.

Once, however, when the fruit-laden trays needed to be loaded, the male hoja found that
his help was not needed as there were sufficient workers already carrying out the task.
He then joined his wife and her woman working partner with the words: *yalniz Allah
tektir...* (only Allah is one) as a reason for not working on alone. In this way, a religious
imperative transcended a gender one. What could have been seen as a transgression of a
gender boundary was transformed into an expression of religious topology by the use of
formulaic language.

The work rhythms were also interrupted by *namaz* or prayer times. The women went to
the house to pray, while some but not all of the men prayed at the edge of the orchard
along the fruit trees. When they performed the evening prayer just as the light was
beginning to fade, the scene resembled one of the ubiquitous photographs of Muslims at
their devotions found in practically every illustrated work on Islam. It reminded me of
the vicarious nature of the western experience of otherness gained largely through the
assault on the gaze of exoticised imagery in books and films.

Normally nightfall was a time when women returned to their houses to look after
children and prepare the evening meal, but work and cash earnings were of prime
importance here and some couples stayed at their benches cutting the fruit until they had
reached the number of trays they had targeted for themselves that day. As this was
seasonal work devoted to products of nature, it was also important to give priority to
tasks which depended on climate. So here the interlocking rhythms of Islamic timespace
and gender were altered by the circumstances of geographical space and economic
motivation. Chronotopically too, the fading light imposed another set of boundaries as
the darkness itself became another enclosing factor.100 Throughout the day, the couples
had established appropriate limits to interpersonal space, and nightfall did not threaten
these as long as movement was marked verbally.

24.1.4. Remembered space

Throughout the working days there were many instances of the ways in which physical,
geographic space impinged on human consciousness. The regional accents of the
different workers evoked memories of life in Turkey and encoded aspects of people’s
linkages with geographic and social space. Topics of conversation also linked people’s
experience of Turkish Islamic space with the present reality of their lives in Australia as
in the following conversation:

Hoja : Australia is a very beautiful country, but it doesn’t
have the same feeling about it as Turkey.

1st man : It’s because of the people. There are hardly any people
here. You can travel for miles without meeting anyone.

2nd man : I miss Turkey very much, but Australia has its good
points. There’s work for anyone who wants it...

Hoja : Take Sydney for example. Lots of Turks love the place
because it reminds them of Istanbul. It’s because of the
harbour mostly - it makes them think of the Bosphorus.
But it’s not the same. Istanbul is really beautiful.

100 Lakoff and Turner (1989:29) point out that in English poetic language: Night is conventionally
conceived metaphorically as a cover, as concealment, as an enclosure. We speak of the cover of night, the
cloak of darkness, since, like a cover, the night makes objects inaccessible to vision.
What makes it so exquisite? It's the skyline, the skyline of Istanbul with those beautiful minarets reaching up to paradise. Think what it will be like in years to come when the Sydney horizon looks like that!

In this way, geographic space was remembered and re-membered as people projected their own religious visions onto the Australian cultural landscape. The hoja's contribution to the conversation was in itself highly visualist and evocative.

25. Inside and Outside Discursive Space

In this group sameness was expressed in people's capacity as workers, but the outward appearance of co-operation masked some subtle differences. Although gender was the main defining feature in the sharing of labour, the moral influence of the hojas provided a constraining factor for people's interactions, and to some degree at least, the gender pattern of interaction was due to their presence. The variations in the voice levels according to the gender composition of the working party at any given time marked invisible spatial boundaries which shifted constantly with the ebb and flow of personal movement. Likewise, the gaze levels expanded and contracted establishing a fictive invisibility for women in the presence of men, and re-establishing their visibility in their absence. This fluctuating visibility was thus marked by eye and by ear.

These hidden dimensions of spatial dynamics could only be discerned when sound was not separated analytically from visually observable settings and behaviour. The silent dimensions of dress and vision extended and shaped voiced meanings and composed some of the key mechanisms through which these Turkish Muslim women and men negotiated the dynamics of interpersonal space. For Muslims living as a minority in a vast non-Muslim society such as Australia where there is a less overt gender allocation of space, Islamic-inspired principles relating to voice and vision took on increasingly potent dimensions in creating and maintaining spatial boundaries, and it was through stressing these principles that space was shaped to Muslim needs.

In the above description, therefore, we have moved from an outsider perspective focused on dress and movement, which both appeal to vision and hence fall within the scope of the eye, to an insider awareness of spatial dynamics accessible only through linking up what people said to each other and how and when they said it.

101The term "fictive invisibility" is from Ardener, 1981:21.
In an ideal Turkish Muslim environment the gender allocation of speaking and listening roles means that the linguistic soundscape is also divided up according to topics. In addition, the scope of the ear is broader for women than it is for men, as women may listen in to conversations in which men's attention is divided between speaking and listening roles. In the absence of spatial segregation, language may provide both a location and a boundary marker for gender topologies.

In an intercultural, bilingual situation, choice of language can enable individuals to create or transcend boundaries between women and men, while the use of Arabic religious greetings and formulas and evocative religious imagery such as minarets on the Sydney horizon create and recreate Islamic ideational topologies. Strictly speaking there is no distinction between sacred and profane for a very religious Muslim; everything one does is done in the name of Allah and this is kept in mind constantly by reciting the Besmele. This religious formula therefore creates an encompassing Islamic space. The physical boundaries of the cutting shed were extended and transformed by language use and the re-membered space of the Islamic past was fused with the visual imagery of the Sydney horizon (currently lacking minarets).

The presence of the hojas in the apricot-cutting group meant that people's behaviour was constrained in ways that it might otherwise not have been. For instance, when I was given a lift to the local shops by one of the couples present, the woman readjusted her scarf to tie it at the back of the neck as soon as we were out of sight of the others and had entered Australian social space, and retied it at the throat before returning to the group. Throughout the drive, her husband conversed with me in English whereas it was only through married couples that language crossed the gender divide within the group. At the same time, the woman and I spoke to each other in Turkish. This pattern of gender allocation of these two languages is characteristic of what usually takes place when bilingual religious Turkish people come into contact with non-Muslim outsiders. Apart from the fact that Turkish men usually have greater access to the outside world and to English than do Turkish women, the languages themselves connote (Turkish) insiderness and (English) outsiderness.

This bilingual shaping of language topology will be developed further in the next event.
25.1. Second Event: Craft Exhibition

The following section aims to show how the notions of open and closed articulate with monolingualism and bilingualism. In this example it is the walls of a tangible, physical building (a Turkish cultural centre) rather than patterns of voice and silence which constitute the most obvious boundaries between open and closed spaces. Different languages as well as different linguistic registers, shape separate social spaces here, however, and complement or transcend these physical barriers. The focus will be on people’s movement within and between these physical and social spaces as well as on their choice of language or register. It will be seen how in a secular and interethnic environment notions of open and closed become transmuted into insider- and outsiderness. Translation of such lexical terms as open and closed across Turkish and English, therefore, requires the subsumption of spatial location in the meaning in some contexts.

The cultural centre was the locus of one of the many Turkish associations in Melbourne. As well as providing social services, such as liaison between various Australian government institutions and Turkish migrants, the association promoted aspects of Turkish culture through various events such as poetry readings, film and video shows, folk dancing displays and, as in this event, an exhibition of women’s handcrafts.

On the occasion of the official opening of the craft exhibition, a large number of Turkish and Australian guests was invited. The women displayed their own work in the house at the back, and in the front building they displayed other Turkish handcrafts from their own private treasure chests. A video was made of the whole event by a visiting Turkish writer from West Germany and would thereby become accessible to a wider spectatorship across the Turkish-speaking world.

Although at this particular centre poetry readings were a vital medium of transmission for the rich oral traditions of Anatolia, be they Kurdish or Turkish, their manifestation within Australia is restricted by language barriers to people from these regions. Political aspirations, therefore, are transmuted into cultural displays of, say, folkdancing or crafts which demand a visual rather than a spoken medium to reach a wider Australian audience. In spite of the visual splendour of this particular event, the sole formal channel of information to the wider community was the press coverage by the local suburban newspaper.

The actual premises housing the craft exhibition comprised a large, single storey
building, with a small front garden and a small courtyard behind. At one side of the
courtyard was a small three-roomed cottage which was about to become officially the
women's house. When women gathered here with their children they did sewing (both
hand and machine sewing), embroidery, patchwork and knitting. The rooms were
beautifully decorated with intricately designed wall hangings, exquisite embroidered
cushions and folk dance costumes, to name but a few items. The front building contained
a large meeting room and three smaller rooms, one used as an office. This main building
was used for mixed gatherings (like the poetry readings and other cultural events
mentioned above). Both buildings had kitchens and bathrooms.

25.1.1. Insiders and Outsiders

This event took place within and between the two separate buildings. It was totally
secular. The emphasis was on vision and display as well as on social distance. The gaze
was constantly negotiated, as was physical space. In contrast to the apricot cutting event,
hierarchical ordering was marked, especially through language choice, i.e. kaba or kibar
Turkish (which marked class differences and/or a rural/urban dichotomy) or
Turkish/English bilingualism which marked cultural differences as well as
professionalism. The varied kinds of Turkish signified a certain insiderness, however, in
contrast to English which was symbolic of outsiderness.

The centre was situated in an inner suburb, in an area which was then (at least to
outward appearances) largely Vietnamese. The main reason for its situation here was
the large number of Turkish families living in the local high-rise flats. Other members of
the association lived in the outer suburbs at considerable distances, and although some
were either former residents of these flats or personally linked through occupation to
other members, many others travelled great distances right across the metropolis to attend
special events such as this one. So, while some members could simply walk down the
road to the centre, it was by no means simply the local Turkish cultural centre. It was the
pivot of an ideational rather than of a geographical universe.

