

Aglâb Khazâd: The Secret Language of Tolkien's Dwarves

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Abstract

J. R. R. Tolkien, best known for his epic works of high fantasy fiction, is also famous for his experimentation in constructed languages. By far his most complex and best-represented languages are those he assigned to his Elves. However, there are snippets from many other constructed languages in his works, all with varying levels of detail and analysis. One such language is Khuzdul, the language of Tolkien's Dwarves. It is poorly represented in Tolkien's works and writings, as the Dwarves kept it secret, barely using it around non-Dwarvish characters and even less frequently providing translations. What data exists, however, provides the basis for a larger language, known as Neo-Khuzdul, used in Peter Jackson's Middle-Earth film trilogies. This paper will provide a linguistic analysis of Neo-Khuzdul and, by extension, Khuzdul itself.

I will first provide an overview of what data exists in both sources, text and film, with a brief analysis of each. Then I will provide more in-depth analysis of Neo-Khuzdul in several linguistic areas: I will start with a morphological analysis, looking at both NONCONCATENATIVE MORPHOLOGY, or the way words are formed and given meaning through internal structure, and CONCATENATIVE MORPHOLOGY, or prefixes and suffixes; next, I will look at the syntactic structure of the language; and finally, I will analyze the phonological system of the language and propose several phonetic changes drawn from the data. I will end with a sociolinguistic discussion of what we can glean of Dwarvish culture from its use of language. Overall, I hope this paper will be of interest to linguists, those interested in constructed languages, and those interested in learning more about Tolkien's literary world.

1. INTRODUCTION¹

John Ronald Reuel (J. R. R.) Tolkien was an academic and author who lived in the first three quarters of the twentieth century. He produced many works of fiction, mainly fantasy, throughout his career, but he is best known for his lengthy high fantasy stories, set in the fictional world of Middle-Earth. The two Middle-Earth works that come to mind for many when thinking of Tolkien are the children's book *The Hobbit*, and its sequel, the six-book epic *The Lord of the Rings*.

Tolkien was born January 3, 1892, to English parents in South Africa. At the age of three, his family moved back to England. Tolkien became interested in languages early in life, studying Finnish, Old English, Old Norse, and Middle English specifically, as well as taking Comparative Philology at Exeter College. Aside from a brief stint of military service in 1916, Tolkien remained in England for the rest of his life.

His creation of the mythology of Middle-Earth began during his time at Exeter College, when he began developing the first of Middle-Earth's constructed languages; it would eventually become Quenya, an Elvish language. He continued to formulate his mythos until 1930, when he began to write *The Hobbit* in earnest, telling the story to his children as he went along to get their feedback.

The Hobbit was published in England in 1937, with the American edition coming out the following year. *The Lord of the Rings* (LOTR), written as one large novel in six parts, was released in three sections, two released in 1954 and one in 1955 (Anderson 2002: 1-23). Since Tolkien's death in 1973, various bits of his other writings on Middle-Earth have been released by

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his son, Christopher Tolkien, edited and reorganized for publication. For the purposes of this paper, I will draw solely from material in *The Hobbit* and LOTR. LOTR passages will be cited by chapter and book number, referring to LOTR's original six-book structure.

2. THE LANGUAGES

One of the main reasons Tolkien began shaping the history and mythology of Middle-Earth was that “he felt that in order for his invented languages to grow and evolve as real languages do, they must have a people to speak them, and with a people comes a history” (Anderson 2002: 4). Tolkien filled his world with different races and groups of people, and each group had their own forms of language.

The main races in Middle-Earth, from which Tolkien's heroes and villains come, are Men, Elves, Dwarves, Hobbits, Ents, and Orcs. Additionally, Tolkien includes several Maiar who are not from Middle-Earth at all, but are analogous to demigods and currently living in Middle-Earth. The Men of Middle-Earth are split into several groups - Men of Gondor, Men of Rohan, the Hillmen, the Rangers, and more - and all speak some variety of Mannish language, a group of which Tolkien wrote little. Some data exists from the language of Rohan, Rohirric, but for the most part Tolkien lumped them all together as Mannish. Elves speak either Quenya, Sindarin, or Silvan, depending on where they live and what type of Elf they are. Hobbits have their own language but little is known of it - they speak mostly Westron, the Common Tongue, spoken by all races on Middle-Earth. Ents have their own language, Entish, as long and complex as could be hoped for in a language of living trees. Orcs speak a combination of Orcish, of which there are many mutually incomprehensible dialects, the Black Speech, created by Sauron the

Maiar, and Westron. The Maiar seem comfortable with any variety of Mannish or Elvish, as well as Black Speech and, to some extent, Orcish.

This paper focuses on the language of the Dwarves, known as Khuzdul. Tolkien deliberately based Khuzdul on Semitic languages and structures, and in this way the language differs from almost every other Middle-Earth language (Tolkien 1971). The Dwarves of Middle-Earth are a secretive race, keeping their language as close as they keep their treasure and their culture. Even their names are secret, as they adopt outer names in Mannish tongues for use with the rest of the world. Khuzdul, like the Black Speech, is a constructed language both in the real world, where it was invented by Tolkien, and in Middle-Earth history, where it was invented by Aulë, one of the Valar, the deities of Middle-Earth, who created the Dwarves in secret at the beginning of the world.

3. EXTANT KHUZDUL AND NEO-KHUZDUL

3.1 The Books

There exist in Tolkien's works a few instances where Khuzdul is used, most times accompanied by a translation into English. A majority of these attestations are names, of mountains or landmarks, but some are full phrases or sentences. From many of these, it is possible to glean some aspects of the vocabulary and morphology of Khuzdul.

Given the chaotic nature of my sources, and the lack of a single standardized corpus, the orthography of Neo-Khuzdul is not internally consistent. For the purposes of this paper, I have taken the orthography I found in my sources and attempted to standardize it in a way consistent with my analysis. A diacritic above a vowel indicates that the vowel is long - this comes from Tolkien's own writings on Khuzdul (Aberg 2007: 43). A glottal stop is indicated by its IPA

symbol, 'ʔ'. An apostrophe, as seen in sentences (6) and (11) below, I have chosen to interpret as an indicator of coalescence or elision – the apostrophe is only seen in Salo's Neo-Khuzdul, and he never explains what it represents. I have chosen this interpretation over its other conventional use as a glottal stop marker, both in the interests of assuming that all inconsistencies are intentional, so as to gain the most meaning from them, and because such an interpretation makes several phonological changes I noticed simpler and more meaningful.

One instance of Khuzdul names being revealed takes place in the third chapter of Book Two of LOTR, "The Ring Goes South." In this chapter, the Fellowship reach the Misty Mountains, and the Dwarf Gimli gives names for three mountain peaks in Khuzdul. The first is *Barazinbar*, translated by Gimli as 'Redhorn'. He refers to the mountain as *Baraz* as well, indicating that the name is a compound, of *baraz* and *inbar*, 'red' and 'horn' respectively.

