

An introduction to the grammar of Sumerian

Gábor Zólyomi

with the collaboration of
Szilvia Jáka-Sövegjártó
and
Melinda Hagymássy

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Abbreviations in the morphemic glossings

~ reduplication	PT = preterite, or the marker of the preterite
~PL = reduplication expressing verbal plurality	RDP = reduplication
~PF = reduplication expressing present-future tense	S = subject (subject of an intransitive verb)
1 = first person	SG = singular
2 = second person	SUB = subordinator suffix
3 = third person	STM = standard marker
A = agent (subject of a transitive verb)	SYN = syncopated form of a verbal prefix
ABL= ablative case-marker or prefix	TL = tenseless
ABS = absolutive case-marker	TERM = terminative case-marker or prefix
ACC = accusative	TN = temple name
ADV = adverbial	VEN = ventive prefix
ANT = prefix of anteriority	
COM = comitative case-marker or prefix	
COOR = coordinator prefix	
COP = copula	
CVN = compound verb nominal element	
DAT = dative case-marker or prefix	
DEM = demonstrative pronoun	
DN = divine name	
ERG = ergative case-marker	
FIN = finite-marker prefix	
GEN = genitive case-marker	
GN = geographical name	
H = human	
L1 = locative1 case-marker or prefix	
L2 = locative2 case-marker or prefix	
L3 = locative3 case-marker or prefix	
L4 = the archaic locative enclitic =/ne/	
MID = middle prefix	
MOD = modal prefix	
NEG = negative particle	
NH = non-human	
NOM = nominative	
ORD = suffix that forms ordinal numbers	
P = patient (object of a transitive verb)	
PF = present-future, or the marker of the present-future	
PL = plural	
PR = pronoun	
PN = personal name	
POSS = possessive enclitic	

A short index of subjects

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Foreword

This textbook is the edited version of the teaching material used during my Sumerian classes. Its first version was prepared by Szilvia Jáka-Sövegjártó in 2012, while I was on sabbatical leave, and she kindly took over my classes. I am most grateful to Szilvia for her incentive, and also for her help in preparing this version, especially the first lesson of the book. I also thank to Melinda Hagymássy, who helped me in writing a number of the exercises and provided important feedback on earlier versions of this work.

This book is not intended to be a comprehensive grammar of Sumerian. For that purpose one should study Bram Jagersma's magnificent work (2010). My experience as a teacher has been that for students of Sumerian, it is intimidating and frustrating to have to face so much uncertainties and vagueness when starting to learn Sumerian. One simply cannot see the forest for the trees because of that. I remember my first year as a student, when I had to read the Cylinders of Gudea together with advanced students; it took me months to figure out the basics. I had to rely on perplexing reference books without any didactic intention.

The present book attempts to present the forest first. Problems and uncertainties are left out or are mentioned only in the *Further readings* sections, descriptions are shortened on purpose; it pretends that Sumerian is a language whose basic grammatical rules may be learnt during the fourteen or so weeks of a semester. It has been made on the assumption that after decades of grammatical research it has become possible now to teach a general framework of Sumerian grammar that may function as the basis of further, more intensive and elaborate studies.

Lesson 1: Introduction

Sumerian was spoken in the southern part of ancient Mesopotamia, an area which roughly corresponds to today's Iraq. The name of the language derives from its Akkadian name: *šumeru*. The Sumerian term was **eme-gir** which may mean "native tongue". Sumerian is a language isolate with no known ancient or modern relatives. It is an extinct language, and can be studied solely from written sources, which were recorded using the cuneiform script, a mixed logographic-phonographic writing system.

Sumerian is a mainly agglutinative language, characterised by split ergativity.¹ It has a system of grammatical gender based on the distinction between human and non-human referents. It is a verb final language, and the order of words preceding the verb is determined by the information structure of the sentence.

1.1 Sources

The first written documents, created most probably by Sumerian speaking people, are dated to the end of the 4th millennium BCE. These texts were recorded using a logographic writing, which could be read in any language, and thus are unsuitable for grammatical analysis. Therefore, the written sources of the Sumerian language come mainly from the 3rd and 2nd millennia BCE, but the language remained in use for religious and scholarly purposes as late as the 1st millennium BCE. The corpus of Sumerian texts from the 1st millennium, however, was definitely not produced by native speakers of the language and thus does not form a solid basis for the grammatical description of Sumerian.

The status of the 2nd millennium BCE texts is also ambiguous, as the most important corpus from this period is that of the literary compositions used as educational tools or in cultic praxis during the Old Babylonian period (ca. 2014-1595 BCE). The scribes are certainly no native speakers of Sumerian, and this results in erroneous transmission of the texts, at least compared to the 3rd millennium corpus. However, many morphological features of the language can first be noted during this period as a result of the excessive study of the language and reproduction of its written sources.

Descriptive grammars of the Sumerian language, for this reason, are based mainly on the corpus from the second half of the 3rd millennium. The preceding periods include the archaic texts from Ur (ca. 2800 BCE) and the Fara period (ca. 2600 BCE). Both corpora include several genres, administrative, legal, lexical and even literary texts. Their orthography is, however, defective and thus no appropriate object of grammatical research. The relevant corpora of Sumerian texts, which the present grammar is mainly based on, are as follows:

- Old Sumerian period (ca. 2470-2340 BCE)
- Old Akkadian period (ca. 2340-2200 BCE)
- Neo-Sumerian period
 - Lagash II period (ca. 2200-2113 BCE)
 - Ur III period (ca. 2112-2004 BCE)

¹ On split ergativity in Sumerian see Lesson 9, section 9.1 below.

The corpus of texts written in Sumerian is substantial both in its size and in its variety. The number of Sumerian texts must be over one hundred thousand, which include an immense quantity of economic and administrative documents, a large corpus of literary texts, lexical texts (word- and sign lists), royal and monumental inscriptions, letters, legal texts, mathematical texts, and even grammatical texts. Unfortunately only a very small portion of this relatively vast corpus may be used for the purpose of linguistic description, because about 90% of the written sources consist of administrative records.

1.2 Some features of the Sumerian writing system

The Sumerian script used in the second part of the 3rd millennium BCE is a mixed logographic-phonographic system. It includes two types of signs: logograms, i.e., word signs representing a word on the level of meaning; and phonograms representing a sequence of sounds.² Many signs may be used either as a logogram or a phonogram depending on the context.

If a logogram has more than one possible pronunciations, it may be accompanied by auxiliary signs. There are two types of such auxiliary signs. If the auxiliary sign functions as a logogram, it is called *determinative*, identifying the semantic class of the preceding or following sign. If it functions as a phonogram it is called phonetic complement, specifying the phonemic value of the preceding or following sign, repeating the word wholly or partially.

The development of the writing system just described was a long process. In the 4th millennium BCE the Sumerian writing system was purely logographic, the signs being depictions of the represented object or abstract symbols, primarily stemming from administrative conventions. The use of the existing logograms could be extended in two ways:

- i) semantic association: a logogram could get another pronunciation with a metaphorically or metonymically related meaning; or
- ii) phonemic association: a logogram could get a different meaning, when a newly associated word was pronounced similarly to the original one.

These innovations prevented the Sumerian writing system from introducing a new sign for every single word. Logograms could also be combined to gain new word signs. In some of these composite signs only the meaning of the constituent logograms counts, however, in some cases the reading of the signs was used as a phonemic indicator disambiguating the reading of the new, yet logographic construct. With the help of these techniques the number of signs remained limited to around 600.

The phonograms developed from logograms. The technique had already been discovered earlier: the reading of a logogram may be used to specify the reading of a composite sign. As the demand to put abstract grammatical morphemes into writing arose, some logograms with the appropriate phonemic values were chosen to denote such abstract morphemes. Though these signs were the first phonograms, they might be better described with the term

² This term is used by Jagersma (2010: 15) instead of the well-established term “syllabogram”. He points out that this term is more appropriate, since the rendering of phoneme sequences is intended and not that of syllables.

“grammograms” as signs with similar phonemic values were not applied freely, but rather, such functions were assigned to a limited set of signs. According to Jagersma, the choice of signs not only took their phonemic values of signs into consideration, but also additional features such as vowel length (Jagersma 2010: 24).

The Sumerian writing system retained a highly logographic character even in the 2nd millennium BCE, making it difficult for us to detect any phonemic or morphological changes within a word stem. Another difficulty from the point of view linguistic description is the phenomenon that “grammograms”, i.e., graphemes used to write grammatical morphemes, tend not to reflect changes in the form of the morphemes. The negative particle /**nu**/, for example, may change to /**la**/, when followed by the syllable /**ba**/, Yet it is apparently up to the scribe to decide whether to write the word in question using the phonogram pronounced as /**la**/, or with the grammogram used commonly to denote the negative particle, the sign **nu**-, irrespective of its actual pronunciation, see Lesson 16, section 16.1 below.

The same happens to the terminative case-marker =/**še**/, which may be written with the sign ŠE₃ (with the readings -**še**₃ or -**eš**₂) even when one is pretty sure that after an open syllable ending with /**a**/, it was probably reduced to only /**š**/, and one would consequently expect it to be written with the phonographic sign -**aš**₂.

The Sumerian writing system in the 3rd millennium BCE is an imperfect tool for the phonemic rendering of texts for yet another reason: syllable-final consonants were often ignored in the spelling of grammatical morphemes. The writing system simply lacked the appropriate signs to record closed syllables. The need to circumvent this inadequacy gave rise to two techniques. In Ebla a closed C₁VC₂ was spelled with an additional CV-sign, with the second sign repeating the vowel of the first one: C₁V-C₂V to be read as C₁VC₂. In Mesopotamia a set of VC-signs came into use at the end of the 3rd millennium BCE, mainly relying on CVC-signs originally starting with the phoneme /**ʾ**/, which was lost in almost all environments by the end of the millennium. Here a closed syllable was spelled as C₁V-VC₂, to be read as C₁VC₂. The use of this technique, however, remained optional, although it became increasingly regular in Sumerian texts until the beginning of the 2nd millennium BCE.

Also at the end of the 3rd millennium BCE a new method emerged for the representation of vowel length: plene-writings, i.e., the adding of an additional V-sign, to indicate a long vowel or vocal contraction. Although plene-writings occur in some contexts frequently and consistently, the method never became a norm to indicate a long vowel in writing.

1.3 Dialects

As every language, spoken Sumerian too must have had a number of different local and temporal varieties. We, however, know, the language only from written sources, and consequently most of these variations went lost forever. We have access only to a written, formal version of Sumerian whose traits and history may be very different from the traits and history of the vernacular. Yet, it is also possible that the traits of the local dialects are reflected in local scribal traditions in the Old Sumerian and Old Akkadian periods. During the second half of the 3rd millennium BCE two main traditions can be distinguished, the Northern (Nippur, Adab, Isin) and the Southern Sumerian (Lagash, Umma, Ur, Uruk) dialects.

In the Old Sumerian period only a handful of differences among the two dialects can be detected: the vowel harmony of the verbal prefixes in the southern cities (see Lesson 2 section 2.2. below), the use of the finite-marker prefix /a(l)/ in a passive sense in the north Babylonian cities (see Lesson 11, section 11.1. below), and the use of the comitative case in the function of the terminative in the 25th century, for example. During the Old Akkadian period most of these distinctive features disappear, only the distinctive passive markers are retained. Additionally a new dialectal difference emerges, namely the voiceless aspirated affricate /ts^h/ — the /dr/ phoneme in the earlier literature — becomes /r/ in Southern but /d/ in Northern Sumerian (see Lesson 2, section 2.1 below)

By the end of the 3rd millennium BCE, with the rise of the Ur III dynasty, the local traditions are not reflected in the written language any more. The Sumerian language was standardised in a form related to Southern Sumerian and this written variety also spread in the northern area of Sumer (cf. Drehem sources). The only place where texts with the features of the Northern dialect or with mixed features come from was Nippur. The proof that the standardisation of Sumerian only occurred on the level of the written language is provided by the Old Babylonian Sumerian which preserved many features of Northern Sumerian. As the centre of power moved to the north, this is also reflected in the formal, written language.

A unique variety of Sumerian which should also be mentioned here is a sociolect known under the Sumerian term **eme-sal** (meaning probably “fine tongue”). The **eme-sal** dialect is characterised by phonological alteration and by limited lexical substitution, that is, the morphological and syntactical rules of Sumerian remain intact, the difference only appears on the level of the phonology and the lexicon. The elements of the **eme-sal** dialect are usually mixed with standard Sumerian. It is not possible to know at what date or in which region **eme-sal** first emerged, but it is supposed to be a form of spoken Sumerian, specifically a women’s dialect. By the early 2nd millennium, the period in which it is first recorded in writing, the **eme-sal** dialect had already become restricted to certain religious and poetic genres and contexts, also including the literary representation of women’s speech.

1.4 The Sumerian-Akkadian bilingualism

Sumerian was only one of the main languages used by a multilingual society. The other major language was East-Semitic, and from about the 24th century onwards one of the dialects of East Semitic, Akkadian. Contact between the two languages is thought to have begun at least as early as the beginning of writing at the turn of the 4th to the 3rd millennium BCE. The presumably widespread bilingualism resulted in similarities between the two languages on the level of lexicon, phonology, morphology and syntax. Many of the shared features are already present in the languages when they become accessible to us in the middle of the 3rd millennium BCE. We cannot therefore know if the assumed shared traits are the result of the long-term language contact of a linguistic area or the result of unilateral diffusions with changing directions.

Whatever the relationship between the two languages in earlier times was, it is reasonable to assume that from about 24th century onwards Akkadian became the dominant language with a resulting asymmetrical bilingualism in which knowledge of Akkadian may have proved practical in more and more contexts. The reduction of Proto-Semitic gutturals in Akkadian at around this

time may point to a relatively large Sumerian speaking population changing to Akkadian, and in the subsequent centuries only interferences from Akkadian on Sumerian are attested and never the other way round. The dominance of Akkadian eventually led to the replacement of Sumerian by Akkadian as the vernacular. It can be assumed that by the end of the Old Babylonian period Sumerian was no longer acquired as a first language, and that already during the Old Babylonian period the majority of the users of written Sumerian were native speakers of Akkadian or other languages. The appearance of the long, sophisticatedly organised Akkadian–Sumerian verbal paradigms, the so called Old Babylonian Grammatical Texts (Black 1991), which analyse Sumerian in terms of Akkadian categories, also imply the second language status of Sumerian.

At the beginning of the 2nd millennium several genres, such as letters, legal records, administrative documents disappear gradually. Sumerian becomes restricted to more formal registers, like royal inscriptions (usually bilingual in Sumerian and Akkadian), and literary texts. After the Old Babylonian period Sumerian remained to be taught and learnt only for the purposes of the cultic, literary and scholarly tradition.

Starting from around the end of the 3rd millennium, Sumerian undergoes an Akkadization which must be connected with the change in its sociolinguistic status. Its sound system becomes more similar to that of Akkadian: e.g., voiceless consonants become voiced in most environments; /uj/ and /aj/ become monophthongized. Grammatical distinctions of Sumerian are no longer maintained consistently or are replaced as a result of a mismatch between Sumerian and Akkadian distinctions: e.g., human and non-human pronominal forms are often used erroneously; the use of the locative1, locative2, and locative3 cases becomes promiscuous. A number of structural interferences from Akkadian can be observed: e.g., the correspondence between case-markers and verbal prefixes disappear, and the nominal case-markers are influenced by the corresponding Akkadian idioms; Sumerian develops morphological causativity.

1.5 From cuneiform script to modern linguistic analysis

The mixed logographic-phonographic writing system reflects the morpho-phonological structure of Sumerian to varying extent in different periods. The morpho-phonological structure of Sumerian words must therefore be reconstructed by setting up correspondences between the sequence of graphemes and the sequence of morphemes. This interpretation is necessarily subjective to some extent, and reflects the grammatical model of the interpreter. The object of linguistic description, however, must be the reconstructed sequence of morphemes, and not that of graphemes.

It must be clear that one cannot even hope to recover the full complexity of the language. Its phonology, morphology, syntax, and usage can be reconstructed only incompletely and to varying extents from the linguistic evidence at our disposal. This short grammar attempts to describe what seem to be the most important characteristics of the language.

In order to overcome the difficulties caused by the writing system, all Sumerian examples used in this grammar will be presented in four lines: the first line represents the utterance in standard graphemic transliteration; the second, a segmentation into morphemes (reconstructed by interpreting the sequence of graphemes); the third, a morpheme-by-morpheme glossing; and the fourth, a

translation.³ In the graphemic transliteration subscript numerals distinguish homophonic graphemes, and superscript graphemes are semantic classifiers; graphemes that constitute a word are linked by hyphens; in the morphemic segmentation and in the glosses the sign “=” links enclitics to their hosts. Three special characters are used in transliterating Sumerian: **ŋ** (pronounced as the last consonant in *sing*), **h** (pronounced as the last consonant in *loch*), and **š** (as the first consonant in *ship*).

1.6 The linguistic study of Sumerian

When the cuneiform script was deciphered in the early 19th century, three languages written in cuneiform were discovered: Akkadian, Persian and Elamite. Only after understanding the Akkadian texts better did scholars become aware of the existence of texts written in another different language. The royal library in Nineveh provided a large number of bilingual sources, mainly lexical lists and literary texts with Akkadian translations which contributed to the decipherment of the Sumerian script and language.

The first systematic attempt at the linguistic description of Sumerian was realised by Arno Poebel in his *Grundzüge der sumerischen Grammatik* in 1923. His research was based on the written evidence available at the time. Adam Falkenstein’s two volume *Grammatik der Sprache Gudeas von Lagash*, published in 1949 and 1950, attempted to elaborate the grammar of a homogenous group of texts from the Lagash II period. In the following decades the written evidence of Sumerian increased and so did the need of a Sumerian grammar considering the recently published material. In 1984 Marie-Louise Thomsen published *The Sumerian Language*, a textbook still in use nowadays. The third edition published in 2001 has only an appendix with the literature published after 1984, but the main text is the same.

A further important publication is Pascal Attinger’s *Éléments de linguistique sumérienne* from 1993, a comprehensive study of the grammatical and semantic properties of a single verb, which however contains a long section describing the grammar of Sumerian (141–314). Joachim Krecher’s teaching material, *Zur Sumerischen Grammatik* (1998), became available online in 2015. Shorter grammars are Dietz Otto Edzard’s *Sumerian Grammar* (2003) and Daniel A. Foxvog’s online available *Introduction to Sumerian Grammar* (2016). Abraham H. Jagersma’s monumental PhD dissertation, *A Descriptive Grammar of Sumerian* (2010) is a detailed reference grammar of the language building on the scholarly debates of the past decades and summarising the present knowledge on the Sumerian language.

Shorter grammatical sketches of the language are Michalowski 2004, Rubio 2007, and Zólyomi 2007.

Unfortunately no modern Sumerian dictionary is available, making the learning of Sumerian even more challenging. The Pennsylvania Sumerian Dictionary (= PSD) project published only the letter A and B (Sjöberg et al. 1984–1998). The online version of the PSD covers all letters but is basically only a glossary (= ePSD, <http://psd.museum.upenn.edu/epsd1>). Daniel Foxvog’s *Elementary Sumerian Glossary* (2016b) is an extremely valuable reference work, and

³ The morphemic glossing follows the conventions of “The Leipzig Glossing rules” (<http://www.eva.mpg.de/lingua/resources/glossing-rules.php>).

the glossary and sign list in Volk's chrestomathy (Volk 2012) is also very useful for beginners.

One may also consult the "Leipzig-Münchner Sumerischer Zettelkasten" (http://www.assyriologie.uni-muenchen.de/forschung/woerterbucher_und_lexika/sumglossar/zettelkasten2006_09.pdf, last updated in 2006), "The Index to the Sumerian Secondary Literature" (<http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/issl>), and Pascal Attinger's "Lexique sumérien-français" (http://www.iaw.unibe.ch/unibe/portal/fak_historisch/dga/iaw/content/e39448/e99428/e122665/e122821/pane123080/e199038/Lexiquesumrien-franais.pdf), for information on the meaning of Sumerian words.

The most important signs lists are Borger 2003 and Mittermayer 2006.

Further readings and resources

A longer and more technical introduction to the study of Sumerian is Black and Zólyomi 2007 (an even longer version of this paper is available online at various places: <http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/edition2/pdf/diachronsum.pdf> or <http://www.hebraisztika.hu/attachments/00000129.pdf>). On Sumerians the most up-to-date summary is Cooper 2013 (available online at http://neareast.jhu.edu/pdf/jcooper/Sumer_Sumerisch_RLA_13_2012.pdf, which is in English in spite of its German title).

An essential paper on the context of the **eme-sal** sociolect of Sumerian is Cooper 2006.

Important contributions to the writing system used for recording Sumerian is Attinger 1993: 129–13, Jagersma 2010: 15–29, and Meyer-Laurin 2011. On various changes in the orthography at the end of the 3rd millennium BCE see Civil 2013.

On the history of Sumerian-Akkadian bilingualism the best paper to consult is Woods 2006. An important contribution is Sallaberger 2004, who discusses the death of Sumerian on the basis of the distribution of Sumerian and Akkadian personal names. Sallaberger 2011 is a case-study based on the Ur III archive of Garshana, with many important observations on Sumerian-Akkadian bilingualism.

Black 1991 remained to be the best work to start with for the so called grammatical texts.

In addition to the printed and often not easily accessible publications of Sumerian texts, there exist now a growing number of online corpora produced by scholars of cuneiform. The best place to start with is the homepage of the Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative project (= CDLI, <http://cdli.ucla.edu/>), which endeavours to register all cuneiform texts. It contains now more than 400.000 records, publishing copies and/or photos of inscribed objects and their transliterations. The other important project is The Open Richly Annotated Cuneiform Corpus (ORACC, <http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/>). It "comprises a workspace and toolkit for the development of a complete corpus of cuneiform whose rich annotation and open licensing are designed to support the next generation of scholarly research and online dissemination of data and findings" (Robson 2014: 143).

The Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Royal Incriptions project (= ETCSL, <http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/>) contains more than 400 Sumerian literary texts from

the Old Babylonian period in transliteration, English prose translations and bibliographical information for each composition.

The Database of Neo-Sumerian Texts (= BDTNS, <http://bdts.filol.csic.es>) is a relational database of around 100.000 administrative cuneiform tablets from the end of the 3rd millennium BCE.

The Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Royal Inscriptions (= ETCSRI, <http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/etcsri/>) is one of the ORACC sites; it is an annotated, grammatically and morphologically analyzed, transliterated, trilingual (Sumerian-English-Hungarian), parallel corpus of all Sumerian royal inscriptions.

A survey and assesment of all assyriological internet sites is provided by Charpin 2014.

For more details on the history of the linguistic study of the Sumerian language see now Marsal 2014 and 2015.

Lesson 2: Phonology

Sumerian is an extinct language without any known relatives. The reconstruction of its sound system must therefore rely entirely on written sources which were recorded using a mixed logographic-phonographic writing system. The interpretation and transliteration of this writing system is eventually based on our understanding of Akkadian phonology. Additional evidence is provided, for example, by the behaviour of loanwords, by glosses in syllabaries and vocabularies, by spelling variants of the same word, by the ancient names of cuneiform signs, and by Greek spellings of Sumerian and Akkadian words from the Hellenistic period. Needless to say, the reconstruction of the Sumerian sound system will always involve a certain degree of conjecture.

2.1 The consonants

The transliteration system used for Sumerian is based on its sound system in the 2nd millennium BCE, which differs significantly from the sound system of the 3rd millennium, and whose reconstruction itself is based on a by now partly overhauled understanding of Akkadian phonology. In Table 2.1 below each consonant is represented in square brackets by their reconstructed pronunciation in the 3rd millennium (using the symbols of the International Phonetic Alphabet), followed in curly brackets by the letter with which they are normally transliterated, called graphonemes.

Graphonemes are phonemic units distinguished by the writing system. Their values ultimately reflect their use in an Akkadian context and depend on our understanding of Akkadian phonetics.

One may ask if it were not better to use different systems for transliterating Sumerian texts from different periods. One could argue, for example, that the verbal form **mu-na-du₃** should be transliterated as **mu-na-ts^hu** if it occurs in an inscription of Ur-Nanshe from the 25th c. BCE. There are a number of arguments against such a proposal. First, this would entail that any time a new proposal about the pronunciation of Sumerian is made and accepted, the transliteration system would be changed. Second, we simply cannot know when exactly the assumed changes happened. Third, this would be against the spirit of the writing system used for Sumerian, which even in the later periods made great use of word signs that encoded the language on the level of the meaning and not on the level of its pronunciation. One therefore has to accept that the transliteration system we use may not reflect the actual pronunciation of a word, and is based on readings of the cuneiform signs in the first part of the 2nd millennium BCE. In a way the graphonemes may be considered to function like variables in mathematics, their value depending on the period and place where a text comes from.

Consonants which went lost during the 3rd millennium BCE, and are therefore usually ignored in the transliteration, are marked with {-}; vl. = voiceless, asp. = aspirated in Table 2.1. In the descriptions below phonemes are enclosed by forward slashes.

	STOPS		AFFRICATES		FRICATIVES	APPROXIMANTS	NASALS
	vl.	vl. asp.	vl.	vl. asp			
BILABIAL	[p] {b}	[p ^h] {p}					[m] {m}
DENTAL OR ALVEOLAR	[t] {d}	[t ^h] {t}	[ts] {z}	[ts ^h] {d}, {r}, or {-}	[s] {s}	[r] {r}	[n] {n}
LATERAL						[l] {l}	
PALATAL					[ʃ] {ʃ}	[j] {-}	
VELAR	[k] {g}	[k ^h] {k}			[x] {h}		[ŋ] {ŋ}
GLOTTAL	[ʔ] {-}				[h] {-}		

Table 2.1: The Sumerian consonants in the 3rd millennium BCE

Stops (except for the glottal stop) and affricates had two series in the 3rd millennium BCE. Both were pronounced voiceless, their distinctive feature being aspiration. Around the 2000 BCE, the plain voiceless stops underwent sound change: they became voiced in most environments. The aspirated voiceless stops retained their old pronunciation. At the same time the plain voiceless affricate ([ts]) underwent the same change as the plain voiceless stops: it became a voiced affricate ([dz]) in most environments. The voiceless aspirated affricate ([ts^h]) disappeared from the language by the end of the 3rd millennium: it merged with [r] or [t] before a vowel, while it was lost word-finally and before a consonant.

A phoneme /h/ can be reconstructed only in a couple of words, like */haj/ “house” (later *e*₂ = /e/) or /hit/ “river” (later *id*₂ = /id/). Both this phoneme and the glottal stop /ʔ/ were lost during the second half of the 3rd millennium BCE. The phoneme /j/ gradually disappeared by around 2000 BCE, syllable final /uj/ and /aj/ became /ū/ and /ē/ respectively (e.g., */aj/ “water” > */ē/).

Note that the consonant transliterated with the graphoneme {r} was a tap [r], a consonant produced with a very short closure, and not a trill. The voiceless aspirated affricate ([ts^h]) appears in the earlier literature as the /dr/-phoneme.

2.2 Vowels and vowel harmonies

The writing system indicates the existence of four vowels. Vowel length was probably phonemic but as the writing system did not indicate vowel length systematically, this assumption is partly based on circumstantial evidence like, e.g., Sumerian loanwords into Akkadian.

	FRONT	BACK
HIGH	{i}	{u}
LOW	{e}	{a}

Table 2.2: The vowels

The assimilation of certain verbal prefixes containing the graphoneme {i} or {e} in respect of vowel height to the vowel of the following syllable, the so-called “Old Sumerian vowel harmony” was an isogloss dividing cities in southern Babylonia (Lagash, Umma, Ur and Uruk, which exhibit the assimilation) from cities further north in Babylonia (Nippur, Adab, Shuruppak and Isin) in the 25th–23rd centuries BCE. In subsequent centuries the assimilation disappeared.

The following prefixes take part in this vowel assimilation:

— The finite marker /i/ (see Lesson 11, section 11.1 below). The graphoneme {e} is written with the sign E as in exx. (1), (3), and (9) below; the graphoneme {i} is written with the sign NI (= i₃) as in exx. (2), (4), (10) below.

(1) En-metena 1 3:4 (RIME 1.9.5.1) (Lagash, 25th c.) (Q001103)⁴

e-ma-ta-bala

{S2}i-{S4}m-_{S5}ba-_{S9}ta-_{S10}e-_{S11}bala-_{S14}∅
FIN-VEN-MID-ABL-L2-cross-3.SG.S

(2) DP 218 rev. 4:2 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P220868)⁵

i₃-tud-da-a

{S2}i-{S11}n-_{S12}tud-_{S14}∅-_{S15}'a-'a
FIN-3.SG.H.A-bear-3.SG.P-SUB-L1

— The ventive prefix followed by a 3rd ps. sg. non-human composite locative₂ or locative₃ prefix (see Lesson 14, section 14.3 and 14.4). The graphoneme {e} is written with the sign ME as in ex. (3) below; the graphoneme {i} is written with the sign MI as in ex. (4) below.

(3) En-metena 1 2:5 (RIME 1.9.5.1) (Lagash, 25th c.) (Q001103)

e-me-sar-sar

{S1}i-{S4}m-_{S5}b-_{S10}i-_{S11}n-_{S12}sar~sar-_{S14}∅
FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-L2-3.SG.H.A-write~PL-3.SG.P

(4) En-metena 23 29–30 (RIME 1.9.5.23) (Lagash, 25th c.) (P222530)

i₃-mi-dug₄-dug₄

{S2}i-{S4}m-_{S5}b-_{S10}i-_{S11}n-_{S12}dug~dug-_{S14}∅
FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-L3-3.SG.H.A-do~PL-3.SG.P

— The 3rd ps. sg. non-human composite locative₂ or locative₃ prefix (see Lesson 14, section 14.3 and 14.4 below). The graphoneme {e} is written with the sign BI (= be₂) as in ex. (5) below; the graphoneme {i} is written with the sign NE (= bi₂) as in ex. (6) below.

(5) Iri-kagina 1 4:8 (RIME 1.9.9.1) (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222607)

be₂-ḡar-re₂-eš

{S5}b-{S10}i-_{S11}n-_{S12}ḡar-_{S14}eš
3.SG.NH-L2-3.SG.H.A-place-3.PL

(6) En-metena 1 2:8 (RIME 1.9.5.1) (Lagash, 25th c.) (Q001103)

bi₂-gi₄

{S5}b-{S10}i-_{S11}n-_{S12}gi-_{S14}∅
3.SG.NH-L3-3.SG.H.A-return-3.SG.P

⁴ Q-numbers and P-numbers refer to the catalogue-numbers of the Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative Project (<http://www.cdli.ucla.edu>). Q-numbers refer to compositions, P-numbers to manuscripts. In the morphemic segmentation of the finite verbal forms subscript “S + number” refers to the verbal slots discussed in detail in Lesson 6 below.

⁵ Abbreviations follow the conventions of the Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative (http://cdli.ox.ac.uk/wiki/abbreviations_for_assyriology).

— The terminative prefix (see Lesson 13, section 13.2 below). The graphoneme {e} is written with the sign ŠE₃ as in ex. (7) below; the graphoneme {i} is written with the sign ŠI as in ex. (8) below.

(7) En-ana-tum I 5 4:8 (RIME 1.9.4.5) (Lagash, 25th c.) (Q001103)

he₂-na-še₃-ṛjal₂

{S1}ha-{S2}i-_{S6}nn-_{S7}a-_{S9}ši-_{S11}n-_{S12}ṛjal-_{S14}Ø

MOD-FIN-3.SG.H-DAT-TERM-3.SG.H.A-exist-3.SG.P

(8) En-metena 1 6:8 (RIME 1.9.5.1) (Lagash, 25th c.) (Q001103)

he₂-na-ši-gub

{S1}ha-{S2}i-_{S6}nn-_{S7}a-_{S9}ši-_{S12}gub-_{S14}Ø

MOD-FIN-3.SG.H-DAT-TERM-stand-3.SG.S

—The locative₁, and 3rd ps. sg. human composite locative₂ or locative₃ prefix (see Lesson 14, section 14.2, 14.3 and 14.4 below). The graphoneme {e} is written with the sign NI (= ne₂) as in ex. (9) below; the graphoneme {i} is written also with the sign NI as in ex. (10) below.⁶

(9) En-metena 23 18 (RIME 1.9.5.23) (Lagash, 25th c.) (P222530)

e-ne₂-pad₃-da-a

{S2}i-{S6}nn-_{S10}i-_{S11}n-_{S12}pad-_{S14}Ø-_{S15}'a-'a

FIN-3.SG.H-L2-3.SG.H.A-find-3.SG.P-SUB-L1

(10) DP 103 rev. 2:1 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P220753)

i₃-ni-gi₄

{S2}i-{S6}nn-_{S10}i-_{S11}n-_{S12}gi-_{S14}Ø

FIN-3.SG.H-L2-3.SG.H.A-return-3.SG.P

The signs used to write the graphoneme {i} remained in use after the vowel harmony disappeared.

On the basis of the writing system used to record Sumerian in the first part of the 2nd millennium BCE, Sumerian appears to have only four vowels; i.e., the writing system distinguishes four vowels, see Table 2.2 above. There exist, however, data which suggest that the writing system used in the 2nd millennium BCE may not have reflected the number of vowels in the middle of the 3rd millennium BCE adequately.

Table 2.3 below shows the correspondences between the vowel of the verbal prefixes and the vowel of the stems as reflected in our transliteration system in texts from around the middle of the 3rd millennium BCE from places which exhibit vowel harmony. It is based on data collected by Keetman (2014: 144–149). The table shows, for example, that all the verbal stems transliterated with the graphoneme {a}, e.g., **ṛjar** “to place”, or **ak** “to act”, occur with a “low” version of the verbal prefix, which undergoes vowel assimilation.

⁶ Note that both the “high” and the “low” forms were written with the same grapheme, but it is assumed in this textbook that the “high” and the “low” forms were pronounced differently.

prefix / stem	{i}	{u}	{e}	{a}
{i}	8	31	6	0
{e}	0	9	4	27

Table 2.3: Correspondences of verbal prefixes and verbal bases

The problem occurs with the stems transliterated with **{u}** or **{e}** graphonemes. Some of them occur with the “low”, some with “high” prefixes. The data in Table 2.3 suggests that the vowels written as **{u}** and **{e}** might have had a high and low variant in Sumerian, making the number of vowels 6, a suggestion already put forward by Poebel (1931: 6). Keetman (2005) goes further and he does not consider it impossible that the Sumerian vowel system consists of 7 or 9 vowels.

Table 2.4 below shows a possible interpretation of Poebel’s suggestion, using the symbols of the International Phonetic Alphabet. It shows that, for example, the graphoneme **{u}** may correspond in fact both to a low back vowel [ɔ] and a high back vowel [u].

	Prefix	Verbal stem
Low	{e} = [ɛ] or [æ]	{a} = [a]
		{e} or {a} = [ɛ] or [æ]
		{u} = [ɔ]
High	{i} = [i]	{e} = [e]
		{i} = [i]
		{u} = [u]

Table 2.4: The assumed two classes of vowels in respect of height

Vowel harmony — the agreement among vowels in successive syllables in respect to one or more features — is also attested among the vowels of a word stem in Sumerian. In particular, in polysyllabic Sumerian words the vowels of the syllables often appear to be the same, i.e., they are transliterated with the same graphoneme, e.g., **zalaḡ** “to be bright”, **saḥar** “dust”, **ḡiri3** “foot”, **ḡibil** “to be new”, **tukul** “weapon”, **sukud** “height”.