The members of this particular association considered themselves to be "progressives"
(ilericiler). Their ideology stressed equality (eşitlik): between social classes, between
women and men and between cultural groups. At an individual level, however, the

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102 Various parts of the Melbourne metropolitan area are popularly considered to be cultural enclaves, such as Italian Carlton or Turkish Brunswick. Often these designations are based on the outward appearances of commercial areas and are actually very different in their residential demographic composition.
members were all very aware of the tensions between the different cultural perspectives on hierarchical relationships as exhibited in Turkish society and also within mainstream Australian society, and their linguistic exchanges mirrored these tensions through patterns of bilingualism and choice of register.

To begin with, although Turkish women and men arrived together in the front building with their children, they soon formed separate gender groups as the women congregated in the smaller building. The children all moved around freely (and often at great speed). These were all insiders: members of the association and people involved in the organisation of the event. As it came nearer to the official opening time, guests began to arrive and it was at this juncture that the fairly closed groupings formed through gender segregation began to open to outsiders. Gender segregation itself, therefore, was here was a mark of insiderness.

The only Turkish adult who moved freely from one building to the other was a young man in his 20s who had grown up in Australia. He worked at the association as an interpreter-translator and mediated not only between Australian and Turkish society, but between Australian Turks and Turkish Turks. Because of his language abilities he was one of the main persons responsible for liaising between Turkish organisers and Australian guests at this event. Thus bilingualism, foregrounded as it was in this context, marked a sphere of liminality between insiders and outsiders.

There were two Australian women involved in organising the event also: an older woman skilled in handcrafts and a younger woman who was involved with the administrative and financial side of matters. The older woman stayed very quietly in the background, but the younger woman was very active. Her behaviour appeared almost frenetic at times and she was very loquacious in comparison with the Turkish women present, who sat and talked in quiet tones and did not move around unless it was essential. On intercultural occasions such as this, the contrast between Turkish and (Anglo-)Australian behaviour and discursive action was always striking, and it was in situations like this that the relative loading on verbalization and listening became most obvious. The young Australian woman tried unsuccessfully to coax these Turkish women to move around and mingle with guests.

The linguistic exchange between Turkish hosts and Turkish guests was very limited. Firstly, many of the Turkish visitors were people involved professionally in the wider community: social workers, interpreters, journalists, writers and artists. Their distance from the association members (the insiders) was marked principally in their role as
spectators. They moved freely from one building to the other, occasionally engaging in polite, formal conversation with other visiting acquaintances. Some of these people were involved in other craft groups and were interested in seeing the nature of the items on display, and comparing this exhibition with those they had been involved in organising elsewhere.

Thus far, we have a contrasting set of insiders and outsiders, almost exclusively Turkish. The outsiders, both as groups and as individuals, differed in various ways from the insiders. Class differences were noticeable. While most of the insiders belonged to or identified with "the workers" or the "working class", some of the social workers and interpreters appeared to identify strongly with their professional colleagues across the wider community. This was marked by their use of physical and linguistic space: in the way they avoided gender segregation, and in the kind of kibar Turkish they spoke. Many of the women, for example, strolled around on their own. Solitariness was made conspicuous here, and marked a move away from traditional ideals of sociality. A social worker who spent much of her time working with English-speaking Australians and other non-Turkish migrants, for example, sought consciously to transgress gender boundaries in an overt and conspicuous way. She was a feminist committed to changing the lives of Turkish women.

25.1.2. Language and Space

By this stage another major mark of distance between people was evident since many Australian guests (predominantly older women) had now arrived. For the most part, Turkish people (apart from one or two of the organisers) spoke only to Australians or Turks already known to them, while those Australians present seemed to gravitate towards anyone they heard speaking English. They did not hesitate to introduce themselves and a popular first question was: and what is your involvement with the Turkish community? Many of these people were involved in cultural organisations of one kind or another. One could echo Said (1978) here and say that for many Australians migrants are a career, just as for many anthropology students they are a research population. While to Turkish people social distance (insiderness or outsiderness) seemed most salient here, for Australians language signalled a divide between speakers of English and non-speakers of English.

By the time the opening speech was about to be made, the place had filled to a degree where it was almost impossible to move. People then negotiated good vantage points for themselves, the Turkish men moving towards the back of the room on the side of the
doorway. So also did most of the Australians, who tended to be very tall and would otherwise have blocked the view for other people. What I want to suggest here is a gender-derived motivation for most of the Turkish people present, but sheer physical size criteria for the Australians. People were now grouping closely together, with a particular focus, rather than moving around.

It was only when the celebratory meal was served after the formal event, that social distance began to dissolve, and spectators became active participants. Although there were limitations on verbal communication, this was transcended by commensality, and language could be quite telegraphic and yet adequate. Those who were bilingual were the most active in terms of promoting verbal exchange, but this was predominantly between Australians and professional Turks, and to a much lesser degree with the insiders of the association. Thus, even here, the inside/outside divide was maintained - spatially and physically by the association Turks, especially during the formal stages of the event, but also fortuitously through the language barrier.

Movement between the various physical spaces fluctuated between insiderness and outsiderness, the women’s house becoming public for this event, the front house taking on more of the insider qualities and the courtyard being the outside domain where symbolically the barriers were broken through commensality.

The three different groups, however, acted according to different value systems. While the association Turks acted according to gender and cultural considerations, other Turkish guests mediated their insiderness through shared professionalism (class) and language, and Australians acted largely as spectators at an "ethnic event", participating through food consumption and through sharing English language discursive space. The overall order was hierarchical in terms of cultural and professional status. It was expressed spatially in terms of host and guest with insider Turkish hosts tending the needs of Australian and Turkish guests.

Language use too took on vertical and lateral dimensions here, as English was associated with the dominant Australian society (and in this case the outside, culture consumers or spectators), and Turkish as a community language marked the insider culture-producers. In contrast with the other events I have described, dress here was decidedly open, but degrees of openness varied from insider (long skirts, long sleeves to outsiders (bare arms and shoulders and knee-length dresses); people’s heads were uncovered.
25.2. Language as Topos

In contrast to the graphocentricity of the events described in Chapter V, the focus here was on spoken language and the ways in which monolingualism, be it Turkish or English, created barriers to communication and hence separate social spaces. As Turkish *insiders* were joined by Turkish *outsiders*, the gender divide became more attenuated as bilingual, professional outsiders (all Turkish women) behaved in individualistic ways which carried intimations of equality with men. The individualistic behaviour of the Turkish women was in stark contrast to that evoked by the male hoja in the apricot cutting event.

As Australian *outsiders* joined the gathering, this added an intercultural dimension, bridged by the bilingualism of the professional Turks. This also created a language barrier, however, as there were now two separate monolingual groups dependent on interpreters for any sustained verbal communication. The lack of shared subject matters meant that interlingual communication depended on verbal competence. This situation is in sharp contrast to the cross-cultural communication between co-religionists described in Chapter III.

It can be seen from the foregoing that people's ideational orientation is shaped to a large degree by language and linguistic networks. Just as the different Turkish registers marked degrees of *insiderness* and English marked *outsiderness*, so also did different voice levels, particularly amongst the women present. Turkish as a whole was, therefore contained or enclosed by the sounds of English, just as *qua* community language it is muted within Australia as a whole.

While interpreters were present, their roles were restricted either to (a) organisational details dealt with on a one-to-one basis, or (b) to the formal opening speech, itself restricted to diplomatic language. These interlingual linkages were overshadowed by the separate domains of interaction marked by use of Turkish and English. Even though commensality and the focus on the exhibits themselves precluded the need for elaborated codes of linguistic interaction, monolingualism remained an effective barrier.

These examples of linguistic soundspace show the linkages between the verbal and the non-verbal in metaphor. Openness and closure can be constituted and subverted through orientation and movement as well as through dress styles, and can operate at a tacit level of meaning. These notions are most likely to be evoked verbally when expectations are transgressed.
Verbal articulation cannot be assumed to guarantee dominant and/or privileged conceptual positions. Linguistic concepts do not correlate with reality as in a reocentric language scheme. By viewing language in a metaphorical light, it is possible to discern nodal points of fusion between the verbal and the non-verbal. At the same time, people locate themselves in language(s) or project boundaries verbally as they topologise their surroundings. Code-switching from Turkish to English creates different ideological spaces which women and men may share without undue attention to voice levels and silence, but where new barriers between insiderness and outsiderness ensue. Likewise, although gender is not marked in Turkish grammar, it is implicit in people's use of physical space.

Chapter VIII relates to the notion of linguistic reality through an exploration of orality and literacy. In this chapter also notions of knowledge are examined in contexts of bilinguality and across different ideational domains.
CHAPTER VIII

26. Different Conceptions of Knowledge

"Islam considers knowledge ('ilm) as something sacred because ultimately all knowledge concerns some aspect of God's theophanies."

Nasr (1976:13)

To know is merely to work with one's favourite metaphor.

Nietzsche

26.1. Knowledge as Revelation

This chapter focuses on aspects of noetic vocabulary and discusses different conceptions of knowledge. The interlinkages between knowledge and reality are multifaceted, and the transmission of knowledge involves the mediation of social guides to a greater degree than the mediation of noetic technologies.

Religious Turks acknowledge that Western science has produced many important results: technological achievements are referred to as gavur icadı (foreign inventions). But Western scientists are standing in their own light, so to speak. Pious Muslims know that everything comes from Allah. It is a mark of human arrogance that people claim these inventions as their own. The knowledge implicit in understanding how these achievements were arrived at is important and worth learning, but this mundane level of knowledge cannot compare with divine knowledge enshrined in the Qur'an and the Hadith.

Religious learning is referred to either as din bilgisi (religious knowledge) on the one hand, or as ahlak bilgisi (moral/ethical knowledge) on the other. The related bilge is an archaic word meaning sage (Gökalp, 1987:81). While the holy scriptures are themselves guides, they require interpretation by learned scholars. Thus here too there is a certain reification. Religious knowledge, moreover, is being construed more and more as moral knowledge.