Another mountain is called *Zirakzigil*, its name in English being 'Silvertine'. The shorter name for this mountain is *Zirak*, indicating that the compound is *zirak* and *zigil*. According to Tolkien's notes, the name translates literally to 'silver-spike', but there is some confusion about which element means 'silver' and which means 'spike'. Initially, *zirak* meant 'silver' and *zigil* meant 'spike', whereas later he reversed the two meanings (Tolkien 1989: 174-5). I believe the first interpretation to be the most likely, as it fits with the syntactic order demonstrated in *Barazinbar*.

The third mountain Gimli names is *Bundushathûr*, or 'Cloudyhead' in translation. The shorter name is *Shathûr*. Tolkien's notes state that the name is made up of *bund(u)* 'head' and *shathûr* 'clouds'. Christopher Tolkien posits that the correct interpretation of the name is *bund - u - shathûr*, or 'head in/of clouds' literally, and that 'cloudyhead' is a shorthand version (Tolkien 1989: 174). I agree with his interpretation, further discussing this name below. The use of

Shathûr as the shorthand name supports the interpretation of *zirak* as meaning ‘silver’ as well - translated thus, the short names mean ‘red’, ‘silver’, and ‘clouds/cloudy’ respectively, all adjectives, and therefore more likely to be correctly assigned to their respective mountains than ‘horn’, ‘spike’, or ‘head’.

In the same passage as the mountain names, Gimli gives the Khuzdul names of four other landmarks. The first is *Khazad-dûm*, translated as ‘dwarrowdelf’. *Khazad* means ‘dwarrow’, or less archaically ‘dwarves’, with *dûm* meaning ‘delf’, or ‘mine’. *Khazad-dûm* is one of the kingdoms of the Dwarves, but is referred to more often as “the mines of Moria”, lending credence to this translation of the Khuzdul.

Gimli also names the site of a great battle, a valley between two arms of the Misty Mountains - *Azanulbizar*, called the Dimrill Dale in English. Tolkien, according to Christopher Tolkien, “hesitantly” translated this as literally meaning ‘vale of dim streams’ - *azan* ‘dark, dim’, *ûl* ‘streams’, *bizar* ‘dale/valley’ (Tolkien 1988: 174). Following the syntactic pattern demonstrated by the mountain names, *Azanulbizar* would literally mean ‘the dark-streams valley’, with ‘Dimrill Dale’ a simpler and more phonetically pleasing alternative to non-Dwarves.

Nearby are two bodies of water. The first is the lake *Kheled-zâram*, or Mirrormere. Tolkien gives the translation of this name as ‘glass-pool’ (Tolkien 1989: 174); presumably *kheled* here means ‘glass’ and *zâram* means ‘pool’ or ‘lake’. The second body is the river *Kibil-nâla*, called Silverlode in English. Tolkien claims that the definition of *nâla* is unknown, but that it probably means something like “path, course, rivercourse, or bed”. *Kibil* means ‘silver’, despite being a different form than either of the elements in *Zirakzigil*. Tolkien explains that the Dwarves most likely found actual silver in the Silverlode (Tolkien 1989: 175), and therefore *kibil*

refers to the metal itself, where whichever element in *Zirakzigil* also translated as ‘silver’ refers to the color only.

After the Fellowship finally enters Moria, in the following chapter, “A Journey in the Dark”, they find the tomb of the Dwarf Balin, with an inscription in both Khuzdul and Westron (represented in the text as English). The Khuzdul reads *Balin Fundinul uzbek Khazaddûmu*, and the translation reads “Balin son of Fundin, lord of Moria”. The use of *Balin* and *Fundin* is strange in a Khuzdul inscription, but has an explanation buried deep in LOTR’s Appendix F, at the end of Section I: “[The Dwarves’] own secret and ‘inner’ names, their true names, the Dwarves have never revealed to anyone of alien race. Not even on their tombs do they inscribe them.” See Section 5 below for further discussion of Dwarvish culture and how it relates to their language.

The rest of the text, however, is clearly in Khuzdul. It is glossed thus²:

1. Balin Fundin-ul uzbek Khazaddûm-u

Balin Fundin-gen. lord dwarrowdelf-obj.gen.

‘Balin, son of Fundin, lord of Moria’

Here we see two different morphemes translated ‘of’, *-ul* and *-u*. One is used in a patronymic, the other in assigning the whole of a kingdom to one Dwarf. My first instinct was to assume the difference as being that *-ul* is used to indicate a relationship other than total possession, and *-u* indicates total possession. Åberg offers a different explanation. He claims that *-u* is an objective marker, whereas *-ul* is adjectival. (Åberg 2007: 52-53). Åberg, therefore, would translate Balin’s inscription as ‘The Fundin-ish Balin, lord over Moria’, or ‘Balin who is Fundin-ish, lord of Moria’. Such an ending can also be found in the word *Khuzdul* itself, making it ‘Dwarvish’ or ‘of Dwarves’.

² For a list of abbreviations and their meanings, see Appendix B.

The *-u* morpheme is also, according to Christopher Tolkien, found in the name *Bundushathûr* ‘Cloudyhead’, where it would mean ‘in/of’, according to him. If he is correct, and the morpheme is used in the same way in that as in the inscription then the *-u* would modify *bund*, making the name something along the lines of ‘clouds of the head’. Åberg proposes two options: The name uses the morpheme, but as a prefix instead of a suffix, modifying *shathûr* instead of *bund*; or, the name does not use the morpheme, but instead is the name *Bunudshathûr* after a metathesis, perhaps to break up the middle consonant cluster (Åberg 2007: 52). As for myself, I tend to take advantage of Christopher Tolkien’s definition of the *-u-* in *Bundushathûr* as ‘in/of’ and assign it the meaning ‘in’ when used as an infix, and ‘of’ when used as a suffix. This would allow the syntactic pattern used in the other mountain names to continue, *Bundushathûr* being translated as ‘head in clouds’, with Cloudyhead as shorthand.

The other use of Khuzdul in a complete phrase or sentence occurs in the seventh chapter of Book Three of LOTR, “Helm’s Deep”. The chapter narrates a fierce battle in and around the fortress of Helm’s Deep near Rohan, and in the battle, Gimli utters a war cry: *Baruk Khazâd! Khazâd ai-mênu!* In Appendix F, at the end of LOTR, Tolkien translates this cry as ‘Axes of the Dwarves! The Dwarves are upon you!’

2. Baruk Khazâd Khazâd ai-mên-u!
 axe.pl dwarf.pl.gen dwarf.pl upon-you.pl-obj.gen.
 ‘Axes of the Dwarves! The Dwarves are upon you!’

From (2), one can infer that Khuzdul lacks any form of the verb ‘to be’ - it is understood, rather than stated. The first phrase remains problematic; there is no indication of any form of genitive on either *Baruk* or *Khazâd*, and yet the phrase is translated ‘axes of the dwarves’. Perhaps there once was an *-u* or *-ul* ending on *Khazâd* that was lost, in order to shorten the phrase for use as a

battle cry. Additionally, a late publication of certain of Tolkien's notes reveals that *ai-* is a contracted form of *aya* 'upon' (Tolkien 2007: 85).