The phenomenon is also attested with loan words, with the advantage that the original form of the word is also known, e.g., **gada** < Akk. *kitûm* “linen”, **libir** < Akk. *lab(ir)um* “to be old”, **niḡir** < Akk. *nāgirum* “herald”, **silim** < Akk. *šal(i)mum* “to be healthy”.

There also exist words which are attested both in forms with two similar and with two different vowels: **a-ḡu3** vs. **uḡu** “skull”, **a-ne** vs. **e-ne** “he”, **ḡa-luḡ** vs. **hu-luḡ** “to be afraid”, **u3-šub** vs. **i3-šub** “brick-mold”.

The last two groups of the words involved suggest that it is the vowel of the first syllable that assimilates to the vowel of the second one, which may well be due to the stress on the last syllable of the words, see the next subsection.

2.3 Syllable structure and stress

Sumerian syllables may have the structure CV, (VC), or CVC. It is likely that before the glottal stop /ʔ/ was lost, all words began with a consonant and consequently

VC type syllables did not exist. Word initial consonant clusters were not tolerated.

Sumerian had a stress-accent, and Sumerian words were probably stressed on the last syllable.

Further readings

The best systematic treatment of Sumerian phonology is without doubt Jagersma's chapter on phonology in his grammar (2010: 31–67). He not only discusses the phonemes in detail but also the methodology with which the sound system of an extinct and unrelated language recorded with a mixed logographic-phonographic writing system may be recovered.

There are a number of papers on the vowel harmony of the verbal prefixes. Poebel 1931 and Kramer 1936 are still worth reading. Krispijn 2000 discusses the phenomenon in its historical context. The two latest contributions, Keetman 2005, 2014 and Smith 2007, are important but are not for the light-hearted. The vowel harmony within the word stems is discussed in detail in Keetman 2014.

The classical study on the phoneme /**ŋ**/ is Krecher 1978. Keetman 2004 is an important contribution on the distinctive features of stops and affricates in Sumerian. The Greek spellings of Sumerian and Akkadian words from the Hellenistic period are discussed in Maul 1991. On the various proposals concerning alleged “extra” phonemes, phonemes concealed by the writing system, see Black 1990.

Exercises

- 2.1 Consider the data below on the correspondences between stops in Sumerian and Akkadian in loanwords. Then fill out Table 3.5, mark the feature that applies to the group of graphonemes in the left with a “+”. Try to explain on the basis of the features why Akkadian borrowed the Sumerian words the way it did.

Sumerian	voice	aspiration	emphatic
{b}, {d}, {g}			
{p}, {t}, {k}			

Akkadian	voice	aspiration	emphatic
{b}, {d}, {g}			
{p}, {t}, {k}			
{t̪}, {q}			

Table 3.5

3rd millennium

Sumerian {b}, {d}, {g} correspond to voiceless graphonemes in Akkadian

e ₂ -gal	→	ekallum	“palace”
kiri ₃ -dab ₅	→	kartappum	“groom”
nu-banda ₃	→	laputtûm	“overseer”
barag	→	parakkum	“dais”
gada	→	kitûm	“linen”
dug ₃ -gan	→	tukkannum	“bag”
u ₂ -dug ₄	→	utukkum	“demon”
gu-za	→	kussûm	“throne”

Sumerian {p}, {t}, {k} correspond to voiceless graphonemes in Akkadian

pisaṇ	→	<i>pišannum</i>	“basket”
temen	→	<i>temennum</i>	“foundation”
ensi ₂	→	<i>išši’akkum</i>	“ruler”
kiri ₃ -dab ₅	→	<i>kartappum</i>	“groom”
kar	→	<i>kārum</i>	“quay”
sukkal	→	<i>šukkalum</i>	“messenger”
ṇiš-kin ₂	→	<i>kiškanûm</i>	“(a tree)”

Akkadian {p}, {t}, {k} correspond to voiced graphonemes in Sumerian

<i>puršumum</i>	→	bur-šu-ma	“old person”
<i>aplum</i>	→	i ₃ -bi ₂ -la	“heir”
<i>šāpirum</i>	→	šabra	“administrator”
<i>šimtum</i>	→	si-im-da	“mark”
<i>mātum</i>	→	ma-da	“country”
<i>tamkārum</i>	→	dam-gar ₃	“merchand”
<i>milkum</i>	→	ma-al-ga	“counsel”
<i>maškānum</i>	→	maš-gana ₂	“settlement”
<i>šākinum</i>	→	šagina	“general”
<i>rākibum</i>	→	ra-gaba	“rider”

Akkadian {b}, {d}, {g} and {t}, {q} correspond to voiced graphonemes in Sumerian

<i>labirum</i>	→	libir	“old”
<i>ṭēmum</i>	→	dim ₂ -ma	“decision”
<i>mašṭarum</i>	→	maš-dara ₃	“inscription”
<i>nāqidum</i>	→	na-gada	“shepherd”

2.2 Consider the data below. Try to explain the form of the Sumerian loanwords in Akkadian on the basis of what you have learnt about stress in Sumerian in this lesson; for the rules of stress in Akkadian, see Huehnergard 1997: 3–4 (1.3).

a) Sumerian words with a final consonant, preceded by a short vowel:

al → <i>allu</i> “hoe”	gag → <i>kakku</i> “nail”
gal → <i>kallu</i> “bowl”	ub ₃ → <i>uppu</i> “drum”
duḥ → <i>tuhḥu</i> “waste”	dub → <i>ṭuppu</i> “tablet”
us ₂ → <i>uššu</i> “foundation”	kid → <i>kittu</i> “reed-mat”
ma ₂ -gur ₈ → <i>makurru</i> “ship”	barag → <i>parakku</i> “dais”
ku ₃ -dim ₂ → <i>kutimmu</i> “silversmith”	dub-šen → <i>tupšinnu</i> “treasury box”
bisaṇ → <i>pišannu</i> “basket”	šum ₂ -siki → <i>šamaškillu</i> “onion”
muḥaldim → <i>muḥatimmu</i> “cook”	apin → <i>epinnu</i> “plough”
mar → <i>marru</i> “shovel”	bukin → <i>bukinnu</i> “through”

b) Sumerian words with a final consonant, preceded by a long vowel:

nar → <i>nāru</i> “singer”	an → <i>ānu</i> “sky”
en → <i>ēnu</i> “high priest”	eg ₂ → <i>iku</i> “dike”
kar → <i>kāru</i> “quay”	gir ₄ → <i>kīru</i> “oven”
ambar → <i>appāru</i> “marsh”	ur-saṇ → <i>uršānu</i> “hero”
banšur → <i>paššūru</i> “table”	bur-zid → <i>pursītu</i> “bowl”

gala-maḥ → kalamāḥu “chief lamentation
priest”

2.3 Which of the listed stems would be used with the verbal prefixes in periods and places that exhibit vowel harmony?

- a) {še} (TERM): tud, gi₄, ŋal₂, šug, pad₃
- b) {mi} (VEN-3NH-LOC2/3): gi₄, gur, sar, bala, tud
- c) {ne} (LOC1-3): dug₄, ŋal₂, du₃, gi₄, tar, gul
- d) {i} (FIN): dim₂, tuš, gi₄, sa, sig

Lesson 3: The nominal template and the non-adverbial cases

This lesson describes the general structure of the Sumerian noun phrase. In the second part of the lesson the two adnominal cases of the language, the main characteristics of the genitive and the equative are discussed.

3.1 The nominal template

The Sumerian noun phrase consists of five structural positions, see Table 3.1 below. P1 and P2 may be occupied by a variety of structural units. P3 may be filled either with a noun phrase in the genitive or with an enclitic possessive pronoun. The possessive pronoun in P3 and the elements occurring in P4 and P5 are enclitics, i.e., affixes being added to phrases but not to lexical heads.

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
HEAD	MODIFIER	POSSESSOR	PLURAL-MARKER	CASE-MARKER

Table 3.1: The Sumerian nominal template

In ex. (11) the human dative case-marker attaches directly to the head of the noun phrase. In ex. (12), however, it follows the genitive case-marker of the noun phrase in P3.

(11) Gudea Statue B 7:24 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P232275)

^dnin-_{nir2}-su-ra

{P1}nin{nir}suk=_{P5}ra

{P1}DN={P5}DAT.H

“for (the god) Ningirsu”

(12) Ur-Bau 1 3 (RIME 3/1.6.1) (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P231808)

dumu an-na-ra

_{P1}dumu _{P3}[_{P1}an=_{P5}ak]=_{P5}ra

_{P1}child _{P3}[_{P1}DN=_{P5}GEN]=_{P5}DAT.H

“for the child of (the god) An”

The noun phrase occupying P3 may have elements in up to four of its five positions, and then there may be four structural units between the head (P1) and the case-marker (P5) of the main noun phrase as in ex. (13) below.

(13) CUSAS 17, 13 3:8 (unknown, cca. 23th c.) (P251599)

nam-til₃ šeš-a-ne-ne

_{P1}namtil _{P3}[_{P1}šeš=_{P3}ane=_{P4}enē=_{P5}ak]=_{P5}Ø

life _{P3}[_{P1}brother=_{P3}3.SG.H.POSS=_{P4}PL=_{P5}GEN]=_{P5}ABS

“the well-being of his brothers”

In exx. (14) and (15) below, the noun phrase occupying P3 contains yet another noun phrase in its P3. In ex. (15) the embedded noun phrase is an appositional construction.

(14) Iri-kagina 1 3:18 (RIME 1.9.9.1) (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222607)

sipad udu siki-ka-ke₄-ne
_{P1}sipad _{P3}[_{P1}udu _{P3}[_{P1}siki=_{P5}ak]=_{P5}ak]=_{P4}enē=_{P5}e
_{P1}shepherd _{P3}[_{P1}sheep _{P3}[_{P1}wool=_{P5}GEN]=_{P5}GEN]=_{P4}PL=_{P5}ERG
 “the shepherds of sheep of wool (= wool-bearing sheep)”

(15) Shulgi 2046 1'-3' (RIME 3/2.1.2.2046) (Ur, 21st c.) (P226193)

nam-til₃ ^dšul-gi diŋir kalam-ma-na-ka-še₃
_{P1}namtil _{P3}[_{P1}šulgir _{P1}diŋir _{P3}[_{P1}kalam=_{P3}ane=_{P5}ak]=_{P5}ak]=_{P5}še
_{P1}life _{P3}[_{P1}PN _{P1}god _{P3}[_{P1}land=_{P3}3.SG.H.POSS=_{P5}GEN]=_{P5}GEN]=_{P5}TERM
 “for the well-being of Shulgi, the protective god of his land”

As the elements in P4, P5, and the possessive pronoun in P3 are enclitics attaching to the final word-level constituent of the noun phrase, all these elements cumulate at the right end of the phrase in simple and double genitive constructions like in exx. (13), (14), and (15).

P1 may be occupied by simple nouns, compound nouns, pronouns, non-finite verbal forms, and clauses with subordinate finite verbal forms. P2 may be occupied by non-finite verbal forms, relative clauses, noun phrases in the genitive case (see Lesson 4, section 4.1), noun phrases in the ablative case (see Lesson 13, section 13.1), cardinal numbers, and demonstrative pronouns. A noun phrase may have more than one modifiers. P3 may be filled either with a noun phrase in the genitive case or with an enclitic possessive pronoun, see table 3.2. below. The enclitic possessive pronoun is therefore a pronoun that stands for a noun phrase in the genitive case. Note that the 3rd ps. sg. non-human enclitic **/be/** may also be used with a plural reference.

	1ST PERSON	2ND PERSON	3RD PERSON
SG	-ŋu ₁₀ (= /ŋu/)	-zu (= /zu/)	h. -(a)-ne ₂ (= /ane/) nh. -be ₂ (= /be/)
PL	-me (= /mē/)	-zu-ne-ne (= /zunenē/)	-(a)-ne ₂ -ne (= /anenē/)

Table 3.2: The enclitic possessive pronouns

P4 may be filled only with the plural-marker **/enē/**. This enclitic is used only with noun phrases whose head belongs to the human class, but its use is not obligatory. The exact conditions of its use are unclear. Its meaning may involve individualising. The plural marker is not used with human head nouns modified with numerals or functioning as the subject of a copular clause. The plurality of noun phrases whose head belongs to the non-human class is usually not overtly marked.

Both human and non-human head nouns may undergo full reduplication; human head nouns with the plural marker may also be reduplicated, see ex. (16) below. The function of this morphological process is certainly to mark some sort of plurality; its exact meaning is, however, unclear, but often involves a notion of totality, as in ex. (16) below:

(16) En-metena 1 1:1–3 (RIME 1.9.5.1) (Lagash, 25th c.) (Q001103)

^den-lil₂, lugal kur-kur-ra,
_{P1}enlil _{P1}lugal _{P3}[_{P1}kur~kur=_{P5}ak]
_{P1}DN _{P1}king _{P3}[_{P1}land~PL=_{P5}GEN]
ab-ba diŋir-diŋir-re₂-ne-ke₄
_{P1}abba _{P3}[_{P1}diŋir~diŋir=_{P4}enē=_{P5}ak]=_{P5}e
_{P1}father _{P3}[_{P1}god~PL=_{P4}PL=_{P5}GEN]=_{P5}ERG
“Enlil, the king of all lands, the father of all gods”

The nominal slot P5 accommodates the case-markers. Nine enclitic case-markers may be distinguished in Sumerian: =/ø/, =/e/, =/(¹)a/, =/ra/, =/ta/, =/da/, =/še/, =/ak/, =/gen/. The case-markers are enclitics that function to distinguish cases. In Sumerian cases are distinguished, however, not solely by nominal case-markers, the verbal affixes also play an essential role in the identification of cases. Three of the nominal case-markers (=/ra/, =/(¹)a/, and =/e/), and one of the verbal affixes (/i/ in S10) are used as markers of more than one case. On the basis of correspondences between nominal case-markers and verbal affixes eleven cases can be distinguished in Sumerian:

CASE	NOMINAL CASE-MARKER		VERBAL AFFIX
	human	non-human	
ergative	=/e/	=/e/	final pronominal prefix (S11) ⁷ and pronominal suffix (S14)
absolutive	=/ø/	=/ø/	final pronominal prefix (S11) and pronominal suffix (S14)
adverbial cases			
dative	=/ra/	=/e/	/a/ (S7)
comitative	=/da/	=/da/	/da/ (S8)
ablative	—	=/ta/	/ta/ (S9)
terminative	=/še/	=/še/	/ši/ (S9)
locative1	—	=/(¹)a/	/ni/ (S10)
locative2	=/ra/	=/(¹)a/	/i/ or /e/ (S10)
locative3	=/ra/	=/e/	/i/ or /e/ (S10)
adnominal cases			
genitive	=/ak/	=/ak/	—
equative	=/gen/	=/gen/	—

Table 3.3: The Sumerian case-system

The twelve cases may be classified into three groups: i) ergative and absolutive, encoders of Agent, Subject and Patient, the primary syntactic functions; ii) adverbial cases; iii) adnominal cases. The uses of the adverbial cases will be discussed in detail in Lessons 12–14 below. The absolutive, the ergative, and the adnominal cases are discussed in the second part of this lesson.

⁷ Verbal structural positions will be referred to as “slots” (= S) throughout this book to distinguish them from the structural positions of the noun phrase, referred to as “positions” (= P).

A number of scholars assume the existence of an adverbial case. Instead of the adverbial case — which signals a grammatical relationship between two words — this textbook proposes a derivative morpheme, which turns an expression into an adverb of manner. It will be discussed in Lesson 5, section 5.2.

3.2 The ergative and the absolutive case

The ergative and the absolutive denote the Agent, the Subject, and the Patient, the three primary syntactic functions. The ergative case-marker is the enclitic $=/e/$; the absolutive case is signalled with the lack of any case-marker, i.e., with a so-called null-morpheme, indicated in the morphemic glosses of this textbook as $=/\emptyset/$.

In ex. (17) below the subject of the transitive verb, the Agent (henceforth, A), is in the ergative case. The object of the transitive verb, the Patient (henceforth, P), is in the absolutive.

(17) Gudea Cyl. A 22:9 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

ensi-ke₄ e₂ mu-du₃
{p1}ensik={p5}e _{p1}e=_{p5}∅ _{s4}mu-_{s11}n-_{s12}du-_{s14}∅
{p1}ruler={p5}ERG _{p1}house=_{p5}ABS VEN-3.SG.H.A.-build-3.SG.P
 “The ruler has built the temple.”

In addition to P, the absolutive may also denote the Subject (henceforth, S), the subject of an intransitive verb. In ex. (18) below, the subject of the intransitive verb **kur** “to enter”, the god Nin-gešzida, is in the absolutive case.

(18) Gudea Statue E 8:11–15 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232278)

dijir-ra-ne₂ ^dnin-geš-zid-da ... mu-na-da-kur₉-kur₉
{p1}dijir={p3}ane _{p1}ningešzidak=_{p5}∅ _{s4}mu-_{s6}nn-_{s7}a-_{s8}da-_{s10}n-_{s12}kur~kur-_{s14}∅
{p1}god={p3}3.SG.H.POSS _{p1}DN=_{p5}ABS VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-COM-L1.SYN-enter~PL-3.SG.S
 “His (= Gudea’s) personal god, Nin-gešzida, entered (with these gifts to Bau into her temple in Iri-kug).”

The absolutive case may thus encode both S and P, while the ergative encodes the A. Languages in which A is encoded with a case different from the one that encodes both S and P are called ergative. Ergative languages are distinguished from accusative languages in which it is the A and S that are encoded similarly with a case called nominative case, while the P is encoded with a different case called accusative. Table 3.1 below illustrates the difference between ergative and accusative languages:

	A	S	P
ERGATIVE	ergative	absolutive	
ACCUSATIVE	nominative		accusative

Tab. 3.3

3.3 The genitive case

The genitive case usually relates two nominals within a noun phrase. The noun phrase in the genitive, the possessor, occupies P3 of the noun phrase whose head is the possessum. The main function of the genitive is to denote the possessor.

Its basic form is *=/ak/*, but it rarely appears in this phonetic shape: the */a/* of the genitive case-marker usually contracts with a preceding vowel; and in word-final position the */k/* of the */ak/* is probably lost. When the */a/* of the enclitic contracts with a preceding short vowel, the result is as a rule an */ā/*, see, e.g., exx. (19) and (20) below. When it contracts with a preceding long vowel then the result is the preceding long vowel, see, e.g., ex. (13) above and ex. (21) below, in which the contraction with the last vowel of the plural marker */enē/* results in */ē/*. The contraction is, however, reflected by the writing only when the preceding morpheme is written with a phonographic sign. If it is written with a word sign, see ex. (22) below, then nothing may be noticed.

(19) Gudea Statue B 8:24 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P232275)

kisal ^dnin-ṇir₂-su lugal-ṇa₂-ka
_{P1}kisal _{P3}[_{P1}ninṇirsuk _{P1}lugal=_{P3}ṇu=_{P5}ak]=_{P5}'a
_{P1}courtyard _{P3}[_{P1}DN _{P1}king=_{P3}1.SG.POSS=_{P5}GEN]=_{P5}L1
 “in the courtyard of Ningirsu, my lord”

(20) Gudea Cyl. A 24:8 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

e₂ lugal-na
_{P1}e _{P3}[_{P1}lugal=_{P3}ane=_{P5}ak]=_{P5}∅
_{P1}house _{P3}[_{P1}king=_{P3}3.SG.H.POSS=_{P5}GEN]=_{P5}ABS
 “his master’s temple”

(21) Gudea Statue A 1:3 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232274)

ama dumu-dumu-ne nin-a-ne₂
{P1}ama [{P1}dumu~dumu=_{P4}enē=_{P5}ak] _{P1}nin=_{P3}ane=_{P5}ra
{P1}mother [{P1}child~_{P4}PL=PL=_{P5}GEN] _{P1}lady=_{P3}3.SG.H.POSS=_{P5}DAT.H
 “to the mother of all children, his lady”

(22) Ur-Namma 14 6 (RIME 3/2.1.1.14) (Ur, 21st c.) (Q000942)

lugal ki-en-gi ki-uri-ke₄
{P1}lugal [{P1}kengir _{P1}kiuri=_{P3}ak]=_{P5}e
{P1}king [{P1}Sumer _{P1}Akkad=_{P3}GEN]=_{P5}ERG
 “king of Sumer and Akkad”

When the */k/* of the genitive case-marker is at the end of a closed syllable, then the writing does not reflect its presence; one may infer its occurrence only from the form of the morpheme that follows. When the human dative case-marker *=/ra/* is preceded by an open syllable, it undergoes apocope and is reduced to */r/*; and the syllable closing */r/* of the resulting closed syllable */CVr/* will not be written until the end of the 3rd millennium BCE, see ex. (23) below. In ex. (24) the dative case-marker has the unreduced form *=/ra/* because of the preceding closed syllable. As the word **eninnu** ends in a vowel, the syllable must be closed because of the presence of a genitive case-marker *=/ak/*.

(23) Gudea 72 1-2 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (Q000924)

^dnin-šubur, nin-a-ne₂_{P1}ninšubur _{P1}nin=_{P3}ane=_{P5}ra_{P1}DN _{P1}lady=_{P3}3.SG.H.POSS=_{P5}DAT.H

“for Ninshubur, his lady”

(24) En-ana-tum I 19 1-2 (Lagash, 25 th c.) (P222490)

^dnin-ṇir₂-su₂, e₂-ninnu-ra_{P1}ningirsuk _{P3}[_{P1}eninnu=_{P5}ak]=_{P5}ra_{P1}DN _{P3}[_{P1}TN=_{P5}GEN]=_{P5}DAT.H

“for Ningirsu in the temple E-ninnu”

The next lesson, Lesson 4 discusses in detail the various constructions in which noun phrases in the genitive are used.

3.4 The equative case

The equative case expresses a relation of comparison between two noun phrases. The equative case-marker attaches to the noun phrase that functions as the basis of the comparison, called the standard in linguistic literature. The equative case-marker is the enclitic =/gen/, written with the sign DIM2 (= gen₇).

In linguistics one may distinguish between i) equative constructions, which express sameness of extent, and ii) similitive constructions, which express sameness of manner. In English the equative and the similitive constructions are different, as the examples in Table 3.4 below show:

	COMPAREE		PARAMETER MARKER	PARAMETER	STANDARD MARKER	STANDARD
i)	You	are	as	kind	as	Bau.
ii)	Ninurta			roars	like	a storm.

Table 3.4: Equative and similitive constructions

In Sumerian, however, the equative and similitive constructions are the same, neither of them contains a parameter, and they may be distinguished only on the basis of their meaning.

Ex. (25) below is a personal name containing an equative construction. The goddess Bau functions as standard, and the standard marker is the equative enclitic.

(25) CTNMC 4 4:19 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P247619)

^dba-u₂-gen₇-a-ba-sag₉_{P1}bau=_{P5}gen _{P1}aba=_{P5}∅ _{S2}i-_{S12}sag-_{S14}∅_{P1}DN=_{P5}EQU _{P1}who=_{P5}ABS FIN-fine-3SG.S

“Who-is-as-kind-as-the-goddess-Bau?”

Exx. (26) and (27) below are similitive constructions; the standards of the comparison, “the new moon” in the former, and “a bull” in the latter, are case-marked with the enclitic =/gen/:

(26) Gudea Cyl. A 24:10 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

ud-sakar	gibil-ø-gen ₇	men	bi ₂ -il ₂
_{P1} udsakar	_{P2} gibil-ø= _{P5} gen	_{P1} men= _{P5} ø	_{S5} b- _{S10} i- _{S11} n- _{S12} il- _{S14} ø
_{P1} crescent.moon	_{P2} new-TL= _{P5} EQU	_{P1} crown= _{P5} ABS	3.SG.NH-L3-3.SG.H.A-carry-3.SG.P

“He (= Gudea) had it (= the temple) wear a tiara shaped like the new moon.”

(27) Lugal-zagesi 1 2:30–32 (RIME 1.14.20.1) (Uruk, 24th c.) (Q001379)

urim ₂ ^{ki} -e	gud-gen ₇	saṇ	an-še ₃
_{P1} urim= _{P5} e	_{P1} gud= _{P5} gen	_{P1} saṇ= _{P5} ø	_{P1} an= _{P5} še
_{P1} GN= _{P5} ERG	_{P1} bull= _{P5} EQU	_{P1} head= _{P5} ABS	_{P1} sky= _{P5} TERM

mu-dab₆-il₂

{S4}mu-{S6}n-_{S7}da-_{S11}b-_{S12}il-_{S14}ø

VEN-3.SG.H-COM-3.SG.NH.A-raise-3.SG.P

“Ur raised its head to the sky like a bull because of him.”

Constructions with the enclitic copula may also be used in a similitive function, see Lesson 8, section 8.4 below.

Note that the two adnominal cases discussed in this lesson differ in their syntactic behaviour. The genitive relates two nominals within a noun phrase, i.e., possessor and possessum form one single noun phrase. The noun phrase in the equative, however, constitute a separate noun phrase, outside the noun phrase with which it compares.

Further readings

On the case system of Sumerian see Zólyomi 2010, who argues that cases should not be distinguished solely on the basis of the form of their case-markers; the distribution of the case-marked words should also be taken into consideration.

The 3rd ps. possessive enclitics *=/ane/* and *=/be/* are assumed to be *=/ani/* and *=/bi/* in the earlier literature. This textbook follows Jagersma (2010: 214–217), who, on the basis of their writings, argues convincingly that their last vowel is in fact */e/*.

The syntax of noun phrases with the equative enclitic is discussed in Sövegjártó 2011. For a typological study of equative and similitive constructions in the languages of Europe, see Haspelmath and Buchholz 1998.

Exercises

3.1 Look up the words used in the examples of this lesson in Foxvog’s (2016b) or Volk’s (2012) glossary, and learn them.

3.2 Provide a morphemic segmentation and glosses to the noun phrases below on the basis of the transliterations and translations provided. The grammatical function of the noun phrases is indicated in brackets.

- a) nin-a-na-ke₄ “his lady” (A)
- b) iri-ne₂ “his city” (A)
- c) nin diṇir-re-e-ne “the lady of the gods” (S)
- d) lugal-ḡu₁₀ “my master” (A)
- e) nam-til₃ šeš-a-ne-ne “the life of his brothers” (P)
- f) niṇ₂ šu-ḡa₂ “the thing of my hand” (S)
- g) arad₂-zu “your servant” (S)
- h) inim diṇir-re₂-ne “the order of the gods” (P)
- i) e₂ iri nam-lugal-ḡa₂-ka “the temple of the city of my kingship” (P)

- j) *dumu ensi₂ lagaš^{ki}-ka-ke₄* “the son of the ruler of Lagash” (A)
- k) *lugal ŋir-su₂^{ki}-ka* “king of Girsu” (S)
- l) *ama diŋir-re-ne-ke₄* “the mother of the gods” (A)
- m) *lugal an-ub-da limmu₂-ba-ke₄* “the king of the four quarters” (A)
- n) *diŋir-ŋu₁₀-gen₇* “like my personal god”
- o) *šu maḥ-ne₂* “his mighty hand” (P)
- p) *mu-be₂* “its name” (S)
- q) *diŋir-ra-na-ke₄* “of his god” (A)
- r) *e₂-ne-ne* “their temple” (P)
- s) *diŋir-re-ne* “the gods” (A)
- t) *bad₃ gal-be₂* “its great wall” (P)
- u) *lugal-ne₂* “for his king” (DAT)

3.3 Mark the positions and add the missing morphological glosses in the noun phrases below. Translate the noun phrases, too. All the information you need may be found in Foxvog’s glossary (2016b) or can be figured out from the translation (given only in difficult cases). (PN = Personal Name, DN = Divine Name, GN = Geographical Name)

- a) *lugalazida arad lugalkigal=ak=∅*
PN₁ PN₂
- b) *namlugal kiš=ak=∅*
kingship GN
- c) *biluda diŋir=enē=ak=e*
rite =L3.NH
- d) *diŋir galgal-∅ lagaš=ak=enē=e*
big~PL-TL =ERG
- e) *e=ŋu=∅*
- f) *namtil=ane=∅*
- g) *kisura ninŋirsuk=ak=e*
border DN =L3.NH
- h) *en aratta=ak=e*
lord GN =ERG
- i) *zapag=zu=∅*
cry
- j) *nu girin-∅=’a*
bed pure-TL=L2.NH
- k) *a dug-∅=∅*
water sweet-TL
- l) *mesalim lugal kiš=ak=e*
PN GN =ERG

3.4 The following noun phrases consist of the same morphemes, but in a different order. What is the consequence of these differences on the meaning of the noun phrases? Please translate them!

a)

1. p_1 dumu $p_3[p_1\text{šeš}=p_3\text{ane}=p_4\text{enē}=p_5\text{ak}]=p_5\emptyset$

2. p_1 dumu $p_3[p_1\text{šeš}=p_3\text{ane}=p_5\text{ak}]=p_4\text{enē}=p_5\emptyset$

b)

1. p_1 anše p_2 libir- \emptyset $p_3[p_1\text{šeš}=p_3\text{ḡu}=p_5\text{ak}]=p_5\emptyset$

2. p_1 anše $p_3[p_1\text{šeš}$ p_2 libir- $\emptyset=p_3\text{ḡu}=p_5\text{ak}]=p_5\emptyset$

3.5 There is something wrong with the following examples, except for one. Please, identify the problem in each case.

a) p_1 e $p_3[p_1\text{diḡir}$ $p_2\text{gal-}\emptyset=p_5\text{ak}]=p_4\text{enē}=p_5\emptyset$
“the temples of the great god”

b) p_1 azu p_2 zid- \emptyset $p_3[p_1\text{lugal}=p_4\text{enē}=p_5\text{ak}]=p_5\emptyset$
“the good doctors of the king”

c) p_1 dam p_2 zid- $\emptyset=p_3\text{ane}=p_5\text{ak}$
“his good wife”

d) p_1 namtil= $p_3\text{ḡu}$
“my well-being”

e) p_1 ezem $p_2\text{gal-}\emptyset=p_4\text{enē}=p_5\emptyset$
“the great festivals”

f) p_1 kugsig $p_1\text{kugbabbar}=p_3\text{zu}=p_5\emptyset$
“your gold and silver”

g) p_1 geme p_2 libir- \emptyset $p_3[p_1\text{damgar}=p_3\text{ane}]=p_5\emptyset$
“the old female servant of the merchant”

3.6 Go to the ETCSRI corpus (<http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/etcsri/corpus>) and write “N5=ERG” (without the quotation marks) in the Search Oracc box. Find and make a list of the graphemes that may be used to write the ergative case-marker, depending on the morpheme or sound before and/or after the case-marker! Try to find differences depending on the location or period of the texts! If you are uncertain about the morphological make-up of a word, follow the link to the text, then either place the cursor over the word in question, or click on the word “Proofing” on the left side of the page.

3.7 Go to the ETCSRI corpus (<http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/etcsri/corpus>) and write “N4=PL” (without the quotation marks) in the Search Oracc box. Find and make a list of the graphemes that may be used to write the plural-marker, depending on the morpheme or sound before and/or after the case-marker! If you are uncertain about the morphological make-up of a word, follow the link to the text, then either place the cursor over the word in question, or click on the word “Proofing” on the left side of the page.

- 3.8 Go to the ETCSRI corpus (<http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/etcsri/corpus>) and write either “N3=ju” or “N3=ani” (without the quotation marks). in the Search Oracc box Find and make a list of the graphemes that may be used to write the 1st ps. sg. or 3rd. ps. sg. human possessive enclitic, depending on the morpheme or sound before and/or after them! Try to find out differences depending on the location or period of the texts! If you are uncertain in the morphological make-up of a word, follow the link to the text, then either place the cursor over the word in question, or click on the word “Proofing” on the left side of the page.
- 3.9 Transliterate the text of Ur-Nanshe 26 (RIME 1.9.1.26) (Lagash, 25th c.) (P222380) (a handcopy of the text can be found at <http://cdli.ucla.edu/P222380>) with the help of Volk’s sign list (2012). Translate the text with the help of Foxvog’s glossary (2016b). Gloss all the words of the text (except for the verbal form) in the way it is done in this textbook. Then go to the ETCSRI edition of the text (<http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/etcsri/Q001042>), click on the “proofing” link on the left side of the page, and compare your glosses with ETCSRI’s glossing. Which grammatical elements are not written in the orthography of this early text?

Lesson 4: Genitive constructions

The genitive construction in ex. (28) is of the most familiar type both in terms of its meaning and construction: it expresses possession and the possessor, the noun phrase in the genitive case, occupies P3 of the noun phrase whose head is the possessum.

(28) Iri-kagina 1 4:9 (Lagash, 24th. c) (Q001124)

gud diŋir-re₂-ne-ke₄
P₁gud P₃[P₁diŋir=_{P4}enē=_{P5}ak]=_{P5}e
P₁ox P₃[P₁god=_{P4}PL=_{P5}GEN]=_{P5}ERG
“The oxen of the gods”

There exist, however, other types of genitive constructions which differ from this common type. This lesson describes the most important characteristics of three “atypical” genitive constructions. In *modifying genitive constructions* the noun phrase in the genitive functions as the modifier of the head, which also affects its syntactic behaviour: it occupies P2 but not P3 of the noun phrase. In *left-dislocated genitive constructions* the possessor occupies a position before the noun phrase whose head is the possessum. In *genitive constructions with suspended cliticization* only the last of the coordinate genitive constructions is case-marked.

4.1 Modifying genitive constructions

In these constructions the relation between the head and the noun phrase in the genitive is not possession, rather, the noun phrase in the genitive functions as the modifier of the head. Accordingly the noun phrase in the genitive stands in P2 of the noun phrase whose head it modifies;⁸ and a possessor, see ex. (29), a possessive pronominal enclitic, see exx. (30), (31) and (35), or a modifying non-finite verbal form, see ex. (32), may therefore only stand after its genitive case-marker.

(29) Iri-kagina 1 4:10–11 (Lagash, 24th. c) (Q001124)

ki šum₂-ma ensi₂-ka
P₁ki P₂[P₁šum=_{P5}ak] P₃[P₁ensik=_{P5}ak]=_{P5}∅
P₁place P₂[P₁onion=_{P5}GEN] P₃[P₁ruler=_{P5}GEN]=_{P5}ABS
“the onion-plot of the ruler”

(30) Gudea Cyl. B 10:1 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

sipad anše-ka-ne₂
P₁sipad P₂[P₁anše=_{P5}ak]=_{P3}ane=_{P5}∅
P₁herder P₂[P₁donkey=_{P5}GEN]=_{P3}3.SG.H.POSS=_{P5}ABS
“his donkey herder”

⁸ Adnominal ablatives functioning as modifiers may also stand in P2, see Lesson 13, section 13.1 below.