Others have a more historically/sociologically grounded appreciation of the place of Islam as a world religion: it superceded Judaism and Christianity because it is truer to the message of God. Religious Turks place considerable importance on supercession and
in an existentialist turn they focus more on ends than on origins. The Prophet Muhammad is frequently referred to as the last prophet (son peygamber). This culminatory notion does not apply to translation, however. Part of the reason Christians have lost their way is that the Bible has been changed so many times (through translation) (see Chapter IV) and the original meaning is no longer knowable. The Qur’an on the other hand has not been translated because it would be impossible to translate the word of Allah into human language. Versions that have appeared in other languages are translations of the literal meaning of the book. As we have seen in Chapter VI, it should not be called a Qur’an unless it is in Arabic language and script.

The Turkish notion of "reality" or "truth" gerçek is a site of considerable semantic and ideological struggle. Gerçek is the new Turkish counterpart to doğruluk except that it lacks the depth of moral connotation of the latter. Because of the inflectional nature of Turkish grammar, the nominal form gerçek (reality, truth), changes shape as it becomes transitivised. The following is an example of the grammatical context of change at the level of the word. A religious hoja talking about priests and rabbis, accused them of not showing people the truth:

Onlar aslında kendi menfaatleri için halka, insana, Hristiyanlara, şey göstermiyorlar, GERÇEĞİ göstermiyorlar...

{In order} to serve their own interests, they do not show people, Christians, the... the truth...

The term gerçek can also be used adjectivally, i.e. to mean "real" or "true". This same religious hoja, for example, referred to Islam as the "true" religion: İslam dini... GERÇEK dini olduğu için... (Islam... being the true religion...) The hoja went on to state that if they (the priests and rabbis) showed people the truth and they themselves believed it, Allah would help humankind a lot more. She gave the example of people starving in Africa, and commented that in the past Christians had been drawn to Africa for its gold and silver, but now they took little notice of the people’s plight. When comparisons are made with other religions, it is often such ethical and moral aspects of behaviour which are emphasized.

Those Turks who adhere to an Islamic worldview place greater emphasis on learning their Islamic traditions (and hence on learning Arabic) than on adopting a purely secular form of education. There is a rejection of some aspects of Western education (the evolutionary bias in the biological and human sciences, for instance) and an emphasis
instead on knowledge as revelation. For others it is important to absorb and understand Western knowledge, but to encapsulate it within a larger Islamic framework. Many Turkish families, for example, encourage their children to study chemistry, biology or other scientific subjects at university and to go later to theological college in a Muslim country for higher education.

The noetic vocabulary of Turkish is a blend of Arabic (Islamic) and Turkish (secularised) terms. In Turkish one can talk about "knowing" in lexically different ways. The two main verbs which translate as "to know" in English are: bilmek which means "to have intellectual knowledge of..." and can also be translated as "to be able" or "to know how" and tanımak which carries the sense of interpersonal acquaintance. The distinction is similar to the savoir/connaitre distinction in French or the wissen/kennen contrast in German. It would seem that English is unusual among languages in having one polysemous term for these different meanings and this has implications for the ways in which speakers of different languages talk about knowledge, and for the kinds of translation or mistranslation that can arise on language contact. Moreover, as philosophers of language have pointed out, the English verb "to know" (like the verbs "to love" and "to believe") are not usually used in the continuous tense. This suggests that it is not construed linguistically as a process, and the high incidence of substantives suggests that for speakers of English "knowledge" is thinglike. Even the English gerundive "knowing" is nominalised.

The nominalist, referentialist focus on linguistic meaning has compounded this problem, which is partly due to the isolating nature of English grammar. In order to recapture philosophically salient distinctions in meaning in English it is necessary to distinguish between "knowing", "knowing that", "knowing how" and so on, as well as to employ terms such as "recognizing". Edie (1963:552) points out that

'recognize' in English... originally signified 'to be with' and then 'to recognize' in the sense of 'seeing or meeting the same person again.'

Whilst this diachronic focus may not be relevant for contemporary English speakers, it uncovers a commonality of meaning, which may be of considerable salience in an interlingual context.
26.2. Knowledge as Social Acquaintanceship

This fusion of the social and the intellectual in the English polysemic "know" can lead to semantic problems in an interlingual context. During a conversation with a Turkish man, in English, for example, I mentioned a married couple whom we both knew. In particular I wanted to say something about the woman, Lynne. My interlocutor and her husband were very close friends. I mentioned her by name. My interlocutor seemed embarrassed and reluctant to acknowledge that he knew whom I meant. "You know Lynne" I repeated, "Ihsan’s wife". My interlocutor seemed even more embarrassed. I realised I had said something wrong and changed the subject. It subsequently transpired that my use of the word "know" suggested a far greater degree of intimacy than it does in the context of English discourse, a degree of intimacy which was inappropriate to ideal Turkish intergender relations.

This was a case of semantic transference,

(a) at the bilingual level where my interlocutor transferred the connotations of Turkish 
tanimak, to English "know",

but also where

(b) at the bicultural level, I had misjudged the gender appropriateness of a culturally specific lexical choice.

This is an instance of something which is linguistically possible being culturally inappropriate.

26.3. Knowledge as Information

Reification of knowledge poses a problem in conceptualising distinctions between having, acquiring or losing knowledge on the one hand and the act of knowing on the other. In each case the focus is different and encodes a different aspect of agency. The literature on epistemology contrasts "experiential knowledge" with "propositional knowledge" which is the axiomised kind of knowledge implicit in much Western philosophy.

In Turkish, for example, it can be said of someone who has learned a lot from life experience, that he "has completed life university" (hayat üniversitesini bitirmiş...).
what Goody calls "primary knowledge" (1987:150).

A further illustration of difference between contextual and textual meaning can be found in a review of a Turkish-language textbook for speakers of English. In an example of the use of the ablative, the authors (native speakers of English) cited the utterance:

\[ \text{Tren Bursa' DAN geçiyor: (the train passes through Bursa) \ (train BursaABL passprog (through))}. \]

The Turkish-speaking reviewers added a footnote:

\[ \text{By the way, trains do not go through Bursa.} \]

While the utterance was linguistically acceptable, it was culturally false. This again points to differences between what is textually or propositionally true and what is experientially real. The difference lies in the authors' logocentric focus on language and the reviewers' attention to the alternative possibility of a reocentric focus. In addition, it points to the reviewers' awareness that textbook examples often get taken for cultural facts and lead to distortions in knowledge. Literate people can easily become victims of literacy in this way.

Another salient aspect of this reification is the different properties ascribed to knowledge. Unlike the Arabic-derived concept 'ilm, which obtains in the religious realm of Turkish culture, concepts of knowledge in the English-speaking world have been affected deeply by technological changes which have occurred at different rates and in different ways in other parts of the world. The new Turkish bilgi is close to such reified meanings. It is, however, rarely used without qualifiers such as in din bilgisi and ahlak bilgisi. Grammatically, therefore, it is closer to the suffix logy as in theology, anthropology and so on.

By examining different levels of translation involved in communication, it will be seen that the relationship between word and world, be it referential or participatory, depends on the degree to which words receive a literal focus and reality a logocentric base.

\[ \text{Çevirince different olur... (Translation changes the meaning...)} \]

The following joke illustrates several points about secular attitudes towards knowledge

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103 The idiom of "life university" came into Turkish ideational culture through translations of Russian literature. The term is a loan translation from Gorki's novel, My Universities.
and very aptly illustrates the dilemma of language at the point of fusion of different technologies of the intellect as well as different aspects of discourse.

26.4. Ne var ne yok?

It is about a Turkish general who visited the United States of America. He was shown the latest computer technology since this would be invaluable to his army in Turkey. He became very interested in machine translation and was invited to try out one of the new computers which could provide instantaneous translations of Turkish into English and vice versa.

*Just say the first thing that comes into your head and the machine will translate it for you* he was told.

Without hesitating, he said:

*Ne var ne yok? (How're things?)*

The machine immediately sprang into action and printed out ream after ream of detailed information about every imaginable topic from every corner of the globe. Soon the room was filled with paper, then it overflowed into the corridors, into the lifts, down the stairs, out into the streets... but still the machine kept on churning it out. Finally, after days and days of ceaseless activity, the machine shuddered and shook, delivered a final few sheets of information, and .... collapsed!

*Taken as an idiomatic expression, ne var ne yok? is a friendly, informal way of greeting someone. It corresponds roughly to the Australian "G'day" or the English "How’re things?"* Taken literally, word for word, however, it raises one of the most fundamental questions of ontology: what is, what is not? in other words: being and nothingness.

Other idiomatic popular usages of these existential predicates, for example, are:

\[
\text{Bugûn variz, yarin yoğuz:} \\
\text{today be3pl, tomorrow be NEG 3pl} \\
\text{(lit. today we are, tomorrow we are not).}
\]

which points to a notion of life’s transience.

Similarly, stories (*hikayelar or masallar*) often begin with the formulaic opening:

*Bir varmuš, bir yokmuš... (once upon a time):*
One beREMPAST$3$sg, one beNEG/REMPAST$3$sg)
(lit. Once there was, once there wasn't...).

which metaphorically evokes the edge of temporal existence.

In the computer joke, the machine had been programmed for the literal isomorphic level of semantic equivalence and could only empty all its memory banks in reply. Moreover, it had responded directly to the question instead of translating it. In other words, it had acted like a human, i.e. as an interlocutor rather than as an instrument of discourse.

When I have told this joke to English speakers, the most common response is to point out this "flaw". The machine, they say, should simply have translated the utterance instead of interpreting it as part of a dialogue and responding to it. But the point captured in the joke goes against this kind of conceptual focus. Speakers of Turkish do not take their epistemological cues from technology to the same extent as do their English-speaking counterparts. In terms of Turkish culture generally the impact of this joke is similar to that of the popular Nasrettin Hoja stories: the triumph of "common sense" over the self-proclaimed superiority of sophisticated, propositional knowledge forms.