3.2 The Movies

3.2.1 *The Lord of the Rings*

Tolkien's world of Middle-Earth has gone through several attempts at adaptation in various kinds of media, but by far the most famous and successful adaptation to date is the trilogy of movies directed by Peter Jackson, based on LOTR: *The Fellowship of the Ring*, released in 2001; *The Two Towers*, released in 2002; and *The Return of the King*, released in 2003. A decade after the first trilogy, Jackson began a second film trilogy, this time based on Tolkien's *The Hobbit*. So far, *The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey* and *The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug* have been released, in 2012 and 2013 respectively. In both franchises, Jackson took care to integrate the constructed languages used by Tolkien's races in ways that made sense within context - when Elves are alone, or wish not to be understood by others, they speak Sindarin; Orcs speak Orcish; Sauron uses the Black Speech of Mordor; and Dwarves, when the situation calls for it, speak Khuzdul.

In order to create a consistency in the constructed languages, between what appears in Tolkien's writings and in the movies, the linguist David Salo was contracted, to analyze Tolkien's languages and expand them, and provide translations into the constructed languages to be used in the films. For the purposes of this paper, I will of course be focusing on his work on Khuzdul. The reconstructed Khuzdul used by Salo and the films is known as Neo-Khuzdul, as it does not come from Tolkien alone, and therefore cannot be called Khuzdul. Much of what is

known of Neo-Khuzdul, and about Neo-Khuzdul, comes from Salo's blog, where he talks about creating it and analyzes certain pieces of it.

Neo-Khuzdul has been used in both film series, although much more frequently in the second trilogy; LOTR has one major Dwarf character, whereas *The Hobbit* has thirteen. Khuzdul, and Neo-Khuzdul by extension, is treated as a great secret by the Dwarves, and so it follows that in a series with only one Dwarf, it will be used much less than in a series with over a dozen. However, Neo-Khuzdul is used in the first film trilogy, in three separate places.

The first Neo-Khuzdul encountered in the films is inscribed on the walls of Moria in *The Fellowship of the Ring*, in the scene where the Fellowship battle the Orc army and the cave-troll. Salo gives the text and an in-depth analysis of two such inscriptions in his post "Piece by Piece", along with the caveat that they are in an early form of his Neo-Khuzdul, and are therefore not exactly what he would come up with, if he were translating them today. Nonetheless, they contain elements of Neo-Khuzdul that are consistent with his more recent efforts.

The first inscription he discusses reads *Mabazgûn zai Azgâr Azanulbizarul zai shakâl Kheled-zâramul*, and is translated thus:

3. Ma-bazg-ûn zai Azgâr Azanulbizar-ul zai shakâl Kheledzâram-ul

ppart-slay-per. in/on battle Azanulbizar-of in/on shore.pl Kheledzâram-of

‘Slain in the Battle of Azanulbizar on the shores of Kheled-zâram.’

This is evidently another funerary inscription, along the lines of the one found on the tomb of Balin. Salo brings up several points of interest, including the ending *-ûn*, which he posits was meant to refer the participle to an individual - the one who was slain in the battle. This inscription also shows the *-ul* ending, making *Azanulbizar* and *Kheled-zâram* descriptions of the battle and the shores.

The second inscription Salo discusses reads *Durin mabazgûn au Abzag Durinu*, and is glossed in (4):

4. Durin ma-bazg-ûn au Abzag Durin-u

 Durin ppart-slay-per. by (agent) killer Durin-of

 ‘Durin slain by Durin’s bane’

Here we see *mabazgûn* again, but this time with the name of the one who was slain. Salo points out that *Abzag* ‘killer’ contains the same root as *mabazgûn*, BZG, but reformed to be a noun.

While ‘Durin slain by the killer of Durin’ sounds repetitive, the translation Salo gives, which is the one he was given by the filmmakers originally, has *Abzag Durinu* mean ‘Durin’s Bane’.

Durin’s Bane is the name given to the Balrog, a fiery demon living in the pits of Moria and the reason the kingdom has gone uninhabited for generations. It is possible that *Abzag Durinu*, while not literally meaning ‘Durin’s Bane’, became the phrase associated with the beast when the Dwarves became aware of it. The phrase also demonstrates the *-u* objective genitive ending - Durin is the object of the killer’s killing.

Salo notes that this inscription uses the Mannish outer name for Durin, rather than the inner Khuzdul name. He explains this by saying that he “felt (probably) that it was a bit above [his] pay grade to be inventing a ‘true Dwarvish name’ for Durin the Deathless” - the legendary first king of the Dwarves who is believed to reincarnate himself at various points throughout history - and so Salo used the Mannish name (Salo, “Piece by Piece”). This is not as jarring as it might have been, due to Tolkien’s use of *Balin* on the Dwarf’s tomb, rather than Balin’s inner name.

The second time Neo-Khuzdul is encountered is not in the form of dialogue or inscription, but is instead part of the soundtrack. I say it is the second use - in actuality, there are

two tracks on the soundtrack that contain lyrics in Neo-Khuzdul, one playing while the Fellowship first enter Moria, the other as the Fellowship flee the Orc army and run into the arms of the Balrog. Both sets of lyrics, however, come from the same poem, originally written by scriptwriter Philippa Boyens and translated by Salo. I place it second on the list because the text of the poem is still being used after the inscriptions are seen - of course, the order in which these are used has no significance at all.

The poem, titled “Durin’s Song,” has two parts: one is a paean to Durin, praising him and the work he did as Durin III in delving deep into the mountain and creating Moria. Following that are two sentences describing the period just before Durin’s first awakening, and then the poem changes, becoming instead a lament and cry of fear as the narrator realizes that the Dwarves have delved too deep and awoken Durin’s Bane.

The poem “Durin’s Song” is the longest text in Neo-Khuzdul to date, and “was foundational for the later versions of neo-Khuzdul [*sic*]” (Salo, “Durin’s song: verbs”). From what I have been able to tell, the grammar of “Durin’s Song” matches with that of the more recent Neo-Khuzdul texts. The only extant glossary of Neo-Khuzdul posted by Salo is based almost entirely on the text of the poem, supplemented with the vocabulary from the inscriptions and Gimli’s curse, discussed above and below, respectively. A full gloss of the text can be found in Appendix A. Several affixes, including a second-person possessive suffix, question prefixes, and the formula for the neo-Khuzdul imperfect verb, can be discovered from the text.

The third use of Neo-Khuzdul is a curse, with a complicated real-world history. The curse is uttered by Gimli to an Elf, when the Fellowship reaches Lothlorien after leaving Moria. Salo provided a rather tame oath, meaning ‘a great darkness upon you Elves’, and translates it into modern Neo-Khuzdul as *aznân gabil ai-fnadumên*.

5. aznân gabil ai fnadu-mên

darkness great upon elves-2pl

‘A great darkness upon you Elves’

However, the actor playing Gimli, either because he found the line too difficult or for some other unknown reason, did not say the sentence given, but something else instead. Salo left the phrase alone for a decade, until the filmmakers for the *Hobbit* trilogy decided to use the same curse in the second film, *The Desolation of Smaug*. Salo then “reverse-engineered (so to speak) a Khuzdul version of [the actor’s] line, using [Salo’s] grammar and phonology”, and came up with *îsh kakhfê ai-'d-dûr-rugnul*, glossed below.