(31) Gudea Cyl. A 10:27 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

ki banšur-ra- ηu_{10}
 P_1 ki $P_2[P_1$ banšur= P_5 ak]= P_3 ηu = P_5 e
 P_1 place $P_2[P_1$ table= P_5 GEN]= P_3 1.SG.POSS= P_5 L3.NH
 “at my dining place”

(32) VS 14, 162 obv. 3:2 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P020173)

4 usan₃ mar gibil
 4 P_1 usan $P_2[P_1$ mar= P_5 ak] P_2 gibil- \emptyset = P_5 \emptyset
 4 P_1 whip $P_2[P_1$ wagon= P_5 GEN] P_2 new-TL= P_5 ABS
 “4 new wagon whips”

If ex. (29) were altered by placing the possessor **ensik=ak** between the word **šum** “onion” and its genitive case-marker, as in possessive genitive constructions, then it would have a different meaning as illustrated in the following hypothetical example:

(33)

P_1 *ki $P_3[P_1$ šum $P_3[P_1$ ensik= P_5 ak]= P_5 ak]= P_5 \emptyset
 P_1 place $P_3[P_1$ onion $P_3[P_1$ ruler= P_5 GEN]= P_5 GEN]= P_5 ABS
 “the place of the ruler’s onion”

Functionally modifying genitive constructions compensate for the lack of derivational affixes deriving adjectives from nouns.

Modifying genitives have two main subtypes: i) non-referential genitives and ii) locative genitives.

In non-referential genitives the structural unit in P2 is a noun without reference to an existing entity. In exx. (29)–(31) above the words **šum** “onion”, **anše** “donkey”, and **banšur** “table”, respectively, do not refer to an existing entity; they modify the meaning of the preceding word, the head. A **sipad anše=ak**, for example, is a kind of herder.

In a non-referential genitive construction the structural unit in P2 may only consist of a noun or another non-referential genitive. In ex. (34) below the non-referential genitive P_1 gu P_2 [**anše=ak**] “donkey neck” functions as the modifier in another, superordinate non-referential genitive: P_1 tug P_2 [gu **anše=ak=ak**] “donkey neck cloths”.

(34) TSA 31 obv. 2:4 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P221392)

26 tug₂ gu₂ anše-ka sumun
 26 P_1 tug $P_2[P_1$ gu P_2 [P_1 anše= P_5 ak]= P_5 ak] P_2 sumun- \emptyset = P_5 \emptyset
 26 P_1 cloth $P_2[P_1$ neck P_2 [P_1 donkey= P_5 GEN]= P_5 GEN] P_2 old-TL= P_5 ABS
 “26 old donkey neck clothes”

In locative genitives the noun phrase in the genitive is a geographical name which denotes the location of the head:

(35) Gudea 8 6 (RIME 3/1.01.07.008) (Lagash, 22nd c.) (Q000892)

e₂ η irsu^{ki}-ka-ne₂
 P_1 e $P_2[P_1$ η irsu= P_5 ak]= P_3 ane= P_5 \emptyset
 P_1 temple $P_2[P_1$ GN= P_5 GEN]= P_3 3.SG.H.POSS= P_5 ABS
 “his temple in Girsu”

4.2 Left-dislocated genitive constructions

The possessor normally occupies P3 of the noun phrase. Under certain conditions, however, the possessor may occupy a position before the head of the noun phrase, i.e., it may be left-dislocated. This construction is called “anticipatory genitive” in earlier literature.

In a left-dislocated genitive construction the possessor is in the genitive, and P3 is occupied by a resumptive pronominal enclitic that agrees in person, gender, and number with the possessor. In ex. (36) below the possessor *ez* “house, temple” does not occupy P3 of the noun phrase *ni2 gal* “great awesomeness”, but is left-dislocated and is in the genitive. P3 is occupied by the pronominal enclitic *=/be/*.

(36) Gudea Cyl. A 9:17 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

e2-a *ni2* *gal-be2*
{P1}*e*={P5}*ak* _{P1}*ni* _{P2}*gal*-_{P3}*be*=_{P5}*Ø*
{P1}*house*={P5}GEN _{P1}*fear* _{P2}*great*-TL= _{P3}3.SG.NH.POSS= _{P5}ABS

kalam-ma *mu-ri*
{P1}*kalam*={P5}*'a* _{S4}*mu*-_{S10}*n*-_{S12}*ri*-_{S14}*Ø*
{P1}*land*={P5}L1 VEN-L1.SYN-settle-3.SG.S

“The temple’s great awesomeness settles upon the Land”

The left-dislocated possessor and the possessum may be separated by another noun phrase:

(37) Gudea Cyl. A 17:17 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

e2-a ^d*en-ki-ke4* *ṇiš-ḥur-be2*
{P1}*e*={P5}*ak* _{P1}*enkik*=_{P5}*e* _{P1}*ṇišḥur*=_{P3}*be*=_{P5}*e*
{P1}*temple*={P5}GEN _{P1}DN=_{P5}ERG _{P1}*plan*=_{P3}3.SG.NH.POSS=_{P5}L3.NH

si *mu-na-sa2*
{P1}*si*={P5}*Ø* _{S4}*mu*-_{S6}*nn*-_{S7}*a*-_{S11}*n*-_{S12}*sa*-_{S14}*Ø*
{P1}*horn*={P5}ABS VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.A-equal-3.SG.P
 “Enki put right the design of the temple for him.”

The left-dislocated possessor may be the possessor of another genitive construction’s possessor. The non-left-dislocated version of genitive construction in (38) would look like this: *lu šag enlil=ak=ak*.

(38) Gudea Cyl. A 17:11 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

^d*en-lil2-la2* *lu2* *šag4-ga-na-kam*
{P1}*enlil*={P5}*ak* _{P1}*lu* _{P3}[_{P1}*šag*=_{P3}*ane*=_{P5}*ak*]=_{P5}*Ø*=_{P5}*am*-*Ø*
{P1}DN={P5}GEN _{P1}*man* _{P3}[_{P1}*heart*- _{P3}3.SG.H.POSS-_{P5}GEN]=_{P5}ABS=COP-3.SG.S
 “He is a man of Enlil’s heart.”

The possessum of the left-dislocated possessor may be the participant of a relative clause, in this case the left dislocated possessor may stand in front of the relative clause’s head noun:

(39) Gudea Statue B 8:41–42 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P232275)

gu₃-de₂-a ensi₂ lagaš^{ki}-ka
 p₁gudea p₁ensik p₃[p₁lagaš=p₅ak]=p₅ak
 p₁PN p₁ruler p₃[p₁GN=p₅GEN]=p₅GEN
 lu₂ inim-ne₂ ib₂-kur₂-a
 p₁lu p₂[p₁inim=p₃ane=p₅ø] s₂i^{-s₁₁}b^{-s₁₂}kur^{-s₁₄}e^{-s₁₅}'a]=p₅ø
 p₁man p₂[p₁word=p₃3.SG.H.POSS=p₅ABS FIN-3.SG.NH.P-change-3.SG.A-SUB]=p₅ABS
 “the man who changes the orders of Gudea, the ruler of Lagash”

In the following example the possessum of the left-dislocated possessor **e=ak** “house=GEN” is itself a left-dislocated possessor. This doubly left-dislocated genitive construction may be derived from an underlying double genitive construction in two steps as is shown in (a–c) below.

(40) Gudea Cyl. A 6:1–2 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

e₂-a du₃-ba mul kug-ba
 p₁e=p₅ak p₁du=p₃be=p₅ak p₁mul p₂kug=p₃be=p₅'a
 p₁house=p₅GEN p₁building=p₃3.SG.NH.POSS=p₅GEN p₁star p₂holy=p₃3.SG.NH.POSS=p₅L2.NH
 gu₃ ma-ra-a-de₂
 p₁gu=p₅ø s₄ma^{-s₆}r^{-s₇}a^{-s₁₀}e^{-s₁₁}n^{-s₁₂}de^{-s₁₄}e
 p₁voice=p₅ABS VEN-2.SG-DAT-L2-pour-3.SG.A
 “She will announce to you the holy stars of the building of the house.”

(c) p₁e=p₅ak p₁du=p₃be=p₅ak p₁mul p₂kug=p₃be=p₅'a
 p₁house=p₅GEN p₁building=p₃3.SG.NH.POSS=p₅GEN p₁star p₂holy=p₃3.SG.NH.POSS=p₅L2.NH

*(b) p₁du p₃[p₁e=p₅ak]=p₅ak p₁mul p₂kug=p₃be=p₅'a
 p₁building p₃[p₁house=p₅GEN]=p₅GEN p₁star p₂holy=p₃3.SG.NH.POSS=p₅L2.NH

*(a) p₁mul p₂kug p₃[p₁du p₃[p₁e=p₅ak]=p₅ak]=p₅'a
 p₁star p₂holy p₃[p₁building p₃[p₁house=p₅GEN]=p₅GEN]=p₅L2.NH

In Sumerian the order of the words preceding the verb is determined by the information structure of the clause. Information structure is understood “as a phenomenon of information packaging that responds to the immediate communicative needs of interlocutors” (Krifka: 2007: 13). The left-dislocated genitive functions to move the possessor into a sentence-initial position, thereby making the possessor the topic of the clause, as a result of which the clause will be construed as being about the possessor, i.e., the clause will express information which is relevant to and which increases the listener or reader’s knowledge of this constituent.

4.3 Genitive constructions with suspended cliticization

Suspended cliticization in Sumerian is the grammatical phenomenon when in an appositive or coordinate construction only the last unit of the construction may be case-marked. Suspended cliticization in appositive constructions is often attested in inscriptions of the 3rd millennium BCE. In ex. (41) below the construction has three units: **enlil**, **lugal kur-kur=ak**, and **abba diŋir=enē=ak**, but only the last one is case-marked with the ergative.

(41) En-metena 1 1:1–3 (RIME 1.9.5.1) (Lagash, 25th c.) (Q001103)

^den-lil₂, lugal kur-kur-ra,
_{P1}enlil _{P1}lugal _{P3}[_{P1}kur~kur=_{P5}ak]
_{P1}DN _{P1}king _{P3}[_{P1}land~PL=_{P5}GEN]
 ab-ba diŋir-diŋir-re₂-ne-ke₄
_{P1}abba _{P3}[_{P1}diŋir~diŋir=_{P4}enē=_{P5}ak]=_{P5}e
_{P1}father _{P3}[_{P1}god~PL=_{P4}PL=_{P5}GEN]=_{P5}ERG
 “Enlil, the king of all lands, the father of all gods”

One could argue that in constructions like ex. (41) above, the three units of the appositive construction are considered as a single unit from syntactic point of view, consequently the ergative case-marker of the case governed by the verb attaches to its very end. The same happens in ex. (42) below, where the appositive construction **nammahne, ensik lagaš=ak** “Nam-mahne, the ruler of Lagash” functions as the possessor of the possessum **namtil** “life, well-being”. The appositive construction is regarded as one unit, the genitive case-marker governed by the head of the noun phrase therefore attaches to the end of its second unit.

(42) Nam-mahne 7 3–6 (Lagash, 21st c.) (Q000932)

nam-til₃, nam-mah-ne₂, ensi₂, lagaš^{ki}-ka-še₃
_{P1}namtil _{P3}[_{P1}nammahne _{P1}ensik _{P3}[_{P1}lagaš=_{P5}ak]=_{P5}ak]=_{P5}še
_{P1}life _{P3}[_{P1}PN _{P1}ruler _{P3}[_{P1}GN=_{P5}GEN]=_{P5}GEN]=_{P5}TERM
 “for the well-being of Nam-mahne, ruler of Lagaš”

Suspended cliticization is also attested with coordinate constructions like ex. (43) below. Here the two coordinate noun phrases, two genitive constructions, “the pedestal of Enlil” and “the pedestal of Utu”, are case-marked only once with the locative₂, the case governed by the verb of the sentence.

(43) Iri-kagina 5 obv. 1:12–13 (RIME 1.09.09.05) (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222618)

barag ^den-lil₂-la₂, barag ^dutu-ka
_{P1}barag _{P3}[_{P1}enlil=_{P5}ak] _{P1}barag _{P3}[_{P1}utu=_{P5}ak]=_{P5}’a
_{P1}dais _{P3}[_{P1}DN₁=_{P5}GEN] _{P1}dais _{P3}[_{P1}DN₂=_{P5}GEN]=_{P5}L₂.NH
 “(He looted) the pedestal of Enlil and the pedestal of Utu.”

Similarly to ex. (43), ex. (44) too contains two coordinate genitive constructions; and the two noun phrases are also case-marked here only once with the case governed by the verb of the sentence, the absolutive. In this example, however, also the genitive is suspended: only the second genitive construction is marked with the genitive (**ensik kurkur=ak**), the case-marker is not present in the first one (**baragbarag kiengir**). In ex. (44) therefore clitic suspension occurs twice: once with the case governed by the verb, once with the case governed by the possessum.

(44) Lugal-zagesi 1 2:21–22 (RIME 1.14.20.1) (Uruk, 24th c.) (Q001379)

barag-barag ki-en-gi, ensi₂ kur-kur-ra
 [[_{P1}barag~barag _{P3}kiengir] [_{P1}ensik _{P3}kur~kur]=_{P5}ak]=_{P5}∅
 [[_{P1}dais~PL _{P3}GN] [_{P1}ruler _{P3}land~PL]=_{P5}GEN]=_{P5}ABS
 “the sovereigns of Sumer and the rulers of all lands”

In ex. (45) the coordinate construction consists of three genitive constructions, and the whole construction is left-dislocated. Here too, the possessor is case-marked with the genitive only in the last of the three genitive constructions.

(45) En-metena 4 5:4–8 (RIME 1.09.05.04) (Q001117)

dumu unug^{ki}, dumu larsam^{ki}, dumu pa⁵-ti-bir⁵-ra^{ki}-ka
 [[_{P1}dumu _{P3}unug] [_{P1}dumu _{P3}larsam] [_{P1}dumu _{P3}patibira]=_{P5}ak]=_{P5}ak
 [[_{P1}child _{P3}GN1] [_{P1}child _{P3}GN2] [_{P1}child _{P3}GN3]=_{P5}GEN]=_{P5}GEN

[ama]-gi⁴-be₂, e-₇jar
{P1}amargi={P3}be=_{P5}Ø _{S2}i⁻_{S11}n⁻_{S12}jar⁻_{S14}Ø
{P1}freedom={P3}3.SG.NH.POSS=_{P5}ABS FIN-3.SG.H.A-place-3.SG.P

“He released the citizens of Unug, the citizens of Larsam, and the citizens of Patibira.”

Further readings

A more detailed description of the left-dislocated genitive constructions can be found in Zólyomi 1996b and 2005.

Suspended cliticization in texts from the 3rd millennium BCE is discussed in detail by Wilcke 1990: 459–464; Wilcke does not use this term, which is adapted from the term “suspended affixation”, used mainly in linguistic works on Turkish, another agglutinative language.

Exercises

- 4.1 Look up the new words used in the examples of this lesson in Foxvog’s (2016b) or Volk’s (2012) glossary, and learn them.
- 4.2 Study the examples of this lesson carefully and make yourself familiar with their grammatical analysis.
- 4.3 Go to the ETCsRI corpus (<http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/etcsri/corpus>) and write “N5=GEN” (without the quotation marks) in the Search Oracc box. Find and make a list of the graphemes that may be used to write the genitive case-marker depending on the morpheme or sound before and/or after the case-marker! Try to find differences depending on the location or period of the texts! If you are uncertain about the morphological make-up of a word, follow the link to the text, then either place the cursor over the word in question, or click on the word “Proofing” on the left side of the page.
- 4.4 Translate the following expressions into Sumerian. Provide morphemic segmentation and glossing to them, use bracketing, as well. All expressions are assumed to be in the absolutive.
 - a) the true son of the king (**zid-Ø** = true-TL)
 - b) the true sons of the mighty king (**mah-Ø** = mighty-TL)
 - c) the true sons of the mighty kings
 - d) the true sons of the mighty king of the land
 - e) the true sons of the mighty king of all the lands
 - f) the true sons of the mighty kings of all the lands
 - g) the shepherd of his donkeys
 - h) the shepherd of his mother’s donkeys
 - i) the shepherd of his kind mother’s donkeys (**sag-’a** = kind-PT)
 - j) the shepherd of his kind mother’s healthy donkeys (**zid-Ø** = healthy-TL)
 - k) the mother of his donkey shepherd

- l) the mother of his reliable donkey shepherd (**zid-ø** = reliable-TL)
 m) the kind mother of his reliable donkey shepherd

4.5 Translate the following expressions into Sumerian, and then left-dislocate the underlined expressions. Provide morphemic segmentation and glossing to them, use bracketing, as well. All expressions are assumed to be in the absolutive.

- | | |
|--|---|
| a) the <u>king's</u> scribe | f) the king of <u>all lands</u> |
| b) <u>my wife's</u> children | g) the <u>hero's</u> donkey |
| c) the servant of <u>my father's</u> house | h) the father of <u>all gods</u> |
| d) the servant of <u>my father's</u> house | i) the well-being of <u>my brothers</u> |
| e) the courtyard of <u>my lord</u> | j) the <u>shepherd's</u> garment |

4.6 Determine which sentences contain a left-dislocated genitive construction only on the basis of the morphemic segmentations! What is the trick?

- a) mu=be=e anzag=ta kurkur=e gu=ø i-m-b-a-si~si-e
 b) namnundakiṇara=ak ur=be=ø na='a mu-nn-a-ni-n-du-ø
 c) id=be='a uš=ø mu-r-a-n-de-ø
 d) e melem=be=ø an=e us-'a=še
 e) e=ṇu=ak ni gal-ø=be kalam='a mu-n-ri-ø
 f) ibila dudu=ak=ene=e kag=anene='a ba-ni-n-gen-eš
 g) ane=ø saṇ=ane=še diṇir-ø=am-ø
 h) e ninṇirsuk=ak=ø eridu=gen ki sikil-ø='a b-i-n-du-ø
 i) gudea lu e=ø du-'a=ak=ak namtil=ane=ø ḥa-i-sud-ø

4.7 Transform the constructions of exx. (43)–(45) into constructions without suspended cliticization. You only have to produce the morphemic segmentation and glossing (2nd and 3rd line of the examples).

4.8 In Lesson 3, section 3.1 above, ex. (46) was used to demonstrate the structure of the Sumerian nominal template. Relabel its brackets now on the basis of what you have learnt in this lesson about modifying genitive constructions.

(46) Iri-kagina 1 3:18 (RIME 1.9.9.1) (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222607)

sipad	udu	siki-ka-ke ₄ -ne
_{P1} sipad	_{P3} [_{P1} udu	_{P3} [_{P1} siki= _{P5} ak]= _{P5} ak]= _{P4} enē= _{P5} e
_{P1} shepherd	_{P3} [_{P1} sheep	_{P3} [_{P1} wool= _{P5} GEN]= _{P5} GEN]= _{P4} PL= _{P5} ERG

“the shepherds of sheep of wool (= wool-bearing sheep)”

4.9 Transliterate the text Gudea 18 (RIME 3/1.1.7.18, ex. 2) (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232472) (Volk 2012 no. 6) (a photo of the text can be found at <http://cdli.ucla.edu/P232472>) with the help of Volk's sign list (2012). Translate the text. Gloss all the words of the text (except for the verbal form) in the way it is done in this textbook. Then go to the ETCSRI edition of the text (<http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/etcsri/Q000896>), click on the “proofing” link on the left side of the page, and compare your glosses with ETCSRI's glossing. Compare the orthography of this text with that of Ur-Nanshe 26 treated in the exercises of the previous lesson. What are the differences?

Lesson 5: Pronouns, adverbs, and numerals

This lesson focuses on the closed word class of pronouns: the independent personal, the interrogative, the indefinite, the reflexive, and the demonstrative pronouns. The enclitic possessive pronoun is discussed in Lesson 3 above. The second part of the lesson describes the adverbs of manner and the forms and function of the adverbial enclitic. The lesson concludes with a section on numerals in Sumerian with an emphasis on the syntax of the numeral expressions.

5.1 Pronouns

The independent personal pronouns

Unlike in languages like English or German, independent personal pronouns play a rather restricted role in Sumerian. The main reason for this is that verbal participants that are contextually identifiable are referred to not by independent pronouns but by pronominal affixes incorporated in the finite verbal form (see Lesson 6, section 6.5 below). In ex. (47) the “he” pronoun of the English translation corresponds to the 3rd ps. sg. pronominal suffix in S14 of the Sumerian finite verb.

(47) Gudea Cyl. A 2:26–27 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

kug ^dḡa2-tum3-dug3-ra mu-na-ḡen,
kug ḡatumdug=ra _{s4}mu-_{s6}nn-_{s7}a-_{s12}ḡen-_{s14}Ø
holy DN=DAT.H VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-go-3.SG.S
“He went to holy Gatumdug.”

Independent personal pronouns are used as a rule only when their referents function either as contrastive topic or as focus. In ex. (48) below the first pronoun (/ze/ “you”) is in focus, i.e., it expresses an exhaustive identification, as the English translation also indicates. The second pronoun (/ḡe/ “I”) expresses a contrast to the other participant.

Both as contrastive topic and as focus the pronouns in ex. (48) may also have been marked with prosodic prominence; in contrast, the verbal pronominal affixes are always unaccented.

(48) Enmerkar and En-suhgir-ana 278 (ETCSL 1.8.2.4)

sig-ta igi-nim-še3 en gal-be2 za-e-me-en
sig-ta iginim=še en gal=be=Ø ze=Ø=me-en
low=ABL upper=TERM lord big=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS 2.SG.PR=ABS=COP-2.SG.S
ḡe26-e us2-sa-zu-me-en,
ḡe=Ø us-’a=zu=Ø=me-en
1.SG.PR=ABS follow-PT=2.SG.POSS=ABS=COP-1.SG.S

“(For the people) from the south to the highlands, their great lord is you (and no one else). As for me, I am indeed only second one to you.”

Table 5.1. below shows the forms of the independent pronouns. The 1st and 2nd ps. pl. forms are supplied with various periphrastic constructions. Note that the 3rd ps. forms belong to those which are attested both in forms with two

similar and with two different vowels (see Lesson 2, section 2.2. above); the former is the form used in the 3rd millennium BCE.

	1ST PERSON	2ND PERSON	3RD PERSON
SG	ŋe ₂₆ -e (/ŋe/)	za-e (/ze/)	a-ne (/ane/), e-ne (/ene/)
PL	—	—	a-ne-ne (/anenē/), e-ne-ne (/enenē/)

Table 5.1: The independent pronouns

Sumerian exhibits an ergativity split according to the semantics of the noun phrase. Nouns are marked ergatively, while independent personal pronouns are marked accusatively, i. e. they do not distinguish formally between A and S.

The interrogative pronouns

The interrogative pronouns behave like nouns, and accordingly they take case-markers. The human interrogative pronoun is formed from the stem /**aba**/, while the non-human from the stem /**ana**/ . The stem /**me(n)**/ is used only with adverbial cases.

a-ba	(aba=∅ : who=ABS)	= “who”, “whom”
a-ba-a	(aba=e : who=ERG)	= “who”
a-na	(ana=∅ : what=ABS)	= “what”
a-na-aš	(ana=še : what=TERM)	= “why”, lit. “for what”
me-a	(me='a : wh=L1)	= “where”
me-še₃	(me=še : wh=TERM)	= “where to”

Constituent questions in Sumerian follow two main patterns in terms of the form and place of the interrogative pronouns. An interrogative pronoun may occur: i) in a sentence-initial position; or ii) immediately before the verb. In sentence-initial position it is as a rule accompanied with a 3rd. ps. sg. enclitic copula, see ex. (49) below. When it stands immediately before the verb, then it usually occurs alone, see ex. (50).

(49) Proverbs collection 2 + 6 Segment D 23 (ETCSL 6.1.02)

a-ba-am₃ ḡi₈ma₂ bi₂-in-du₈
aba=∅=am-∅ ma=e s₅b_{-s10}i_{-s11}n_{-s12}du_{-s14}∅
who=ABS=COP-3.SG.S boat=L3.NH 3.SG.NH-L3-3.SG.A-caulk-3.SG.P
“Who caulked the boat?”

(50) Enmerkar and En-suhgir-ana 121 (ETCSL 1.8.2.4)

en unug^{ki}-ga en kul-aba^{ki}-ra a-na ga-an-na-ab-be₂
en unug=ak en kulaba=ak=ra ana=∅ s₂ga_{-s6}nn_{-s7}a_{-s11}b_{-s12}e
lord GN=GEN lord GN=GEN=DAT.H what=ABS MOD-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.NH.P-speak.PF
“What shall I say to the lord of Unug, the lord of Kulaba?”

The indefinite pronoun

The pronoun /**name**/ “some, any” is used as an indefinite modifier, most often in negative clauses as in exx. (51)–(53) below:

(51) The Cursing of Agade 160 (ETCSL 2.1.5)

ni_2 $na-me$ a_2-be_2 $la-ba-ra-e_3$
 $P_1 ni_2$ $P_2 name=P_5 \emptyset$ $a=be=ta$ $nu-ba-ta-e-\emptyset$
 $P_1 thing$ $P_2 some=P_5 ABS$ $arm=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABL$ $NEG-MID-ABL-leave-3.SG.S$
 “Nothing escaped their clutches.”

(52) SNAT 535 13 (Umma, 21st c.) (P130295)

ni_2 $na-me$ $nu-mu-da-a-tuku$
 ni_2 $name=\emptyset$ $s_1 nu-s_4 mu-s_6 'da-s_{11} e-s_{12} tuku-s_{14} \emptyset$
 $thing$ $some=ABS$ $NEG-VEN-1.SG-COM-2.SG.A-have-3.SG.P$
 “I do not owe you anything” = lit. “You do not have anything with me.”

(53) TCS 1 68 rev. 3 (unknown, 21st c.) (P145654)

lu_2 $na-me$ $na-na-ab-\check{sum}_2-e$
 $P_1 lu$ $P_2 name=P_5 ra$ $s_2 na-s_6 nn-s_7 a-s_{11} b-s_{12} \check{sum}-s_{14} e$
 $P_1 person$ $P_2 some=P_5 DAT.H$ $MOD-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.P-give-3.SG.A$
 “He should not give it to anyone!”

The words **lu₂** “person” and **ni₂** “thing” may also be used in a pronominal function with the meaning “someone, anyone” and “something, anything”, respectively, without the modifier **na-me**, see, e.g., ex. (54) below.

(54) Gudea Statue B 5:10–11 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P232275)

lu_2 ur_5-ra e_2 lu_2-ka $nu-kur_9(REC145)$
 lu $ur=ak=\emptyset$ e $lu=ak='a$ $s_1 nu-s_2 i-s_{10} n-s_{12} kur-s_{14} \emptyset$
 $person$ $debt=GEN=ABS$ $house$ $person=GEN=L1$ $NEG-FIN-L1.SYN-enter-3.SG.S$
 “No one’s house was entered by the debt collector.”

The reflexive pronouns

The reflexive pronouns behave like nouns, and accordingly they take case-markers. The reflexive pronouns are formed from the stem **/ni(te)/** with the addition of a possessive enclitic. As a rule the allomorph **/ni/** occurs before a consonant, while **/nite/** occurs before a vowel. The 1st and 2nd ps. pl. forms are not attested.

	1ST PERSON	2ND PERSON	3RD PERSON
SG	ni_2-ru_{10} (ni=ru)	ni_2-zu (ni=ru)	h.: $ni_2-te-ne_2$ (nite=ane) nh.: ni_2-be_2 (ni=be)
PL	—	—	$ni_2-te-ne-ne_2$ (nite=anene)

Table 5.2: The reflexive pronouns

The form **/nite/** may also be written as **ne-te-**, see ex. (56) below, or as **mete(TE+ME)-**, see ex. (57) below in the 3rd millennium BCE. The pronoun may occur without a possessive enclitic when used as the object of a compound verb, see ex. (480) in Lesson 16 below.

The reflexive pronoun is used when the A or the S of a verb is coreferent with one of the other participants of the verb; except for the participant in the dative, in which case the middle prefix **/ba/-** is used, see Lesson 11, section 11.4 below:

(55) TMH NF 1-2, 53 obv. 8 (Ur, 21st c.) (P134365)

ni₂-te-ne-ne ba-ra-an-sa₁₀-aš₂
 nite=anenē=∅ s₅ba-s₉ta-s₁₁n-s₁₂sa-s₁₄eš
 self=3.PL.POSS=ABS MID-ABL-3.SG.H.A-barter-3.PL
 “They sold themselves.”

(56) NWHCM 2009.174 obv. 14-16 (Umma, 23th c.) (P480080)

ne-te-ni-ta, kar-da-ḫi^{ki}-še₃, ba-ḡen
 nete=ane=ta kardahi=še ba-ḡen-∅
 self=3.SG.H.POSS=ABL GN=TERM MID-go-3.SG.S
 “He left on his own for Kardahi.”

(57) E-ana-tum 3 3:15-16 (RIME 1.09.03.03) (Lagash, 25th c) (Q001067)

iri mete-na, šu ḫe₂-na-zig₃
 iri nite=ane=’a šu=∅ s₁ḫa-s₂i-s₆nn-s₇a-s₁₀n-s₁₂zig-s₁₄∅
 city self=3.SG.H.POSS=L1 hand=ABS MOD-FIN-3.SG.H-DAT-L1.SYN-rise-3.SG.S
 “May there be a revolt against him in his own city!”

A comparison of exx. (57) and (58) shows that when the reflexive pronoun functions as possessor, it emphasizes that the possessum belongs to a particular person.

(58) En-metena 1 6:26-29 (RIME 1.9.5.1) (Lagash, 25th c.) (Q001103)

nam-lu₂-lu₇ iri-na šu u₃-na-zig₃
 namlulu=e iri=ane=’a šu=∅ s₁u-s₆nn-s₇a-s₁₀n-s₁₂zig-s₁₄∅
 people=ERG city=3.SG.H.POSS=L1 hand=ABS ANT-3.SG.H-DAT-L1.SYN-rise-3.SG.S
 šag₄ iri-na-ka, ḫa-ne₂-gaz-ze_x(AB₂.ŠA₃.GE)
 šag iri=ane=ak=’a s₁ḫa-s₁₀ni-s₁₁n-s₁₂gaz-s₁₄e
 heart city=3.SG.H.POSS=GEN=L1 MOD-L1-3.SG.H.P-kill-3.SG.A
 “After there has been a revolt against him in his city, may the people kill him in the middle of his city!”

Demonstrative pronouns

Five demonstrative pronouns can be identified but the semantic distinction between them is not always clear. The pronouns =/e(n)/, =/be/, =/re(n)/, and =/še/ are used as enclitics. The pronoun (=)/nē(n)/ is used both as enclitic, see exx. (62) and (63) below, and as an independent pronoun, see exx. (64) and (65) below. The pronoun /ur/ is used only as an independent pronoun, see ex. (67) below. The most frequently attested of them are =/be/, see ex. (59) below, =/e(n)/, see exx. (59) and (60) below, and (=)/nē(n)/, in this order. The demonstrative pronouns =/re(n)/ and =/še/ are used mainly in fixed expressions.

(59) Ur-Namma 19 2:7-8 (RIME 3/2.1.1.19) (Ur, 21st c.) (Q000946)

eg₂-ba a-ba-^dnanna-gen₇,
 p₁eg=p₃be=p₅ak aba=∅-nanna-gen=∅
 p₁levee=p₃DEM=p₅GEN who=ABS-DN-EQU=ABS
 mu-be₂
 mu=be=∅=am-∅
 name=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS=COP-3.SG.S
 “Of this levee ‘Who-is-like-the-god-Nanna?’ is its name.”

(60) Rimush 18 18–22 (RIME 2.1.2.18) (Agade, 23rd c.) (Q000842)

lu₂, im-sar-ra-e, ab-ha-lam-me-a
 lu₁imsara=_{p2}e=_{p5}∅_{s2}a-_{s11}b-_{s12}halam-_{s14}e-_{s15}'a=∅
 person_{p1}inscription=_{p2}DEM=_{p5}ABS FIN-3.SG.NH.P-obliterate-3.SG.A-SUB=ABS
 “Whoever obliterates this inscription,”

(61) The three ox-drivers form Adab 15 (ETCSL 5.6.5)

amar-e a-ba-kam
{p1}amar={p2}e=_{p5}∅ aba=ak=am-∅
{p1}calf={p2}DEM=_{p5}ABS who=GEN=COP-3.SG.S
 “Whom does this calf belong to?”

(62) Gudea Cyl. A 1:17 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

ud-ne maš-ṛi₆-ka,
{p1}ud={p2}nē mašṛik='a
{p1}day={p2}DEM vision=L1
 “On this day, in a dream,”

(63) Gudea Statue B 9:6–7 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P232275)

gud-gen₇, ud=ne-na ḥe₂-gaz
 gud=gen_{p1}ud=_{p2}nēn=_{p5}'a_{s1}ḥa-_{s2}i-_{s12}gaz-_{s14}∅
 ox=EQU_{p1}day=_{p2}DEM=_{p5}L1 MOD-FIN-kill-3.SG.S
 “May he be slaughtered like an ox on the very day!”

(64) Enki and Ninhursaga 201 (ETCSL 1.1.1)

a-na-am₃ ne-e
 ana=∅=am-∅_{p1}nē=_{p5}∅
 what=ABS=COP-3.SG.S_{p1}DEM=_{p5}ABS
 “What is this?”

(65) FaoS 17, 45 10 (Nippur, 21st c.) (P123220)

ne-me arad₂ ḥa-me
{p1}nē={p5}∅=me-eš arad=∅_{s1}ḥa-_{s12}me-_{s14}eš
{p1}DEM={p5}ABS=COP-3.PL.S slave=ABS MOD-COP-3.PL.S
 “(Ipquša and Shu-Ninmug sold their sister Ala-NE. If she stops working,) it is these (i.e., the brothers) who should be slaves (in her place).”

(66) The Debate between Grain and Sheep 20 (ETCSL 5.3.2)

nam-lu₂-ulu₃ ud-re-a-ke₄-ne
{p1}namlulu{p3}[_{p1}ud=_{p2}re=_{p5}ak]=_{p4}enē=_{p5}e
{p1}people{p3}[_{p1}day=_{p2}DEM=_{p5}GEN]=_{p4}PL=_{p5}ERG
 “The people of those days”

It is likely that these demonstrative pronouns participated in a three-degree set “this” (near the speaker), “that” (within view of the speaker), “that” (outside of the view of the speaker). The following groupings are attested in grammatical and lexical texts:

“this” near the speaker	“that” within view of the speaker	“that” outside of the view of the speaker
=/e(n)/	=/še/	=/re(n)/
(=)/nē(n)/	=/še/	=/re(n)/
=/e(n)/	=/re(n)/	=/be/

Table 5.3: The demonstrative pronouns

In actual texts, however, the pronoun =/be/ often appears rather to have the meaning “this”, see, e.g. ex. (59) above or ex. (106) below. It is also often used as a quasi-definite article, and it is likely to be the source of the 3rd ps. sg. non-human possessive enclitic. The pronoun /ur/ is often attested with the equative case-marker as in ex. (67) below.

(67) Gudea Statue B 6:77–7:3 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P232275)

e₂ ur₅-gen₇ dim₂-ma, ensi₂ dili-e
e ur=gen dim-’a=ø ensi dili=e
house DEM=EQU make-PT=ABS ruler single=ERG

^dnin-ḡir₂-su-ra, nu-na-du₃,

ninḡirsuk=ra s₁nu-s₂i-s₆nn-s₇a-s₁₁n-s₁₂du-s₁₄ø

DN=DAT.H NEG-FIN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.A-build-3.SG.P

“No ruler ever built a temple fashioned like this for Ningirsu.”