The degree to which interpreters and translators limit themselves to literal meanings varies according to the semantic gaps between different speech communities. An employee of the Department of Immigration, for example, commented on the semantic gap between many non-English speaking immigrants and Anglo-Australian bureaucrats. Even when correspondence is translated from other languages into English, it is still difficult to understand the cultural import of such phrases as "I have not kissed my children's eyes for many years" (from a letter by a Turkish migrant). This was a literal translation of *cocuklarımı gözlerinden senelerce öpmedim* which was meant to stress that the writer had not seen her children for years. Adopted literally into an English bureaucratic language context, the phrase lost its semantic force.

The computer joke is not only about language and translation but also about the shaping of meaning. Ong's remarks (1982:114) concerning orality and literacy where he discusses the historical relationship between Latin and English are relevant here, as they suggest a somewhat analogous relationship between different linguistic codes:

_Learned Latin effects even greater objectivity in establishing knowledge in a medium insulated from the emotion charged depths of one's mother-tongue, thus reducing interference from the human life-world._
It was just such "interference from the human life-world" which triggered the collapse of the computer system, as idiomatic language strongly imbued with social meaning had interfered with lexical translatability at the logocentric or logomorphic level. Not only does the joke point to problems of translation between different languages, but also to translation of formulaic idiom into literal language, as well as the calquing of computer languages on consciously formulated rules. The joke as a whole, moreover, is a metaphor for power relations, since, historically, language contact between Turkish and English has been mainly through militarism.

The joke can be seen, therefore, as a metaphor for a nexus of relationships: linguistic, cultural, political. On the political level, the protagonists are Turkey and the United States. Their relationship is a military one. The asymmetry of the relationship is encoded through the Turkish general's visit to the United States homeground. At a linguistic level, the meaning of their exchange plays on the unequal relationship between English as a world language and Turkish as a "critical" one.

At the bilingual level of the joke, symmetry is posited but the unequal nature of the exchange is shown by what transpires: one way translation. At a deeper linguistic stage, the dénouement involves another level of translation: recall that for the U.S. military, Turkish (along with other Uralo-Altaic languages) was a "critical" language (Newmeyer, 1986:56). The military content of some Turkish language textbooks for speakers of English is striking. Lewis (1953), for example, has a sizeable glossary devoted to military terminology.

The joke points to a view of knowledge as information, and this view is implicitly attributed to the politically powerful and dominant (in this case the U.S. military). The Turkish general is assigned the role of a puppet or pawn, but both are outwitted by the idiom of ordinary, everyday speech.

Computers not only compute, they store information, and those who have access to these powerful storage machines have access to a wide range of information - about people, places, events and decisions. From the perspective of this joke, however, their power is undermined by their having only a partial grasp of the relative nature of knowledge, and the metaphorical nature of everyday language in which knowledge is often encoded. Moreover, a chance question had been instrumental in emptying the machine of its information, showing the vulnerability of the powerful and their lack of real wisdom. It points to a reification of knowledge as information, severed from its social and ideational contexts.
The joke is popular amongst leftists, and epitomizes their grounds for seeking socialist solutions to the economic and political problems facing Turkey. The presence of NATO military bases (referred to as Amerikan üsleri (American bases)) throughout their country is a permanent reminder of their domination by external forces. This domination manifests itself not only militarily but also (a) through the cultural hegemony of English, which is the dominant medium of instruction for tertiary-level study in Turkey, and (b) through translation of indigenous knowledge, be it cultural or linguistic, into English through the various social sciences.

The joke hints at the assimilatory nature of the translation process: information being transferred from Turkish to English. This contradicts the reciprocity implied in the invitation to try out the machine, i.e. that of two-way translation.

Wallerstein's (1979:473) remarks on the imposition of English as a world language of scholarly communication are relevant here:

We view the dominant ideology of world social science as a viewpoint imposed by the hegemonic world powers (first Great Britain, later the U.S.). Their cultural hegemony (and the consequent distortion of knowledge) is maintained in many ways. One way has been the steady attempt to define English as the only world scholarly language.

The following remarks by Wierzbicka (1989:46) point in the same direction. In her analysis of the Anglo-Saxon folk category "mind", she claims:

it is usually English - rather than 'Western' ethnopsychological categories that are taken as the conceptual foundation of scientific inquiry...

This attention to the ideological implications of language use is timely in a linguistically shrinking world. The process of forcible translation referred to by Asad (see Chapter I) is aided by the intellectualization of languages through loan translations.

Beck (1978:84) claims that metaphor helps to ground our conceptual structures in the reality of concrete experience. The joke stands in an inverse relationship to power and knowledge in Turkish socialist experience, especially when knowledge is seen as information. A socialist worldview incorporates a revelatory notion of knowledge which hinges on the unmasking of socio-economic relationships. The joke plays on the tension between knowledge as revelation and (computer) knowledge as information.
1.5. Gerçek bir hikaye...(a "true story")

In contrast, the following story exemplifies an Islamic view of knowledge which emerges through the notion of truth or reality (gerçek) it enshrines.

This story was told to me quite spontaneously in the course of a long conversation with a young Turkish friend. She is a devout Muslim who had nevertheless received a secular education in western Turkey. Rather than subvert her religious knowledge, the knowledge she gained from the secular domain was encapsulated and framed within her religious faith. In the story, knowledge manifests itself in a sign from Allah. This is implicit in the overall context of the narrative and operates at a far deeper level than the knowing explicitly referred to lexically in the introductory section:

There’s a story, a true story:

there was (once) a very rich man, who didn’t know (tanimyor, bilmiyor) his neighbours at all. This rich man’s wife was pregnant, and when she smelled meat cooking at her neighbours’ house she craved some.

"Whatever you do, bring me that meat" she said to her husband.

The man went and knocked at his neighbour’s door and asked for some meat, but his neighbour refused:

"I can’t give it" she said “because we are eating ... donkey meat”

The man was so saddened by his neighbours’ poverty (fakirlik), that without telling his wife or anyone else, he gave them all his pilgrimage money.

His friends went on the pilgrimage without him. But when they were in Mecca, they saw that the man was there, (circumambulating the Kaaba).

Can you imagine it? That man had gained so much merit (sevap) that Allah had taken his spirit (ruh) there (to Mecca).

He had gained so much merit...
26.6. Gerçek

The meta-commentary on this story as true or real (gerçek) points to the issue of contested realities within Turkish culture generally. To show this, it is necessary first to put the story back into its context of narration.

The foregoing text is a short version of a translation of a story told to me in the context of explaining the religious obligations of a Muslim. The story was tape-recorded. When the narrator came to explaining that making the haj to Mecca was contingent on one's earthly status and that only rich people (zengin insanlar) were obliged to make the pilgrimage, she told me this story and introduced it as gerçek bir hikaye (a true story). This story does not begin with the formulaic opening bir varmış, bir yokmuş discussed above.

After I had done a verbatim transcription of that excerpt of the tape recording, I translated it into English. I also sent the transcription to a Turkish friend, asking him to check it and to translate it. I wanted to compare my translation with his for semantic accuracy as well as for punctuation and other effects of literacy generally. Unlike the narrator of the story, he has a very secular outlook on life. He espouses Marxism as a political and existential philosophy, whereas the narrator is a devout Sunni Muslim. In his comments on the transcription he questioned the notion of gerçek (true, real) and commented: "this is a religious story", thus implying a distinction between religion and his secular reality.

In a subsequent telephone conversation with me, he repeated his comments in a tone which implied that I was being gullible in accepting the truth or reality of this story. For him, the notion of gerçek was incompatible with the religious nature of the story signalled by the allusion to belief in the spirit (ruh). The teller and the reader, therefore, had brought different epistemological assumptions to bear upon the truth value of the story. Although the narrator and the reader participated in a common linguistic heritage, there was a disparity in their use of the term gerçek. For the reader, the story could not be real or true since it did not fall within the parameters of what for him would be socially real or true or humanly possible, i.e. their views of agency differed with regard to the possibility of the man's spirit going to Mecca. The transcendant realm of supernatural agency was replaced in his worldview by an infrastructural level of economic power.

In this story, the fact that the rich man did not even know his neighbours indicates his
former lack of concern for their wellbeing, and by implication his lack of *sevap* (religious merit). Both Turkish terms for knowing, i.e. *tanimak* and *bilmek* are used, one to reinforce the other and to cover the overlap between the two senses of knowing, i.e. personal acquaintanceship and a knowledge of someone’s situation.

The overt mention of *tanimak, bilmek* has reasonably direct referentiality expressed linguistically in SOV word order, with case marking to indicate the agent/patient relationship between the rich man and his neighbour:

*Adamın bir tanesi... yanındaki komşusunu tanımıyor, bilmiyor.*

*manPOSS one NUM.CL sidePOSS.LOC neighbourPOSS3sgACC knowNEG3sgPROG, knowNEG3sgPROG.*

A (particular) man... did not know his (next door/close) neighbour (at all)

The Turkish reader captured this sense of social acquaintanceship in his translation with the notion of "having contact": *There was a... man who did not know and had not had any contact with his neighbour at all.*

The reader also questioned another aspect of the reality embodied in the story: if the neighbour’s family was eating donkey meat, it did not mean that they were poor (*fakir*). The donkey was an important means of transport: *he is their motor car...* he told me. No family would eat their donkey. That was not a real sign of poverty: poverty meant having nothing to eat... nothing! Poverty is the focus of much political and religious debate within Turkish society generally, and hence within the community in Melbourne. Causes and remedies are construed differently.