6. îsh kakhf-ê ai-'d-dûr-rugn-ul

pour.imp feces-1sing.poss upon-def.obj-bare-chin-of

‘May my excrement be poured upon the naked-jawed (ones)’

This translation of Gimli’s curse demonstrates some Neo-Khuzdul affixes: Salo states that *-ê* “was the already-existing first person singular possessive” and labels *- 'd-* as the definite object marker *id-*, presumably after coalescing with *ai-* (Salo, “Gimla ok Thorins bqlvan”) – see Section 4.3 below. The verb in (6) is problematic; for an in-depth discussion, see Section 4.1.1.1.1 below.

3.2.2 *The Hobbit*

Jackson’s second film trilogy is incomplete at the time of writing, only two of three movies having been released. As mentioned above, these two films make more frequent use of Neo-Khuzdul, although there is nothing as long as “Durin’s Song” involved to date. The Neo-

Khuzdul in *The Hobbit* film franchise is more conversational than poetic or lyrical so far; what has appeared has been mainly battle-cries, both in the midst of conflict and to inspire Thorin's Company before embarking on their epic quest, curses, and a short inscription on a prayer talisman.

Of the curses, one is the same as Gimli's curse from the first film of the first trilogy, this time with the force of Salo's approval behind it. The other is uttered by Thorin to Thranduil, King of the Woodland Realm of Elves, in the second film, *The Desolation of Smaug*:

7. imrid amrad urs-ul

die.imp death fire-of

'Die a death of fire'

Here we see an imperative of the form iCCiC, a difference from the form cited above, CiCiC.

The discrepancy will be discussed below. The rest of the curse is fairly grammatically straightforward. Interestingly, as I noticed, (7) also presents the same root *MRD* as both as a verb and a noun.

Of the battle cries uttered by Dwarves, the one most commonly used is sentence (8):

8. Du bekâr

to arm.pl

'To arms!'

This cry appears both in Bag End, as Thorin attempts to rally the spirits of the Company, and in a flashback to the Battle of Azanulbizar, as he leads the final charge. Here, *bekâr* 'arms' takes a similar form to the word *felak* 'a tool like a broad-bladed chisel' extant in Tolkien's own writings (Tolkien 1996: 352) – both have a CVCVC form, and share the same first vowel and quality of

the second vowel. The difference in second vowel quantity can perhaps be attributed to number - *bekâr* is plural, whereas *felak* is singular. Another battle cry, heard in Rivendell, is below:

9. Ifridî bekâr

ready.imp arm.pl

‘Ready weapons!’

In addition to *bekâr* ‘arms’, this cry gives another example of an imperative verb, *ifridî* ‘ready’, in iCCiC form, this time with a long vowel affixed to the end for unknown reasons.

A prayer talisman, held by the Dwarf Kili and shown while he is in the dungeons of Mirkwood, carries a short Neo-Khuzdul inscription.

10. Innikh d-ê

return.imp to-me

‘Return to me’

The translation of the inscription, as well as the gloss, were provided by Salo. *Innikh* is the imperative form of the root *NNKh* ‘return, come back’, a strengthening of the root *NKh* ‘come’. *Dê*, Salo explains, is *du* ‘to, toward’, seen in sentence (8), combined with “the 1st person singular pronominal suffix -ê” (Salo, “Kíla steinn”). The inscription, therefore, is a command, or possibly just a request, for Kili to return home after the Quest; he reveals that the talisman was a gift from his mother.

4. THE LINGUISTICS OF NEO-KHUZDUL

4.1 Morphology

The morphology of Neo-Khuzdul (for the purposes of linguistic analysis, I will refer to Neo-Khuzdul only, as it shares all linguistic features with the extant Tolkienian Khuzdul by design) relies heavily on nonconcatenative morphology. Nonconcatenative morphology, as defined by McCarthy, consists of “those morphological operations that cannot be analyzed by the method of recurrent partials”, such as “reduplication, infixation,” and other such operations (McCarthy 1981: 373). Specifically, McCarthy explains that “Semitic morphology is pervaded by a wide variety of purely morphological alternations internal to the stem” (374). In practical terms, I will use *nonconcatenative morphology* to refer to morphological changes and forms that fall outside the realm of simple prefixation and suffixation. Prefixation and suffixation I will refer to as *concatenative morphology*, following McCarthy’s definition of the same (373).

4.1.1 Nonconcatenative Morphology

4.1.1.1 Verbs

Perhaps the most obvious and straightforward example of nonconcatenative morphology in Neo-Khuzdul is in its structure of verbal formation. The imperative, perfect, and imperfect conjugations seem to be the only verb forms present in Neo-Khuzdul. More may exist in Salo’s notes, but of the current extant Neo-Khuzdul, all verbs fall into one of these three forms. In one of his blog posts, “Paradixis”, Salo gives an example conjugation of the root *ZRB* ‘write, inscribe’ into perfect and imperfect forms, which I have recreated in Table 1 below.

Perfect (CaCaC)			Imperfect (CCVC)		
1st common	zarabmi	zarabmâ	1st common	azrabi	mazrabi
2nd M	zarabsu	zarabsun	2nd M	sazrabi	sazrabîn
2nd F	zarabsi	zarabsin	2nd F	sazrabiya	sazrabiyan
3rd M	zaraba	zarabôn	3rd M	tazrabi	tazrabiya
3rd F	zarabai	zarabên	3rd F	tazrabîn	tazrabiyan
Dependable facts, past or future or continually			Vividly imagined action, either because it is currently happening or playing out in mind's eye		

Table 1 (Salo, “Paradixis”)

Perfect verbs, in Neo-Khuzdul, refer to events that have already taken place, but that is not all. Salo explains, still in “Paradixis”, that the Neo-Khuzdul perfect form “refers to actions which can be considered as dependable facts, as opposed to evolving and uncertain realities.” He gives the sentences *Izgil taraza zann ra zann* ‘the moon rises night and night’ and *Uslukh sharaga* ‘a dragon lies’ as examples of dependable facts not in past tense, but rather things that are consistently true, at least in the Dwarves’ experience. He also gives *Durin zabakana* ‘Durin will awake’ as a future certainty expressed in the perfect. However, the verb *zabakana* does not fit the pattern given in his chart, unless the *-na* suffix marks future verbs on the third person

masculine singular perfect conjugation. There is no other evidence to support this interpretation, however.

Salo's chart makes evident the markers for person, number, and gender in the perfect conjugation, added to the base morphology CaCaC, derived from the verb root. Simply by looking at it, we can glean that *-m-* indicates first person and *-s-* indicates second person. Salo confirms this, adding that "*-u* and *-i* mark masculine and feminine. Second and third person plurals are marked by *-n*." ("Paradixis"). He goes on to say that the third person plurals must be **zaraba-un* and **zaraba-in* respectively, which then underwent simplification of the diphthongs to *zarabôn* and *zarabên*. The third person feminine singular ending is *-ai*, then, and not simply **-i*, due to the lack of diphthong simplification evident.