5.2 Adverbs of manner and the adverbial

There are two ways to form adverbs of manner in Sumerian: i) With the adverbial enclitic =/eš/; ii) with the enclitic =/be/. First we discuss the adverbial in detail as its exact classification is controversial.

The basic form of the adverbial enclitic is =/eš/. In many contexts the enclitic of the adverbial and the terminative case-marker are written with the same grapheme, ŠE₃, which may be read either as -še₃ or -eš₂, consequently the adverbial and the terminative case are not always easy to tell apart in practice. It is the easiest to distinguish them after words ending in a consonant. In ex. (68) below the spelling clearly shows that the form of the adverbial is =/eš/, in contrast to the terminative in ex. (69) whose basic form is =/še/.

(68) Gudea Cyl. A 24:8 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

e₂ lugal-na zid-de₃-eš₂ mu-du₃
e lugal=ane=ak=ø zid-ø=eš s₄mu-s₁₁n-s₁₂du-s₁₄ø
house king=3.SG.H.POSS=GEN=ABS right-TL=ADV VEN-3.SG.H.A-build-3.SG.P

“He built his master’s temple in the appropriate manner.

(69) Gudea Statue B 3:8–9 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P232275)

gu₃-de₂-a, sipad zid-še₃ kalam-ma
gudea=ø sipad zid-ø=še kalam=’a
PN=ABS shepherd right-TL=TERM land=L1

ba-ni-pad₃-da-a

s₅ba-s₁₀ni-s₁₁n-s₁₂pad-s₁₄ø-s₁₅’a-’a

MID-L1-3.SG.H.A-find-3.SG.P-SUB-L1

“(when Ningirsu) chose Gudea for (being) the true shepherd of the Land for himself, ...”

After a word ending in a vowel the terminative case-marker =/še/ reduces to /š/; the adverbial and the terminative are therefore difficult to distinguish

in this morphological environment, see Attinger (1993: 253), who offers a list of morphological criteria to be used to distinguish between them.

The /e/ of the adverbial enclitic may contract with last vowel of the word it attaches to, and the syllable closing /š/ is often not written as the contrast between the orthography in ex. (70) and ex. (71) demonstrates.

(70) Gudea Statue B 6:76 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)

gil-sa im-mi-ak
 gilsa=eš _{s2i-s4m-s5b-s10i-s11n-s12ak-s14ø}
 treasure=ADV FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-L3-3.SG.H.A-act-3.SG.P

“(After building the E-ninnu for Ningirsu, Gudea, ruler of Lagash,) donated (the booty) to it for ever.” = lit. “(He) made (the Eninnu) treat (the booty) in the manner of a treasure.”

(71) Ur-Namma 19 2:5-6 (Ur, 21st c.) (Q000946)

urim^{ki}-e gil-sa-aš, he2-mi-ak
 urim=e gilsa=eš _{s1ha-s2i-s4m-s5b-s10i-s11n-s12ak-s14ø}
 GN=L3.NH treasure=ADV MOD-FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-L3-3.SG.H.A-act-3.SG.P

“He donated indeed (the drained swamp) to Urim for ever.” = lit. “He made indeed Urim treat (the drained swamp) in the manner of a treasure.”

The function of the adverbial is to form an adverb of manner. The adverbial is therefore not a case which signals a grammatical relationship between words, but a kind of derivational formative that functions to change the word class of an expression. The adverbial can be attached to nouns, see exx. (70) and (71) above, to nouns modified by a non-finite verb, see ex. (72), and to non-finite verbs, see ex. (68) above. All these expressions change into an adverb. The adverbial enclitic is probably a loan from the Akkadian terminative-adverbial -iš.

(72) Enki's journey to Nibru 71 (ETCSL 1.1.4)

e2-engur-ra-ke4 šir3 dug3-ge-eš im-me
 eengurak=e šir dug-ø-eš _{s2i-s4m-s11b-s12e-s14e}
 TN=L3.NH song sweet-TL-ADV FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH.L3-speak.PF-3.SG.A

“He praised the E-engura temple in the manner of sweet songs”

The other way to form an adverb of manner is to attach the enclitic =/be/ to a tenseless, see ex. (73), or a preterite non-finite verbal form, see (74) below.

(73) Enlil in the Ekur 75 (ETCSL 4.05.1)

abzu barag kug-ga gal-be2 tum2-ma-zu
 abzu barag kug='a gal-ø=be tum-'a=zu
 GN dais holy=L2.NH great-TL=3.SG.NH.POSS suit=PT=2.SG.POSS

“That you are greatly suited for the abzu, the holy throne”

(74) Letter from Ishbi-Erra to Ibbi-Suen 25 (ETCSL 3.1.17)

še-ba-ne2 ul4-la-be2 al-til-la
 šeba=ane=ø ul-'a=be _{s2al-s12til-s14ø-s15'a=ø=am-ø}
 ration=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS hurry-PT=3.SG.NH.POSS FIN-complete-3.SG.S-SUB=ABS=COP-3.SG.S

“The thing is that his grain rations have quickly been exhausted.”

The enclitic =/be/ may well be related to the 3rd ps. sg. non-human possessive enclitic, but the origin of this construction is unclear. From the Old

Babylonian period onwards the meaning of this form is occasionally reinforced with an additional adverbial:

(75) Anam A 38 (ETCSL 2.7.1.1)

^den-lil₂-še₃ maḥ-be₂-eš₂ ḡal₂-me-en
 enlil=še maḥ=be=eš ḡal-ø=ø=me=en
 DN=TERM great=3.SG.NH.POSS=ADV exist-TL=ABS=COP=2.SG.S
 “You are grandly there for Enlil!”

5.3 Numerals

Sumerians used a sexagesimal number system, i.e., they counted in multiples of sixty. As numerals normally were written with logograms, the reconstruction of their phonological and morphological form is not without problem. The numbers 1–5, 10, 20, 60 and 3600 are expressed with unanalyzable words, while the other numbers are probably compound numerals which are either additive or multiplicative, or both.

1	/diš/ or /aš/	20	/niš/
2	/min/	30	/ušu/ (= 3×10 */eš/ + /u/)
3	/eš/	50	/ninnu/ (= 20×2+10 */niš/ + /min/ + /u/)
4	/limmu/	60	/ḡešd/
5	/ya/	3600	/šar/
6	/aš/ (= 5+1 */ya/ + /aš/)		
7	/imin/ (= 5+2 */ya/ + /min/)		
8	/ussu/ (= 5+3 */ya/ + /eš/)		
9	/ilimmu/ (= 5+4 */ya/ + /limmu/)		
10	/u/		

A sentence like “John bought 4 bulls” may be expressed in two different ways as far as the numeral modifier of “bulls” is concerned in Sumerian. In construction a) the cardinal number functions as the modifier of the head noun as in exx. (76) and (77) below:

(76) Gudea 56 3:3–4 (RIME 3/1.1.7.56) (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P234436)

šita_x(KAK.GIŠ) ur saḡ 3-še₃, mu-na-dim₂
 šita ur p₁saḡ p₂3=p₅še s₄mu-s₆nn-s₇a-s₁₁n-s₁₂dim-s₁₄ø
 mace lion p₁head p₂3=p₅TERM VEN-3.SG-DAT-3.SG.H.A-make-3.SG.P
 “He fashioned a mace with three lion heads from it.”

(77) En-metena 1 3:25–27 (RIME 1.9.5.1) (Lagash, 25th c.) (Q001103)

SAHAR.DU₆.TAK₄-be₂, ki 5-a,
 SAHARDUTAK=be=ø p₁ki p₂5=p₅'a
 burial.mound=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS p₁place p₂5=p₅L2.NH

i₃-mi-dub

s₂i-s₄m-s₅b-s₁₀i-s₁₁n-s₁₂dub-s₁₄ø

FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-L2-3.SG.H.A-pile.up-3.SG.P

“He piled up their burial mounds in five places.”

In construction b) the cardinal number functions as the predicate complement and the counted thing or person as the subject of a copular clause as in exx. (78) and (79) below.

(78) Gudea Statue B 7:30 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P232275)

ud 7-am₃ še la-ba-ara₃
_s[day=Ø] _{PC}[7=Ø]=am-Ø še=Ø _{S1}nu-_{S5}ba-_{S12}ara-_{S14}Ø
_s[day=ABS] _{PC}[7=ABS]=COP-3.SG.S grain=ABS NEG-MID-grind-3.SG.S
 Lit “For days that are seven (in number) no grain was ground.”
 = “For seven days no grain was ground.”

(79) MVN 6, 293 rev. 3:9' (Lagash, 21st. c.) (P114737)

mu dumu-ne₂ 3-am₃ ba-gub-ba-še₃
_s[dumu=ane=Ø] _{PC}[3=Ø]=am-Ø _{S5}ba-_{S12}gub-_{S14}Ø-_{S15}'a=ak=še
 name _s[child=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS] _{PC}[3=ABS]=COP-3.SG.S MID-stand-3.SG.S-SUB=GEN=TERM
 Lit. “Because his sons who are three (in number) were on duty.”
 = “Because his three son were on duty.”

There is a discrepancy between spoken and written forms of metrological expressions in Sumerian. In spoken language the word order is “measured item - measure - numeral”, while in writing, especially in administrative texts, the norm becomes “numeral - measure - measured item” by the end of the 3rd millennium BCE. In these texts the written word order is governed by scribal convention and not by grammatical rules. The tendency that numerals precede the quantified nouns apparently serves visual clarity. The former order, which reflects the spoken language, is used in ex. (80) below, while the latter one is used in ex. (81).

(80) Iri-kagina 3 2:15'–18' (RIME 1.9.9.3) (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222610)

lu₂ dam u₃-taka₄, kug gi₄ 5-am₆,
 lu=e dam=Ø _{S1}u-_{S11}n-_{S12}taka-_{S14}Ø kug gi₄ 5=Ø=am-Ø
 man=ERG wife=ABS ANT-3.SG.H.A-leave-3.SG.P silver unit 5=ABS=COP-3.SG.S
 ensi₂-ke₄, ba-de₆
 ensik=e _{S5}ba-_{S11}n-_{S12}de-_{S14}Ø
 ruler=ERG MID-3.SG.H.A-bring-3.SG.P
 “If a man divorced (his) wife, the ruler received 5 shekels of silver.”

(81) TCS 1, 131 3–6 (unknown, 21st c.) (P145679)

1 gi₄ kug-babbar-am₃, mu-₁₀u-še₃,
 1 gi₄ kugbabbar=Ø=am-Ø mu=₁₀u=še
 1 unit silver=ABS=COP-3.SG.S name=1.SG.POSS=TERM
 ba-sag₉-ga, ₂he-na-ab-šum₂-mu
 basaga=ra _{S1}ha-_{S2}i-_{S6}nn-_{S7}a-_{S11}b-_{S12}šum-_{S14}e
 PN=DAT.H MOD-FIN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.NH.P-give-3.SG.A
 “(Tell Lu-Shara that) he should give ONE shekel of silver to Basaga on my behalf!”

A construction in which the numeral stands in apposition to the quantified noun and the possessive enclitic attached to the numeral agrees in person, gender and number with the quantified noun functions to make the expression definite:

(82) NG 117 rev. 4' (Lagash, 21st c.) (P111340)

di til-la di-kud lugal 7-ba
 di til-'a _{P3}[_{P1}dikud _{P2}[_{P1}lugal=_{P5}ak] _{P1}7=_{P3}be=_{P5}ak]=_{P5}Ø
 case complete-PT _{P3}[_{P1}judge _{P2}[_{P1}king=_{P5}GEN] _{P1}7=_{P3}3.SG.NH.POSS=_{P5}GEN]=_{P5}ABS
 Lit. “a closed case of royal judges, seven of them” = “a closed case of the seven royal judges”

(83) Amar-Suena 5 2:1 (Ur, 21st c.) (P227059)

lugal an-ub-da limmu₂-ba-ke₄

lugal _{P3}[_{P1}anubda _{P1}limmu=_{P3}be=_{P5}ak]=_{P5}e

king _{P3}[_{P1}quarter _{P1}four=_{P3}3.SG.NH.POSS=_{P5}GEN]=_{P5}ERG

Lit. “king of the quarters, four of them” = “king of the four quarters”

The numeral with the possessive enclitic may also be used without an immediately preceding noun:

(84) NRVN 1, 224 obv. 8 (Nippur, 21st c.) (P122441)

limmu-ne-ne

{P1}limmu={P3}anenē=_{P5}še

four=3.PL.POSS=TERM

Lit. “for their four” = “for the four of them”

Ordinal numbers are formed from cardinal numbers with a suffix **-/kama(k)/**:

(85) Gudea Cyl. A 23:4 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

ud 7-kam-ma-ka e₂-e im-mi-dab₅

ud 7-kamak='a e=e _{S2}i-_{S4}m-_{S5}b-_{S10}i-_{S11}n-_{S12}dab-_{S14}∅

day 7-ORD=L1 house=L3.NH FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-L3-3.SG.H.A-encircle-3.SG.P

“By the seventh day he had set them (= the stelae) up around the temple.”

Further readings

A general survey of the word classes of Sumerian is provided by Black 2002. On the independent personal pronouns, see Klein 2000 and Attinger 2014. The syntax of constituent questions is discussed in Attinger 2004 and Zólyomi 2014c: 135–148. On demonstrative pronouns, see Woods 2000: 303–314; on the demonstrative enclitic **=/e(n)/**, see Attinger 2014.

For the different constructions with numeral modifiers, see Jagersma 2010: 246–255 and 706–707.

The adverbial was first identified by Attinger (1993: 253–255), who considers it a case, unlike this textbook. An important contribution to its form, spellings, and history is Meyer-Laurin 2012. She argues against the assumption that the adverbial is a kind of derivational formative, but does not rule out that the Sumerian adverbial **=/eš/** was a loan from the Akkadian terminative-adverbial **-iš** (2012:236⁷⁰).

Exercises

5.1 Look up the new words used in the examples of this lesson in Foxvog’s (2016b) or Volk’s (2012) glossary, and learn them.

5.2 Study the examples of this lesson carefully and make yourself familiar with their grammatical analysis.

5.3 Provide the missing parts of the morphemic glossings in the following examples.

a)
mu dumu-ne₂ 3-am₃ ba-gub-ba-še₃
mu s[dumu=ane=ø] PC[3=ø]=am-ø s₅ba-s₁₂gub-s₁₄ø-s₁₅'a=ak=še
name MID-stand-3.SG.S-SUB=GEN=TERM
Lit. "Because his sons that are three (in number) were on duty."

b)
a-ba-am₃ ḡi^šma₂ bi₂-in-du₈
aba=ø=am-ø ma=e s₅b-s₁₀i-s₁₁n-s₁₂du-s₁₄ø
boat=L3.NH 3.SG.NH-L3-3.SG.H.A-caulk-3SG.P
"Who caulked the boat?"

c)
za-gen₇ a-ba an-ga-kalag
za=gen aba=ø s₂a-s₃nga-s₁₂kalag-s₁₄ø
FIN-COOR-strong-3.SG.S
a-ba an-ga-an-da-sa₂
aba=ø s₂a-s₃nga-s₆nn-s₈da-s₁₂sa-s₁₄ø
FIN-COOR-3SG-COM-equal-3SG.S
"Who is as mighty as you, and who rivals you?"

d)
amar-e a-ba-am₃ ba-an-tum₂
amar=e aba=ø=am-ø s₅ba-s₁₁n-s₁₂tum-s₁₄ø
MID-3.SG.H.A-lead-3.SG.P
"Who leads this calf away?"

e)
a-ba-am₃ za-e-me-en
aba=ø=am-ø s[ze=ø]-me-en
s[]=COP-2SG.S
"Who are you?"

5.4 Translate the following expressions into Sumerian. Provide transliteration, morphemic segmentation, and glossing.

- a) 5 shekels of gold
- b) the ruler of two cities (= A)
- c) this temple (= P)
- d) of this canal
- e) in the middle of their own cities
- f) where?
- g) why?
- h) I do not owe you any silver.
- j) Who is this man?
- k) He built the house of his mother quickly.
- l) the three royal sons
- m) in the 3rd temple

5.5 Transliterate the text Gisha-kidu 1 (RIME 1.12.6.1, ex. 01) (Ur, 21st c.) (P222828) (a photo of the text can be found at <http://cdli.ucla.edu/P222828>) with the help of Volk's sign list (2012). Translate the text with the help of either Volk's (2012) or Foxvog's glossary (2016b). Assign morphemic segmentation and glossing to all words, except for the finite verbs. Then go to the ETCSRI edition of the text

(<http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/etcsri/Q001325>), click on the “proofing” link on the left side of the page, and compare your glosses with ETCSRI’s glossing. How could you characterize the text in terms of suspended cliticization?

- 5.6 Transliterate the text Ur-Namma 33 (RIME 3/2.1.1.33, ex. 01) (Ur, 21st c.) (P226641) (a copy of the text can be found at <http://cdli.ucla.edu/P226641>) with the help of Volk’s sign list (2012). Translate the text with the help of either Volk’s (2012) or Foxvog’s glossary (2016b). The text is no. 1 in Volk’s (2012) chrestomathy. Assign morphemic segmentation and glossing to all words, except for the finite verb. Then go to the ETCSRI edition of the text (<http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/etcsri/Q000953>), click on the “proofing” link on the left side of the page, and compare your glosses with ETCSRI’s glossing.

Lesson 6: The verbal template

The finite verbal form is the most important constituent of the clause in Sumerian. In addition to the modality, voice, tense, and direction of the verbal event, it may also indicate the syntactic function of up to four of the verbal participants, even when no noun phrase or independent pronoun is present in the clause. This lesson gives an overview of the structure and functioning of the Sumerian finite verb. The detailed description of the functions of the morphemes it may consist of can be found in the subsequent lessons of the textbook.

6.1 The general structure of the finite verbal form

Finite verbal forms in Sumerian are distinguished by the large number of affixes that can be attached to a verbal stem. These affixes and the verbal stem may be arranged into 15 structural positions or slots on distributional grounds. There are eleven slots before the stem, which itself fills slot 12 (henceforth, S12) and there are three slots after the stem. Unlike in German or English, where only the subject is cross-referenced with an affix on the verbal form, Sumerian verbal forms may cross-reference up to four participants of the verb. Table 6.1. below gives an overview of the affixes' functions.

Slot 1	MODAL prefix (ha), negative particle, prefix of ANTERIORITY, STEM (in imperative forms)
Slot 2	FINITE-MARKER prefix, MODAL prefixes (all the other)
Slot 3	COORDINATOR prefix
Slot 4	VENTIVE (cislocative) prefix
Slot 5	MIDDLE prefix or the 3.SG.NH PRONOMINAL prefix /b/ (specifying the person, gender and number of the first in the sequence of adverbial prefixes)
Slot 6	INITIAL PRONOMINAL prefix (= IPP) (specifying the person, gender and number of the first in the sequence of adverbial prefixes)
Slot 7	Adverbial I: DATIVE prefix
Slot 8	Adverbial II: COMITATIVE prefix
Slot 9	Adverbial III: ABLATIVE or TERMINATIVE prefix
Slot 10	Adverbial IV: LOCATIVE1, LOCATIVE2, or LOCATIVE3 prefix
Slot 11	FINAL PRONOMINAL PREFIX (= FPP) (referring to A or P, depending on the tense, or LOCATIVE3)
Slot 12	STEM
Slot 13	PRESENT-FUTURE MARKER (<i>in intransitive verbs</i>)
Slot 14	PRONOMINAL SUFFIX (referring A, S, or P depending on the tense)
Slot 15	SUBORDINATOR

Table 6.1: The verbal template

The finite verb is almost always the last constituent of the clause; only in literary texts may a constituent stand behind it.

6.2 The prefixes of S11–15

S11 and S14 contain pronominal affixes which may cross-reference the Agent, the Subject, and the Patient of the finite verb. The syntactic function of these verbal participants is mainly indicated by the position of the affixes that cross-reference them; so, e.g., in the present-future conjugation the pronominal suffix in S13 cross-references A and S, while the final pronominal prefix in S11 cross-

references P. S12 contains the verbal stem. S13 contains the present-future marker suffix */ed/*, which occurs in the intransitive present-future forms. The morphemes of S11–S14 are involved in the expression of the grammatical categories of verbal tense and verbal plurality. The detailed description of their functioning is the subject of Lessons 8 and 9.

S15 contains the subordinator suffix */’a/*. It changes the clause of the finite verb into a subordinate clause, which may then function as a relative or a complement clause. The subordinator suffix is discussed in Lesson 7.

6.3 The adverbial prefixes

The prefixes of S5–10 are involved in the verbal cross-reference of participants in an adverbial case; see also Table 3.3 in Lesson 3, section 3.1 above. These participants may be cross-referenced either by a composite or by a simple adverbial prefix.

A composite adverbial prefix is composed of i) a pronominal prefix and ii) an adverbial prefix. The former specifies the person, gender, and number, while the latter identifies the syntactic function of the prefix’s referent. In ex. (86) below, the indirect object of the verb *šum₂* “to give” is in the dative case. In the verbal prefix-chain this participant is cross-referenced by a composite dative prefix that consists of an initial pronominal prefix */nn/* in S6 and a dative prefix */a/* in S7 (both in bold).

(86) Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta 420 (ETCSL 1.8.2.3)

en-me-er-kara₂-ra ^den-ki-ke₄ ɲeštug₂ mu-na-an-šum₂
 enmerkar=**ra** enkik=e ɲeštug=ø _{S4}mu-_{S6}**nn**-_{S7}**a**-_{S11}n-_{S12}šum-_{S14}ø
 PN=DAT.H DN=ERG ear=ABS VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.A-give-3.SG.P

“The god Enki gave wisdom to Enmerkar.”

The relationship between the noun phrase in the dative and the composite adverbial prefix is schematized in Table 6.2. It shows that the function of the dative adverbial prefix */a/* corresponds to the function of the dative case-marker *=/ra/*, both serve to indentify the syntactic function of the verbal participant.

	NOUN PHRASE	ADVERBIAL PREFIX
REFERENTIAL EXPRESSION	Enmerkara	_{S6} / nn /
CASE-MARKER	=/ra/	_{S7} / a /

Table 6.2

A simple adverbial verbal prefix consists only of an adverbial prefix without a pronominal prefix. The existence of simple adverbial prefixes follows from the structure of the verbal prefix-chain: there is only one pronominal slot, S6, before the adverbial prefixes (this rule, however, is valid only with some qualifications, for which see below). So, if, for example, the prefix-chain contains a dative prefix in S7, then any adverbial prefix following the dative prefix must occur as a simple adverbial prefix, i.e., without a pronominal prefix. In ex. (87) below, for example, the locative2 prefix in S10 (in bold) occurs as a simple prefix, because it is preceded by a composite dative prefix.

(87) Gudea Cyl. A 9:10 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

ḡarza-ḡa₂ mul an kug-ba
 ḡarza=ḡu=ak mul an kug=be='a
 regulation=1.SG.POSS=GEN star sky holy=3.SG.NH.POSS=L2.NH

gu₃ ga-mu-ra-a-de₂
 gu=∅ s₂ga-s₄mu-s₆r-s₇a-s₁₀e-s₁₂de
 voice=ABS MOD-VEN-2.SG-DAT-L2-pour

“Let me tell you the pure stars of heaven indicating my regulations!”

In contrast, the locative2 prefix occurs as a composite adverbial prefix in ex. (88) below. It consists of an initial pronominal prefix /nn/ in S6 and a locative prefix /i/ in S10 (both in bold). In ex. (88) the locative2 prefix in S10 is the first adverbial prefix of the finite verb: it is not preceded by any other adverbial prefix, and there is no other morpheme between it and the initial pronominal prefix in S6. Consequently, the initial pronominal prefix specifies the person, gender, and number of the verbal participant in the locative2 case.

(88) En-metena 1 6:21-23 (RIME 1.9.5.1) (Lagash, 25th c.) (Q001103)

^dnin-ḡir₂-su-ke₄, sa-šuš-gal u₃-ni-šuš
 ninḡirsuk=e sašušgal=∅ s₂u-s₆**nn**-s₁₀**i**-s₁₁n-s₁₂šuš-s₁₄∅
 DN=ERG battle.net=ABS ANT-3.SG.H-L2-3.SG.H.A-cover-3.SG.P
 “After Ningirsu had thrown a battle-net on him (= the Ummaite), ...”

It follows from the above description that the dative prefix occurs always as a composite prefix, as its slot (S7) is the nearest to the slot of the initial pronominal prefix (S6). Other adverbial prefixes may have either composite or simple form. Simple adverbial prefixes always refer to a 3rd ps. non-human participant.

The pronominal prefix of a composite adverbial prefix is as a rule a morpheme in S6. There exist, however, three exceptions to this rule:

i) There is no initial pronominal prefix in S6 cross-referencing a 3rd ps. sg. non-human verbal participant, but a /b/ in S5, which is diachronically related to the middle prefix, is used in this function. The mutually exclusive distribution of the middle prefix and the 3rd ps. sg. non-human pronominal prefix has the consequence that no composite adverbial prefix with a 3rd ps. sg. non-human reference may occur in a verbal form with a middle prefix. So, in ex. (89) below, the comitative may occur in a composite form, as its 3rd ps. sg. human pronominal prefix occupies S6, but in ex. (90) below the locative2 must occur in a simple form because of the presence of the middle prefix. The mutually exclusive distribution of the middle prefix and the 3rd ps. sg. non-human pronominal prefix explains that forms like ***ba-ba-šum**₂ [**ba-b-a-šum**-∅ = MID-3.SG.NH-DAT-give-3.SG.S], approx. “was given to it” are grammatically incorrect and are not attested.

(89) UET 3, 335 rev. 1' (Ur, 21st c.) (P136656)

ud ba-nu₂-a ba-an-da-ḡar
 ud ba-nu-∅-'a='a s₅ba-s₆n-s₈da-s₁₂ḡar-s₁₄∅
 day MID-lie-3.SG.S-SUB=L1 MID-3.SG.H-COM-place-3.SG.S

“On the day she/he was buried, (various golden objects) were put next to her/him.”

(90) Nisaba 8, 365 rev. 7 (Drehem, 21st c.) (P321037)

ma₂-a ba-a-ṇa₂-ar
 ma=³a S₅ba⁻S₁₀e⁻S₁₂ṇar⁻S₁₄∅
 boat=L2.NH MID-L2-place-3.SG.S
 “(Various animals) were put on the boat.”

In ex. (91) below S5 is used by the middle prefix, consequently the ablative prefix occurs in a simple form, without any pronominal prefix.

(91) Gudea Cyl. A 19:13 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

bisaṇ u₃-šub-ba-ta sig₄ ba-ta-il₂
 bisaṇ ušub=ak=ta sig=∅ S₅ba⁻S₉ta⁻S₁₁n⁻S₁₂il⁻S₁₄∅
 basket brick.mold=GEN=ABL brick MID-ABL-3.SG.H.A-raise-3.SG.P
 “He lifted the brick out of the frame of the mould.”

ii) If the composite form of a dative, locative2, or locative3 (i.e. of cases that may indicate motion towards a destination) refers to a 1st ps. sg. participant, then the pronominal element is not the 1st ps. sg. form of the initial pronominal prefix in S6, but the ventive prefix in S4. In ex. (92) below, the ventive prefix in S4 precedes the dative prefix in S6, and the two morphemes form a composite adverbial prefix with a 1st ps. sg. reference.

(92) The victory of Utu-hegal 29 (ETCSL 2.1.6)

gu-ti-um^{ki} ^den-lil₂-le ma-an-šum₂
 gutium=∅ enlil=e S₄m⁻S₇a⁻S₁₁n⁻S₁₂šum⁻S₁₄∅
 GN=ABS DN=ERG VEN-DAT-3.SG.H.A-give-3.SG.P
 “Enlil has given Gutium to me.”

iii) The locative1 prefix /**ni**/ in S10 has no composite form, but only simple form: it always occurs without a pronominal prefix, and always cross-references a 3rd ps. non-human participant.

The adverbial cases and their verbal markers are discussed in detail in Lessons 12–14. The ventive prefix in S4, the 3rd ps. sg. non-human pronominal prefix in S5, and the initial pronominal prefixes in S6 are discussed in Lesson 11.

6.4 The prefixes of S1–5

The first slot of the finite verbal form contains the prefix of negation and the modal prefix /**ḥa**/. Their function is discussed in the last lesson of the textbook, Lesson 16. The prefix of anteriority of S1 is involved in indicating the relative time of the verbal event in Sumerian, it is discussed in Lesson 9, section 9.2.

S2 may contain all the modal prefixes, except for /**ḥa**/, and the finite prefixes. The modal prefixes will be treated in Lesson 16, section 16.2 below, together with the prefix /**ḥa**/.

The finite-marker prefix has a complicated history that is obscured by the phenomenon that in many morphological environments it went lost. In the Sumerian texts we know, in many verbal forms it only indicates that the verbal form functions as the predicate of the clause and not as a modifier of a noun.

The coordinator prefix in S3 functions as a clause coordinator. The main function of the ventive or cislocative prefix in S4 is to indicate a motion towards a deictic center that may be the location of the speech event or one of the speech

act participants, the speaker or the addressee. The middle prefix on S5 indicates that the verbal action or state affects the grammatical subject or his interests. The prefixes of S2–5, except for the modal prefixes, are discussed in Lesson 11.

6.5 Observations on the functioning of the finite verbal form

The Sumerian verbal template consists of fifteen slots. The existence of a relatively large number of structural positions does not entail that a finite verb should have a morpheme in every slot. In fact no finite verbal form is attested in which all slots are filled with a morpheme. The shortest finite verbal form contains at least three morphemes: a finite-marker in S2, the stem in S12, and a pronominal suffix cross-referencing S in S14 as in ex. (93) below.

(93) Gudea Cyl. A 12:12 (Lagash, 22nd. c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

gu₃-de₂-a i₃-zig
 gudea=Ø S₂i-S₁₂zig-S₁₄Ø
 PN=ABS FIN-rise-3.SG.S
 “Gudea woke up.”

The number of morphemes in the longest finite verbal forms is eight, see e.g., in ex. (94) below, or nine, see, e.g., in ex. (95) below.

(94) En-metena 2 3:5–4:2 (RIME 1.9.5.2) (Lagash, 25th c.) (P222546)

id₂-nun-ta, mu-bi-kur-ra,
 idnun=ta mubikura=še
 WN=ABL GN=TERM

e-na-ta-ni-e₃

S₂i-S₆nn-S₇a-S₉ta-S₁₀ni-S₁₁n-S₁₂e-S₁₄Ø
 FIN-3.SG.H-DAT-ABL-L1-3.SG.H.A-leave-3.SG.P

“(For Ningirsu, his master who loves him, En-metena) extended it (= the boundary levee) from the Idnun canal until Mubikura.”

(95) En-metena 1 6:15–16 (RIME 1.9.5.1) (Lagash, 25th c.) (Q001103)

a-šag⁴ašag tum₃-de₃, am₆-ta-bala-e-da
 ašag=Ø tum-ed=e S₂a-S₄m-S₅b-S₉ta-S₁₀e-S₁₂bala-S₁₃ed-S₁₄Ø-S₁₅'a
 field=ABS bring-PF=DAT.NH FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-ABL-L2-CROSS-PF-3.SG.S-SUB
 “who crosses (the boundary levees) in order to take away fields”

As expected, it is not the case either that all morphemes occur with the same frequency. An examination of the relative frequency of the morphemes of slots 1–10 (Zólyomi 2013) resulted in Chart 6.1 below.⁹

⁹ The examination was based on the 2135 morphologically analyzed finite verbal forms which were available at the website of Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Royal Inscriptions (<http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/etcsri>) on 1 August 2013.

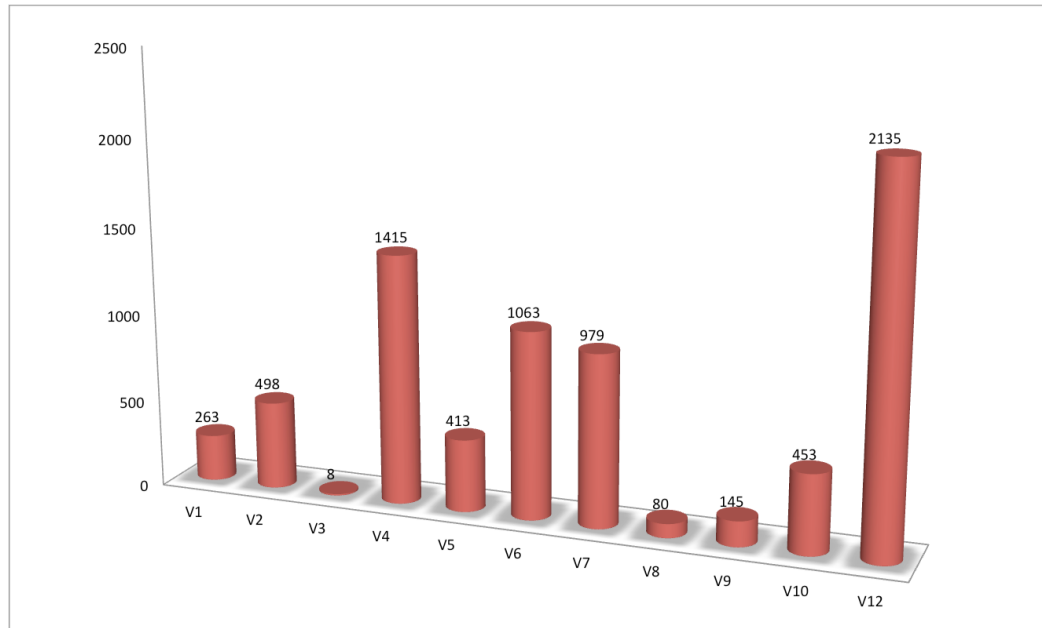


Chart 6.1: The frequency of the verbal prefixes

The chart shows that in the corpus of the royal inscriptions the most frequently used verbal prefix among the prefixes of slots 1-10 is the ventive in S4. Among the 2135 finite verbal forms 1415 contained a ventive prefix, which is 66 % of all finite verbal forms in the corpus.

263 finite verbal forms contained a modal or negative prefix in S1 (= 12 %). Among the 263 forms, 59 were negated forms with the prefix /nu/-.

The most frequent prefix among the adverbial prefixes was the dative in S7: 979 (= 46 %) finite verbal forms of the corpus contained a dative prefix. The second most frequent were the various locative prefixes in S10: 453 (= 21 %).

Another study (Zólyomi 2013b) examined the co-occurrences of the adverbial prefixes based on 2138 finite verbal forms available at ETCSRI on 3 August 2013. Table 6.3 below shows the findings of the study in detail.

	DAT	COM	ABL	TERM	L1	L2	L3(V10)	L3(V11)
ALONE	857	66	83	54	186	209	58	16
DAT	—	3	9	13	80	10	0	2
COM		—	0	0	8	5	0	2
ABL			—	0	2	3	0	0
TERM				—	0	0	0	0
L1					—	0	0	1
L2						—	0	0
L3(V10)							—	0
L3(V11)								—

Table 6.3: Co-occurrences of the adverbial prefixes

The study found that among the 2138 finite verbal forms in the corpus, 1529 (72 %) contained a single adverbial prefix, 138 (6.45 %) contained two, and only 3 (0.14 %) contained three prefixes. It concluded that Sumerian finite verbal forms in this corpus typically contain only one adverbial prefix. If they contain

two, then one of them is the dative in the great majority of occurrences. Finite verbal forms with three adverbial prefixes (see, e.g., ex. [94] above) are extremely rare. Chart 6.2 below visualize the data of Table 6.2.