For Turkish leftists who have come to Australia, political domination by the United States is perceived to be one of the principal catalysts behind the need for the migration of people from a fertile country which, they feel, should be amply capable of supporting a large population. Their popular peace march slogan *ekmek, barış, özgürlük ...* (bread, peace, freedom...) encapsulates their basic aspirations and also the fact that their aspirations are basic. For leftists, poverty is a manifestation of social injustice, hence their demands for bread (*ekmek*). Thus the notion of poverty as well as referring to a social fact is a powerful ideological weapon because of its social implications in the larger context of the Turkish lifeworld. The demands for bread point to the hunger and poverty suffered by many of their compatriots. People talk about having come to Australia "to make a living" (*ekmek paraşi için* (lit. "for bread money")). Their concern
is with basic needs and this basicness is captured principally by the term *ekmek* since this also connotes food in general. While the terms *ekmek, barış, özgürlük* are politically loaded, belonging as they do to the lexicon of new Turkish and hence to secular reality, *ekmek* links and collapses the secular and the religious. In Turkish culture bread is the traditional staple food, and because of this it is considered quasi-sacred by religious people. If a piece of bread is found on the ground, for instance, it will be picked up and put aloft in a high place: it is called "Allah's gift" or "blessing": *Allah'ın nimeti*.

Within the context of this story, however, the nature of poverty itself was not a crucial issue for the narrator. Her aim was to convey to me the difference between going on the haj to Mecca and the other four Islamic precepts. In her words: *one of these conditions is not essential, it is important but not for everyone, only for rich people....* Social hierarchy and the co-existence of rich and poor are assumed in a traditional Turkish Islamic worldview, but humanity is subject to divine justice. For a secular, westernized Turk, on the other hand, unequal distribution of wealth is due to human social factors. Whereas social justice is achieved in Islam by making it incumbent on the rich to give to the poor (through *zekat*), many secularized Turks (including the reader) would hold that there is no social justice whilst there is poverty, i.e. that poverty is socially produced. Within the context of this story, poverty became an issue which, for the reader, impinged on the truth value of the story given that it was presented by the narrator as *gerçek bir hikaye* (a true story).

For Vygotsky, "ideas often change their names" (1962:146), but it is equally true that semantic shifts occur within names, or that degrees of polysemy develop with tensions in meaning. Whereas for pious Muslims the relationship between poverty and wealth *fakirilik* and *zenginlik* is contingent on an underlying notion of merit (*sevap*), for leftists the relationship is a direct causal one: poverty is caused by unequal distribution of wealth. The notion of *fakirilik* in this instance is an example of how a name can expand and/or change its meaning depending on the linguistic and cultural context and the kinds of discourse it is embedded in.

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104 Acceptance of the Qur'an as the word of Allah, belief in the angels, acceptance of the Prophet Mohammad as the messenger of Allah, and pronouncement of the *kelime-isaadet* (Islamic proclamation of faith), known collectively as *Islam' in beş sarti* (five principles or conditions of Islam.)

105 Sarr: "condition" does not imply absolute obligation and the stronger word *farz* is necessary to denote compulsion. Muslim ritual is talked about in terms of obligations or duties. Women, for example, are not obliged to go to the mosque to pray, they can pray at home. Western feminist critiques of Islam construe these gender differences in terms of rights rather than duties. This is one of the ways in which different discourses shape different meanings.

106 When religious people see scantily-clad dancers (*dansöz*) on television screens, for example, they say they apprehend some kind of impending disaster, such as an earthquake: *mutlaka deprem olur.*
The kind of knowing (tanımak, bilmek) alluded to at the beginning of this story, i.e. knowing one's neighbours, embodies a social as well as an epistemological level of signification. Even in highly urbanised milieux, it is incumbent on Turkish people to be acquainted with their neighbours and to know something of their situation (durum), or condition (hal). Courteous hospitality and neighbourliness are considered to be virtually synonymous with being Turkish. It is common for instance in big cities in Turkey for rural people of similar regional background to live in close proximity. In Australia, however, it has been official housing policy to mix people from diverse cultural backgrounds living in government housing in order to obviate the creation of ethnic enclaves. Thus, although there are migrant suburbs in Melbourne, they are not dominated completely by particular migrant groups.

Urbanised professional Turks, moreover, seek to distance themselves from rural Turkish immigrants and they choose to live in different areas of Melbourne. When I visited a professional Turkish couple at their home in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne, I was offered some Turkish coffee. Later, when my hosts learned that I had lived in Turkey, they said how embarrassed they felt to have been so inhospitable as not to have invited me to eat with them. They said they felt they had not behaved in a proper Turkish way. Later on, they apologized again for their "inhospitality": their Japanese neighbours who lived up the road, they said, also found that they behaved quite differently towards nearby residents now that they were in Australia. *It is the environment which constrains our behaviour* they said. *We have no Turkish neighbours here, and even though most of our other neighbours come from overseas, we all take on an Australian style of interaction now we're here.* Other Turkish people who had moved into non-Turkish areas of Melbourne commented on the lack of neighbourliness. How could they ever learn English, they asked, when nobody ever spoke to them!

### 27. Translation Levels

Apart from evoking issues such as agency and (social) knowing, the story of the story implicates epistemological issues of translation. The following levels of translation have been involved in the communication of this story:

- from oral to literate mode;
- from Turkish to English;
- from one epistemological grounding to another, i.e. religious narrative genre to secular and/or ethnographic interpretation or reading;
from implicit to explicit rendering of gender and agency

from context of narration where the story is rendered to highlight the non-obligatoriness of making the haj to a new cultural and linguistic (and hence epistemological) context of ethnographic dissertation.

Bilingualism in itself accounts for some of the transference phenomena: in my translation I have rendered hac parası (a common cultural idiom in Turkish religious life) literally as "pilgrimage money", whereas the Turkish reader rendered this as "savings" and was therefore less constrained by specific literal referentiality and provided a cross-culturally informed rendering of meaning. Semantic considerations are at issue here: "pilgrimage money" invites a gloss in order to convey specific cultural significance to Anglophone readers, whereas "savings" has achieved a cultural as well as a linguistic translation in one move.

The narrator is recalling it from memory; it belongs to a genre of well-known religious stories which, as well as being of great philosophic and aesthetic merit, are instrumental in the transmission of knowledge in an oral medium. Her reference to memory and to reading when she broke off the story with the comments that’s how it was probably, I don’t remember exactly because my memory is not so strong. I’ve read so much... indicates a blending of oral and literate traditions and therefore no absolute separation of these two registers is possible except in the telling and the reading. Although the story is also available in written form, however, this particular rendering was told in a characteristically oral mode, the most obvious signal of which was the constant use of the term demiş (s/he said) to quote direct speech.107

Apart from thematic considerations and cross-linguistic influences, changes in style can be accounted for grammatologically. Unlike my word-for-word transcription which conveys the actual word order used, the Turkish reader’s transcription was a refined, more literary rendering of the story, where word order was changed to accord with the grammatical canons of literary Turkish. The whole story was carefully punctuated and edited; the ubiquitous demiş was omitted in several instances and sentences were completed formally in accordance with the canons of standard written Turkish.

107 The story is strikingly similar to a short story by Tolstoy, in which two Russian village elders decide to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Such similarities suggest that the story not only crosses language and literary boundaries, but religious boundaries too. The shared theme of the respective stories raises the issue of authorship, and the degrees to which literary works are "re-workings" of orally inspired themes.
An example of the different word orders will convey a sense of how these changes affect the tenor of delivery. The oral version builds up meaning incrementally:

"... mutlaka verirler demiş, bir parçaçık et, pisirdikleri etten..."

definitely givePRES3pl sayREMPAST3sg a pieceDIM meat, cookPST3pl meatABL definitely they (will) give (she) said a (small) piece of meat, of cooked meat

as opposed to the reader’s more literal version:

...mutlaka pişirdikleri etten bir parçaçık verirler demiş...

definitely cookPST3pl meatABL a pieceDIM givePRES3pl sayREMPAST3sg

definitely cooked meat a (small) piece (will give) (she) said

which is verb final, and where there is a greater degree of semantic embeddedness.

Transcription involves the translation of spoken words into written signs. The resultant written text involves a certain redundancy: punctuation replaces pauses and hesitations in speech and obviates the need for the constant repetition of features such as demiş (she said). A literate mode of communication, especially one with long-standing historical conventions, constrains word order and imposes a syntagmatic logic on the text (compare the oral and literate versions above); as the degree of textual reflexivity increases, the social, contextual element is reduced and language becomes increasingly logocentric.108

The moral tone of the narrated story which centred on the issue of obligation and merit, was conveyed by voice levels and intonation. This was neutralised in the written version, but subsequently manifested itself at another social level of meaning in the act of reading. Recall that the Turkish polysemic okumak means "to read" and "to recite", and points to differences between silent reading and reading aloud. The very questioning of the logic of poverty being signalled by the eating of donkey meat, or of the truth value of the story itself, is indicative of the different realities brought to a story by different readers/listeners irrespective of transmission medium, but in the absence of extra-textual clues such as intonation and facial gestures, a reader must rely on lexical content to a greater degree. This total reliance on the literal word gives rise to ambiguity at the level of logocentrism and to the need for a greater degree of interpretation.

108 I am grateful to Lys Ford (pers. comm.) for pointing out that this is not always necessarily so, and is not the case for Australian Aboriginal languages.
Apart from variations in style, the translations provide indications of a different linguistic focus in each case. The reader’s translation was from a first into a second language, whereas my translation was from a second into a first language. This split focus is partly due to the systemic nature of the two languages involved and the kinds of constraints that are imposed by linguistic considerations such as, for example, the use of gender. In Turkish, gender is not signalled pronominally as in English. In the story, agents were identified first (in this case, a man, his wife and his woman neighbour), and thereafter the demonstrative pronoun o (meaning he, she or it) could denote any protagonist, according to context. In English, on the other hand, gender is expressed pronominally and this facilitates topic tracking between clauses and throughout discursive practices. This awareness of linguistic differences between the two language systems led to over-compensation by the Turkish reader, so that when talking about the neighbour, even though she had been identified as a woman, he rendered o in English as "s/he" and esegini as "his/her donkey". Another reason for providing the gender alternatives in the translation was his awareness of feminist critiques of standard English usage where "he" predominates regardless of the actual or possible gender of subjects. His focus, therefore, was on language as logocentric, rather than on the overall semantic salience of the story. This linguistic focus, however, did not hold for the notion of gerçek.