Neo-Khuzdul's imperfect verbs refer to "vividly imagined action - either because one sees it directly in front of one, or imagines it as something which is playing out in the mind's eye" ("Paradixis"). As such, it seems to correspond more to what we would understand as the present tense, although could be used for past or future tenses as well, in the context of a story or prediction.

The imperfect conjugations at first glance appear more complicated, including as they do both prefixes and suffixes. However, as Salo notes, the pattern used becomes clear: Second-person imperfects have an *sa-* prefix, where third-person imperfects have *ta-*. The endings for second and third person are equally consistent - masculine singular endings are *-i*, and feminine plural endings are *-iyan*. The second-person feminine singular and third-person masculine plural are the same, *-iya*. I would postulate that these were once **-iwan* and **-iwa* respectively, given Salo's comments on /w/ changing to /j/ in front of vowels – see Section 4.3 below. The second-person masculine plural and third-person feminine singular are also identical, *-în*. It is unclear

whether the prefixes developed first and the suffixes to further differentiate the persons and numbers, or whether the prefixes developed later, to differentiate between verb forms with the same suffixes. The base morphology of the imperfect is CCVC; the stem vowel varies between words in a “purely lexical distinction, [which] is unpredictable, and does not correspond to any kind of semantic class” (Salo, “Paradixis”).

The imperative form in Neo-Khuzdul is muddier than that of the perfect or imperfect. In “Gimla ok Thorins bōlvān”, Salo gives his “overall scheme for imperatives” as CiCiC. I discuss below the issues surrounding his explanation of *ish* as an imperative of that form, and postulate a possible solution. However, other imperatives appear in Neo-Khuzdul, none of them taking the form CiCiC. Instead, they take the form iCCiC, given by Salo in “Kīla steinn” as the pattern generally used for imperatives. Two of them appear in this form exactly, *imrid* ‘die’ and *innikh* ‘return’.

A third imperative is *Ikhf* ‘feel’, appearing in the following sentence:

11. Ikhf	id-ursu	Khazād
Feel.imp	def.obj-fire	Dwarf.pl.gen

‘Feel the fire of the Dwarves’

If we assume a root of *ʔKhF* ‘feel’, the imperative should be *iʔKhiF*. The glottal disappears – or perhaps never existed in the first place, the root being my own deduction and not coming from Salo – leaving us with *iKhiF*. It would appear that the word then underwent metathesis, perhaps owing to initial vowel similarity with the following *id-*; for further discussion of this theory, see Section 4.3 below. The final vowel would then coalesce. Such elision is seen also in the phrase *ai-’d-dûr-rugnul*, although slightly differently - here, the second vowel of the cluster, the /i/ in the definite object marker *id* (which Salo identifies it as – see (6) above), changes to an

apostrophe, or coalescence marker. I suspect this makes no difference in either a phonetic or orthographic sense, although it is difficult to test the latter without seeing it written out. I would hypothesize, in order to maintain as much consistency as possible among imperatives, that the runes, when written out, would spell *ikhif id-ursu khazâd*, but the sentence would be pronounced as (11) above.

In addition, verbs in Neo-Khuzdul can undergo internal reduplication as an indication of intensity. This reduplication can be seen in the Neo-Khuzdul text of “Durin’s Song”, as given in Appendix A. Salo, in his discussion of the song’s verbs, writes:

Four of the examples [of verbs in the song] show a doubled medial consonant: *taburrudi* ‘grows heavy’, *tashurrukimâ* ‘surrounds us’, *takalladi* ‘shakes’, and *takarraki* ‘splits’. This was supposed to be an auxiliary stem indicating long-continued, repeating, or otherwise extreme action: e.g. *takalladi* ‘shakes over and over’, *takarraki* ‘splits into many small pieces, “shivers”’ (Salo, “Durin’s song: verbs”).

These examples have the *ta*-beginning characteristic of third-person imperfect verbs, but their stems do not follow the CCVC format, implying epenthesis of a vowel to break up the consonant cluster.

4.1.1.1.1 The Problem of Îsh

12. îsh kakhf-ê ai-'d-dûr-rugn-ul

pour.imp feces-1sing.poss upon-def.obj-bare-chin-of

‘May my excrement be poured upon the naked-jawed (ones)’

The verb in sentence (12) above is perhaps the most problematic word in the extant Neo-Khuzdul today. Salo writes about it in his discussion of how this line came to be. The story goes, according to Salo, that the actor playing Gimli for some reason did not say the line prepared for

him, but instead extemporaneously spoke the line above, which Salo then reverse-engineered into something that fit with his Neo-Khuzdul rules later. In his post, titled “Gimla ok Thorins bōlvan”, he says that the verb *îsh* “fit in well with [his] overall scheme for imperatives, CiCiC”. However, all other imperatives take the form iCCiC, and indeed Salo says in his post “Kíla steinn” that the iCCiC pattern is “generally the case with... imperatives” - the CiCiC pattern given in “Gimla ok Thorins bōlvan”, then, is an anomaly. What’s more, the verb does not appear actually to fit that pattern. Salo gives the root as *ʔYSh* ‘pour out, pour down, pour over’ - the ‘Y’ indicates a [j] sound, which is how I shall refer to the allophone when discussing it alone below. A CiCiC imperative would be *ʔiyish*. And finally, the translation for *îsh* decided on by Salo, ‘may x be poured’, does not read like an imperative, but rather some type of subjunctive. All of these inconsistencies could be explained as mistakes or typographical errors on Salo’s part, but I am inclined to believe they are purposeful, in the interests of furthering my analysis.

I choose to interpret the data as meaning that Neo-Khuzdul has no subjunctive mood; there is no other extant evidence for it, and Salo directly states that *îsh* is an imperative. I conclude, therefore, that the CiCiC is an alternate form for the imperative that gets translated as a wish, ‘may x be y’, rather than a direct command. As for the discrepancy in form, there is no other evidence of an extant [j] in spoken Neo-Khuzdul. I posit, therefore, that the [j] is dropped and the two vowels coalesce into a single vowel, as is evident in other words. The absence of the glottal stop is harder to explain, especially given that it exists in the only environment to demonstrate glottal stops in Tolkien’s Khuzdul, which Tolkien describes at the end of Appendix E Section II.ii. It is possible that the glottal stop exists in Salo’s reconstruction of the word but is lacking in his transcription; however, as above, I choose to interpret inconsistencies as purposeful. It is possible that the glottal stop is somehow part of the vowel coalescence and was

subsumed into the resulting long vowel; alternately, the presence of a long vowel might cause the glottal stop to delete. I am inclined towards the first interpretation; the presence of the glottal stop may explain why the vowel in this instance is long, where in other examples of metathesis it remains short.

4.1.1.2 Nouns and Adjectives

Neo-Khuzdul nouns are also formed through the use of nonconcatenative morphology. Different uses of nouns have different formats, which affect how they are translated. Salo has only explained two forms, the agentive noun and the noun used to identify a type of people, but other formations are evident in the data.