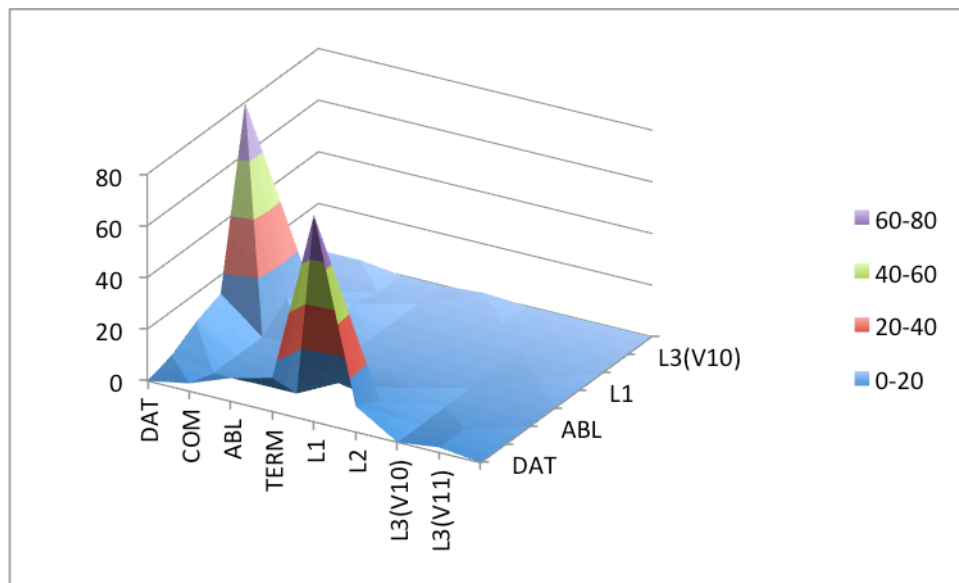


Chart 6.2

The two peaks of the chart indicate that in this corpus a verbal form with two adverbial prefixes typically contains an adverbial prefix that specifies the location of the verbal event, and the dative, which cross-references the beneficiary; note that this corpus contains a great number of votive inscriptions. If the verbal form contains a third adverbial prefix, then as a rule it refers not to the location of the event but has some other function, as in ex. (96) below, where the ablative basically functions to modify the meaning of the verb similarly to the verbal prefixes in German, e.g. “*herauskommen*”.

(96) Gudea Cyl. B 18:12–13 (Lagash, 22nd. c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

iri-e ^dutu-gin₇, ki-ša-ra
 iri=e utu=gin kišar=³a
 city=DAT.NH DN=EQU earth=L2.NH

im-ma-ta-a-e₃

{S2}i-{S4}m-_{S5}b-_{S7}a-_{S9}ta-_{S10}e-_{S12}e-_{S14}Ø

FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-DAT-ABL-L2-leave-3.SG.S

“Like Utu, he (= Gudea) rose on the horizon for the city.”

The verbal participants of the finite verb are cross-referenced with the adverbial prefixes and the pronominal affixes of S11 and S14. There is, however, no one-to-one correspondence between the verbal affixes and the case-marked noun phrases of the clause. Two types of discrepancies may be distinguished:

- i) *The noun phrase in an adverbial case is not cross-referenced with any adverbial prefix*

The co-occurrence between the noun phrase in the dative, the comitative, and the locative cases (used in a local meaning) is quite strict. A noun phrase in any of these cases occurs as a rule together with a corresponding adverbial prefix in the verbal prefix-chain (unless the structure of the prefix makes it impossible, see

Lesson 14, sections 14.3 and 14.4 below). In case of the ablative and terminative the co-occurrence is much less strict. Noun phrases in the ablative or terminative may quite often occur without a corresponding adverbial prefix, see Lesson 13 below. This is obviously a semantic issue, a detailed examination of the phenomenon is needed.

Starting from around the end of the 3rd millennium BCE the correspondence between noun phrases and adverbial prefixes is often lost: the nominal case-markers are influenced by the corresponding Akkadian idioms but the “original” adverbial prefix is preserved, see, e.g., ex. (306) in Lesson 12 below.

ii) The adverbial prefix has no nominal counterpart in the clause

This phenomenon is quite common, because both the adverbial prefixes and the pronominal affixes of S11 and S14 may function as anaphoric (or occasionally, as cataphoric) pronouns. These affixes are therefore *not* agreement markers: they may occur either without or with a coreferential noun phrase in the clause. They may exceptionally also occur with independent pronouns, but only to express a contrast.

The adverbial prefixes and the pronominal affixes of S11 and S14 function similarly to the pronouns of other languages, a verbal participant introduced earlier in the discourse may be encoded only with a verbal affix in Sumerian.

In ex. (97) the Agent (= Ningirsu) is cross-referenced by the prefix /n/ in S12, and the verbal participant in locative2 (= the city of Umma) is cross-referenced by a composite adverbial prefix /bi/ in S5 and S10. The noun phrase in the ergative, and the noun phrase in the locative2 are “missing” from the sentence. Both of these verbal participants were mentioned in the text previously, they are therefore referred to only by pronouns, as in other languages. The independent personal pronouns of the English translation correspond to the verbal affixes. Some scholars translate sentences like ex. (97) with pronouns in brackets, assuming and indicating that they are actually not present in the Sumerian sentence. This assumption is unfounded, the pronouns are there, but they are part of the finite verbal form.

(97) En-metena 1 1:28–29 (RIME 1.9.5.1) (Lagash, 25th c.) (Q001103)

inim ^den-lil2-la2-ta sa-šuš-gal bi2-šuš
 inim enlil=ak=ta sašušgal=∅ _{S5}b-_{S10}i-_{S11}n-_{S12}šuš-_{S14}∅
 word DN=GEN=ABL battle.net=ABS 3.SG.NH-L2-3.SG.H.A-cover-3.SG.P

“By the order of Enlil, he (= Ningirsu) threw a battle net on it (= the city Umma).”

Occasionally adverbial prefixes occur without referring to any verbal participant. In this case their function is to modify the meaning of the verb, similarly to the verbal prefixes of German verbs, like *aus-* oder *weggehen*, see, eg., ex. (96) above, and ex. (98) below, in which the ablative prefix modifies the meaning of the verb **sa**₁₀ “to barter” to “to sell”.

(98) TMH NF 1-2, 53 obv. 8 (Ur, 21st c.) (P134365)

ni2-te-ne-ne ba-ra-an-sa₁₀-aš₂
 nite=anenē=∅ _{S5}ba-_{S9}ta-_{S11}n-_{S12}sa-_{S14}eš
 self=3.PL.POSS=ABS MID-ABL-3.SG.H.A-barter-3.PL

“They sold themselves.”

Further readings

The rule that only the first of the adverbial prefixes of a finite verb may be preceded by a pronominal prefix, i.e., that a finite verb may only contain one *composite* adverbial prefix, was explicitly formulated by Joachim Krecher (1985: 133¹) for the first time; see also Attinger 1993: 206 (§134 R1). The consequences of Krecher's rule are discussed in Zólyomi 1999: 220–224.

On the anaphoric use of the adverbial prefixes and the pronominal affixes of S11 and S14, see Zólyomi 2010: 580–583.

Exercises

6.1 Look up the new words used in the examples of this lesson in Foxvog's (2016b) or Volk's (2012) glossary, and learn them.

6.2 Study the examples of this lesson carefully and make yourself familiar with their grammatical analysis.

6.3 Identify the slots in the following prefix chains. Find all the adverbial prefixes and decide whether they are composite or simple.

a) $_{S4}mu-_{S6}n-_{S8}da-_{S12}ak-_{S14}e$

g) $_{S4}mu-_{S6}nn-_{S7}a-_{S10}ni-_{S11}n-_{S12}du-_{S14}\emptyset$

b) $_{S1}ha-_{S2}i-_{S6}mē-_{S7}a-_{S11}b-_{S12}šum-_{S14}e$

h) $_{S2}a-_{S6}r-_{S7}a-_{S12}gig-_{S14}\emptyset$

c) $_{S4}mu-_{S6}nnē-_{S7}a-_{S9}ta-_{S12}e-_{S14}\emptyset$

i) $_{S1}ha-_{S4}mu-_{S6}'-_{S8}da-_{S11}n-_{S12}gub-_{S14}\emptyset$

d) $_{S2}i-_{S6}n-_{S8}da-_{S11}n-_{S12}tuku-_{S14}\emptyset$

j) $_{S4}mu-_{S10}ni-_{S11}n-_{S12}il-_{S14}\emptyset$

e) $_{S2}i-_{S10}n-_{S12}gu-_{S14}enē$

k) $_{S4}mu-_{S6}n-_{S9}ši-_{S11}n-_{S12}bar-_{S14}\emptyset$

f) $_{S5}ba-_{S9}ši-_{S11}n-_{S12}nu-_{S14}\emptyset$

6.4 Assign the glossed morphemes to slots and try to translate the verbal forms on the basis of the glosses.

a) FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-DAT-give-3.SG.A

b) VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.NH.P-speak.PF-3.SG.A

c) ANT-VEN-3.SG.NH-DAT-3.SG.NH.A-give-3.SG.P

d) FIN-3.SG.NH-ABL-3.SG.H.A-place-3.SG.P

e) VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-L1-3.SG.H.A-build-3.SG.P

f) ANT-VEN-3.SG.H.-DAT-COM-L1-enter-2.SG.S

6.5 Try to pair the verbal forms with the translations. You do not have to know the meaning of the stem, just concentrate on the slots and the information hidden in the gloss.

$_{S2}na-_{S11}n-_{S12}sa\sim sa-_{S14}en$
MOD-3.SG.H.P-stem~PF-2.SG.A

“They stepped forward to him with”

$_{S1}ha-_{S2}i-_{S12}til-_{S14}\emptyset$
MOD-FIN-stem-3.SG.S

“He also demolished it.”

$_{S1}u-_{S4}mu-_{S6}nn-_{S7}a-_{S8}da-_{S10}n-_{S12}kur-_{S14}en$
ANT-VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-COM-L1.SYN-stem-2.SG.S

“After he had thrown it on him,”

{S2}a-{S5}b-_{S9}ta-_{S11}n-_{S12}gu-_{S14}ø-_{S15}'a
FIN-3.SG.NH-ABL-3.SG.H.A-stem-3.SG.P-SUB

“Do not buy her!”

{S1}u-{S6}nn-_{S10}i-_{S11}n-_{S12}šuš-_{S14}ø
ANT-3.SG.H-L2-3.SG.H.A-stem-3.SG.P

“It cannot be tired.”

{S2}i-{S3}nga-_{S11}n-_{S12}sig-_{S14}ø
FIN-COOR-3.SG.A-stem-3.SG.P

“From which he consumed it.”

{S2}i-{S6}nnē-_{S9}ši-_{S11}n-_{S12}sa-_{S14}ø
FIN-3.PL-TERM-3.SG.H.A-stem-3.SG.P

“After you had entered to her into it with them,”

{S4}mu-{S6}nn-_{S7}a-_{S8}da-_{S12}šug-_{S14}eš
VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-COM-stem.PL-3.PL.S

“He bought her from them (lit. ‘bartered for them’).”

{S1}u-{S11}n-_{S12}taka-_{S14}ø
ANT-3.SG.H.A-stem-3.SG.P

“May it come to an end!”

{S2}nan-{S12}kuš-_{S14}ø
MOD-stem-3.SG.S

“After he left her,”

6.6 Transliterate the text Ur-Namma 4 (RIME 3/2.1.1.4, ex. 01) (Ur, 21st c.) (P226639) (a photo of the text can be found at <http://cdli.ucla.edu/P226639>) with the help of Volk’s sign list (2012). Translate the text with the help of either Volk’s (2012) or Foxvog’s glossary (2016b). The text is no. 3 in Volk’s (2012) chrestomathy. Assign morphemic segmentation and glossing to all words. Then go to the ETCSRI edition of the text (<http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/etcsri/Q000936>), click on the “proofing” link on the left side of the page, and compare your glosses with ETCSRI’s glossing.

6.7 Transliterate the text Gudea 64 (RIME 3/1.1.7.64, ex. 01) (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P234557) (a photo of the text can be found at <http://cdli.ucla.edu/P234557>) with the help of Volk’s sign list (2012). Translate the text with the help of either Volk’s (2012) or Foxvog’s glossary (2016b). The text is no. 4 in Volk’s (2012) chrestomathy. Assign morphemic segmentation and glossing to all words. Then go to the ETCSRI edition of the text (<http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/etcsri/Q000921>), click on the “proofing” link on the left side of the page, and compare your glosses with ETCSRI’s glossing.

Lesson 7: Non-finite verbal forms and relative clauses

The first section of this lesson discusses the forms and functions of the non-finite verbal forms. It is followed by a section on the subordinator suffix, which transforms the clause of a verb into a subordinate clause. The subject of the third section is the relative clause, which may be formed either from a non-finite verbal form or from a subordinate clause with a finite verb in Sumerian. The lesson concludes with two sections on constructions involving non-finite verbal forms. The first functions as a purpose clause, the second as a temporal clause.

7.1 Non-finite verbal forms

Three forms of the non-finite verbal form can be distinguished on formal grounds:

$_{PT}STEM-\emptyset$ (stem-TL)	tenseless non-finite verbal form
$_{PT}STEM^{-3}a$ (stem-PT)	preterite non-finite verbal form
$_{PF}STEM-ed$ (stem-PF)	present-future non-finite verbal form

The first two forms use the preterite stem, while the third form uses the present-future stem of the verb, supposing the verb has one. In all three forms the stem may undergo a plural-reduplication, see, e.g. ex. (117) below. Non-finite verbal forms can only be prefixed with the negative prefix /**nu**/. The opposition between the preterite and the present-future is maintained only with verbs expressing an action. Non-finite verbal forms expressing a state always use the preterite form.

Future forms often express modal meanings. This is also true about the present-future non-finite verbal form which may express the modal meaning of necessity, obligation, see e.g., ex. (99) below, ability or inability, see, e.g., ex. (118) below:

(99) NG 209 obv. 2:16–17 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P134582)

nam-erim ₂ -be ₂	ku ₅ -ru-dam
namerim=be=∅	kur-ed=∅=am-∅
oath=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS cut-PF=ABS=COP-3.SG.S	

“This is to be taken an oath about.”

The preterite and the present-future non-finite verbal form consist of the verbal stem and a suffix which is the marker of tense. The tenseless non-finite verbal form consists only of the verbal stem without any material suffix, indicating iconically that it is a form which expresses the verbal state or action without any temporal reference point as permanent and essential. The expression lugal **gabari nu-tuku** means, for example, “a king who has no rival”. The use of a preterite non-finite verbal form **nu-tuku-a** would refer to a king who until a given point of time has not had or at a given point of time does not have a rival.

Sumerian is a language without a distinguishable word class of adjectives. Adjectival concepts are expressed with non-finite verbal stems or with structures like the modifying genitive construction, see Lesson 4, section 4.1 above.

Verbal stems with an adjectival meaning (e.g., **dugud** “heavy”, **tur** “small”, **sukud** “high”, **dug₃** “sweet”) occur most frequently as tenseless non-finite verbal forms. They occur in fewer contexts than a verb expressing an action. This is, however, the consequence of their meaning which affects in which grammatical forms they can occur, but does not justify the postulation of a separate word class of adjectives in Sumerian.

Tenseless non-finite verbal forms are one of the main sources of compound nouns. The following compound nouns are based on headless tenseless non-finite verbal forms: **dub-sar** “scribe” < **dub sar** (**dub=Ø sar-Ø** : tablet=ABS write-TL) “he who writes tablets”, **ku₃-dim₂** “goldsmith” < **ku₃ dim₂** (**kug=Ø dim-Ø** : metal=ABS fashion-TL) “he who fashions metal”.

Adjective-like compound constructions are normally based on tenseless non-finite verbal forms: **usu tuku** (**usu=Ø tuku-Ø** : power=ABS have-TL) “powerful”, **igi ḡal₂** (**igi=Ø ḡal-Ø** : eye=ABS exist-TL) “wise”.

Compound verbs with nominal parts that derive from non-finite verbal forms also use tenseless non-finite verbal forms: **š_u-tag — dug₄** “to decorate” < **š_u=Ø tag-Ø=Ø** : hand=ABS touch=TL=ABS “to do hand touching”, see also ex. (173) below in Lesson 9, section 9.3.

Sumerian non-finite verbal forms can function both as verbal adjectives and as verbal nouns. Unlike in many other languages, these two functions are not distinguished morphologically in Sumerian. Used as a verbal adjective they modify a head noun in P2 of a noun phrase, or form a predicate with the copula, see, e.g., ex. (99) above, exx. (100) and (130) below.

(100) BM 106451 7 (Umma, 21st c.) (P200743)

lu₅-am₃

lu-Ø=Ø=am-Ø

false-TL=ABS=COP-3.SG.S

“(Lu-Suena declared:) ‘This is false!’”

Used as a verbal noun, they function as nouns that take cases. In ex. (101) below the present-future non-finite form of the verb **du₃** “to build”, together with its object, **e₂** “house, temple”, functions as a verbal noun. It is the left-dislocated possessor of the word **ḡiškim** “sign”, and consequently is in the genitive.

(101) Gudea Cyl. A 9:9 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

e₂-ḡu₁₀

du₃-da

e=ḡu=Ø

du-ed=ak

house=1.SG.POSS=ABS

build-PF=GEN

ḡiškim-be₂

ga-ra-ab-šum₂

ḡiškim=be=Ø

s₂ga-s₆r-s₇a-s₁₁b-s₁₂šum

sign=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS

MOD-2.SG.-DAT-3.SG.NH.P-give

“I promise to give you the ominous sign concerning the building of my temple.”

In ex. (102) below again the present-future non-finite form of the verb **du₃** “to build”, together with its object, **e₂** “house, temple”, functions as a verbal noun. Here, however, it functions as a non-finite complement clause of the verb “to say”, and is in the locative2 case.

(102) Gudea Cyl. A 4:20 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

e₂-a-ne₂ du₃-da ma-an-dug₄
 e=ane=∅ du-ed='a s₄m⁻s₇a⁻s₁₁n⁻s₁₂dug⁻s₁₄∅
 house=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS build-PF=L2.NH VEN-DAT-3.SG.H.A-speak-3.SG.P
 “He ordered me to build his temple.”

In ex. (103) below the preterite non-finite form of the verb **sa₁₀** “to barter”, together with its object **sa₇** “slave”, functions as a verbal noun. It is the possessor of the expression **lu₂ inim-ma** “witness”, and consequently is in the genitive.

(103) NG 51 rev. 3 (Umma, 21st c. BCE) (P131780)

lu₂ inim-ma sa₇ sa₁₀-a-še₃ mu-ne-ra-e₃
 p₁[lu inim=ak] p₃[sa₇=∅ sa-'a=ak]=še s₄mu⁻s₆nnē⁻s₈a⁻s₉ta⁻s₁₂e⁻s₁₄∅
 p₁[man word=GEN] p₃[head=ABS buy-PT=GEN]=TERM VEN-3.PL-DAT-ABL-leave-3.SG.S
 “(Two persons) came forward as witnesses against them that the slave had been bought.”

Non finite verbal forms that function as a verbal adjective and modify a head noun in P2 of a noun phrase are discussed in section 7.3 of this lesson as examples of non-finite relative clauses.

7.2 The subordinator suffix (Slot 15)

The last structural position of the finite verb, S15, accommodates the subordinator suffix **-/’a/**. Although it attaches to the verb as the last constituent of the clause, it affects in fact not the verb but the clause. It transforms the clause of the verb into a subordinate clause which may then function either as a complement clause, having the properties of a noun and taking a case, or as a relative clause, occupying P2, the position of the modifier in a noun phrase. The finite relative clauses are discussed in section 7.3 of this lesson.

Exx. (104) and (105) below are examples of subordinate clauses functioning as complement clauses. In both examples the subordinate clauses function as possessors. In ex. (104) the subordinate clause is a left-dislocated possessor, while in ex. (105) the subordinate clause occupies P3 of the noun phrase whose head is the expression **lu₂ inim-ma** “witness”. Note the structural similarity between ex. (103) and ex. (105): in the former the possessor is a non-finite verbal form used as a verbal noun, in the latter the possessor is a subordinate clause used as a complement clause.

(104) Iri-kagina 1 12:23–28 (RIME 1.9.9.1) (Lagash, 24th c.)

nu-siki nu-ma-kuš, lu₂ a₂ tuku,
 nusiki numakuš=∅ lu a=∅ tuku-∅=ra
 orphan widow=ABS person arm=ABS have-TL-DAT.H
 nu-na-ṣa₂-ṣa₂-a ^dnin-ṣir₂-su-da, iri-ka-gi-na-ke₄,
 s₁nu⁻s₂i⁻s₆nn⁻s₇a⁻s₁₁n⁻s₁₂ṣa⁻ṣa⁻s₁₄e⁻s₁₅'a=ak ninṣirsuk=da irikagenak=e
 NEG-FIN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.P-place-3.SG.A-SUB=GEN DN=COM PN=ERG
 inim-be₂ ka e-da-keše₂
 inim=be=e kag=∅ s₂i⁻s₆n⁻s₈da⁻s₁₁n⁻s₁₂keše⁻s₁₄∅
 word=3.SG.NH.POSS=L3.NH mouth=ABS FIN-3.SG.H-COM-3.SG.H.A-bind-3.SG.P
 “Iri-kagina made an agreement with Ningirsu that he would not surrender the orphan or the widow to the powerful.”

(105) NG 11 obv. 13–14 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P111315)

lu₂ inim-ma ^{geš}kiri₆,p₁[lu inim=ak] p₃[kiri=ø]p₁[person word=GEN] p₃[garden=ABS]ur-^dnanše-ra ba-na-gid₂-da-meur-nanšek=ra s₅ba-s₆nn-s₇a-s₁₂gid-s₁₄ø-s₁₅'a=ak]=ø=me-eš

PN=DAT.H MID-3.SG.H-DAT-long-3.SG.S-SUB=GEN]=ABS-COP-3.PL.S

“They were the witnesses that the garden was measured out for Ur-Nanshe.”

Causal subordination may be expressed with a construction involving a subordinate finite clause used as a complement clause: p₁**bar** p₃[**complement clause**]_{p₅}=ak='a (outside [complement clause]=GEN=L2.NH) or p₁**mu** p₃[**complement clause**]_{p₅}=ak=še (name [complement clause]=GEN=TERM) “because of ...” as in ex. (106) below (with **bar**), and in ex. (229) (with **mu**) in Lesson 11, section 11.4 below.

(106) En-metena 1 2:27 (RIME 1.9.5.1) (Lagash, 25th c.) (Q001103)

bar še-be₂ nu-da-su₃-su₃-da-kabar še=be=ø s₁nu-s₂i-s₅b-s₈da-s₁₂su~su-s₁₃ed-s₁₄ø-s₁₅'a=ak='a

outside grain=DEM=ABS NEG-FIN-3.SG.NH-COM-repay~PF-PF-3.SG.S-SUB=GEN=L2.NH

“As this (amount of) barley cannot not be repaid,”

7.3 Relative clauses

A relative clause states something about a head noun which is coreferent with one of the participants in the relative clause. In Sumerian a head noun may be modified by two varieties of relative clauses: clauses containing a finite verb and clauses containing a non-finite verb. In both cases the relative clause follows the noun. In the following, the first type will be referred to as a *finite relative clause* and the second type as a *non-finite relative clause*.

In finite relative clauses the finite verb of the clause is suffixed as a rule with the subordinator suffix -/(')a/ in S15, and the subordinate clause occupies the modifier position of the noun phrase (= P2) whose head (= P1) is the relativized noun, as in exx. (107)–(111) below. In non-finite relative clauses the verbal form is a non-finite verbal form: in exx. (113), (114), and (117) a tenseless, in exx. (112), (115) and (116) a preterite, and in ex. (118) a present-future non-finite verb. The non-finite relative clause also occupies the modifier position of the noun phrase whose head is the relativized noun.

The A of the non-finite verbal form may be expressed either by a noun phrase in the ergative case preceding the verbal form as in ex. (116), or by an noun phrase in the genitive case, as the possessor of the relativized noun as in exx. (112) and (115). The former construction is often called as the *mesanepada*-construction in the literature after the personal name **meš₃-an-ne₂-pad₃-da** (**meš an=e pad-'a** : young.man DN=ERG find-PT “young man chosen by An”).

Less frequently the possessor of the relativized noun expresses the indirect object of the verb as in ex. (117) below, which is a headless non-finite relative clause.

Note that in finite relative clauses the syntactic function of the head noun within the relative clause is marked in Sumerian not with a relative pronoun but with a pronominal affix of the finite verb. In ex. (107) below, for example, the head noun **gur₄-gur₄ kug luḥ-ḥa** “gurgur vessel of purified silver” functions as the source from which the god consumes the oil. This syntactic function is indicated merely by the composite ablative prefix s₅**b-s₉ta** in the verbal prefix-

chain of the subordinate finite verb. The relative clause occupies P2 of the noun phrase, whose head is **gur₄-gur₄ kug luḥ-ḥa**, the relativized noun. The case-marker in P5 marks the syntactic function of the whole noun phrase in the main clause.

(107) En-metena 7 14–16 (RIME 1.9.5.7) (Lagash, 25th c.) (P222539)

gur₄-gur₄ kug luḥ-ḥa i₃ itud^l-da
 p₁[gurgur kug luḥ-'a=ak] p₂[i itud=ak=∅]
 p₁[vessel silver clean-PT=GEN] p₂[oil month=GEN=ABS]
^dnin-ṇir₂-su₂-ke₄ ab-ta-gu₇-a,
 ninṇirsuk=e s₂a-s₅b-s₉ta-s₁₂gu-s₁₄e-s₁₅'a]=p₅∅
 DN=ERG FIN-3.SG.NH-ABL-eat-3.SG.A-SUB]=p₅ABS

mu-na-dim₂

s₄mu-s₆nn-s₇a-s₁₁n-s₁₂dim-s₁₄∅
 VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.A-create-3.SG.P

“(For the god Ningirsu, En-metena) fashioned a *gurgur* vessel of purified silver, from which Ningirsu consumes the monthly oil (offering).”

(108) En-ana-tum I 18 2:3–7 (RIME 1.9.4.18) (Lagash, 25th c.) (P222497-8)

šu-ni-al-dugud, kindagal, nam-nu-banda₃ e₂-šag₄-ga,
 p₁šunialdugud p₁kindagal p₂[namnubanda ešag=ak=∅]
 p₁PN p₁chief.barber p₂[overseership inner.room=GEN=ABS]

an-na-taḥ-ḥa, KIB mu-dim₂-dim₂
 s₂a-s₆nn-s₇a-s₁₂taḥ-s₁₄∅-s₁₅'a]=p₅e KIB=∅ s₄mu-s₁₁n-s₁₂dim~dim-s₁₄∅
 FIN-3.SG.H-DAT-add-3.SG.S-SUB]=p₅ERG nail=ABS VEN-3.SG.H.A-create~PL-3.SG.P

“Shuni-aldugud, the chief barber, to whom the office of the personal quarters’ overseer was also given, fashioned numerous inscribed clay nails.”

(109) Gudea Statue B 1:13–14 (Lagash, 22nd. c.) (P232275)

ensi₂ inim bi₂-ib₂-gi₄-gi₄-a
 p₁ensik p₂[inim=∅ s₅b-s₁₀i-s₁₁b-s₁₂gi~gi-s₁₄e-s₁₅'a](=p₅ak)¹⁰
 p₁ruler p₂[word=ABS 3.SG.NH-L2-3.SG.NH.P-return~PF-3.SG.A-SUB](=p₅GEN)
 “The ruler who withdraws (the regular offerings),”

(110) Gudea Cyl. A 5:19 (Lagash, 22nd. c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

ud ki-šar₂-ra ma-ra-ta-e₃-a
 p₁ud p₂[kišar='a s₄mu-s₆r-s₇a-s₉ta-s₁₀e-s₁₂e-s₁₄∅-s₁₅a]=p₅∅
 p₁light p₂[horizon=L2.NH VEN-2.SG-DAT-ABL-L2-leave-3.SG.S-SUB]=p₅ABS
 “The daylight that had risen for you on the horizon”

Exx. (111) and (112) below are instructive about the interchangeability of finite and non-finite relative clauses; the same idiom is expressed as a finite relative clause in the former, and as a non-finite relative clause in the latter.

¹⁰ This noun phrase is the first in a sequence of noun phrases standing in apposition to each other. Only the last of these noun phrases is case-marked with the genitive, which is to be understood as the case-marker of all noun phrases in the sequence.

(111) Gudea Cyl. A 7:11–12 (Lagash, 22nd. c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

inim ^dnanše-e mu-na-dug⁴-ga-aš,
_{P1}inim _{P2}[^dnanše=e _{S4}mu-_{S6}nn-_{S7}a-_{S11}n-_{S12}dug-_{S14}ø-_{S15}'a]=_{P5}še
_{P1}word _{P2}[DN=ERG VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.A-speak-3.SG.P-SUB]=_{P5}TERM

saj sig ba-ši-ḡar
 saj sig-ø=ø _{S5}ba-_{S9}ši-_{S12}n-_{S13}ḡar-_{S14}ø
 head low-TL=ABS MID-TERM-3.SG.H.A-place-3.SG.P

Lit. “He set a low head to the words that Nanshe told him” = “He accepted what Nanshe told him.”

(112) Gudea Cyl. A 12:14–15 (Lagash, 22nd. c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

inim dug⁴-ga ^dnin-ḡir²-su-ka-še₃,
_{P1}inim _{P2}[dug-'a] _{P3}[ninḡirsuk=ak]=_{P5}še
_{P1}word _{P2}[speak-PT] _{P3}[DN=GEN]=_{P5}TERM

sag sig ba-ši-ḡar
 saj sig-ø=ø _{S5}ba-_{S9}ši-_{S11}n-_{S12}ḡar-_{S14}ø
 head low-TL=ABS MID-TERM-3.SG.H.A-place-3.SG.P

“He accepted what was told by Ningirsu.”

There seems to be no restriction on the syntactic function of the participants to be relativized: the relativized noun is the A in exx. (109), (113), and (117); the S in exx. (110) and (114); the P in exx. (111), (112), (115), and (116), the indirect object in ex. (108); a place adverbial in exx. (107) (in the ablative) and (118) (in the locative1).

(113) Gudea Statue E 2:1–2 (Lagash, 22nd. c.) (P232278)

arad ni₂ tuku nin-a-na-kam
_{P1}arad _{P2}[ni=ø tuku-ø] _{P3}[nin=ane=ak]=ø=am-ø
_{P1}slave _{P2}[fear=ABS have-TL] _{P3}[lady=3.SG.H.POSS=GEN]=ABS=COP-3.SG.S

“(Gudea) is the reverent (lit. ‘who has fear [of gods]’) slave of his lady.”

(114) Gudea Statue E 4:14 (Lagash, 22nd. c.) (P232278)

kisal maḡ-na
_{P1}kisal _{P2}[maḡ-ø]=ane='a
_{P1}courtyard _{P2}[great-TL]=3.SG.H.POSS=L1

“in her main courtyard”

(115) Gudea Statue B 2:16–17 (Lagash, 22nd. c.) (P232275)

dumu tud-da ^dḡa²-tum²-dug¹⁰-ke₄
_{P1}dumu _{P2}[tud-'a] _{P3}[ḡatumdug=ak]=_{P5}e
_{P1}child _{P2}[bear-PT] _{P3}[DN=GEN]=_{P5}ERG

“the child born by the goddess Gatumdug”

(116) Gudea Cyl. A 2:28 (Lagash, 22nd. c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

dumu an kug-ge tud-da
_{P1}dumu _{P2}[an kug=e tud-'a]=_{P5}ø
_{P1}child _{P2}[DN holy=ERG bear-PT]=_{P5}ABS

“the child born by the holy god An”

(117) E-ana-tum 4 1:9–10 (Lagash, 25th c.) (P222460)

kur gu₂ ŋar-ŋar, ^dnin-ŋir₂-su₂-ka-ke₄
_{P2}[kur=e gu=∅ ŋar~ŋar-∅] _{P3}[ninŋirsuk=ak]=_{P5}e
_{P2}[kur=L3.NH neck=ABS place~PL-TL] _{P3}[DN=GEN]=_{P5}ERG
 “who makes all the foreign lands submit to Ningirsu”

(118) Gudea Cyl. A 15:19 (Lagash, 22nd. c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

kur ^{ne}erin-na lu₂ nu-ku₄-ku₄-da
_{P1}[kur erin=ak] _{P2}[lu=∅ nu-ku~ku-ed]=_{P5}'a
_{P1}[mountain cedar=GEN] _{P2}[man=ABS NEG-enter~PF-PF]=_{P5}L1
 “into the mountain of cedars which no one is to penetrate”

Even possessors of verbal participants may be relativized, as shown by the following examples:

(119) NG 215 obv. 1:5 (Umma, 21st c.) (P131762)

lu₂ 3 šuku-be₂ i₃-la₂-a
_{P1}[lu 3] _{P2}[šukur=be=∅ _{S2}ⁱ-_{S12}la-_{S14}∅-_{S15}'a]=_{P5}e
_{P1}[man 3] _{P2}[prebend=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS FIN-small-3.SG.S=SUB]=_{P5}ERG
 “the three men whose subsistence land was curtailed”

(120) Gudea Cyl. A 17:18 (Lagash, 22nd. c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

e₂ me-lem₄-be₂ an-ne₂ us₂-sa
_{P1}e _{P2}[melem=be=∅ an=e us-'a]=(_{P5}še)¹¹
_{P1}house _{P2}[halo=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS heaven=L3.NH next.to-PT]=(_{P5}TERM)
 “(Towards) the temple whose halo reaches to heaven”

The relative clauses play an important role in the interclausal syntax of Sumerian as temporal subordination is usually expressed with the construction _{P1}noun _{P2}[relative clause]=_{P5}case-marker: _{P1}ud _{P2}[relative clause]=_{P5}'a (day [relative clause]=L1) “on the day when ...”; _{P1}en_{er} _{P2}[relative clause]=_{P5}ta (back [relative clause]=ABL) “after ...”. Occasionally the head noun may be missing from these constructions.

7.4 Non-finite verbal forms expressing a purpose

A special construction with the present-future non-finite verbal form is used as a subordinate clause expressing a goal or purpose. The present-future non-finite verbal form is used in this construction as a verbal noun and is case-marked with the non-human dative case-marker =/e/. There is no difference between constructions in which the A of the subordinate clause is the same as the A, see ex. (121), or S, see ex. (122), of the main clause, and constructions in which the A is different from the A of the main clause, see exx. (123) and (124) below.

Functionally these constructions are comparable to infinitives. Note that the phenomenon that the morpheme used to express the infinitive is the same as the one used to mark the indirect object is attested in other languages, for example in English: cf. “to do”, and “he gave it to him”.

¹¹ This noun phrase is the first in a sequence of noun phrases standing in apposition to each other. Only the last of these noun phrases is case-marked with the genitive, which is to be understood as the case-marker of all noun phrases in the sequence.