The narrator and the reader belonged to/participated in a common cultural heritage, whereas I was a cultural outsider. As ethnographer, I encountered no difficulty in translating gerçek as meaning true even though as a private individual I may not accept the story as plausible. The story, as data, was treated as an objective linguistic text and my translation focused on a linguistic rather than on a cultural level of transformation. It was mainly a lexical transformation and the semantic questioning of words and meanings did not enter into this level of translation. This metalevel of English usage comes from treating language as a "tool" and from non-identification with the social semantics of the situation as opposed to the lexical semantic level. The Turkish reader was concerned that I did not question the validity of the story, and was relieved that I was using this as an example of a religious worldview against which I would contrast a secular one. He was also concerned about the gullibility and vulnerability of anthropology students vis-a-vis the research population.

These different emphases point to different conceptions of language. In focusing on the Turkish text, there was no prizing apart of word and meaning for the reader, whereas from a Saussurian logocentric standpoint this dualism is central. When the focus
switched to the English version, however, the stances towards language were reversed: the reader adopted a logocentric position, whereas I assumed a reocentric one. Unlike the alternative views of language propounded by Harris, (reocentric, logocentric and psychocentric) (see Chapter I), in a cross-linguistic context the focus is constantly shifting. It would seem that only philosophers treat different conceptions of language as mutually exclusive.

The deeper epistemological context surrounding the narration of the story in the first place was the issue of agency: the rich man's good deed was rewarded by Allah and his spirit was taken to Mecca. The narrator, for example, continued her talk by telling of a dream she had in which the spirit of her father spoke to her. This attention to spirit and to dreams is a vivid indication of a religious consciousness, but the narrator simultaneously inhabited a secular reality in which the existence and/or importance of these phenomena are questioned. Religious Turks inhabit a reality in which such phenomena are accepted as part of the nature of things. Recourse to history is necessary to situate these variations in worldview.

Following the intense period of secularization within Turkey itself (from the 1920s to the present) and given the encapsulating secular reality of Australian mainstream culture, religious Turks are aware of the discrepancies between their worldview and those of the wider, disenchanted, secular Australian society. As a member of that outside society, my position as ethnographer invites cultural comment of the kind embodied in the story. The spirit world is real for the narrator, but so is her awareness that it may not be so for me. There is, therefore, also a subtle shaping of our communication based on these implicit considerations; otherwise she need not have endorsed the story as true (gerçek). Another reason for drawing attention to its trueness is that hikaye as a generic term for Turkish oral genres includes also fables and other stories accepted as works of imagination.

The ambiguity attached to this notion of truth or reality in the act of telling the story is the result of the narrator's encoding of her listenership: in this instance, a non-Muslim, non-Turkish outsider. The term later gained controversial status through a secular, Marxist Turkish reading by a cultural insider, whose reality construal was shaped by a different discourse or way of talking.

At the level of lexicalisation, it is significant for this story that the Turkish terms fakir
(poor) and zengin (rich) both come from Arabic. This suggests a religiously shaped semantic context at the time of borrowing and one which would be retained in a contemporary religious domain of discourse. Words such as these which have clearly strong emotive power are prone to be sites of semantic struggle.

In the use of Arabic, the "interference from the human life-world" referred to by Ong (see above) is kept to a minimum as Qur'anic Arabic provides the epistemological base for Islamic reality. Qur'anic Arabic, being a learned language, Turkish Islam has a logocentric base rather than one which emanates directly from life experience in an immanent way, or to use Goody's terms, from "primary knowledge". 7

3. Knowledge, Language and Intention

The following example will illustrate the difficulties in conveying one's interest in Islam as an object of socio-linguistic study as opposed to a desire to convert to that religion, and to the epistemological implications of knowing/understanding Islam. Early in my fieldwork period, I was invited by Fatma Hoca to attend a wedding. During the wedding feast some of the guests went into quiet areas adjacent to the main hall to pray. Fatma invited me to join them. She suggested I imitate everything she did and said. When she pronounced some utterances in Arabic, I repeated them after her and continued to repeat other prayers. After we had finished namaż, she turned to me, beaming:

*Hoca Efendi (referring to her husband) will be delighted, he will be so delighted.*

*Why? I asked.*

*You have become a Muslim. Hoca Efendi will be delighted.*

As a result of our ensuing conversation, it became clear that we had each brought totally different sets of assumptions and expectations to the particular speech act we had engaged in. In the course of this speech act, I had pronounced the kelime i-saadet (Islamic proclamation of faith). For Fatma, the epistemological issue was not contingent on my having understood or not understood the literal meaning of the actual words I was pronouncing. To have pronounced the words entailed the niyet (intention) of becoming a Muslim, whereas for me the intention was to learn ABOUT Islamic namaż by performing the gestures correctly and repeating the words carefully. Having focused now on

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7 For Arabic-speaking Muslims the distance would be signalled by different registers or codes: distinctions of speaking and citing are also salient here.
intention I was able to convince Fatma that to my secular way of thinking, it was possible to understand the linguistic and social practices of Islam without this necessarily entailing conversion. Her notion of understanding or knowing, on the contrary, was not restricted to such superficialities, and involved a deeper sense of participation.

These aspects of language use raise important questions about epistemology. They point to the relativity of knowledge: what is known is known from a particular perspective. Fatma Hoca's knowledge was both experiential and participatory, inside knowledge, whilst mine was restricted to outer propositional forms. Reality is apprehended in definite ways and always in relation to human knowers. The different approaches point, moreover, to the need for a Verstehen rather than an Erklären posture towards language, one which is anthropocentric as well as logocentric.

The social mediation of knowledge is attested to in a variety of ways. The respect accorded to teachers, both secular and religious, and the obligations they undertake towards their students in a "traditional" Turkish setting is a dyadic one of social reciprocity and is rarely contained entirely within one social domain alone. Recall the differences between Ayşe Hanım's relationship to Hacer, as literacy teacher, and Hacer's more formal relationship with the other literacy students, described in Chapter V. Book knowledge cannot compensate for the fullness and richness of social transmission. This is reflected too in Gülseren's reluctance to learn about her own cultural heritage in an institutionalised domain of education, such as sociology or cultural studies.

In conclusion, Chapter IX gives an account of the connections between orientations embedded in language structures themselves (logocentric, and anthropocentric) and those articulated in formulaic sayings, and in turn links these notions to a general discussion of different conceptions of language.
CHAPTER IX

1. Conclusion

_Dilin kemği yoktur..._
(The tongue has no bone...)

By examining different topologies of language enshrined in the polysemic richness of Turkish formulaic sayings, this thesis has demonstrated some of the philosophical richness of oral conceptions of language. The focus on different aspects of linguistic usage has highlighted the ways in which language is "inhabited" by speakers, and the different soundscapes in which people can locate themselves. The experience of geographic dislocation attending migration is tempered by the recreation and maintenance of a familiar soundspace. By locating themselves in this familiar soundspace, Turkish people in Melbourne are able to transcend the geographic limitations of their "here and now".

For most Turkish people, migration to Australia was motivated by the need to earn a living (_ekmek parası için_), and a metaphor of labour is central to the shaping of this experience. Displacement itself evokes prior cultural metaphors of movement (Heidegger's _Wegen_, Stambaugh, 1987:83) such as the migration of their early ancestors from Inner Asia to Anatolia and other migratory metaphors such as that of pilgrimage and _gurbet_.

By tracking language use throughout this thesis I have demonstrated the shifting focus on language: as object, as instrument and as _logos_ in different linguistic contexts. At the same time, by highlighting issues of translation, I have drawn attention to some of the ways in which what is articulated in one language (system) becomes tacit and unspoken in another. Translation from one language to another has also served to illustrate different cultural configurations of speech and silence. This verbal patterning is discernible through paying attention to voice and vision, both as alternative sensory parameters of language use, and as mutually reinforcing axes of signification.

By clearly demarcating the boundaries between language and languages, we have seen that it is possible to steer an aesthetic middle course between formal theories of language and language seen as a purely social phenomenon. With few exceptions,¹

anthropologists have stressed the social aspects of language use, while linguists have concentrated largely on language as a quasi-autonomous entity/phenomenon. Through concentrating on the polysemic aspects of language while not ignoring linkages with other cultural dimensions such as gesture, movement, dress and so on, it has been possible to map the dynamic of verbal exchange and pronouncement, and incorporation into an ideational topos.

It has been seen throughout this study that different Turkish cultural styles are embedded in language use, and these have been apprehended through paying attention to the emic linguistic notions of kaba and kibar, as well as to the socially salient dimensions of hierarchy, gender and temporality. Modern standard Turkish is largely a literate creation, embodying a linear, telementational logic. For this reason, it has been necessary to pay attention to the historical dimensions of Turkish linguistic issues which I have traced through the alternating focus on purism and borrowing in successive stages of language reform.

Clues to the ideational aspects of language as topos may be discerned through paying attention to linguistic categories provided that these categories are not seen as ends in themselves but as pointers to possible ways of construing the world. It is clear from this study that there are many opposing ways of talking about reality or of talking reality into existence, with only extremely tenuous links between the categories of verbal language and the world talked about. Language provides a space for shifting vantage points. This has been demonstrated through the use of linguistic artifices such as mıšli zaman which mark particular orientations towards what is spoken about as well as what is said.

When language use is embedded in different media: electronic print and handwriting, and in the unmediated but gendered human voice, media or means converge with meanings, and there is evidence of tension between these different linguistic forms as well as in the ranges of autonomy they facilitate for verbal and other forms of communication.

Literacy adds a further dimension to this exteriorisation of concepts, while bilingualism throws different conceptual scaffoldings into relief as language contact facilitates the adoption (and obviates the creation) of a metalanguage through which one language can be used for analysing another. The dilemma of Gülsoz (described in Chapter VII) highlights the disparities between mother tongue and learned language in the degree of emotional charge and linguistic linkage afforded to speakers of different languages. Set phrases in either language shape communication in different ways. It is commonly
accepted that in stressful situations speakers revert to their mother tongue. It carries a greater affective loading than languages learned abstractly. Ong (1982:113) claims for Latin, for example, that after it became solely a vehicle for learning it had no direct connection with anyone's unconscious of the sort that mother tongues, learned in infancy, always have.