Salo explicitly defines the agentive format for nouns as uCCaC in two places (“Durin’s song: The rest”, “Question about Dwalin’s axes”). This form is seen on Balin’s tomb, in the word *uzbad* ‘ruler’. The character Dwalin in the Hobbit films has two axes, one named *ukhlát* ‘grasper’ and the other *umraz* ‘keeper’ (named after Emily Brontë’s dogs), with the roots *KhLT* ‘hold tight’ and *MRZ* ‘keep, retain’ as their bases (Salo, “Question about Dwalin’s axes”).

In his post “Mining for Meaning”, Salo discusses his decision to assign a form to the semantic class of nouns referring to “animate or rational beings”. The format for such words is CuCC, with a plural form of CaCâC. These forms can be seen in the words *khuzd* / *khazâd* ‘Dwarf/Dwarves’, *rukhs* / *rakhâs* ‘Orc/Orcs’, and *fund* / *fanâd* ‘Elf/Elves’. Salo points out that this form is also seen in *Sigin-tarâg*, the Dwarvish name for their leading clan the Longbeards. *Tarâg* ‘beards’ is seen in this instance in the CaCâC form, as it applies to a group of Dwarves, where in other cases it may be seen in with different pattern. CaCâC would also seem to be the pattern for the genitive form of such nouns, as can be seen in (2) and (11) above.

Curiously, in his discussion of sentence (6), Salo gives the word for ‘lower jaw, chin’ as *rugn / ragân* (“Gimla ok Thorins bqlvan”). This seems to be an extrapolation along the same lines as the one used for *Sigin-tarâg* – in (6), Gimli is using the Elves’ chins as a metonymy for the Elves themselves, and therefore the word is treated as though it were the word for ‘Elf’ as well.

These two forms are the only ones Salo explicitly identifies, but nouns not of those two semantic classes also appear in the extant Neo-Khuzdul. In “Durin’s Song”, the word *urus* ‘fire’ appears, as well as its plural, *arrâs* ‘flames’. This implies a form of uCuC / aCCâC for some nouns; given Salo’s determination to assign meanings to the distribution of noun forms (“Mining for Meaning”), perhaps this form is meant for the semantic class of nouns referring to forces of nature, or destructive objects. It is impractical to hypothesize further on this form, or any of the other noun forms present in “Durin’s Song”, without more data, as *urus / arrâs* ‘fire/flames’ is the only set of the singular and plural version of the same noun.

Also present in the song, however, are two words representing the noun and adjectival forms of the same root, *iklal* ‘(n.) cold’ and *kalil* ‘(adj.) cold’. What is interesting about this pair of words is that they share not only the same root, *KLL* ‘cold’, but also contain the same vowels. The vowels are in a different order, however; as a result, it is unclear whether the inclusion of both vowels in both forms is a coincidence, with an iCCaC noun form and a CaCiC adjective form, or whether the vowels are linked to the stem somehow and metathesize between the noun and adjective forms.

As an interesting sidenote, the use of *urus* as the singular noun form of ‘fire’ gives credence to the theory of metathesis I developed above. In (7), we see *ursul* ‘of fire’, with the *-ul* genitive ending. Given the singular form of the word, it could be hypothesized that the word was

initially **urus-ul*, metathesized to **ursu-ul*, and then coalesced the two common vowels, becoming *ursul*.

4.1.2 Concatenative Morphology

Neo-Khuzdul also makes use of concatenative morphology, prefixes and suffixes, in both its nouns and its verbs. These affixes take the form of case markers, pronominal suffixes, and question prefixes.

There are only two extant case suffixes in Neo-Khuzdul, and one case prefix. The two suffixes I have discussed in my analyses of their uses above, and are *-ul* and *-u*, both genitive markers. The difference between them is that *-ul* is used as a sort of adjectival genitive marker, when the genitive in question is modifying its referent in order to describe it (see (1), *Balin Fundinul* ‘Balin of-Fundin’). The suffix *-u*, on the other hand, is an objective genitive, used when the genitive is functioning as a direct object (see (1) *uzbad Khazaddûmu* ‘lord of Moria’). The case prefix is a definite accusative marker, *id-*, which “comes before a noun which is the direct object of a verb, if that noun is *not* being newly introduced into the universe of discourse” (“Definite accusative prefix”, Midgardsmal). As with much regarding the linguistics of Neo-Khuzdul, more may exist in Salo’s notes or mind, but these affixes are the only case markers evident in the extant data.

Somewhat richer in data is the system of pronominal endings in Neo-Khuzdul. Pronominal endings can be attached to either nouns or verbs, as can be seen in the text of “Durin’s Song” in Appendix A. Such endings only appear to refer to first- or second-person pronouns:

1st person	2nd person
Singular possessive: -ê	Singular: -mê
Plural: -mâ	Singular possessive: -zu
	Plural (familiar): -mên
	Plural (formal): -zun

Table 2

All extant pronominal endings come from “Durin’s Song,” with the exception of the first person singular possessive, which comes from Salo’s blog post “Kíla steinn”. In his discussion of “Durin’s Song”, Salo notes that the first person plural serves as a possessive when attached to nouns, and as an object marker when attached to verbs – see Appendix A, *bashukimâ* ‘our bones’ and *tashurrukimâ* ‘surrounds us’ (Salo, “Durin’s song: verbs”).

It is unclear whether any pronominal endings exist outside of what is given here; it may easily be that a first-person singular pronoun may be assumed, and therefore unmarked. Additionally, the familiar and formal aspects of the second person seem to have to do with the addressee of the statement, and therefore would not be necessary in a first-person context. Aside from what is given above, I would expect first- and second-person plural possessives, and a third-person paradigm similar to that of the second-person pronominal endings.

The only other affixes to be found in the extant data are two question prefixes, *ka-* ‘can’ and *za-* ‘will/shall’. Both are found in “Durin’s Song”. Salo points out that they only attach to imperfect verbs, as they refer not to definite facts but to speculations on the future, and that they

may once have been “auxiliary verbs that eventually got attached to verbs as clitics” (“Durin’s song: verbs”). They certainly do not fit the model demonstrated by other Neo-Khuzdul affixes, as they carry lexical meaning as opposed to grammatical meaning, and Salo’s explanation makes sense in this regard.

One other prefix exists in Neo-Khuzdul, it is *ma-*, a negative marker seen only in the word *maku* ‘no one’. Salo glosses the word as literally meaning ‘no who’, with *ma-* as a negating prefix and *ku* meaning ‘who’, as it does elsewhere in “Durin’s Song” (“Durin’s song: The rest”).

4.2 Syntax

It is in the syntax of Neo-Khuzdul that its status as a constructed language, created by an English speaker, becomes abundantly clear. I am inclined to place the reasons for this with Tolkien himself rather than Salo - the one complete sentence in Tolkien’s Khuzdul, *Khazâd ai-mênu* ‘the dwarves are upon you’, is in subject-verb-object (SVO) order, as is English. Salo uses SVO order in his work on Neo-Khuzdul, as is abundantly clear in the gloss of “Durin’s Song”. The main difference between the syntax of Neo-Khuzdul and English comes in the construction of the noun phrases; in English, adjectives precede the nouns they modify within the noun phrase, whereas in Neo-Khuzdul, they follow the nouns:

13. askad gabil

shadow great

‘A great shadow’

This is also seen in the funerary inscription discussed in (1) - in both cases where a genitive suffix is found, the noun it is attached to follows the noun it modifies.