(121) Gudea Cyl. A 15:9–10 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

e₂ ^dnin-ḡir₂-su-ka du₃-de₃
 e ninḡirsuk=ak=∅ du-ed=e
 house DN=GEN=ABS build-PF=DAT.NH
 gu₃-de₂-a iri-ne₂ ḡir₂-su^{ki}-še₃ gu₂ mu-na-si-si
 gudea=ra iri=ane ḡirsu=še gu=∅ _{s4}mu-_{s6}nn-_{s7}a-_{s12}si~si-_{s14}e
 PN=DAT city=3.SG.H.POSS GN=TERM neck=ABS VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-fill~PF-3.SG.A
 “In order to build the temple of Ningirsu (Magan and Meluhha) gathered for Gudea at his city Girsu.

(122) En-metena 1 6:15–16 (RIME 1.9.5.1) (Lagash, 25th c.) (Q001103)

^{a-šag}ašag tum₃-de₃, am₆-ta-bala-e-da
 ašag=∅ tum-ed=e _{s2}a-_{s4}m-_{s5}b-_{s9}ta-_{s10}e-_{s12}bala-_{s13}ed-_{s14}∅-_{s15}'a
 field=ABS bring-PF=DAT.NH FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-ABL-L2-cross-PF-3.SG.S-SUB
 “who crosses (the boundary levees) in order to take away fields”

(123) DP 307 obv. 2:1–6 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P220957)

ku₆ hab₂-še₃ ak-de₃ amar-girid₂^{ki} muhaldim-ra
 ku=∅ hab=še ak-ed=e amargirid muhaldim-ra
 fish=ABS fish.oil=TERM act-PF=DAT.NH PN₁ cook=DAT.H
 en-ig-gal nu-banda₂ e-na-šum₂
 eniggal nubanda=e _{s2}i-_{s6}nn-_{s7}a-_{s11}n-_{s12}šum-_{s14}∅
 PN₂ overseer=ERG FIN-3.SG.H.-DAT-3.SG.H.A-give-3.SG.P
 “En-iggal, the overseer, gave fish to Amar-Girid, the cook, so that he (= Amar-Girid) makes them into fish-oil(?)”

(124) SNAT 535 1–5 (Umma, 21st c.) (P130295)

ur-^dḡal-^rmu¹-[ša₄-ke₄], lugal-ušur₄ simug-[ra], ḡa-zi-in dim₂-e-^rde₃¹
 urḡalmušak=e lugalušur simug=ra ḡazin=∅ dim-ed=e
 PN₁=ERG PN₂ smith=DAT.H axe=ABS create-PF=DAT.NH
 1 2/3 ma-na zabar, ^rin¹-na-an-šum₂
 1 2/3 mana zabar=∅ _{s2}i-_{s6}nn-_{s7}a-_{s11}n-_{s12}šum-_{s14}∅
 1 2/3 unit bronze=abs FIN-3.SG.H.-DAT-3.SG.H.A-give-3.SG.P
 “Ur-Halmusha gave Lugal-ushur, the smith, 1 and 2/3 *manas* of bronze, to produce an axe.”

Examples like (125) below suggest that when the structure of the prefix-chain allows it, the composite dative prefix that cross-references the non-finite form may occur.

(125) Gudea Cyl. A 15:9–10 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

u₃-šub mu-dub₂
 ušub=∅ _{s4}mu-_{s11}n-_{s12}dub-_{s14}∅
 mould=ABS VEN-3.SG.H.A-shake-3.SG.P
 šeg₁₂ had₂-de₃ ba-šub
 šeg=∅ had-ed=e _{s5}b-_{s7}a-_{s11}n-_{s12}šub-_{s14}∅
 brick=ABS dry-PF-DAT.NH 3.SG.NH-DAT-3.SG.H.A-fall-3.SG.P
 “He shook the brick mould and left the brick to dry”

7.5 Non-finite verbal forms as adverbial clauses of time

A special construction involving both the preterite and the present-future non-finite verbal form is used as a subordinate temporal clause. This construction was referred to as pronominal conjugation in earlier literature.

	PRETERITE FORMS	PRESENT-FUTURE FORMS
1.SG	_{PT} STEM-’a=ŋu ₁₀ =ne (stem-PT=1.SG.POSS=L4)	_{PF} STEM-ed-’a=ŋu ₁₀ =ne (stem-PF-SUB=1.SG.POSS=L4)
2.SG	_{PT} STEM-’a=zu=ne (stem-PT=2.SG.POSS=L4)	_{PF} STEM-ed-’a=zu=ne (stem-PF-SUB=2.SG.POSS=L4)
3.SG HUMAN	_{PT} STEM-’a=ane=e (stem-PT=3.SG.H.POSS=L3.NH)	_{PF} STEM-ed-’a=ane=e (stem-PF-SUB=3.SG.H.POSS=L3.NH)
3.SG NON-HUMAN	_{PT} STEM-’a=be=e (stem-PT=3.SG.NH.POSS=L3.NH)	_{PF} STEM-ed-’a=be=e (stem-PF-SUB=3.SG.NH.POSS=L3.NH)
3.PL	_{PT} STEM-’a=anenē=e (stem-PT=3.PL.POSS=L3.NH)	_{PF} STEM-ed-’a=anene=e (stem-PF-SUB=3.PL.POSS=L3.NH)

Table 7.1

1st and 2nd person plural forms are not attested. The morphological analysis of these forms is controversial. Being verbal nouns these forms too should be case-marked with a case. The table above assumes that the 1st and 2nd ps. forms are case-marked with an enclitic =/ne/, which might be an archaic marker of the locative, the nominal equivalence of the locative1 verbal prefix /ni/, surviving only in marginal, non-productive contexts. The 3rd ps. forms are analyzed as being case-marked with the non-human locative3 =/e/.

The use of the subordinator suffix /()a/ with the present-future forms is unexpected. It may represent a secondary development on the analogy of the preterite forms starting with a reanalysis of the most frequent 3rd ps. sg. present-future forms like **ku₄-ku₄-da-ne** (= **ku~ku-ed=ane=e**) “at his entering” as **ku~ku-ed-’a=ane=e**. The preterite forms express anteriority, see ex. (126) below, while the present-future forms express simultaneity, see ex. (127) below, with the verbal event of the main clause.

(126) Lugalbanda in the mountain cave 241 (ETCSL 1.8.2.1)

nu₂-a-zu-ne uŋ₃ ši-mu-e-da-nu₂
 nu-’a=zu=ne uŋ=∅ _{S2}ša-_{S4}mu-_{S6}e-_{S7}da-_{S12}nu-_{S14}ed-_{S16}∅
 lie-PT=2.SG.POSS=L4 people=ABS MOD-VEN-2.SG-COM-lie-PF-3.SG.S
 “When you have lain down, the people lie down with you.”

(127) Nam-mahne 6 2:2-5 (ETCSL 1.8.2.1)

(Lagash, 21st c.) (P234696)

^dlamma tar-sir₂-sir₂-ra, kisal ^dba-u₂-ka ku₄(REC56)-ku₄(REC56)-da-ne₂
 lamma tarsirsir=ak=∅ kisal bau=ak=’a ku~ku-ed-’a=ane=e
 spirit GN=GEN=ABS courtyard DN=GEN=L1 enter~PF-PF-SUB-3.SG.H.POSS=L3.NH
 alan-e nin-ŋu₁₀, ŋeštug₂-ga-ni-a
 alan=e=e nin=ŋu=∅ ŋeštug=ane=’a
 alan=DEM=ERG lady=1.SG.POSS=ABS ear-3.SG.H.POSS=L1

mu-na-ni-ru-gu₂

{S4}mu-{S6}nn-_{S7}a-_{S10}ni-_{S11}n-_{S12}rugu-_{S14}e

VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-L1-3.SG.H.P-whitstand-3.SG.A

“Whenever the protective spirit of Tarsirsir enters the courtyard of Bau, this statue will attract my lady’s attention towards him.”

The present-future stem of the verb **jen** “to go”, forms the 3rd ps. forms of the construction without an **-/ed/** and **/’a/** suffix:

(128) ABTR 13 rev. 5 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P100201)

[a]-dam-šaḥ^{ki}-še₃ du-ne-ne
 adamšaḥ=še du=anenē=e
 GN=TERM go.PF=3.PL.POSS=L3.NH
 “When they were going to Adamshah”.

(129) MVN 22, 71 rev. 8 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P206204)

a-dam-šaḥ^{ki}-ta du-ne₂
 adamšaḥ=ta du=ane=e
 GN=ABL go.PF=3.SG.H.POSS=L3.NH
 “When they were coming from Adamshah”.

In texts from the first part of the 2nd millennium BCE and in later texts the 3rd ps. sg. forms are sometimes case-marked with the locative₁ or the ablative instead of the locative₃, what may be an interference from Akkadian which translates these forms with the construction *ina* + infinitive + genitive pronoun. A correspondence between the Akkadian preposition *ina* and the Sumerian locative₁ and ablative was well established.

The construction is also attested with the word **dili** “single”: **dili-ḡu₁₀-ne** “on my own, I alone”, **dili-zu-ne** “on your own, you alone”, see ex. (130) below, **dili-ne₂** “on his own, he alone”.

(130) Ibbi-Suen B Segment A 37 (ETCSL 2.4.5.2)

dili-zu-ne₂ maḥ-me-en
 dili=zu=ne maḥ-ø=ø-me-en
 single=2.SG.POSS=L4 august-TL=ABS=COP-2.SG.S
 “You alone are august!”

Further readings

The word class of adjectives is controversial in Sumerian. A general survey of the word classes of Sumerian is provided by Black 2002. His arguments for a separate word class of adjectives in Sumerian are detailed in Black 2000. He, and also Jagersma (2010: 267–284), assume that Sumerian has a closed word class of adjectives.

On the function of the possessor of the head of a relative clause, see Peust 2009. On the archaic locative enclitic, called here locative₄, see Krecher 1993: 96–98.

Exercises

- 7.1 Look up the new words used in the examples of this lesson in Foxvog’s (2016b) or Volk’s (2012) glossary, and learn them.
- 7.2 Study the examples of this lesson carefully and make yourself familiar with their grammatical analysis.
- 7.3 Add morphological segmentation and glossing to the excerpt from a votive inscription of Lugal-zagesi below. Translate the text with the help of Foxvog’s (2016b) glossary. Pay special attention to the genitive constructions used in this text, and find the

constructions where the text uses suspended cliticization. Then go to the ETCSRI edition of the text (<http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/etcsri/Q001379>), click on the “proofing” link on the left side of the page, and compare your glosses with ETCSRI’s glossing.

Lugal-zagesi 1 1:3–35 (RIME 1.14.20.1) (Uruk, 24th c.) (Q001379)

i 3	lugal-zag-ge-si	i 20	^d utu
i 4	lugal unug ^{ki} -ga	i 21	sukkal-maḥ
i 5	lugal kalam-ma	i 22	^d suen
i 6	išib an-na	i 23	šagina
i 7	lu ₂ -maḥ	i 24	^d utu
i 8	^d nisaba	i 25	u ₂ -a ^d inana
i 9	dumu bu ₁₁ -bu ₁₁	i 26	dumu tud-da
i 10	ṛensi ₂ ¹ umma ^{ki}	i 27	^d nisaba
i 11	ṛlu ₂ ¹ -maḥ	i 28	ga zid gu ₇ -a
i 12	^d nisaba-ka	i 29	^d nin-ḥur-saṇ
i 13	igi zid bar-ra	i 30	lu ₂ ^d meš ₃ -saṇṇa-unug ^{ki} -ga
i 14	an lugal kur-kur-ka	i 31	saṇ a ₂ e ₃ -a
i 15	ensi ₂ -gal	i 32	^d nin-girim ₃
i 16	^d en-lil ₂	i 33	nin unug ^{ki} -ga-ka
i 17	ṇeštug ₂ šum ₂ -ma	i 34	agrig maḥ
i 18	^d en-ki	i 35	diṇir-re-ne-ra
i 19	mu pad ₃ -da		

7.4 Transliterate the text Shu-Suen 12 (RIME 3/2.1.4.12, ex. 2) (Ur, 21st c.) (P226510) (a photo of the text can be found at <http://cdli.ucla.edu/P226510>) with the help of Volk’s sign list (2012). Add morphological segmentation and glossing to the text. Translate the text with the help of Foxvog’s (2016b) glossary. Then go to the ETCSRI edition of the text (<http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/etcsri/Q000996>), click on the “proofing” link on the left side of the page, and compare your glosses with ETCSRI’s glossing. Identify and list the non-finite verbal forms. Can you notice something about the orthography of the text?

Lesson 8: Non-verbal predication and other uses of the copula

In Sumerian there exist two kinds of non-verbal predicates. The more common type is the one in which the predicate contains a verbal copula. If the S of the non-verbal predicate is in the 3rd ps. sg. then the non-verbal predicate may occur without a copula in certain contexts. This lesson describes both kinds of non-verbal predicates, and also the various other uses of the copula.

8.1 Copular clauses

The Sumerian copular clause is an intransitive clause which consists of two main parts: a) the subject and b) a non-verbal predicate. The predicate itself consists of two parts: i) a structural unit functioning as the predicate complement (= PC) and ii) a copula.

The Sumerian copula is a verbal copula formed from the verb **me** “to be”. It has two forms: the independent and the enclitic copula. The independent copula is a finite verb with at least one verbal prefix, while the enclitic copula is attached to the last word of the clause without any prefix. As a rule the predicate complement is situated next to the copula; if the copula is enclitic, then it cliticizes to the predicate complement. In copular clauses, where the constituent next to the copula is the predicate complement, the predicate complement as a rule predicates a property about a referential S. Ex. (131) contains a 3rd ps. sg. enclitic copula cliticized to the last unit of the predicate complement:

(131) En-metena 7 21–22 (RIME 1.9.5.7) (Lagash, 25th c.) (P222539)

ud-ba du-du, saŋŋa ^dnin-ŋir₂-su₂-ka-kam
 ud=be='a s[dudu=Ø] pc[sanŋa ninŋirsuk=ak=Ø]=am-Ø
 day=DEM=L1 s[PN=ABS] pc[official DN=GEN=ABS]=COP-3.SG.S

“At that time Dudu was the temple administrator of the god Ningirsu.”

As other stative verbs in Sumerian, the copula too has only a preterite and no present-future form. Both the independent and the enclitic copula are suffixed with the set of pronominal suffixes that are coreferential with the participant in the absolutive case in preterite tense verbal forms (called Set B in Table 9.1, in Lesson 9, section 9.1. below). The final /e/ of the copula and the initial /e/ of the pronominal suffixes are contracted to a single vowel, which may have been long.

	SINGULAR			PLURAL		
	1 ST	2 ND	3 RD	1 ST	2 ND	3 RD
INDEPENDENT	-me-en	-me-en	-me-Ø	-me-enden	-me-enzen	-me-eš
ENCLITIC	=me-en	=me-en	=am-Ø	=me-enden	=me-enzen	=me-eš

Table 9.1: Forms of the copula

In the 3rd ps. sg., the enclitic copula uses a special stem, the stem /**am**/ instead of /**me**/. The 3rd ps. sg. enclitic copula is written as **-am₆(AN)** until around 24th c. BCE, and later as **-am₃(A.AN)**.

If a noun phrase ends in a vowel, the vowel of the 3rd ps. sg. enclitic copula /**am**/ contracts with the vowel. The contraction is, however, reflected by the writing only when the preceding morpheme is written with a phonographic sign

as in ex. (132) below. In ex. (133) the enclitic copula follows a word sign, the copula and the preceding word most probably contracted to /**esim**/, yet the writing does not reflect the contraction. In a similar example, ex. (134), where the preceding morpheme is written with a phonographic sign, the contraction is reflected also by the writing.

(132) BM 106540 obv. 3 (Umma, 21st c.) (P200724)

nin₉- η u₁₀-um

PC[nin= η u= \emptyset]=am- \emptyset

PC[sister=1.SG.POSS=ABS]=COP-3.SG.S

“She is my sister.”

(133) Gudea Statue B 7:54 (Lagash, 22nd c) (P232275)

^{na4}esi-am₃

PC[esi= \emptyset]=am- \emptyset

PC[diorit=ABS]=COP-3.SG.S

“(The statue) is of diorite.”

(134) Shu-Suen 1 4:44-46 (RIME 3/2.1.4.1)

iri^{ki}-ba,

^dšu-^dsuen,

dinir-be₂-em

PC's POSS[iri=be=ak]

s[šusuen= \emptyset]

PC[dinir=be= \emptyset]=am- \emptyset

PC's POSS[city=3.SG.NH.POSS=GEN]

s[PN=ABS]

PC[god=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS]=COP-3.SG.S

“Of their town, Šu-Suen is its protective god.”

In literary contexts, see exx. (135) and (136) below, and in personal names of the 3rd millennium BCE, see ex. (137) below, the copula may use yet another stem, the stem /(**na**)**nam**/. This stem may derive from a modal form of the copula: **na-me- \emptyset** (= MOD-COP-3.SG.S), which became /**nam**/ after the loss of the stem final -/e/, and was expanded again pleonastically with the affirmative epistemic modal prefix /**na**/. The form may, at least originally, have expressed epistemic certainty, see Lesson 16, section 16.2 below.

(135) Lugalbanda in the mountain cave 59 (ETCSL 1.8.2.1)

ud-be₂-a

7

he₂-na-me-eš

ud=be='a

PC[7= \emptyset]

{S1}ha-{S12}i-_{S12}nam=_{S14}eš

day=DEM=L1

PC[7=ABS]

MOD-FIN-COP-3.PL.S

“At that time there were seven of them.”

(136) Enmerkar and En-suhgir-ana 15 (ETCSL 1.8.2.4)

sukkal

en

aratta^{ki}-ka

sukkal

an-sig₇-ga-ri-a

PC's POSS[sukkal

en

aratta=ak=ak]

s[sukkal

ansigari'a= \emptyset]

PC's POSS[minister

lord

GN=GEN=GEN]

s[minister

PN=ABS]

mu-ne₂

he₂-en-na-nam

PC[mu=ane= \emptyset]

{S1}ha-{S12}i-_{S12}nam=_{S14} \emptyset

PC[name=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS]

MOD-FIN-COP-3.SG.S

“Now the name of the lord of Aratta's minister was minister Ansiga-ria.”

(137) BIN 8, 345 obv. 7:6 (ED IIIb) (P221476)

^dba-u₂-na-nam

PC[bau=ak]=**nam**= \emptyset

PC[DN=GEN]=COP=3.SG.S

“She/he belongs to Bau.”

The S of a copular clause is in the absolutive case. The copula agrees in person and number with the S. The S of a copular clause may be expressed in three ways: i) both as an overt lexical noun phrase and by a pronominal suffix on the copula, see, e.g., ex. (142) below; ii) solely by the pronominal suffix on the copula, see, e.g., ex. (132) above; or iii) both as an independent pronoun and by a pronominal suffix on the copula, see, e.g., ex. (143) below.

As a rule the predicate complement is in the absolutive case. Less frequently it may be in the genitive, as in exx. (138), (139); ablative (expressing an instrumental meaning), as in ex. (140); or equative, as in ex. (141) below:

(138) En-ana-tum I 2 rev. 2:5 (RIME 1.9.4.2) (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222496)

an-ta-su-ra ṇa₂-kam
_s[antatura=Ø] _{pc}[ṇe=ak]=am-Ø
_s[GN=ABS] _{pc}[1.SG.PR=GEN]=COP-3.SG.S
 “The Antasura is mine!”

(139) TCS 1, 177 rev. 2 (unknown, 21st c.) (P145700)

gu₂-na-kam
_{pc}[gu=ane=ak]=am-Ø
_{pc}[neck=3.SG.H.POSS=GEN]=COP-3.SG.S
 “It is of his neck.” = “It is his responsibility.”

(140) NG 214 obv. 1:8 (Umma, 21st c.) (P131761)

inim ur-ni₃in₃-ṇar nu-banda₃-ta-am₃
_{pc}[inim urni₃in₃ṇar nubanda=ak=ta]=am-Ø
_{pc}[word PN overseer=GEN=ABL]=COP-3.SG.S
 “This was with the permission of Urningar, the overseer.”

(141) TCS 1, 327 obv. 3-4 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P111288)

a₂ tug₂ gada-a du-a,
_s[a tug gada=’a du-Ø=ak=Ø]
_s[wage cloth line=L2.NH go-TL=GEN=ABS]
 urim₅^{ki}-ma-gin₇-nam
_{pc}[urim=ak=gen]=am-Ø
_{pc}[GN=GEN=EQU]=COP-3.SG.S
 “The wages for ‘walking’ on cloth and line are as those of Urim.”

The independent and the enclitic copula have a complementary distribution. The independent form of the copula is used i) when the meaning of the predicate requires the use of a verbal prefix other than the finite-marker prefix (this verbal prefix is a modal prefix in S1 in ex. [142], while it is the coordinator prefix in S3 in ex. [143]); ii) in subordinate copula clauses, which may be a complement clause as in ex. (144), or a relative clause as in ex. (145). In morphosyntactic environments different to i) and ii), the enclitic copula is used. The enclitic copula thus occurs in place of a not subordinate independent copula whose prefix-chain consists exclusively of a finite-marker prefix. It may have come into being through the syncopation of the finite-marker prefix /i/-. As it often happens, the older form was retained in subordinate contexts.

(142) Lugalbanda and the Anzud bird 106 (ETCSL 1.8.2.2)

diŋir ħe₂-me-en
 PC[diŋir=Ø] S₁ħa-S₂i-S₁₂me-S₁₄en
 PC[god=ABS] MOD-FIN-COP-2.SG.S
 “if you are a god,”

(143) Shulgi C 9 (ETCSL 2.4.2.03)

niŋ₂-erim₂-ma usan₃ bar-uš-be₂
 PC's POSS[niŋerim=ak] PC[usan baruš=be=Ø]
 PC's POSS[evil=GEN] PC[scourge stick=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS]

ŋe₂₆ in-ga-me-en₃
 S[ŋe=Ø] S₂i-S₃nga-S₁₂me-S₁₄en
 S[1.SG.PR=ABS] FIN-COOR-COP-1.SG.S
 “As for all evil, their scourge and stick are also me.”

(144) NG 212 obv. 2:4 (Umma, 21st c.) (P142272)

arad dšara₂ i₃-me-a
 PC[arad šara=ak=Ø] S₂i-S₁₂me-S₁₄Ø-S₁₅'a=ak
 PC[slave GN=GEN=ABS] FIN-COP-3.SG.S-SUB=GEN

“(Lugalazida is to take the assertory oath) that he (= Lugalitida) is a slave of the god Shara”.

(145) ASJ 4, p. 141, no. 6 obv. 2 (Drehem, 21st c.) (P102167)

ud tur₅-ra i₃-me-a
 ud PC[tur-'a=Ø] S₂i-S₁₂me-S₁₄Ø-S₁₅'a='a
 day PC[ill-PT=ABS] FIN-COP-3.SG.S-SUB=L1

“When he was ill.”

Non-verbal predicates may be negated in two ways: i) The negative equivalent of a copular clause with a 3rd ps. sg. S and an enclitic copula is negated solely with the negative particle /**nu**/ and the negative clause contains no copula; ii) if the S is *not* in the 3rd ps. sg. and/or the copula is *not* enclitic, then the clause is negated with an independent copula prefixed with the negation prefix /**nu**/-.

In ex. (146) below the first clause is negated with the particle /**nu**/, while the second is negated with an independent copula prefixed with the negation particle /**nu**/-.

(146) Gudea Statue B 7:49–50 (Lagash, 22nd. c.) (P232275)

alan-e, u₃ kug nu
 S[alan=e=Ø] u PC[kug=Ø] nu
 S[statue=DEM=ABS] and PC[silver=ABS] NEG

za-gin₃ nu-ga-am₃
 PC[zagin=Ø] S₁nu-S₂i-S₃nga-S₁₂me-S₁₄Ø
 PC[lapis.lazuli=ABS] NEG-FIN-COOR-COP=3.SG.S

“This statue is of neither silver nor lapis lazuli.”

The affirmative equivalent of the first clause would contain the 3rd ps. sg. form of the enclitic copula (***kug=Ø=am-Ø** : silver=ABS=COP=3.SG.S), while the affirmative equivalent of the second clause would contain an independent copula because of the presence of a coordinator prefix in S3 (***S₂i-S₃nga-S₁₂me-S₁₄Ø** : FIN-COOR-COP=3.SG.S). The difference in the way the two clauses are negated in ex. (146)

is thus conditioned by the form of the copula in the corresponding affirmative clauses.

Non-verbal predicates may be used to express a range of semantic relations. In English, for example, the same verb, the verb “to be”, is used to express identity, attribution, possession, benefaction, and location. In Sumerian only the first four of the semantic relations mentioned are expressed with the copular verb **me** “to be”, while for location a different verb, the verb **ḡal** “to exist somewhere”, is used.

8.2 Non-verbal predicates without a copula

If the S is in the 3rd ps. sg., then the non-verbal predicate may occur without a copula in certain grammatical environments. There are four grammatical environments in which the non-verbal predicate is attested to omit the copula: i) copular clauses functioning as proper names (names of persons, statues etc.) in which the S is an overt lexical noun; ii) seal inscriptions; iii) the negated counterpart of copular clauses in which the S is in the 3rd ps. sg. and the copula is enclitic (see the previous subsection above); iv) interrogative clauses.

In proper names consisting of a non-verbal predicate the copula may be omitted if the S of the clause is an overt lexical noun, as in exx. (147) and (148) below. If the S is not an overt lexical noun, then the copula is present, as shown by ex. (149) below.

(147) UET 2, 338 rev. 2:2 (Ur, 28th c.) (P005925)

ama-ḡeštin
_s[ama=∅] _{pc}[ḡeštin=∅]
_s[mother=ABS] _{pc}[wine=ABS]
 “The-mother-is-wine”

(148) Amar-Suena 20 1 (RIME 3/2.1.3.20) (Ur, 21st. c) (P200450)

nin-he₂-du₇
_s[nin=∅] _{pc}[hedu=∅]
_s[lady=ABS] _{pc}[ornament=ABS]
 “The-lady-is-an-ornament”

(149) Nam-mahne 11 9 (RIME 3/1.1.12.11) (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P234704)

^dutu-kam
_{pc}[utu=ak]=am-∅
_{pc}[DN=GEN]=COP-3.SG.S
 “He-is-Utu’s”

In seal inscriptions ending with the “your slave” formula, which functions as the predicate, the copula never occurs, as in ex. (150) below.

(150) Shulgi 86 (RIME 3/2.01.02.86) (unknown, 21st c.) (P226941)

ba-qar ₃ -tum,	dumu-munus	lugal,	^d šul-gi-i ₃ -li ₂ ,	arad-zu
baqartum	dumumunus	lugal=ak=∅	_s [šulgiili=∅]	_{pc} [arad=zu=∅]
PN ₁	daughter	king=GEN=ABS	_s [PN ₂ =abs]	_{pc} [slave=2SG.POSS=ABS]

“Baqartum, the king’s daughter: Shulgi-ili is your slave.”

If the S of an interrogative clause is in the 3rd ps. sg., then the copula may be dropped. In ex. (151) below the first clause is interrogative, while the second one is declarative; the S of both clauses is in the 3rd ps. sg. In the first clause

the copula after the predicate is omitted, while in the second one the predicate complement is followed by a copula. The presence of the copula in the first clause is thus conditioned by the type of the clause. (In ex. [151] the sentence-initial interrogative pronoun is accompanied by a copula. The structure and function of forms like this is discussed in Lesson 5 above.)

(151) Enlil and Nam-zid-tara 23-24 (ETCSL 5.7.1)

a-ba-am ₃	mu-zu,
aba=∅=am-∅	PC[mu=zu=∅]
who=ABS=COP-3.SG.S	PC[name=2.SG.POSS=ABS]
nam-zid-tar-ra	mu-ḡu ₁₀ -um
s[namzid tara=∅]	PC[mu=ḡu=∅]=am-∅
s[PN=ABS]	PC[name=1.SG.POSS=ABS]=COP-3.SG.S

“What (lit. who) is your name? My name is Nam-zid-tara.”

8.3 Copular biclausal constructions

Copular clauses may be used as parts of biclausal constructions. In Sumerian copular biclausal constructions the initial clause is always a copular clause. The verb of the second clause is typically a finite, non-copular verb, but occasionally the second clause too may be copular. The defining characteristic of copular biclausal constructions is that one of the participants of the copular clause and one of the participants of the other clause are coreferential. The shared participant may occur as an overt noun phrase only in the initial copular clause, and is present only in the form of a pronominal affix on the (verbal) predicate in the second clause.

A typical example is ex. (152) below, in which the S of the copular clause functions as P in the second, non-copular clause. The shared participant is *li* “juniper”, which is referred to by a pronominal suffix in S14 of the finite verb in the second clause. The two component clauses of this construction could be used separately without any modification as simple sentences. In sentences like ex. (152) the predicate of the initial copular clause may be interpreted as an attributive apposition or as an attributive relative clause of the shared participant, as shown also by the second, non-literal translation.

(152) Gudea Cyl. A 8:10 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

li ^{ḡiṣ}	u ₂	sikil	kur-ra-kam
s[li=∅]	PC[u	sikil	kur=ak=∅]=am=∅
s[juniper=ABS]	PC[plant	pure	mountain=ABS]=COP=3.SG.S
izi-a	bi ₂ -si-si		
izi=’a	s ₅ b ₅ -s ₁₀ i ₁ -s ₁₁ n ₁ -s ₁₂ si ₁ ~si ₁₄ ∅		
fire=L2.NH	3NH-L2-3.SG.A-fill~PL-3.SG.P		

Lit. “The juniper is the pure plant of the mountains; he (= Gudea) put it onto the fire.”
= “He put juniper, (which is) the pure plant of the mountains, onto the fire.”

In relative clauses of non-copular verbs the relative clause is syntactically subordinate, formally marked with the subordinator suffix -/’a/, as in ex. (153) below.

(153) Gudea Cyl. A 7:11–12 (Lagash, 22nd. c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

inim^d nanše-e mu-na-dug₄-ga-aš,
{P1}inim{P2}[nanše=e_{S4}mu-_{S6}nn-_{S7}a-_{S11}n-_{S12}dug-_{S14}Ø-_{S15}'a]=_{P5}še
{P1}word{P2}[DN=ERG VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.A-speak-3.SG.P-SUB]=_{P5}TERM

saḡ sig ba-ši-ḡar

saḡ sig-Ø=Ø_{S5}ba-_{S9}ši-_{S12}n-_{S13}ḡar-_{S14}Ø

head low-TL=ABS MID-TERM-3.SG.H.A-place-3.SG.P

Lit. “He set a low head to the words that Nanshe told him” = “He accepted what Nanshe told him.”

Copular clauses may also be used in similar constructions. In ex. (154) below the head of the copular relative clause (**ab₂** “cow”) is the possessor of the predicate complement of the copular clause. The copular clause is subordinated, formally marked with the subordination suffix in S15, and consequently the copula uses its independent form.

(154) NG 137 obv. 7 (Umma, 21st c.) (P131782)

ab₂ ša-bar-tur mu-be₂ i₃-me-a
{P1}ab{P2}[šabartur=Ø]_{PC}[mu=be=Ø]_{S3}i-_{S12}me-_{S14}Ø-_{S15}'a]=_{P5}Ø
{P1}cow{P2}[PN=ABS]_{PC}[name=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS] FIN-COP-3.SG.S-SUB]=ABS
 “the cow whose name is Shabar-tur”

Subordinate copular relative clauses similar to ex. (154) may, however, be formed only if the relativized constituent is different from the S of the copular clause. Subordinate copular relative clauses in which the relativized constituent is the S of the copular clause do not exist in Sumerian; they are substituted by biclausal constructions like ex. (152) above. To put it simply, the sentence “John, who is a sailor, built a house” may only be said in Sumerian as “John is a sailor; he built a house”. In constructions like ex. (152) above, the copular clause functions as paratactic, i.e., syntactically non-subordinate, copular relative clause; its predicate functions only to provide some additional information about the shared participant.

In Lesson 5 (section 5.1) above it was mentioned that only participants functioning as identificational focus or contrastive topic are referred to by independent pronouns. As a consequence of this rule, appositional constructions with a pronominal head, e.g., “I, the shepherd”, do not exist in Sumerian: ex. (155) below would be ungrammatical in Sumerian, a copular biclausal construction is used instead, see ex. (156) below.

(155)

*ḡe₂₆-e sipad-e e₂ mu-du₃
 ḡe sipad=e e=Ø_{S4}mu-_{S11}'-_{S12}du-_{S14}Ø
 1.SG.PR shepherd=ERG house=ABS VEN-1.SG.A-build-3.SG.P
 I, the shepherd, have built the temple.”

(156) Gudea Cyl. B 2:5 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

sipad-me e₂ mu-du₃
{PC}[sipad=Ø]=me-en e=Ø{S4}mu-_{S11}'-_{S12}du-_{S14}Ø
_{PC}[shepherd=ABS]=COP-1.SG.S house=ABS VEN-1.SG.A-build-3.SG.P

“I am shepherd, I have built the temple. = I, who am a shepherd, have built the temple. = I, the shepherd, have built the temple.”

8.4 The copula functioning as standard marker

In some of its occurrences the 3rd ps. sg. enclitic copula **=/am-ø/** lends itself easily to a translation with the preposition “like”:

(157) Iddin-Dagan A 172 (ETCSL 2.5.3.1)

lugal	dirir-am ₃	šag ₄ -be ₂ -a	mu-un-da-an-til ₃
lugal=ø	dirir=ø=am-ø	šag=be='a	_{S4} mu- _{S6} n- _{S7} da- _{S10} n- _{S12} til- _{S14} ø
king=ABS	god=ABS=COP-3.SG.S	heart=3.SG.NH.POSS=L1	VEN-3.SG-COM-L1.SYN-live-3.SG.S

“Lit. “The king is a god, he lives with her in it.” = “The king lives with her (= the goddess Ninegala) in it like a god.”

The ancient scribes already recognized this usage. In a grammatical text from the first millennium BCE (NGBT IX l. 270-271 in MSL 4: 175), the enclitic copula is equated with the Akkadian preposition *kīma* “like”.

It was discussed in Lesson 3 above that in similitive constructions, which express sameness of manner, and equative constructions, which express sameness of extent, the standard marker is as a rule the equative enclitic **=/gen/**. In ex. (157) above, which in essence is a similitive construction, the predicate complement with the copula appears to be interpreted as the standard with its marker.

Ex. (157) may be considered a copular biclausal construction. There exists, however, examples which may be construed as consisting of a copular and a non-copular clause.

In ex. (158) below the constituent **šag enlil=ak** “the heart of the god Enlil” is in the ergative case, the case required by the transitive verb of the second clause. Should this constituent still function as the S of the copular clause “the heart of the god Enlil is the river Tigris”, then it would be in the absolutive case. Consequently this example is not biclausal, the morpheme **=/am/** functions in it truly as a standard marker (= STM), but not as the predicate of a copular clause. Ex. (157) above should probably be interpreted similarly, but in this example the change in the grammatical function of the enclitic copula may not be recognized, as the word **lugal** “king” would be in the absolutive both in the copular and the non-copular clause.

(158) Gudea Cyl. A 1:9 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

šag ₄	en-lil ₂ -la ₂ -ke ₄	^{id₂} idigna-am ₃
šag	enlil=ak=e	idigna= am
heart	DN=GEN=ERG	WN=STM
a	dug ₃ -ga	nam-de ₆
a	dug-ø=ø	_{S2} na- _{S4} m- _{S11} b- _{S12} de- _{S14} ø
water	sweet-PT=ABS	MOD-VEN-3.SG.NH.A-bring-3.SG.P

“The heart of the god Enlil brought sweet water like the river Tigris.”