At a more basic level, different conceptions of language and of the ways in which (a) language itself, and (b) language use embody agency can be discerned if attention is paid to what people say about language, as well as to the preformulated proverbs and sayings that are part of a given linguistic heritage. These in turn allude to different epistemologies, phenomenologically based on different patterns of interplay between dominant perceptual modes. The reception of speech and the activity of listening are germane to these noetic worlds. My suggestion throughout this thesis has been that language contact and the subsequent prominence of particular languages in different social domains can provide possible approaches to distinguishing separate epistemological bases.

Silence is a salient factor in understanding the cultural weighting which different members of a community place on verbal action. In different contexts, silence can be a more momentous and efficacious communicator than sound. Patterns of language and silence differ not only from context to context but from one language to another. We have seen how certain formulaic expressions in Turkish translate into silence or alternatively dissolve into a clumsy, groping for words in English. Conversely topics which invite discussion and elaboration in English may be subject to taboo amongst Turkish speakers.

We have seen that the beautiful sounds of a woman's voice are said to pose dangers for harmonious inter-gender relations, and how voice levels are gauged to fit the gender pattern of the particular social entourage of given speech acts. In addition, choice of different languages in a bilingual (or multilingual) situation provides an extension of the parameters of gendered linguistic exchanges. In these instances, the tensions between different conceptions of appropriate linguistic behaviour encompassed by the particular languages, can be exploited in order to transcend barriers that might be apprehended within the narrower social domain surrounding specific languages.

Social space and proxemics have a very important bearing on language use, not least in inter-gender situations, as has been illustrated throughout Chapters V and VIII. Voice levels map hierarchical space, just as topics and degrees of formality mark social
intimacy and distance. The use of linguistic formulas marks transgressions of gendered space while at the same time 'translating' the contours of gender into religious contours (Yalnız Allah tektir...). This constant tension between gender fission and fusion on the one hand, and the demands of non-Turkish public and private space on the other, is mediated through the invisible verbal boundaries and alibis inherent in English and Turkish usage (such as the Arabic class alibi discussed in Chapter III). Anthropomorphism in language is amenable both to a hierarchical ordering of socially constructed reality, and to intimations of symmetry or equality. Attendant on literacy is a shift from anthropocentric imagery to linguistically-based (logocentric) and etymologically-bound conceptual forms.

To illustrate the dynamics of voice and vision, I have described and analysed two events: a women's religious gathering and a working party on a rural orchard (both in Chapter V). Each event involved roughly 20 people. At the religious gathering only women were present; they were meeting in a confined physical space, a suburban house. What was being displayed in that gathering was their sameness or equality in relation to one another. This was marked most overtly through dress. The visual emphasis was on proximity, and distance was marked and delimited by sound, which was directed towards Allah, the wholly (and holy) other. In the absence of men, the gaze was open.

In contrast, at the fruit-cutting shed on the rural orchard where the second event took place, both women and men were present. The shed was an oblong structure with three walls. One of the sides was completely open to the outside orchard and to the roadway. What was being displayed there, was co-operativeness between the various couples who made up the working party. Two of the people (a married couple) were religious hojas or teachers. The emphasis was on work rhythms and movement. Voice and gaze marked invisible boundaries, particularly the gender divide.

Because verbal exchange was culturally inappropriate between unrelated men and women, the implications of gaze exchanges in Muslim culture generally took on added significance. Religious teachers in the community stressed the dangers inherent in the inter-gender gaze. The looks between women and men were considered to be fraught with potential danger, but it was considered to be acceptable to look directly at human faces on television, since the actors could not return the gaze.

Other intimations of the interplay between the verbal and the non-verbal were discernible in jokes. The three jokes discussed in Chapters III, VI and VIII respectively, were chosen because of the points they make about language. While the cartoon joke
points to the importance of symbolic associations within any given linguistic system, the computer joke highlights the tensions between literal and idiomatic meaning, and the joke about missing the boat emphasizes the importance of gesture to language in general. Jokes metaphorically capture meaning in an elliptic linguistic economy of words that allude to hidden referentiality rather than spell it out explicitly. These jokes have all hinted at some of the complexities of linguistic meaning, and have pointed to words as sites of semantic struggle. All three jokes undermine the autonomy of decontextualised literal meaning.

Although there are possible universal elements of temporality encoded in the joke about missing the boat, the very use of gesture is more common in some speech communities than in others. Gesture tends to be downplayed in standard English, but is indispensable to understanding much visual communication in Turkish culture. This cultural difference is accentuated in contexts where verbal communication (between certain kin, for example, and with strangers) is taboo, particularly across the gender divide.

This suggests different cultural loadings on different (verbal) languages. The relationship between language and other aspects of culture is not constant, however, but differs from one social/linguistic grouping to another. It would seem that the more culturally diverse but monolingual a society becomes, the greater the semantic loading on verbal language. Homogeneity encourages silence or non-verbal communication because so much can be implicit and unspoken, while multilingualism provides evidence of disparities across different languages in the language-culture relationship.

People's notions of what constitutes linguistic richness also vary. Many associations covered polysemously in Turkish are marked by different words in Arabic, and since Arabic is a learned language for Turkish speakers, these distinctions convey themselves as linguistic richness. The depth of meaning afforded by polysemy is overlooked as a source of richness when richness is measured in numbers of words. Speaking of their own language, Turkish people often draw unfavourable comparisons with Arabic, which they describe as rich (zengin) or profound (derin). *Arapça çok zengin bir lisanıdır* (Arabic is a very rich language).² They also point to features of English as having cognitive advantages over everyday Turkish. Attempts to spell out the differences in this perceived richness and profundity are often cast in terms of the volume of vocabulary, that is, in the number of words, but rarely in the number of meanings to given words (the

²There may be some synesthetic overlap between this notion of "richness" and the notion of "heavyness" discussed by Becker (1979:253).
polysemic depth or range of the lexicon). In English, for example, we can say "simultaneously", "concurrently" and "at the same time" and each captures different nuances of meaning. In Turkish, *ayni zamanda* (lit. same time at) covers all these meanings; context makes the specific meaning clear. Başkan (1986:108), on the other hand, sees Turkish speakers as having cognitive advantages over speakers of English because of the transparency of the interrelationships in underlying meanings expressed through particles in Turkish. Historically these appraisals of linguistic richness can be explained by borrowing (from Latin in the case of English) and from Arabic (in the case of Turkish). Nevertheless, these points raise important questions about the nature and functions of language.

1.1. Language as Topos

As the above study shows, the notion of language needs to be broadened to include other salient aspects of communication, but at the same time it should not be forgotten that language is things other than communication, such as an instrument and agent of power, and a treasure store of human intellectual history. By treating language as topos, not only do we pay attention to the deictic elements embedded in grammar, but recognize the ways in which language grounds us in different ideational spaces and simultaneously provides the means for transcending these spaces. Language is inherently locative, not only in the case of case, but also in the imagery of hierarchy and symmetry it mimics and shapes.

Apart from demonstrating the topological importance of various orientational metaphors, I have drawn attention to the salience of names as ideational landmarks, as well as to ways in which certain grammatical features of Turkish serve as keystones or milestones on this linguistic soundscape (*daş* and *taş*), while other syntactic features, such as the particles *en* and *an*, provide for the flux and dynamism of shifting cultural arenas.

The different configurations of reality construal provided for in different metaphors are simultaneously informed by different noetic choices, and the final chapter pointed to the salience of these connections, and suggested some of the possible epistemological implications of pursuing an exploration of polysemy both cross-linguistically and cross-culturally. If we consider verbal language simply as a tool of communication, we are

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3 Throughout my fieldwork I was asked frequently how many hundred words I knew in Turkish.
likely to view polysemy as a hindrance to clarity, and to miss much of its symbolic efficacy; if we see language simply as an expression of culture we may overlook the diversity and importance of codes and registers, and of meaning as highly motivated. We may also miss some of the more general or universal aspects of communication and meaning.

The flux and flow of social reality has also served to highlight some of the varied contexts which need to be taken into account in examining the shifting relationship between word and world. The pivots of people’s ideational worlds often escape verbal articulation altogether and, rather than encoding reality, words do no more than provide fragmented bits of scaffolding. The saying of language and the saying of discourse receive different functional loadings in different contexts, and formulaic language provides evidence of the richness of cultural experience which has gone into shaping notions of linguistic reality. The key nodes of this linguistic reality are the polysemic images which pervade oral Turkish, and it is this very polysemy which resists systemization and allows for constant innovation.