Neo-Khuzdul lacks articles but has other determiners, as demonstrated by the existence of the word *tada* ‘that’ in (14):

14. *tada aklat gagin*

that sound again

‘That sound again!’

As demonstrated by (14)’s gloss, determiners in Neo-Khuzdul follow the same rules as they do in English.

With the exception of prepositional suffixes and the aforementioned noun-adjective order, it seems that syntactically, translating between Neo-Khuzdul and English is a simple word-by-word matter. I was initially disappointed to discover this, as Neo-Khuzdul is so morphologically complex and distinct from the language I was familiar with (namely English). Tolkien’s Khuzdul follows an SVO word order, but as there is only one complete verbal sentence in Khuzdul, it hardly seems as binding as certain other elements. In trying to puzzle out why Salo may have made this choice, I turned to his work on other Tolkienian languages, namely Sindarin. In his grammar on Sindarin, Salo notes that all verbal sentences follow a verb-initial order, with the exception of sentences with topicalization of the subject (Salo 2004: 204). This, then, may prove an answer as to why Neo-Khuzdul is an SVO language - Khuzdul is meant to be incredibly different from nearly all other languages of Middle-Earth, including all of the Elvish languages. Salo, therefore, may have chosen to abide by an SVO syntactic system in order to differentiate it from Sindarin, the most common Elvish language, at the expense of differentiating Neo-Khuzdul from the modern natural language of English.

4.3 Phonetics and Phonology

Salo's Neo-Khuzdul, by design, shares a near-exact phonetic system with Tolkien's Khuzdul. Salo provides a list of the sounds of Khuzdul, and by extension Neo-Khuzdul, which I have replicated in the charts below.

Consonants

b	t, t ^h , d	k, k ^h , g	ʔ
f	s, ʃ, z		h
m	n		
	r		
	l		

Table 3 (Salo, "Language Creation 101")

Vowels

î, î				u, û	
	e, ê		o (ô)		ai
		a, â			

Table 4 (Salo, "Language Creation 101")

All of the sounds represented above appear at least once in attested Khuzdul, and therefore were adopted into the phonetic system of Neo-Khuzdul in accordance with their frequency - /o/ appears in only one word, *Gabilgathol* 'Great Fortress', and Salo mentions that he avoided using

/o/ as much as possible, to reflect this tendency (“Language Creation 101”, Midgardsmal). The only difference is noted in parentheses in Table 4; a long /o/ appears in one verb ending in Neo-Khuzdul, but nowhere in Khuzdul.

There is evidence of some underlying phonology that differs from the above phonetic system. Salo, in his discussion of the word *îsh*, makes mention of one such change:

$$*w \rightarrow j / _V$$

From this, it seems that there is an underlying /w/ phoneme, which is replaced in Neo-Khuzdul with [j] when before a vowel; presumably it is replaced by other sounds in other environments, as there are no instances of [w] appearing in Neo-Khuzdul. Salo states that this change occurs “regularly”, and the example he uses is $*\textit{?AWAS}h \rightarrow * \textit{?AJAS}h$ (“Gimla ok Thorins bôlván”).

$$*j \rightarrow \emptyset / V_V$$

[j] sounds delete intervocalically in Neo-Khuzdul; the only example of such a sound is from a root, and is not present in the actual spoken version of the word. Therefore, it seems that [j] deletes between vowels. This is seen in $*\textit{?ijish} \rightarrow * \textit{?iish} \rightarrow \textit{îsh}$ ‘pour out, pour down, pour over’.

$$*p \rightarrow f$$

Another sound lacking in Neo-Khuzdul is [p]. Unlike the rule above, there is no concrete evidence that an underlying /p/ exists at all. The only indication is from Salo’s blog, when he discusses the formation of the Neo-Khuzdul word for ‘Elf’. He states that the earliest Elves the Dwarves would have met would have been “calling themselves some version of $*\textit{Pendi}$ ” (“Gimla

ok Thorins bōlvan”). As we can see in sentence (5), the word for ‘Elf’ has a root *FND*. Either [f] was used in place of a sound, [p], that had no place in the Dwarvish language, or the sound was originally [p] and changed over time to [f] - it is impossible to tell which is the case.

$$*V_1C \rightarrow *CV_1 / _V_1$$

$$*V_1V_1 \rightarrow V_1$$

The above two changes are unconfirmed by Salo - they come from my own observations of metathesis and coalescence, discussed above. It seems evident that, when a vowel-consonant cluster is followed by the same vowel, the cluster metathesizes to bring the vowels together. They then partially coalesce, leaving a vowel of the original quality and quantity.

$$*ʔ V_1V_1 \rightarrow \hat{V}_1$$

This rule is related to the one above, but provides a different second step. When the vowel-vowel cluster is preceded by a glottal stop, the glottal stop is absorbed into the coalescence and the resulting vowel is long. This can be seen in the word **ʔiyish* \rightarrow **ʔiish* \rightarrow *îsh* ‘pour out, pour down, pour over’.

$$*C_1C_2C_2V_1 \rightarrow C_1V_1C_2C_2V_1$$

In a three-consonant cluster where the final two consonants are the same, a vowel of the same quality and quantity of the following vowel is epenthesized between the first and second consonants to break up the cluster. This epenthesis can be seen in **tashrruki* \rightarrow *tashurruki* ‘surrounds’.

$*a\ u \rightarrow \hat{o}$

$*a\ i \rightarrow \hat{e}$

These changes are present in certain verb endings in Neo-Khuzdul. [a] and [u], when next to each other, coalesce into a long [o] sound; similarly, [a] and [i] – when not in a diphthong [ai] – coalesce into a long [e]. These make sense, as the resulting vowels are long, their quantities having been doubled, and their qualities are at the midpoint between the two original vowels. These can be seen in **zaraba-un* → *zarabôn* and **zaraba-in* → *zarabên* ‘they wrote (M/F)’.

5. CULTURE AND LANGUAGE

There are, I believe, many hints to Dwarvish culture hidden in the Dwarves' language, especially in how they use it. There are significantly more uses of Neo-Khuzdul in the movies than there are of Khuzdul in the books, but I believe they both contribute to an image of the Dwarves that is consistent between both forms of media.

Khuzdul in the books is used very sparingly. In written form, Khuzdul is only used on a funerary inscription that must have been made while the kingdom was under attack. With no other inscription of the type being extant, it is impossible to know whether tombs are usually marked in Khuzdul. If we assume the extant inscription is representative of its kind, however, we can draw from it a clue to how the Dwarves treat their language. The inscription is in Khuzdul, but with a translation in Westron, the Common Tongue. Clearly, it was more important to the Dwarves who crafted the tomb that any who came after the invasion was over should know who lay there, than ensuring that all Khuzdul remain without translation, and therefore unknown. Despite this, the deceased's name is in Mannish - his Khuzdul name is too secret to be revealed even in this extreme circumstance.