The use of **=/am/** as standard marker appears to be restricted to literary texts, suggesting that it belonged to a higher register; and it is used as standard marker only in similitive constructions.

8.5 The copula functioning as focus marker

In copular clauses the constituent next to the copula is mostly the predicate complement. The order of the predicate complement and the S may, however, sometimes be inverted, as in the second clause of ex. (159) below.

(159) Gudea Cyl. A 3:6 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

ama nu-tuku-me

_{PC}[ama nu-tuku-Ø]=me-en

_{PC}[mother NEG-have-TL]=COP-1.SG.S

ama-ḡu₁₀ ze₂-me

_{PC}[ama-ḡu=Ø] _S[ze=Ø]=me-en

_{PC}[mother=1.SG.POSS=ABS] _S[2.SG.PR=ABS]=COP-2.SG.S

“I am someone who has no mother, my mother is you (and no one else).”

In copular clauses with an inverted word order the predicate complement does not predicate a property about a referential S. It does something fundamentally different; it exhaustively identifies the referent of a description by naming it. So in ex. (159) the description “my mother” is identified as “you” (and no one else). The S next to the copula functions thus as the identificational focus of the copular clause, i.e., “[i]t indicates that the focus denotation is the only one that leads to a true proposition” (Krifka 2007: 33). Copular clauses like the second one in ex. (159) are called *specificational* in linguistics.

Copular biclausal constructions in which the copular clause is *specificational* are to be translated and interpreted as cleft clauses. The constituent next to the copula, see exx. (160) and (161), or a subconstituent of the constituent next to the copula, see ex. (162) below, functions as the *identificational focus* of the clause.

(160) Hoe and Plough 147 (ETCSL 5.3.1)

ḡe₂₆-e-me-en

mu₂-sar-ra a

bi₂-ib₂-sig₁₀-sig₁₀-ge-en

_S[ḡe=Ø]=me-en

musar=’a a=Ø

{S5}b{-S10}i_{-S11}b_{-S12}sig~sig_{-S14}en

_S[1.SG.PR=ABS]=COP-1.SG.S

plot=L2.NH

water=ABS

3.SG.NH-L2-3.SG.NH.P-put~PL-1.SG.A

“It is me who puts water in all the plots.”

(161) Gudea Cyl. A 13:2 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

siki udu gan-na-kam

_S[siki udu gan-Ø=ak=Ø]=am-Ø

_S[wool sheep bear-TL=GEN=ABS]=COP-3.SG.S

šu-a mi-ni-ḡar-ḡar

šu=’a _{S4}mu_{-S10}ni_{-S11}n_{-S12}ḡar~ḡar_{-S14}Ø

hand=L1 VEN-L1-3.SG.H.A-put~PL-3.SG.P

“(He undid the tongue of the goad and the whip;) it was wool from lamb-bearing sheep that he placed instead in all hands”.

In ex. (162) below the constituent next to the copula is the noun phrase **udu=ḡu=Ø** (sheep=1.SG.POSS=ABS) “my sheep”. From the context, however, it is clear, that the focus is in fact its subconstituent, the enclitic possessive pronoun “my”, as Turam-ili intends to defend himself against accusations that he has given someone else’s sheep to Sulalum.

(162) NG 138 rev. 7 (Umma, 21st c.) (P200731)

udu-ḡu₁₀-um

šu₂-la-lum-ra in-na-šum₂

_S[udu=ḡu=Ø]=am=Ø

šulalum=ra

{S2}i{-S6}nn_{-S7}a_{-S11}’_{-S12}šum_{-S14}Ø

_S[sheep=1.SG.POSS=ABS]=COP-3.SG.S

PN=DAT.H

FIN-3.SG.H-DAT-1.SG.A-give-3.SG.P

“(Turam-ili declared:) ‘I gave MY sheep to Sulalum.’”

Further readings

For a detailed description of all uses of the copula in Sumerian see now Zólyomi 2014c.

For similative and equative constructions in Sumerian see Sövegjártó 2011.

Exercises

8.1 Look up the new words used in the examples of this lesson in Foxvog's (2016b) or Volk's (2012) glossary, and learn them.

8.2 Study the examples of this lesson carefully and make yourself familiar with their grammatical analysis.

8.3 Translate with the help of Foxvog's (2016b) or Volk's (2012) glossary, and assign morphemic segmentation and glossing to the following examples.

- a)
iri^{ki}-ba, ^dšu-^dsuen, diŋir-be₂-em
- b)
da-du maškim-be₂-em
- c) (S = "you")
^dnin-lil₂-la₂ ɣi-li šag₄-ga-na-me-en
- d) (S = "you")
en za-e-me-en lugal za-e-me-en
- e)
^mer₃-ra-ga-ši-ir, dumu nibru^{ki}-kam,
ur-sag₉-ga, ɣa-mu-na-šum₂-mu
- f) (A = "I")
sipad-me e₂ mu-du₃
- g)
^dutu-am₃ an-šag₄-ge im-si
- h)
^{neš}meš₃ zid-dam kurun₃ kug mu-un-il₂
- i)
diŋir an ki-a za-e-me-en i₃-zalag-ge-en

8.4 Translate the following clauses into Sumerian. Provide only the morphemic segmentation and glossing.

- a) At that time Gudea was the ruler of Lagash.
- b) As for Ningirsu, the ruler is a man of his heart.
- c) I, the king, built the great temple of my mighty gods.
- d) Who are you?
- e) Ningirsu was the mighty god of Gudea, ruler of Lagash.
- f) The ruler of Lagash is you.
- g) They are the seven royal judges.
- h) She was kind.
- i) She is not my wife.
- j) You are not the king of Ur.
- k) He is not the king of Ur.
- l) They are not the king of Ur either.
- m) Of this temple, Ningirsu is its god.

n) Like a donkey, he carried gold.

8.5 Analyze and translate the following excerpt from a literary text with the help of Foxvog's (2016b) or Volk's (2012) glossary. Add the missing morphemic glossing to the lines. Explain the use of the various kinds of copular clauses and of the independent pronouns.

(163) Enmerkar and En-suhgir-ana 276–280 (ETCSL 1.8.2.4)

za-e-me-en en ki aṇ₂
 s[ze=∅]-me-en p_C[en ki=∅ aṇ-∅
^di₁inana-me-en
 inanak=ak=∅]-me-en
 dili-zu-ne₂ maḥ-me-en
 dili=zu=ne p_C[maḥ=∅]-me-en
^di₁inana-ke₄ ur₂ kug-ga-ne₂-še₃ zid-de₃-eš
 inanak=e ur kug=ane=še zid=eš
 mu-un-pad₃-de₃-en ki ^raṇ₂-ṇa₂¹-ne₂-me-en
 s₄mu-s₁₁n-s₁₂pad-s₁₄en p_C[ki=∅ aṇ=ane=∅]-me-en
 sig-ta igi-nim-še₃ en gal-be₂ za-e-me-en
 sig-ta iginim=še p_C[en gal=be=∅] s[ze=∅]-me-en
 ṇe₂₆-e us₂-sa-zu-me-en,
 s[ṇe=∅] p_C[us-'a=zu=∅]-me-en
 a ru-a-ta gaba-ri-zu nu-me-en
 a=∅ ru-'a=ta p_C[gabari=zu=∅] s₁nu-s₂i-s₁₂me-s₁₄en
 šeš gal za-e-me-en
 p_C[šeš gal=∅] s[ze=∅]-me-en
 ṇe₂₆-e nu-mu-da-sa₂-e-en ud da-ri₂-še₃
 s[ṇe=∅] s₁nu-s₄mu-s₆e-s₈da-s₁₂sa-s₁₄en ud dari=še

Lesson 9: Verbal tense

This lesson describes the formal means used to distinguish the preterite and present-future tense in Sumerian. It also discusses the prefix of anteriority /u/ in S11, because of the prefix's role in expressing the relative time of the verbal event in Sumerian.

9.1 The formal marking of the tenses

In the indicative mood Sumerian finite verbal forms distinguish two verbal tenses: present-future (= PF) and preterite (PT). Sumerian has a relative tense system: the verbal form called here the present-future denotes actions that are not anterior, but simultaneous or posterior, relative to a given reference point. The verbal form called the preterite denotes actions anterior relative to a given reference point. The opposition between the present-future and the preterite is neutralized in verbal forms denoting permanent states, as verbs used in a stative meaning always use the preterite tense. The terms present-future and preterite are kept here as convenient labels used for referring to the two tenses of Sumerian.

Formally the two tenses are distinguished either i) solely by agreement patterns involving the affixes in S11 and S14, or ii) by a combination of i) with one of the following grammatical devices: a) the form of the verbal stem in S12, or b) the suffix *-/ed/*, a marker of present-future, in S13.

In exx. (164) and (165) the same verb *šum₂* “to give” is in preterite and present-future, respectively. In (92) the A is expressed with a pronominal prefix in S11, while in (165) it is expressed by a pronominal suffix in S14. Both the preterite and the present-future verbal forms use the same simple stem *šum₂*.

(164) The victory of Utu-hegal 29 (ETCSL 2.1.6)

gu-ti-um^{ki} d^{en}-lil₂-le ma-an-šum₂
gutium=Ø enlil=e s₄m^{-s₇}a^{-s₁₁}n^{-s₁₂}šum^{-s₁₄}Ø
GN=ABS DN=ERG VEN-DAT-3.SG.H.A-give-3.SG.P
“The god Enlil has given Gutium to me.”

(165) Gudea Statue B 7:21-23 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P232275)

gu₃-de₂-a, alan-e, inim im-ma-šum₂-mu
gudea=e alan=e inim=Ø s₂i^{-s₄}m^{-s₅}b^{-s₆}a^{-s₁₂}šum^{-s₁₄}e
PN=ERG statue=DAT.NH word=ABS FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-DAT-give-3.SG.A
“Gudea entrusted the statue with the (following) message: ‘...’.”

Exx. (166)–(168) use the same verb *gi₄* “to return”. Exx. (166) and (167) contain transitive verbal forms, which differ both in their agreement pattern (in the former the A is expressed with a pronominal prefix in S11, while in the latter with a pronominal suffix in S14), and in the form of the verbal stem (the former uses the simple stem /gi/, while the latter the reduplicated stem /gi~gi/). In ex. (167) both the agreement pattern and the use of the reduplicated stem signals the present-future tense.

(166) En-metena 4 4:3 (RIME 1.09.05.04) (Lagash, 25th c.) (Q001117)

dumu ama i₃-ni-gi₄
 dumu=∅ ama=ra s₂i<sub>-s₆nn<sub>-s₁₀i<sub>-s₁₁n<sub>-s₁₂gi<sub>-s₁₄∅
 child=ABS mother=L2.H FIN-3.SG.H-L2-3.SG.A-return-3.SG.P
 “He let the child return to (his) mother.”</sub></sub></sub></sub></sub>

(167) Gudea Statue B 1:13–14 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)

ensi₂, inim bi₂-ib₂-gi₄-gi₄-a
 ensik inim=∅ s₅b<sub>-s₁₀i<sub>-s₁₁b<sub>-s₁₂gi~gi<sub>-s₁₄e<sub>-s₁₅’a
 ruler word=ABS 3.SG.NH-L3-3.SG.NH.P-return~PF-3.SG.A-SUB
 “The ruler, who revokes these (offerings),”</sub></sub></sub></sub></sub>

Ex. (168), which is a finite relative clause, contains an intransitive verbal form in the present-future. Its tense is marked by its agreement pattern (the Subject is expressed with a pronominal suffix in S14), by the form of the verbal stem (it uses the reduplicated stem /gi~gi/), and by the presence of suffix -/ed/ in S13.

(168) Gudea Statue B 8:19–20 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)

ni_ḡ2-ba-ḡa₂ ba-a-gi₄-gi₄-da
 ni_ḡba=ḡu=’a s₅ba<sub>-s₁₀e<sub>-s₁₂gi~gi<sub>-s₁₃ed<sub>-s₁₄∅<sub>-s₁₅’a
 gift=1.SG.POSS=L2.NH MID-L2-return~PF-PF-3.SG.S-SUB
 “... who revokes my gifts, ...”</sub></sub></sub></sub></sub>

Exx. (169), which is a finite relative clause, and ex. (170) contain the verb “to speak” in the preterite and present-future, respectively. They differ both in their agreement pattern (in the former the A is expressed with a pronominal prefix in S11, while in the latter with a pronominal suffix in S14), and in the form of the verbal stem (the former uses the simple stem /dug/, while the latter the suppletive stem /e/). In ex. (170) both the agreement pattern and the use of the suppletive stem signals the present-future tense.

(169) Iri-kagina 1 8:10–12 (RIME 1.9.9.1) (Lagash, 24th c.)

inim lugal-ne₂, ^dnin-ḡir₂-su-ke₄
 p₁[inim] p₂[lugal=ane] ninḡirsuk=e
 p₁[word] p₂[king=3.SG.H.POSS DN=ERG
 e-na-dug₄-ga
 s₂i<sub>-s₆nn<sub>-s₇a<sub>-s₁₁n<sub>-s₁₂dug<sub>-s₁₄∅<sub>-s₁₅’a]<sub>-p₅∅
 FIN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.A-speak-3.SG.P-SUB]<sub>=p₅ABS
 “the commands, Ningirsu, his master, gave him,”</sub></sub></sub></sub></sub></sub></sub></sub>

(170) Nam-mahne 6 2:6 (RIME 3/1.1.12.6) (Lagash, 21st c.) (P234696)

sizkur-ḡu₁₀ ḡe₂-na-be₂
 sizkur-ḡu=∅ s₁ḡa<sub>-s₂i<sub>-s₆nn<sub>-s₇a<sub>-s₁₁b<sub>-s₁₂e<sub>-s₁₅e
 pray=1.SG.POSS=ABS MOD-FIN-3.SG.H.-DAT-3.SG.NH.P-speak.PF-3.SG.A
 “May it (= this statue) pray to her on my behalf (lit. ‘tell my pray’)!”</sub></sub></sub></sub></sub></sub>

The pronominal affixes which are involved in the agreement pattern of the tenses may be arranged into three sets, see Table 9.1. below. Slot 11 contains the final pronominal prefixes (= FPP). Slot 14 may be filled by either of two sets of suffixes, which differ only in their 3rd ps. forms. Note that in 3rd ps. sg. only the

FPP distinguishes between human and non-human forms, while the pronominal suffixes in S14 do not.

The 2nd ps. sg. FPP is /e/. In texts from the 3rd millennium BCE the /e/ contracts with the preceding vowel and lengthens it, whereas in texts from the 2nd millennium BCE the contraction results in an /ē/. The exact form of the 1st ps. sg. FPP is uncertain, but its existence can be inferred from the form of the preceding prefixes.

	SLOT 11	SLOT 14	
	FPP	SET A	SET B
SG. 1	/ʾ/	-/en/	-/en/
SG. 2	/e/	-/en/	-/en/
SG. 3 H	/n/	-/e/	-/ø/
SG. 3 NH	/b/	-/e/	-/ø/
PL. 1	—	-/enden/	-/enden/
PL. 2	—	-/enzen/	-/enzen/
PL. 3	/nnē/	-/enē/	-/eš/

Table 9.1

Sumerian is an ergative language which exhibits split ergativity in its verbal agreement system. The pronominal cross-referencing system of the preterite is ergative: both the S of intransitive verbal forms and the P of transitive verbal forms are cross-referenced by the same set (Set B) of pronominal suffixes in S14, while the A is cross-referenced by a different set of affixes. The pronominal cross-referencing system of the present-future is nominative-accusative: A and S are cross-referenced with the same set of suffixes (Set A) in S14, except for the 3rd ps. forms, while P is cross-referenced with the FPPs of S11. In 3rd ps. sg. and pl. the present-future has a tripartite system: A, S, and P are all marked with different affixes.

9.2 The preterite

In the preterite S and P, the verbal participants in the absolutive, are cross-referenced with the suffixes of Set B in S14. In other words, both the S of intransitive verbal forms and the P of transitive verbal forms are cross-referenced by the same set of pronominal suffixes in S14 in the preterite.

The agreement pattern of the transitive preterite forms is complex. The singular A is cross-referenced by the singular forms of the final pronominal prefix in S11. The plural A is cross-referenced by a periphrastic construction involving the use of two affixes: the singular forms of the FPP in S11 and the plural forms of Set B in S14. The verbal form in ex. (171) below is, for example, a 3rd ps. pl. transitive preterite. It contains a 3rd ps. sg. human FPP in S11 (/n/), and a 3rd ps. pl. pronominal suffix in S14 (-/eš/). These two affixes together cross-reference the 3rd ps. pl. A. One could say that the FPP in S11 agrees in gender and person, while the suffix in S14 agrees in number and person with the Agent. Note that in these plural transitive verbal forms no affix cross-references the P.

(171) NG 99 rev. 1:3–4 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P111162)

i₃-bi₂-la du-du-ke₄-ne, ka-ga-ne-ne-a ba-ni-gi-in-eš
 ibila dudu=ak=ene=e kag=anene='a s₅ba-s₁₀ni-s₁₁n-s₁₂gin-s₁₄eš
 heir PN=GEN=PL=ERG mouth=3.PL.H.POSS=L1 MID-L1-3.SG.H.A-confirm-3.PL
 “The heirs of Dudu confirmed this in their account (lit. ‘in their mouths’).”

Note that the 3rd ps. pl. FPP /**nnē**/ is not used for cross-referencing A in transitive preterite verbal forms. In addition to the periphrastic construction described in the previous paragraph, a 3rd ps. pl. A may also be cross-referenced with the 3rd ps. sg. non-human prefix /**b**/ in S11.

The agreement pattern of the preterite forms is summarized in Table 9.2 below:

	S11	S12	S14
INTRANSITIVE		stem _{PT}	S (with set B)
TRANSITIVE (SG A)	A (with a sg. IPP)	stem _{PT}	P (with set B)
TRANSITIVE (PL A)	A (with a sg. IPP)	stem _{PT}	A (with a pl. suffix of set B)

Table 9.2: The preterite agreement pattern

9.3 The present-future

In present-future forms A and S are cross-referenced with different sets of suffixes in S14: A with Set A, while S with Set B. Note that Set A and B differs only in the 3rd ps. forms. P is cross-referenced with an FPP in S11.

In intransitive present-future forms the suffixes of set B cross-referencing S are preceded by the suffix /**ed**/ in S13 until the end of the 3rd millennium BCE, in the 2nd millennium its use becomes less regular. Note that in verbal forms whose verbal stem has no special present-future form, only the suffix /**ed**/ distinguishes the intransitive present-future from the intransitive preterite as both use Set B in S14 to cross-reference S.

The 3rd ps. pl. FPP /**nnē**/ is attested only in texts from the 24th and 23rd c. BCE, no more than six times; one of them is ex. (172) below. For cross-referencing a 3rd ps. pl. P, /**nnē**/ is supplanted by the 3rd ps. sg. non-human prefix /**b**/ in S11.

(172) FaoS 19, Gir32 rev. 7 (Lagash, 23rd c.) (P213570)

ḥa-mu-ra-ne-šum₂-mu

{S11}ḥa-{S4}mu-_{S6}r-_{S7}a-_{S11}nnē-_{S12}šum-_{S14}e

MOD-VEN-2.SG-DAT-3.PL.P-give-3.SG.A

“May he give them to you!”

When the participant functioning as P of the transitive present-future verbal form is a 3rd ps. sg. non-human, then the presence of the cross-referencing prefix /**b**/ in S11 is not obligatory, as in ex. (173) below. In this example the participant functioning as P is not cross-referenced by any prefix, the presence of the 3rd. ps. sg. suffix /**e**/ in S14, however, can alone indicate that the verbal form is transitive.

(173) Gudea Cyl. A 1:11 (Lagash, 21nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

e₂-ninnu me-be₂ an ki-a

eninnu=ak me=be=e an ki='a

TN=GEN essence=3.SG.NH.POSS=L3.NH sky earth=L1

pa e₃ mu-ak-ke₄

pa=∅ e-∅=∅ _{S4}mu-_{S10}n-_{S12}ak-_{S14}en

branch=ABS leave-TL=ABS VEN-L1.SYN-act-1.SG.A

“I will make the grandeur of E-ninnu known everywhere.

This phenomenon is not restricted to transitive present-future forms, it may also be observed in imperative forms and in forms with the modal-prefix /ga/-, see lesson 17 below, i.e., in any form which cross-references P in S11.

The agreement pattern of the present-future forms is summarized in Table 9.3 below:

	S11	S12	S13	S14
INTRANSITIVE		stem _{PF}	-/ed/-	S (with set B)
TRANSITIVE	P (with an IPP)	stem _{PF}	—	A (with set A)

Table 9.3: The present-future agreement pattern

The present-future tense is also signalled by the form of the verbal stem with some of the verbs. In particular, Sumerian verbs can be grouped into four classes according to their form in the present-future:

i) Verbs belonging to the REGULAR CLASS use the same stem both in the present-future and preterite. The majority of the verbs belongs to this class.

ii) Verbs belonging to the REDUPLICATING CLASS use a reduplicated stem in the present-future. If the stem ends with a consonant, then the consonant is either omitted in the reduplicated form, e.g.: **ḡar**_{PT}/ḡar/ : **ḡa₂-ḡa₂**_{PF}/ḡa~ḡa/ “to put”, **naḡ**_{PT}/naḡ/ : **na₈-na₈**_{PF}/na~na/ “to drink”, **kur₉**_{PT}/kur/ : **ku₄-ku₄**_{PF}/ku~ku/ “to enter”; or it is preserved only in the first syllable: **ḡal**_{PT}/ḡal/ : **ḡal-ḡa**_{PF}/ḡal~ḡa/ “to distribute”, **te-en**_{PT}/ten/ : **te-en-te**_{PF}/ten~te/ “to cool off”. If the monosyllabic stem ends with a vowel, then the whole stem is reduplicated, e.g.: **gi₄**_{PT}/gi/ : **gi₄-gi₄**_{PF}/gi~gi/ “to return”; **mu₂**_{PT}/mu/ : **mu₂-mu₂**_{PF}/mu~mu/ “to grow”. Some bisyllabic verbs form their present-future stem by a reduplication of the first syllable with an accompanying voicing of the consonant: **tuku**_{PT}/tuku/ : **du₁₂-du₁₂**_{PF}/du~du/ “to have”; **taka₄**_{PT}/taka/ : **da₁₃-da₁₃**_{PF}/da~da/ “to leave”.

iii) Verbs belonging to the EXTENDING CLASS use a stem extended with a consonant in the present-future, e.g.: **e₃**_{PT}/e/ : **ed₂**_{PF}/ed/ “to go out”, **te**_{PT}/te/ or **ti**_{PT}/ti/ : **ten₃**_{PF}/ten/ or **tiḡ₃**_{PF}/tiḡ/ “to approach”. The presence of the stem-final consonant is shown by the orthography only if there is an affix after the stem.

iv) Verbs belonging to THE SUPPLETIVE CLASS use an entirely different stem in the present-future, e.g.: **dug₄**_{PT}/dug/ (sg.), **e**_{PT}/e/ (pl.) : **e**_{PF}/e/ (sg. and pl.) “to speak”. See also Table 11.1 in Lesson 11 below for more verbs with a suppletive stem; the form of these verbs also depends on the plurality of their participant in the absolutive.

In the Sumerian texts we have at our disposal preterite verbal forms outnumber present-future forms greatly. Only the preterite may be used with stative verbs, and this is the most often used tense in texts referring to past events.

In ex. (174) below the present-future is used to express an action that will take place in the future, posterior relative to the present of the text. The present-future is also used to express future events in the protasis part of curse formulas see, e.g., ex. (60) in Lesson 5, and exx. (167) and (168) above.

(174) Gudea Cyl. A 12:1–2 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

e₂ ud-de₃ ma-ra-du₃-e
 e=∅ ud=e s₄mu-s₆r-s₇a-s₁₂du-s₁₄e
 house=ABS day=ERG VEN-2.SG-DAT-build-3.SG.A

ḡi₆-e ma-ra-ab-mu₂-mu₂
 ḡi=e s₄mu-s₆r-s₇a-s₁₁b-s₁₂mu~mu-s₁₄e
 night=ERG VEN-2.SG-DAT-3.SG.NH.P-grow~PF-3.SG.A

“The day will build the temple for you and the night will make it rise for you.”

In ex. (175) below the present-future is used to express an action that is simultaneous with another action.

(175) Lugal-zagesi 1 2:26–32 (RIME 1.14.20.1) (Uruk, 24th c.) (Q001379)

ud-ba, unug^{ki}-ge, giri₁₇-zal-a, ud mu-da-zal-zal-le
 ud=be=[’]a unug=e girizal=[’]a ud=∅ s₄mu-s₆n-s₇da-s₁₀n-s₁₂zal~zal-s₁₄e
 day=DEM=L1 GN=ERG joy=L1 day=ABS VEN-3.SG.H-COM-L1.SYN-pass~PL-3.SG.A

urim^{ki}-e gud-gen⁷ sarj an-še₃ mu-dab₆-il₂
 Ur=e gud=gen sag=∅ an=še s₄mu-s₆n-s₇da-s₁₁b-s₁₂il-s₁₄∅
 GN=ERG bull=EQU head=ABS sky=TERM VEN-3.SG.H-COM-3.SG.NH.A-raise-3.SG.P

“At that time, while Uruk passed each and every day in joy because of him, Ur raised his head high like a bull because of him”

In ex. (176) below the present-future is used to express actions that are simultaneous with each other.

(176) Lugal-kigine-dudu 1 6–14 (Uruk, 24th c.) (Q001368)

nam-en, nam-lugal-da, e-na-da-tab-ba-a,
 namen=∅ namlugal=da s₂i-s₆nn-s₇a-s₈da-s₁₁n-s₁₂tab-s₁₄∅-s₁₅[’]a-[’]a
 rulership=ABS kingship=COM FIN-3.SG.H-DAT-COM-3.SG.H.A-double-3.SG.P-SUB-L1

unug^{ki}-ga, nam-en, mu-ak-ke₄
 unug=[’]a namen=∅ s₄mu-s₁₀n-s₁₂ak-s₁₄e
 GN=L1 rulership=ABS VEN-L1.SYN-act-3.SG.A

urim^{ki}-ma, nam-lugal, mu-ak-ke₄
 urim=[’]a namlugal=∅ s₄mu-s₁₀n-s₁₂ak-s₁₄e
 GN=L1 kingship=ABS VEN-L1.SYN-act-3.SG.A

“(When Enlil, the king of all lands,) combined the title of *en* and the title of king for him: he ruled then as *en* in Unug, while he ruled as king in Urim.”

In ex. (177) below the verb of address introducing direct speech uses the present-future tense. Here the act of addressing is considered to be simultaneous with the speech, see also ex. (165) above.

(177) The victory of Utu-hegal 28 (ETCSL 2.1.6)

dumu iri-na-ke₄-ne gu₃ mu-ne-de₂-e
 dumu iri=ane=ak=enē=ra gu=∅ s₄mu-s₆nnē-s₇a-s₁₂de-s₁₄e
 child city=3.SG.H.POSS=GEN=PL=DAT.H voice=ABS VEN-3.PL-DAT-pour-3.SG.A

“He addressed a speech to the citizens of his city: ‘...’”

In ex. (178) the present-future is used with the modal prefix /*ha*/- to express a wish, see also Lesson 16, section 16.2 below.

(178) Gudea Cyl. B 2:6 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

bar-ḡu₁₀-a šud₃ ḡe₂-mi-sa₄-za
 bar-ḡu=¹a šud=∅ s₁ḡa-s₂i-s₄m-s₅b-s₁₀i-s₁₁b-s₁₂sa-s₁₄enzen
 outside=1.SG.POSS=L2.NH prayer=ABS MOD-FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-L2-3.SG.NH.P-call-2.PL.A
 “(O, Anuna gods,) may you pray on my behalf!”

In ex. (179) below the present-future is used to express a habitual action.

(179) En-metena 7 14–16 (RIME 1.9.5.7) (Lagash, 25th c.) (P222539)

gur₄-gur₄ kug luḡ-ḡa i₃ itud¹-da
 p₁[gurgur kug luḡ-¹a=ak] p₂[i itud=ak=∅
 p₁[vessel silver clean-PT=GEN] p₂[oil month=GEN=ABS
^dnin-ḡir₂-su₂-ke₄ ab-ta-gu₇-a,
 ninḡirsuk=e s₂a-s₅b-s₉ta-s₁₂gu-s₁₄e-s₁₅¹a]=p₅∅
 DN=ERG FIN-3.SG.NH-ABL-eat-3.SG.A-SUB]=p₅ABS

mu-na-dim₂

s₄mu-s₆nn-s₇a-s₁₁n-s₁₂dim-s₁₄∅
 VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.A-create-3.SG.P

“(For the god Ningirsu, En-metena) fashioned a *gurgur* vessel of purified silver, from which Ningirsu consumes the monthly oil (offering).”

9.4 The prefix of anteriority

In addition to the formal means of the previous subsection, the prefix /u/ of S1 is also involved in indicating the relative time of the verbal event in Sumerian. It denotes anteriority relative to the event of a following clause. If the verb of the following clause is in the present-future, it denotes anteriority in the future, while if it is in the preterite, it denotes anteriority in the past. Verbal forms with the prefix /u/ are as a rule in the preterite.

The prefix assimilates to the vowel of the next syllable only if it forms an open syllable, see ex. (182) and the first verbal form in ex. (183) below. If it forms a closed syllable, /uC/, then it does not assimilate. Its behaviour gives further support to the assumption that the 3rd ps. sg. human IPP is /nn/, if followed by a vowel. The different vowels of the prefix of anteriority in exx. (181) and (182), /u/ vs. /i/, may easily be explained if one assumes that the grapheme NI represents /nni/ in the former, but /ni/ in the latter.

(180) Iri-kagina 3 2:16’–18’ (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222610)

lu₂ dam u₃-taka₄, kug ḡiḡ₄ 5-am₆,
 lu=e dam=∅ s₁u-s₁₁n-s₁₂taka-s₁₄∅ kug ḡiḡ 5=∅=am-∅
 man=ERG wife=ABS ANT-3.SG.H.A-leave-3.SG.P silver unit 5=ABS=COP-3.SG.S
 ensi₂-ke₄, ba-de₆
 ensik=e s₅ba-s₁₁n-s₁₂de-s₁₄∅
 ruler=ERG MID-3.SG.H.A-bring-3.SG.P

“If a man divorced (his) wife, the ruler received 5 shekels of silver.”

(181) En-metena 1 6:21–23 (RIME 1.9.5.1) (Lagash, 25th c.) (Q001103)

^dnin-ḡir₂-su-ke₄, sa-šuš-gal u₃-ni-šuš
 ninḡirsuk=e sašušgal=∅ s₂u-s₆nn-s₁₀i-s₁₁n-s₁₂šuš-s₁₄∅
 DN=ERG battle.net=ABS ANT-3.SG.H-L2-3.SG.H.A-cover-3.SG.P

“After Ningirsu had thrown a battle-net on him (= the Ummaite), ...”

(182) Iri-kagina 1 7:17–21 (RIME 1.9.9.1) (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222607)

RU-lugal-ke₄, sa₇ ašag-ga-na-ka, pu₂ i₃-ni-du₃,
 RUlugalak=e sa₇ ašag=ane=ak='a pu=∅ s₁u^{-s₁₀}ni^{-s₁₁}n^{-s₁₂}du^{-s₁₄}∅
 attendant=ERG head field=3.SG.H.POSS=GEN=L1 well=ABS ANT-L1-3.SG.H.A-build-3.SG.P
 “After an attendant had built a well in the front part of his field (...)”

(183) Amar-Suena 9 32–39 (RIME 3/2.1.3.9) (Ur, 21st c.) (Q000984)

lu₂ e₂ a-ba-sumun, u₃-un-du₃,
 lu e=∅ s₁u^{-s₅}ba^{-s₁₂}sumun^{-s₁₄}∅ s₁u^{-s₁₁}n^{-s₁₂}du^{-s₁₄}∅
 man house=ABS ANT-MID-old-3.SG.S ANT-3.SG.H.A-build-3.SG.P
 “The man, who, after the temple has become dilapidated, rebuilds it,”

Further readings

The most important article on the forms of the present-future stem is Krecher 1995. A part of the sumerological literature refers to the preterite and present-future tenses of Sumerian with the ancient Akkadian terms as *ḥamṭû* (“quick”) and *marû* (“slow”) respectively, see Black 1991: 99–119 on these ancient terms. The “classical” account of the various stems used in present-future is Edzard 1976. On the use of the tenses in Sumerian, see Streck 1998.

On split-ergativity in general and in Sumerian, see Woods 2000: 314–319. The origin of split-ergativity in the Sumerian verbal system is the subject of two papers. Interestingly their main conclusions are somehow contradictory. Coghill and Deutscher (2002) argue that the ergative pattern of the preterite arose in Sumerian when a passive structure was reanalyzed as active-transitive as it happened in many other languages. Schulze and Sallaberger (2007) conclude that the present-future pattern derives from “the grammaticalization of the antipassive as an accusative construction” (163) as it happened in many other languages. The complexity of the issue is indicated by the fact that both articles needed two authors, an assyriologist and a linguist.

On the function of the prefix of anteriority and on its possible Semitic origin, see Civil 2008.

Exercises

9.1 Look up the new words used in the examples of this lesson in Foxvog’s (2016b) or Volk’s (2012) glossary, and learn them.

9.2 Study the examples of this lesson carefully and make yourself familiar with their grammatical analysis.

9.3 Change the present-future forms into preterite, and the preterite forms into present-future. You only have to produce the morphemic segmentation and glossing (2nd and 3rd line of the examples).

a)

mu-ak-ke₄
 s₄mu^{-s₁₀}n^{-s₁₂}ak^{-s₁₄}e
 VEN-L1.SYN-act-3.SG.A

b)

ma-ra-ab-mu₂-mu₂
 s₄mu^{-s₆}r^{-s₇}a^{-s₁₁}b^{-s₁₂}mu~mu^{-s₁₄}e
 VEN-2.SG-DAT-3.SG.NH.P-grow~PF-3.SG.A

c)

i₃-ni-gi₄s₂i_{-s₆nn_{-s₁₀i_{-s₁₁n_{-s₁₂gi_{-s₁₄∅}}}}}

FIN-3.SG.H-L2-3.SG.A-return-3.SG.P

d)

ma-ra-du₃-es₄mu_{-s₆r_{-s₇a_{-s₁₂du_{-s₁₄e}}}}

VEN-2.SG-DAT-build-3.SG.A

e)

ma-an-šum₂s₄m_{-s₇a_{-s₁₁n_{-s₁₂šum_{-s₁₄∅}}}}

VEN-DAT-3.SG.H.A-give-3.SG.P

g)

ba-ni-gi-in-eš

s₅ba_{-s₁₀ni_{-s₁₁n_{-s₁₂gin_{-s₁₄eš}}}}

MID-L1-3.SG.H.A-confirm-3.PL

h)

be₂-ṇar-re₂-ešs₅b_{-s₁₀i_{-s₁₁n_{-s₁₂ṇar_{-s₁₄eš}}}}

3.SG.NH-L2-3.SG.H.A-place-3.PL

i)

gu₂ ma-si-si-negu=∅ s₄m_{-s₇a_{-s₁₂si_{-s₁₄enē}}}

neck=ABS VEN-DAT-fill~PF-3.PL.A

j)

mu-na-dim₂s₄mu_{-s₆nn_{-s₇a_{-s₁₁n_{-s₁₂dim_{-s₁₄∅}}}}}

VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.A-create-3.SG.P

k)

sizkur₂ mu-na-be₂sizkur=∅ s₄mu_{-s₆nn_{-s₆a_{-s₁₁b_{-s₁₂e_{-s₁₄e}}}}}

prayer=ABS VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.NH.P-speak.PF-3.SG.A

9.4 Go to the ETCSRI corpus (<http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/etcsri/corpus>) and write “V12=STEM-PF” (without the quotation marks) in the Search Oracc box. You will have all the verbal forms listed which use a special present-future stem. Collect them and pair them with their preterite stem.