An apt image with which to disrupt and defer further exploration of polysemy is that of the welcoming words of Turkish leavetaking: *bekliyoruz, yine geliniz, kapımız her zaman açık* (we await [you], come again, our door is always open).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Turkish</th>
<th>English</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>abla</td>
<td>older sister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>açık</td>
<td>open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>açıklama</td>
<td>exegesis, explanation, commentary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ağabey</td>
<td>older brother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ağız Allah’ın yoludur</td>
<td>the mouth/language is the pathway to Allah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ağzında dili yok</td>
<td>lit. &quot;without a tongue in the mouth&quot; (used for a quiet, taciturn person)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ahiret</td>
<td>the hereafter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ahlaksızlık</td>
<td>immorality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>akar su gibi</td>
<td>like flowing water</td>
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<tr>
<td>akraba</td>
<td>relative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Allah doğru yol gösterir</td>
<td>Allah will show the right way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alevi</td>
<td>Shiite Muslim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ailen teri</td>
<td>sweat of the brow, hard work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>amca</td>
<td>paternal uncle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anadil</td>
<td>protolanguage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anadili</td>
<td>mother tongue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anlamak</td>
<td>to understand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arapça çok zengin bir lisandır</td>
<td>Arabic is a very rich language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>askeriik</td>
<td>military service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avrupa</td>
<td>Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ayak</td>
<td>foot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ayak baş, baş</td>
<td>lit. &quot;the head has become the foot and the foot the head&quot;; things have been turned upside down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aydınlar</td>
<td>intellectuals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ayın ondördü gibi
ayıp
ayını zamanı
ayvayı yemek
azünk

[B]
 bacı
 baksi
 baskılı altında dil daha simbolik oluyor
 ba artisans
 bağımlılık
 bilmemek ayıp değil.
 öğrenmemek ayıp
 bir
 bir dil bir insan
 Bismillah çek
 bis bize benzeriz
 bis her şey unutuktan sonra Avrupa sahip çıkı...
 boş ver
 bugün offdayım
 bugün offım var
 bugün çalışıyoruz
 bugün işimiz yok

[C]
 cemaat

lit. "like the new moon"; very beautiful
shameful
at the same time
lit. "to eat quinces"; to be in a lot of trouble
(ethnic) minority
older sister
oppression
in situations of oppression,
language becomes more symbolic
west, western
lit. "false belief"; superstition
to sink, to set (sun)
clear, certain
in my opinion
to know
it is not shameful not to know,
it is shameful not to learn
a, one
one language, one person
say the Besmele
we resemble ourselves
after we had forgotten everything
Europe took (it) over
don’t let it worry you
today’s my day off
I have today off
we are not working today
we have no work today

(religious) association, community
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Turkish</strong></th>
<th><strong>English</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cennet</td>
<td>paradise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cennet gibi bir yer</td>
<td>a place like paradise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>çingene gibi</td>
<td>like a gypsy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cinperiler</td>
<td>djinns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>çokevililik</td>
<td>polygamy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>çok karınlılık</td>
<td>polygyny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cuma</td>
<td>Friday</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>[D]</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>davul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dayak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dede</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>değil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>demiş</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>derin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>devlet baba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dilin kemiği yoktur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dil nazari</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doğru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doğru yol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doğru</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>[E]</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>edebiyat yapmak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>efendi (yeni) (eski)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ekmek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el öpmek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>emek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>emel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
enişte
eskiden
eski Türkçe
ezitlik
etin senin, kemigi benim
evnilik
ezan
ezan sesi duymuyoruz

[F]
fakirilik
fazlaevililik

[G]
gavur
gelin
gerçek
gerçek bir hikaye
göbekadi
göçmen
görenler
görmek
göz
göz nazari
göz öpkek
günah
günahkâr
gurbet

[H]
hafiz(lar)
hafia

sister's husband, aunt's husband
in the old days
old Turkish
equality
the flesh is yours, the bones are mine
marriage
Islamic call to prayer
lit. we do not hear the call to prayer, we miss the call to prayer
poverty
polygamy
foreigner, alien, infidel
daughter-in-law
real, true, reality, truth
a true story
lit. "womb name"; intimate first name
nomad, bur. migrant
those who see (see mülaka görevnî var)
to see
eye
power of the gaze
lit. "to kiss the eyes" (of someone younger); gestural greeting
sin
sinful
exile, absence from home

who know the Qur'an by heart
week
hala

hangi memleketsiniz?

hanım

haramlık

hasret

hecelemek

helal

hikaye

hileler

hoca (hoja)

hoş gelebiliyor kulağına

hurmet

[İ]

iftar

ilâhi

insan

insallah

Islam’ in beş şarti

[K]

kaba

kaba eti

kaba Türkçe

kader

kadın sesi, su sesi, para sesi

kapalı

kardeşlik

kasap

kaktüs

kaynana

paternal aunt

which country are you from?

term of address for women, used after first name

inner, private area of house

longing, desire, homesickness

read out in syllables

lawful, legitimate

story

opportunists

teacher (eski)

it would sound nice, lit. "it would be pleasing to the ear"

respect (see also saygı)

fast-breaking evening meal during Ramadan

hymns, chants

human, person

God willing

lit. five conditions: the five pillars or principles of Islam

rough, coarse, unrefined

buttocks

common Turkish

fate

the sound of a woman's voice, the sound of water, the sound of money

closed, covered

brotherhood

butcher

cactus

mother-in-law
kaynana dili  
lit. "mother-in-law's tongue"; cactus

kaza  
accident

kelime-işaadet  
Islamic proclamation of faith

kiتاب  
book

kismet  
lot, share

kiتاب Türkçesi  
book Turkish

kıbar  
polite, refined, noble

kıbar Türkçe  
refined Turkish

kible  
direction for praying, i.e. orientated towards the Kaaba in Mecca

kimlerdensiniz?  
lit. "who are you from?"; which family are you from?; who are you?

kimsiniz?  
who are you?

kök  
origin, roots

komünisler  
communists

köylü  
villager, rural person

kulağına kırşun  
lead to his ears!

kulak  
ear

kulak misafiri olmak  
lit. "to be an ear guest", to overhear

kudret  
power, force

Kur'an  
the Qur'an

Kur'an-i Kerim  
the Holy Qur'an

kurnaz  
shrewd, crafty

kutsal kitap  
holy book

kuvvet  
power

[1]  

laik devleti  
secular state

Laz  
group from the Black Sea region

lisans  
language

Lisanullah  
the Qur'an

Lokman Hekim  
two legendary sages regarded as the fathers of medicine; traditional medicine
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mahalle</td>
<td>neighbourhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>masal</td>
<td>fairy tale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maşallah</td>
<td>God protect!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mavi boncuk</td>
<td>blue stone (see nazr boncugu)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mecaz</td>
<td>metaphor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>memleket</td>
<td>country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meydan</td>
<td>public square</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mezhep</td>
<td>Islamic school of law: sect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>miller</td>
<td>religious minority, people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mişli zaman</td>
<td>narrative tense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mobilya</td>
<td>furniture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mülaka</td>
<td>definitely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mülaka-görenler var</td>
<td>these seeing creatures definitely exist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mülaka kazanacağiz</td>
<td>lit. &quot;we will definitely win&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>muska</td>
<td>amulet with writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>muskactılık</td>
<td>faith healing using amulets with writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Müslüman</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>namaz</td>
<td>prayer, ritual worship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>na-mehram</td>
<td>taboo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>namus</td>
<td>honour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nazr</td>
<td>power of the gaze</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nazr boncuğuñaşı</td>
<td>blue stone which wards off the evil eye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nefes</td>
<td>breath</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nefes etmek</td>
<td>to cure by breathing on the sick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nerede</td>
<td>where</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nerelisiniz?</td>
<td>where are you from?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>niyet</td>
<td>intention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nüfus coğalması için</td>
<td>to reproduce/increase the population</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(you know) that man in the flat opposite

student

teacher

when you read, enunciate every letter

AUX. as

that's why it's forbidden

(with heads) covered (for women)

purification, simplification

pure, simple

pure Turkish

Sunday

market day

Ramadan, holy month of fasting

guide

to take a bribe

watch, clock, hjour

naive people

life, right

ritual prayer, worship (see namaz)

respect (see hurmet)

ornamental rose used in the margins of the Qur'an to indicate prostration

city person

reception area for guests

religious merit

left
solcu(lar)           leftist(s)

[§]            condition, principle

şar        "communication"

[T]            board, wood, wooden
tablıq            "communication"
tahta            "communication"
takvit            "communication"
talebe            "communication"
tatlı yiyelim        "communication"
tek            "communication"
tek başına        "communication"
tekevilik        "communication"
tembeltik yapıyor    "communication"
temelli        "communication"
tepsi        "communication"
teravi namaz        "communication"
ters            "communication"
tersine döndü        "communication"
teyze            "communication"
tokat yemek        "communication"
toprak ana        "communication"
Türkçe           "communication"
Türkçemiz ayrılı        "communication"

[U]            "with three papers": shrewd, crafty
uç kağıdı            "with three papers": shrewd, crafty

[V]            sermon
vai̇z
yalınız
yalınız Allah tektir
yani herşey mantıksız
değil bize
yapraklar
yazı
yedi göbek

yemek
yeni
yeni Türkçe
yol
yolcu
yön
yurdumuz
yurt
yurduşundaklar
yuva

only, alone,
Allah alone is one
there is good reason for everything
we {turks/Muslims} do
pages, leaves
writing, destiny
lit. "seven generations" (partners to a marriage
must be separated by seven generational links
verb: to eat; noun: food
new
new Turkish
path, way, road
traveller, pilgrim
direction
our homeland, our country
native country, homeland
"those who are outside the homeland";
overseas Turks
nest, home

[z]

zaman
zekai
ezengin
zurna
time, era
alms, tax for the poor
rich
reedlike musical instrument
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formulaic Term</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agız Allah’ın yoludur</td>
<td>the mouth is the pathway to Allah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allah doğru yol gösterir</td>
<td>Allah will show the right way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Besmele</td>
<td>the Bismillah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bir dil, bir insan</td>
<td>one language, one person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cebinize harçlık</td>
<td>wealth to your pocket!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dilin kemiği yoktur</td>
<td>the tongue has no bone(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellinize sağlık</td>
<td>health to your hands!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emek insanı yaratmış</td>
<td>labour created humanity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eti senin, kemiği benim</td>
<td>the flesh is yours, the bones are mine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geçmiş olsun</td>
<td>may it pass!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>İnşallah</td>
<td>God willing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kağıt insandan sabırdır</td>
<td>paper is more patient than people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kolay gelsin</td>
<td>may it be easy!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kur’an’ın her kelime Allah’ın sözüdür</td>
<td>every word in the Qur’an is the word of Allah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milletimiz Türk, dinimiz İslam, kitabımız Kur’an-i-Kerim</td>
<td>our nationality is Turkish our religion is Islam, our book is the Holy Qur’an</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rehberimiz Kuran, yolumuz Turan</td>
<td>our guide is the Qur’an, our path is Turan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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