The mountain names revealed in Book II are revealed under another special circumstance. From context, it seems that Gimli has never been to Moria before this moment, and he treats it as a sacred event for him, full of meaning and memory, and it is just such an event that one could imagine Khuzdul being used to commemorate. He is also among those whom he has agreed to trust with his life; it may be that he felt it appropriate to trust them with these words as well.

Neo-Khuzdul seems to be used along the same lines, and paints a similar picture. Thorin's battle cry at the Battle of Azanulbizar, as well as his curse in the dungeons of Mirkwood, are uttered only among Dwarves, and his cry at Rivendell is directed at the Dwarves of his Company, not meant for the ears of nearby Elves. Thorin gives another battle cry at Bag End, but, as with Gimli, the non-Dwarves around him are those he means to bind to him by contract - furthermore, he offers no translation, rendering anything they may have registered essentially meaningless. In Book II, Gimli does offer translations of the mountain names, but again, that moment is sacred for him, where Bag End holds no such meaning for Thorin.

There is one more moment in the Hobbit movies released to date where a usage of Neo-Khuzdul offers insight into the culture of the Dwarves who use it - in the dungeons of Mirkwood, when Tauriel the Elf asks about Kili's runestone. Kili's initial response is to describe a terrible curse that will fall on all non-Dwarves who read the runes on his prayer talisman, before revealing that he does not mean it, and that it is just a token. However, he says that the power of the talisman depends on whether or not one believes in it, implying that there are some Dwarves, potentially including the one who gave him the talisman, who do believe in the curse. It would seem, then, that there are some Dwarves, potentially quite a large group, who believe in curses and cursed objects, with the magic carried in the language itself.

Overall, the impression given of Dwarves by both Khuzdul and Neo-Khuzdul is that of an intensely secretive, tight-knit community. They do not share any words of their language with outsiders, except in reverential situations or those where the non-Dwarves in question are closely bound with Dwarves, to the point where either would risk their life for the other. Outside of such situations, the Dwarvish language is kept so close that in certain situations, a non-Dwarf who reads it is at risk for repercussions outside even the Dwarves' control.

6. FURTHER RESEARCH

Above all, what is needed in order to continue analyzing Neo-Khuzdul is more data (I limit myself here in view of the virtual impossibility of obtaining more Khuzdul data, due to its creator's death). More scraps of data will no doubt come with the release of the third Hobbit film, but even then, it is unlikely to be anything substantial, merely more battle cries, curses, and small scraps of sentences. As Neo-Khuzdul is a constructed language, analysis of more substantial corpuses must wait upon the discretion of the filmmakers, and of David Salo. At such time as this data arrives, I would like to see a more in-depth syntactic analysis than I have been able to perform, to tease out any other differences between Neo-Khuzdul syntax and English syntax. I would also like to see examples of other morphological forms - more structures for nouns, more pronominal affixes, to create a fuller understanding of the system. There still remain inconsistencies in the verbal system, particularly in the imperatives, which defy explanation with the data we have – for example, the long vowel on the end of *ifridî* ‘ready’. There are also comparisons to be made between Neo-Khuzdul and the Semitic natural language family, in morphology, syntax, and phonology, which I was unable to perform due to time restrictions as well as lack of data. I would also like to see Neo-Khuzdul from a time long before *The Hobbit* is

set - Khuzdul is described as changing incredibly slowly, but it does change, and it is impossible to track these in-universe changes without data. All in all, what is needed for further study is quite simple - data, data, and more data.

Appendix A: Durin's Song - Gloss

Durin ku bin-amrad

Durin who lacking-death

‘Durin who is Deathless’

Ugmal sull-u addad

old.super all-gen father.pl.gen

‘Eldest of all Fathers’

Ku bakana

who wake.perf

‘Who awoke’

Ana aznân

to darkness

‘To darkness’

Undu abad

beneath mountain

‘Beneath the mountain’

Ku ganaga

who walk.perf

‘Who walked’

Tur ganâd aban-ul

through hall.pl stone-of

‘Through halls of stone’

Durin ku bin-amrad

Durin who lacking-death

‘Durin who is Deathless’

Uzbad Khazad-dûm-u

lord Dwarves.gen-mansion-of

‘Lord of Khazad-dum’

Ku baraka

Who cleave.perf

‘Who cleaved’

Aznân

darkness

‘The Dark’

ra karaka

and break.perf

‘And broke’

atkât

silence

‘The silence’

ala lukhud-izu

this light-2poss

‘This is your light’

ala galab-izu

this word-2poss

‘This is your word’

ala ukrat-izu
 this glory-2poss
 ‘This is your glory’

Khazad-dûm
 Dwarf.gen-mansion
 ‘Khazad-dum’

kilmîn thatur ni zâram kalil ra narag Kheled--zâram
 crown star.pl.gen in water cold and black Kheled-zâram
 ‘A crown of stars in the cold, black water of Kheled-zaram’

Durin ta-zlifi
 Durin imper-sleep
 ‘Durin sleeps’

Ubzar ni kâmin
 Deep.comp in earth
 ‘Deeper into the earth’

aznân ta-burrudi
 darkness imper-be.heavy.intensifier
 ‘The dark grows heavy’

iklal ta-nzifi bashuk-imâ
 cold imper-snap bone.pl-1pl
 ‘Cold snaps our bones’

Ubzar ni kâmin
 Deep.comp in earth
 ‘Deeper into the earth’

gilim san-zigil
 glint true-silver
 ‘The Mithril-glint’

shakar ra udlag
 sharp and far.comp
 ‘Sharp and far away’

Ubzar ni kâmin
 Deep.comp in earth
 ‘Deeper into the earth’

tada aklat gagin
 that sound again
 ‘That sound again’

ugrûd ta-shurruki-mâ
 fear imper-surround.intense-1pl
 ‘Dread surrounds us’

ma-ku ka-ta-kluti-mâ
 no-who can-imper-hear-1pl
 ‘Can no one hear us’

askad gabil
 shadow great
 ‘A great shadow’

ta-shfati ni aznân
 imper-move in darkness
 ‘Moves in the dark’

kâmin ta-kalladi

earth imper-shake.intense

‘The earth shakes’

ta-briki ta-karraki

imper-crack imper-split

‘Cracks, splits’

ma-ku za-ta-nsasi-mâ

no-who will-imper-save-1pl

‘Will no one save us’

urus urus ni buzra

fire fire in deep

‘Fire, fire in the deep’

arrâs ta-lbabi fillu-mâ

fire.pl imper-lick skin-1pl

‘Flames lick our skin’

ugrûd ta-shniki kurdu-mâ

fear imper-rip heart-1pl

‘Fear rips our heart’

lu lu lu urkhas ta-nakhi

no no no demon imper-come

‘No no no, the demon comes’

Appendix B: Abbreviations

Below is a table with all abbreviations used in line glosses, and their meanings.

ppart	past participle
per	person indicator
sing	singular
pl	plural
1	first person
2	second person
imp	imperative
imper	imperfect
perf	perfect
poss	possessive
def.obj	definite object marker
comp	comparative
sup	superlative
gen	genitive
M/F	masculine/feminine

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