9.5 Translate the text Lugal-kigine-dudu 1 (RIME 1.14.14.01) (Uruk, 24th c.) (Q001368) with the help of Volk's (2012) or Foxvog's (2016b) glossary. Add morphological segmentation and glossing to the text. Then go to the ETCSRI edition of the text (<http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/etcsri/Q001368>), click on the “proofing” link on the left side of the page, and compare your glosses with ETCSRI's glossing.

1. ^den-lil₂2. lugal kur-kur-ke₄3. lugal-ki-ṇen-ne₂-du₇-du₇-ra4. ud ^den-lil₂-le5. gu₃ zid e-na-de₂-a

6. nam-en

7. nam-lugal-da

8. e-na-da-tab-ba-a

9. unug^{ki}-ga

10. nam-en

11. mu-ak-ke₄

12. urim₂^{ki}-r^{ma}¹

13. nam-lugal

14. mu-ak-ke₄

15. lugal-ki-ḡen-ne₂-du₇-du₇-de₃

16. nam gal ḡul₂-la-da

17. ^den-lil₂ lugal ki ar₂-ne₂

18. nam-til₃-la-ni-še₃

19. a mu-na-ru

Lesson 10: Verbal plurality

The alternation of the verbal stem has two main functions in Sumerian: i) to signal the present-future tense; ii) to signal verbal number. The former was discussed in the previous lesson. This lesson describes the formal means used to signal verbal number in Sumerian.

10.1 Event number

Number is traditionally considered to be a nominal category; in some languages, however, the plurality of verbal events or the plurality of certain participants may trigger alternations in the form of the verb. Sumerian also appears to be a language in which verbal number plays an important role.

Two main types of verbal number can be distinguished: event number and participant number. Event number relates to the plurality of the verbal event manifesting itself in many different but related ways: iterative, durative, or intensive verbal action, totality of the object (see, e.g., exx. [184], and [362]), or the subject, distributive meaning, i.e., more than one subject or object is involved in the verbal action simultaneously or successively (see, eg., exx. [185], [186], [187], and [188] below). Some of these meanings may also involve the plurality of one of the participants, but this is only a consequence of the verb's meaning. Sumerian signals the plurality of verbal events by the full reduplication of the verbal stem (plural reduplication). Both present-future and preterite forms may undergo plural reduplication.

(184) Shulgi A 91 (ETCSL 2.4.2.01)

kur ħu-mu-gam-gam
kur=∅ s₁ħa-s₄mu-s₁₁'-s₁₂gam~gam-s₁₄∅
foreign.land=ABS MOD-VEN-1.SG.A-subdue~PL-3.SG.P

kalam hu-mu-ge-en-ge-en
kalam=∅ s₁ħa-s₄mu-s₁₁'-s₁₂gen~gen-s₁₄∅
land=ABS MOD-VEN-1.SG.A-firm~PL-3.SG.P

"I subdued the foreign lands completely, I secured the land fully."

(185) Iri-kagina 5 obv. 4:1-4 (RIME 1.9.9.5) (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222618)

kug za-gin₃-be₂ ba-ta-keš₂-keš₂
kug zagin=be=∅ s₅ba-s₉ta-s₁₁n-s₁₂keš~keš-s₁₄∅
precious.metal lapis.lazuli=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS MID-ABL-3.SG.H.A-bind~PL-3.SG.P

alan-be₂ i₃-gul-gul
alan=be=∅ s₁i-s₁₁n-s₁₂gul~gul-s₁₄∅
statute=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS FIN-3.SG.H.A-destroy~PL-3.SG.P

"(He set fire to the temple of the goddess Gatumdug,) collected all its precious metal and lapis lazuli from it for himself, and destroyed all its statues."

(186) En-metena 1 2:4-5 (RIME 1.9.5.1) (Lagash, 25th c.) (Q001103)

eg₂-ba na-ru₂-a e-me-sar-sar
eg=be='a naru'a=∅ s₁i-s₄m-s₅b-s₁₀i-s₁₁n-s₁₂sar~sar-s₁₄∅
dike=DEM=L2.NH stela=ABS FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-L2-3.SG.A-write~PL-3.SG.P

"He set up inscribed stelae all over along that dike."

(187) En-metena 23 29–30 (RIME 1.9.5.23) (Lagash, 25th c.) (P222530)

kisal ^dlugal-urub^{ki}-ka-ke₄ sa₂ i₃-mi-dug₄-dug₄
 kisal lugalurubak=ak=e sa-ø=ø s₂i⁻s₄m⁻s₅b⁻s₁₀i⁻s₁₁n⁻s₁₂dug~dug⁻s₁₄ø
 courtyard DN=GEN=L3.NH equal-TL=ABS FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-L3-3.SG.H.A-do~PL-3.SG.P
 “He assigned (precious metals, lapis lazuli, 20 oxen, and 20 sheep) to Lugal-Uruba's courtyard as a regular offering.”

(188) Lugal-zagesi 1 2:26–29 (RIME 1.14.20.1) (Uruk, 24th c.) (Q001379)

ud-ba, unug^{ki}-ge, giri₁₇-zal-a, ud mu-da-zal-zal-le
 ud=be='a unug=e girizal='a ud=ø s₄mu⁻s₆n⁻s₇da⁻s₁₀n⁻s₁₂zal~zal⁻s₁₄e
 day=DEM=L1 GN=ERG joy=L1 day=ABS VEN-3.SG.H-COM-L1.SYN-pass~PL-3.SG.A
 “At that time, while Uruk passed each and every day in joy because of him,”

10.2 Participant number

The second type of verbal number, the participant number relates to the number of participants involved. As in other languages displaying this grammatical category, participant number operates on an ergative basis in Sumerian, as well: the alternation of the verbal stem reflects the plurality of the participant in the absolutive, i.e., either that of S or that of P.

The set of alternating stems consists of a limited number of intransitive verbs expressing position or motion, or transitives that indicate the causation of motion; the verb “to die” is also typically involved. In the case of these verbs the number of participants makes a semantic difference that may explain the use of verbal number which ultimately always relates to the semantics of the verb. Table 10.1 below shows the stem alternations of the six Sumerian verbs involved:

VERB	SINGULAR		PLURAL	
	PT	PF	PT	PF
“to go”	/ŋen/ ^{a)}	/du/ ^{b)}	/ere/ ^{c)}	/sub/ ^{d)}
“to stand, to put”	/gub/ ^{e)}		/sug/ or /šug/ ^{f)}	
“to sit, to seat”	/tuš/ ^{g)}	/dur/ ^{h)}	/durun/ ⁱ⁾	
“to live”	h: /til/ ^{j)} nh: /lug/ ^{k)}	—	/sig/ ^{l)}	—
“to die, to kill”	/uš/ ^{m)}	/ug/ ⁿ⁾		
“to bring”	countables: /tum/ ^{o)}		countables: /laḥ/ ^{p)}	
	mass nouns: /de/ ^{v)}	mass nouns: /tum/ ^{q)}	—	

Table 10.1

The most often used writings of the stems of Table 10.1 are: a) **ŋen**; b) **du**; c) **e-re**₇; d) **su**₈/**sub**₂; e) **gub**; f) **su**₈/**sug**₂, **šu**₄; g) **tuš**; h) **dur**₂; i) **durun**, **durun**_x(KU.KU); j) **ti/til**₃; k) **lu/lug**, **lug**_x(LUL); l) **se**₁₂/**sig**₇, **se**₁₁, **ze**₂; m) **uš**₂; n) **ug**₇, **ug**₅, **ug**_x(UŠ₂.UŠ₂); o) **tum**₂; p) **de**₆, **di**₃(TI) (in Garshana); q) **tum**₃; r) **laḥ**₄, **laḥ**₅, **la**-(ḥe/a).

As exx. the (189)–(192) below show there is a tendency that when the participant in the absolutive functions as S, then the verb shows a 3rd ps. pl. agreement, see exx. (189) and (191) below. When the participant in the absolutive functions as P, then it is cross-referenced with 3rd ps. sg. pronominal suffix in S14, see exx. (190) and (192). In the former examples, therefore, plurality is

signalled by both the verbal stem and the pronominal suffix; in the latter examples, however, only by the verbal stem.

(189) NWHCM 2009.174 obv. 9–10 (Umma, 23th c.) (P480080)

ʾumma^{ki-ʾa}, ki-ḡa₂ i₃-durun_x(KU.KU)-ne₂-ʾeš₂^ʾ
 umma=^ʾa ki=ḡu=^ʾa s₂i-s₅b-s₁₀(i>)ø-s₁₂durun-s₁₄eš
 GN=L2.NH place=1.SG.POSS=L2.NH FIN-3.SG.NH-L2.SYN-sit.PL-3.PL.S
 “They are staying with me (lit. ‘at my place’) in Umma.”

(190) NG 120b rev. 9–10 (Umma, 21st c.) (P131776)

nag-su^{ki}-še₃ ḡa-za-num₂-e mu-na-an-laḡ₄
 nagsu=še hazanum=e s₄mu-s₆nn-s₇a-s₁₁n-s₁₂laḡ-s₁₄ø
 GN=TERM mayor=ERG VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.A-bring.PL-3.SG.P
 “The mayor took them (= the sheep) for him to Nagsu.”

(191) Gudea Cyl. B 11:13–14 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

nam-šita sag⁹-ga gu₃-de₂-a-a-da en ^dnin-ḡir₂-su-ra
 namšita sag=^ʾa gudea=ak=da en ninḡirsuk=ra
 entreaty friendly-PT PN=GEN=COM lord DN=DAT.H
 mu-na-da-šu₄-ge-eš₂
 s₄mu-s₆nn-s₇a-s₈da-s₁₂šug-s₁₄eš
 VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-COM-stand.PL-3.PL.S
 “They stepped forward to Lord Ningirsu with friendly entreaties on behalf of Gudea.”

The use of the suppletive plural stems is triggered by the plurality of participants, and not by the plurality of event as in the case of plural reduplication. The difference in function of suppletive plural stems and plural reduplication is also implied by the phenomenon that plural stems may also undergo plural reduplication:

(192) Gudea Cyl. A 23:7 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

e₂-a mi-ni-šu₄-šu₄
 e=^ʾa s₄mu-s₁₀ni-s₁₁n-s₁₂šug~šug-s₁₄ø
 temple=L1 VEN-L1-3.SG.H.A-stand.PL~PL-3.SG.P
 “He had each of them (= stone basins) stand in the temple.”

There exist some examples mainly from the 3rd millennium BCE, in which the plurality of the participant in the absolutive (P or S) apparently is signalled by an *-en/* suffix. The suffix *-en/* appears to be the vestige of an older, supplanted grammatical system. The traces of this system may also be detected in the plural stem of **tuš** “to sit”: */durun/* < **/dur-en/*; and probably in the 1st and 2nd ps. pl. suffixes of S14: */-enden/* < **/en-den/*, */-enzen/* < **/en-zen/*.

All examples involve the verb **kur** “to enter, bring in”, except for the last example, ex. (195), which comes from a literary text dated to the first part of the 2nd millennium BCE.

(193) VS 14, 179 10:3 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P020190)

mu-na-kur_x(DU)-re₆-na-am₆
 s₄mu-s₆nn-s₇a-s₁₀n-s₁₂kur-en-s₁₄ø-s₁₅^ʾa=am-ø
 VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-L1.SYN-enter-PL-3.SG.S-SUB=COP-3.SG.S
 “These [= various animals] are (gifts) brought in for (Baragnamtara).”

(194) UET 3 1410 3–4 (Ur, 21st c.) (P137735)

a-wi-li₃ nu-banda₄ ba-ni^l-in-kur₉-re-en₃
 awili nubanda=e s₅ba-s₁₀ni-s₁₁n-s₁₂kur-en-s₁₄∅
 PN overseer=ERG 3.SG.NH-L1-3.SG.H.A-enter-PL-3.SG.P
 “Awili, the overseer brought them (= 8 troops) in.”

(195) The Death of Gilgamesh, Me Turan Version Segment F 168 (ETCSL 1.8.1.3)

e₂ nin₉-a-ta nin₉ me-ši-du-un
 e nin=ak=ta nin=∅ s₄mu-s₆e-s₉ši-s₁₂du-en-s₁₄∅
 house sister=GEN=ABL sister=ABS VEN-2.SG-TERM-go-PL-3.SG.S
 “From the sisters’ house the sisters will come to you.”

Further reading

The linguistic description of this lesson is informed by Mithun 1988 and Corbett 2000.

Verbal plurality and full reduplication of the preterite stem is discussed by Edzard 1971: 226–232. B. Tanos’s unpublished dissertation (2012) is the most comprehensive work on verbal plurality in Sumerian. He also published a long article on the semantics of verbal plurality (2014).

The two most important articles about the forms of the suppletive verbal stems are Krecher 1967/8 and Steinkeller 1979.

Since almost all forms of the verb “to bring” are written with the sign DU, the reading and interpretation of its various forms was an unsolved problem. The breakthrough in this issue was made by Walther Sallaberger (2005), mainly with the help of the Garshana texts in which the form /**de**/ is written not with the DU sign (= **de**₆) but with the TI (= **di**₃). Meyer-Laurin 2010 examined the 3rd millennium BCE occurrences of the verb in detail, using Sallaberger’s insights as a starting point.

This textbook assumes that the various form of the verb “to bring” depend on whether the P of the verb is countable or mass noun. Sallaberger assumes that the form of the verb depends on whether the P “can move on his/its own (persons, herd animals, boats)” (“kann sich selbst bewegen [Personen, Herdentiere, Boote]”) or “must be carried” (“muss getragen werden”) (2005: 573). Meyer-Laurin assumes that we have in fact two lexemes: **tum**₂ “to lead” (“geleiten”) and **de**₆ / **tum**₃ “to deliver” (“liefern”) (2010: 11) until the end of the 3rd millennium BCE. In my view, the distinction between countable and mass nouns explains better that the plural form /**lah**/ may not be used with things which “must be carried” or “delivered”. As a matter of fact, none of the accounts of the various forms of the verb “to bring” may explain all occurrences, especially when 2nd millennium examples are also taken into consideration.

For the plural suffix **-en**/, see Jagersma 2010: 322–323. For a typologically similar language in which an affix “does not show person agreement, but which indicates the plurality of participants, object or subject, depending on the case frame of the verb”, see Sandawe, a language spoken in Central Tansania (Kießling 2002).

Exercises

10.1 Look up the new words used in the examples of this lesson in Foxvog’s (2016b) or Volk’s (2012) glossary, and learn them.

10.2 Study the examples of this lesson carefully and make yourself familiar with their grammatical analysis.

10.3 Go to the ETCSRI corpus (<http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/etcsri/corpus>) and write “V12=STEM-RDP” (without the quotation marks) in the Search Oracc box. Select at least 10 verbal forms and try to explain the meaning of the plural reduplication.

10.4 Go to the ETCSRI corpus (<http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/etcsri/corpus>) and write “V12=STEM-PL” (without the quotation marks) in the Search Oracc box. Pair the plural stems with the singular stems.

10.5 Create the plural or singular version of the following examples. You only have to produce the morphemic segmentation and glossing (2nd and 3rd line of the examples).

a)

kug ^dḡa₂-tum₃-dug₃-ra mu-na-ḡen,
 kug ḡatumdug=ra _{s4}mu-_{s6}nn-_{s7}a-_{s12}ḡen-_{s14}∅
 holy DN=DAT.H VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-go-3.SG.S
 “He went to holy Gatumdug.”

b)

ṛumma^{ṛki-ṛa}, ki-ḡa₂ i₃-durun_x(KU.KU)-ne₂-ṛeš₂^ṛ
 umma=ṛa ki=ḡu=ṛa _{s2}i-_{s5}b-_{s10}(i>)∅-_{s12}durun-_{s14}eš
 GN=L2.NH place=1.SG.POSS=L2.NH FIN-3.SG.NH-L2.SYN-sit.PL-3.PL.S
 “They are staying with me (lit. ‘at my place’) in Umma.”

c)

ensi₂-be₂, mu-uš₂
 ensik=be=∅ _{s4}mu-_{s11}n-_{s12}uš-_{s14}∅
 ruler=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS VEN-3.SG.H.A-die-3.SG.P
 “He killed its ruler.”

d)

gud-be₂ nu-mu-da-tum₂
 gud=be=∅ _{s1}nu-_{s4}mu-_{s6}n-_{s8}da-_{s11}n-_{s12}tum-_{s14}∅
 OX=DEM=ABS NEG-VEN-3.SG.H-COM-3.SG.H.A-bring-3.SG.P
 “He was not able to bring that ox.”

e)

lugal-keš^{ki}-da, e-da-se₁₂
 lugalkeš=da _{s2}i-_{s6}n-_{s8}da-_{s12}se-_{s14}eš
 PN=COM FIN-3.SG.H-COM-live.PL-3.PL.S
 “They live by Lugal-Keš.”

f)

nag-su^{ki}-še₃ ḡa-za-num₂-e, mu-na-an-laḡ₅
 nagsu=še hazanum=e _{s4}mu-_{s6}nn-_{s7}a-_{s11}n-_{s12}laḡ-_{s14}∅
 GN=TERM mayor=ERG VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.A-bring.PL-3.SG.P
 “The mayor took them (= the sheep) for him to Nagsu.”

g)

inim-ba ħa-mu-da-gub
 inim=be='a _{S1}ħa-_{S4}mu-_{S6}'-_{S8}da-_{S10}n-_{S12}gub-_{S14}∅
 word=DEM=L1 MOD-VEN-1.SG-COM-L1.SYN-stand-3.SG.S
 “May she stand with me in this matter!”

h)

nam-šita sag⁹-ga gu₃-de₂-a-da
 namšita sag-'a gudea=ak=da
 entreaty good-PT PN=GEN=COM
 en ^dnin-₂nir-su-ra mu-na-da-š_{u4}-ge-eš₂
 en ninjirsuk=ra _{S4}mu-_{S6}nn-_{S7}a-_{S8}da-_{S12}šug-_{S14}eš
 lord DN=DAT.H VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-COM-stand.PL-3.PL.S
 “(Bau’s septuplets) stepped forward to lord Ninjirsu one by one with friendly entreaties
 on behalf of Gudea.”

10.6 Transliterate the text FaoS 19, Gir32 (Lagash, 23rd c.) (P213570) with the help of Volk’s sign list (2012). A copy of the text can be found at <http://cdli.ucla.edu/P213570>. Translate the text with the help of Volk’s (2012) or Foxvog’s (2016b) glossary.

Lesson 11: The prefixes of Slots 2–6

This lesson describes the function of the morphemes that may occupy S2–6 of the finite verbal form. The grammatical functions expressed by the finite-marker prefixes in S2, by the ventive in S4, and by the prefix **/ba/-** in S5 are controversial in Sumerology. The reason for this is that they express functions that are not easily recoverable from the entirely written corpus of an ancient extinct language. The finite-marker prefixes are the vestige of an obsolete system expressing a difference in verbal tense and a difference between dynamic and stative verbs. The ventive is an allative deictic morpheme, and the prefix **/ba/-** is a marker of middle voice. The prefix **/nga/-** in S3 functions as clause coordinator. The lesson concludes with the description of the final pronominal prefixes in S6 that function as the pronominal part of the composite adverbial prefixes.

The modal prefixes, except for the prefix **/ha/-**, also occupy S2: they cannot co-occur with a finite marker. They will, however, be discussed in Lesson 16, section 16.2, not in this lesson.

11.1 The finite-marker prefixes (Slot 2)

This prefix has two allomorphs: i) **/i/** and ii) **/a(l)/-**, and the second allomorph has again two allomorphs: a) **/al/-** when there is no other prefix between it and the verbal stem, see ex. (201) below; b) **/a/-** in all other environments, see, e.g., ex. (204) below. The **/i/-** prefix assimilates to the vowel of the following syllable with respect to vowel height around the middle of the 3rd millennium BCE, see Lesson 2, section 2.2. above.

In verbal forms containing a morpheme in any of S3–10, the occurrence of the finite-marker prefix is constrained by a rule which is clearly phonological by nature: it occurs only if the verbal form starts with a consonant cluster without the finite-marker prefix. In ex. (196) below, for example, the verbal form starts with a geminated consonant, **/mm/** without the finite-marker. The verbal form in ex. (197) has no finite-marker, it starts with a single consonant.

(196) Gudea Cyl. A 18:8 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

e2-e im-ma-ŋen

e=e s2i-s4m-s5b-s7a-s12ŋen-s14Ø

house=DAT.NH FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-DAT-go-3.SG.S

“He went to the temple.”

(197) Gudea Cyl. A 2:26–27 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

kug dŋa2-tum3-dug3-ra mu-na-ŋen,

kug ŋatumdug=ra s4mu-s6nn-s7a-s12ŋen-s14Ø

holy DN=DAT.H VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-go-3.SG.S

“He (= Gudea) went to holy Gatumdug.”

In ex. (198) below the finite-marker is present, without it the verbal form would again start with a geminated consonant, **/nn/**. And the verbal form starting with a single consonant in ex. (199) has no finite marker either.

(198) MVN 3 36 obv. 3:2–7 (Isin, ED IIIb) (P222204)

1/2 kug ma-na, ma-hir, dumu amar-šuba_x(MUŠ₃.KUR.ZA)-ra,

1/2 kug mana=∅ mahir dumu amaršuba=ra

1/2 silver unit=ABS PN₁ child PN₂=L3.H

a-pa-e₃ azlag₂, sam₂-še₃, i₃-ni-gu₇

apa'e azlag=e sam=še s₂i_{-s6}nn_{-s10}i_{-s11}n_{-s12}gu_{-s14}∅

PN₃ fuller=ERG price=TERM FIN-3.SG.H-L3-3.SG.H.A-eat-3.SG.P

“Apa-e, the fuller, made Mahir, the son of Amar-šuba, receive (lit. ‘eat’) half a mana of silver as the price.”

(199) Gudea Cyl. A 4:4 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

kar niġin^{ki}-na-ke₄ ma₂ bi₂-us₂

kar niġin=ak=e ma=∅ s₅b_{-s10}i_{-s11}n_{-s12}us_{-s14}∅

quay GN=GEN=L3.NH boat=ABS 3.SG.NH-L3-3.SG.H.A-be.next-3.SG.P

“He (= Gudea) moored the boat at the quay of Nigin.”

In verbal forms in which the finite-marker prefix is the only prefix before the verbal base in S12 the rule just described does not hold. In ex. (200) below the presence of the finite-marker has no phonological reason, it is apparently only there to indicate that the verbal form functions as a predicate but not as a modifier.

(200) Gudea Cyl. A 12:12 (Lagash, 22nd. c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

gu₃-de₂-a i₃-zig

gudea=∅ s₂i_{-s12}zig_{-s14}∅

PN=ABS FIN-rise-3.SG.S

“Gudea woke up.”

The phonological nature of the rule that predicts the presence of the finite-marker suggests that the system we know is the outcome of a linguistic change that resulted in the disappearance of the finite marker in many morphophonological environments. In verbal forms containing a morpheme in any of S3–10, the finite-marker is preserved only in environments where its disappearance would result in a consonant cluster at the beginning of a word, which is, however, not allowed by the rules of Sumerian phonotactics.

Our texts consequently only preserved the remnants of an old system in which the prefix /i/- and /a(l)/- had a complementary distribution and probably occurred in all finite verbal forms. In this system the finite-marker /i/- was used in preterite verbal forms expressing an action. Verbal forms expressing a state, see exx. (201) and (202), a state resulting from a previous action, see ex. (203), or present-future verbal forms expressing an action, see exx. (204), (205) below, were prefixed with /a(l)/-.

(201) CUSAS 26, 45 rev. 1:3 (unknown, 23rd c.) (P427623)

inim-be₂ al-til

inim=be=∅ s₂al_{-s12}til_{-s14}∅

word=DEM=ABS FIN-complete-3.SG.S

“This case is finished.”

(202) E-ana-tum 1 obv. 4:20-22 (RIME 1.9.3.1) (Lagash, 25th c. BCE) (P222399)

e₂-an-na, ^dinana, eb-gal-ka-ka a-tum₂
 eana inanak ebgal=ak=ak='a s₂a-s₅b-s₁₀(i>)ø-s₁₂tum-s₁₄ø
 TN₁ DN TN₂=GEN=GEN=L2.NH FIN-3.SG.NH-L2-worthy-3.SG.S
 "He is worthy of the E-ana of Inana of the Ebgal"

(203) En-ana-tum I 18 2:3-7 (RIME 1.9.4.18) (Lagash, 25th c.) (P222497-8)

šu-ni-al-dugud, kindagal, nam-nu-banda₃ e₂-šag₄-ga,
 p₁šunialdugud kindagal namnubanda ešag=ak=ø
 p₁PN chief.barber overseership inner.room=GEN=ABS
 an-na-taḫ-ḫa, KIB mu-dim₂-dim₂
 s₂a-s₆nn-s₇a-s₁₂taḫ-s₁₄ø-s₁₅'a=e KIB=ø s₄mu-s₁₁n-s₁₂dim~dim-s₁₄ø
 FIN-3SG.H-DAT-add-3.SG.S-SUB=ERG nail=ABS VEN-3.SG.H.A-create~PL-3.SG.P
 "Shuni-aldugud, the chief barber, who has been assigned to the office of the personal quarters' overseer, fashioned numerous inscribed clay nails."

(204) Rimush 18 18-22 (RIME 2.1.2.18) (Agade, 23rd c.) (Q000842)

lu₂, im-sar-ra-e, ab-ha-lam-me-a
 lu imsara=e=ø s₂a-s₁₁b-s₁₂halam-s₁₄e-s₁₅'a=ø
 person inscription=DEM=ABS FIN-3.SG.NH.P-obliterate-3.SG.A-SUB=ABS
 "Whoever obliterates this inscription,"

(205) En-metena 7 14-16 (RIME 1.9.5.7) (Lagash, 25th c.) (P222539)

gur₄-gur₄ kug luḫ-ḫa i₃ itud^l-da
 gurgur kug luḫ-'a=ak i itud=ak=ø
 vessel silver clean-PT=GEN oil month=GEN=ABS
^dnin-ḡir₂-su₂-ke₄ ab-ta-gu₇-a,
 ninḡirsuk=e s₂a-s₅b-s₉ta-s₁₂gu-s₁₄e-s₁₅'a=p₅ø
 DN=ERG FIN-3.SG.NH-ABL-eat-3.SG.A-SUB=p₅ABS
 mu-na-dim₂
 s₄mu-s₆nn-s₇a-s₁₁n-s₁₂dim-s₁₄ø
 VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.A-create-3.SG.P
 "(For the god Ningirsu, En-metena) fashioned a *gurgur* vessel of purified silver, from which Ningirsu consumes the monthly oil (offering)."

This reconstructed original system almost completely disintegrated in the Sumerian used in the South (preserved mainly in texts from Lagash) by the end of the 3rd millennium BCE. Here the prefix /i/- replaced the prefix /a(l)/- in almost all verbal forms, except for the imperative, see ex. (206), and also ex. (390) in Lesson 14, section 14.3, exx. (478) and (479) in Lesson 16, section 16.2 below.

(206) NG 208 obv. 17 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P135570)

kišib-ḡu₁₀ zi-ra-ab
 kišib=ḡu=ø s₁zir-s₂a-s₁₁b
 seal=1.SG.POSS=ABS break-FIN-3.SG.NH.P
 "Destroy my sealed tablet!"

In the North (preserved mainly in texts from Nippur and Adab) the original distribution and functions of the two finite-marker prefixes remained more or less intact; and the verbal forms with the prefix /a(l)/- acquired even an additional function compared to texts from the South: the finite-marker prefix /a(l)/- came to be used as a marker of passive verbal forms, see ex. (207) below,

corresponding to verbal forms with the middle prefix **/ba/-** in Sumerian in the South, see section 11.3 below.

(207) OSP 2, 58 1–4 (Nippur, 23rd c.) (P216212)

^den-lil₂-le-ma-ba-ra, an-na-la₂

enlilemaba=ra _{s₂a-s₆nn-s₇a-s₁₂la-s₁₄∅}

PN=DAT.H FIN-3.SG.H-DAT-weigh-3.SG.S

“(16 shekels of silver, (which is) the value of the corvée obligation,) were paid to Enlile-maba.”

Exx. (208) and (209) below show that passive forms expressed with the middle marker **/ba/-** in Ur, may be expressed with the finite-marker **/a(l)/-** in Nippur.

(208) MS 4096 rev. 6 (Ur, 21st c.) (P253193)

igi- ^r be ₂ ¹ -še ₃	mu	lugal	ba-pad ₃
igi=be=še	mu	lugal=ak=∅	_{s₅ba-s₁₂pad-s₁₄∅}
face=3.SG.NH.POSS=TERM	name	king=GEN=ABS	MID-call-3.SG.S

“The promissory oath was sworn before them.”

(209) MVN 3, 330 obv. 9 (Nippur, 21st c.) (P113890)

mu	lugal-be ₂	al-pad ₃
mu	lugal=ak=be=∅	al-pad-∅
name	king=GEN=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS	FIN-call-3.SG.S

“The promissory oath concerning it was sworn.”

The old function of the **/a(l)/-** finite-marker to mark present-future forms was apparently also known to the Nippurian compilers of the so called Old Babylonian Grammatical texts, which date to the first part of the 2nd millennium BCE. In OBGT VII (MSL 4 88–89), for example, which is an Akkadian-Sumerian paradigm of the verb **nen** = *alākum*, “to go”, the present-future Akkadian verbal forms are translated with Sumerian verbal forms containing the finite-marker **/a(l)/-**:

(210) OBGT VII 31–33 (= A 24189) (Nippur)

31.	al-du	i- ^r il ¹ -lak
32.	al-du-un	a-al-lak
33.	al-du-un	tal ₂ -lak

11.2 The coordinator prefix (Slot 3)

The prefix **/nga/-** functions as clause coordinator, prefixed, as a rule, to the verbal form of the last one of the coordinated clauses. Its meaning is usually conjunction: A, and also B; but when the coordinated clauses are negated it may also mean disjunction: neither A, nor B.

(211) Shulgi C 9 (ETCSL 2.4.2.03)

nij₂-erim₂-ma usan₃ bar-uš-be₂
 nijerim=ak usan baruš=be=ø
 evil=GEN scourge stick=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS

ne₂₆ in-ga-me-en₃
 ne=ø s₂i-s₃nga-s₁₂me-s₁₄en
 1S.G.PR =ABS FIN-COOR-COP-1.SG.S

“As for all evil, their scourge and stick are also me.”

(212) Sargon 1 38–41 (RIME 2.01.01.01) (Agade, 24th c., in Old Babylonian copies) (Q000834)

iri¹-ne₂ e-ḥul¹
 iri=ane=ø s₂i-s₁₁n-s₁₂ḥul-s₁₄ø
 city=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS FIN-3.SG.H.A-raid-3.SG.P

bad₃-be₂ e-ga-¹sig₁₀¹
 bad=be=ø s₂i-s₃nga-s₁₁n-s₁₂sig-s₁₄ø
 wall=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS FIN-COOR-3.SG.H.A-demolish-3.SG.P
 “He raided his city and also demolished its city-walls.”

(213) Gudea Statue B 7:49–50 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)

alan-e, u₃ kug nu
 alan=e=ø u kug=ø nu
 statue=DEM=ABS and silver=ABS NEG

za-gin₃ nu-ga-am₃
 zagin=ø s₁nu-s₂i-s₃nga-s₁₂me-s₁₄ø
 lapis.lazuli=ABS NEG-FIN-COOR-COP-3.SG.S
 “This statue is of neither of silver nor lapis lazuli”

The conjunction of noun phrases is expressed most often with the conjunction particle **u₃**, which is a loan from Early Semitic **wa*.

(214) Shu-Suen 12 7–8 (Ur, 21st c.) (Q000996)

nam-sipad kalam-ma, u₃ an-ub-da limmu₂-ba-še₃
 namsipad kalam=ak u anubda limmu=be=ak=še
 shepherdship land=GEN and quarter four=3.SG.NH.POSS=GEN=TERM
 “as the shepherd of the land and of the four quarters”

11.3 The ventive prefix (Slot 4)

The ventive (called cislocative in linguistics) has two functions in Sumerian: i) it functions as an allative deictic element, indicating motion towards the location of the speech event and/or by implication towards one of the speech act participants, the speaker or the addressee; ii) it functions as a 1st ps. sg. pronominal prefix before the dative as well as the locative2 and locative3 prefix.¹²

In practice these functions are not always easily separated as all three cases mentioned may indicate motion towards an entity. Nevertheless, when the ventive functions as a 1st ps. sg. pronominal prefix then there is nothing between it and the adverbial prefix, so the two morphemes together form a composite adverbial prefix as in ex. (215) below. When the ventive functions “only” as a

¹² The pronominal use is secondary, developed from its function to indicate a motion towards the location of the speech event, see Mithun 1996 for similar developments in other languages.

deictic element, then a pronominal prefix occurs in S5 or S6 between it and the adverbial prefix, should there be any in the prefix-chain. In ex. (216) below, for example, the 2nd ps. sg. initial pronominal prefix in S6 separates the ventive and the dative prefix.

(215) Gudea Cyl. A 10:28–29 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

dinir gal-gal lagaš^{ki}-a-ke₄-ne,
dinir gal~gal-ø lagaš=ak=enē=e
god big~PL-TL GN=GEN=PL=ERG

gu₂ ma-si-si-ne

gu=ø _{S4}m-_{S7}a-_{S12}si-_{S14}enē

neck=ABS VEN-DAT-fill~PF-3.PL.A

“(In the E-bagara, my dining place,) the great gods of Lagash gather around me.”

(216) Gudea Cyl. A 11:8 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

an-ta ḥe₂-ḡal₂ ḥa-mu-ra-ta-ḡen
an=ta ḥeḡal=ø _{S1}ḥa-_{S4}mu-_{S6}r-_{S7}a-_{S9}ta-_{S12}ḡen-_{S14}ø
sky=ABL abundance=ABS MOD-VEN-2.SG-DAT-ABL-go-3.SG.S

“Abundance comes down to you from heaven.”

The prefix has two basic allomorphs:

i) /**m**/ before a vowel, see ex. (215) above, or before /**b**/, see ex. (223), or immediately next to the verbal base, see ex. (217) below. The /**b**/ assimilates to the /**m**/, see ex. (223), and the resulting sequence /**mm**/ is reduced to /**m**/ if followed by another consonant, see ex. (227);

ii) /**mu**/- in other environments, see, e.g., ex. (222), but its vowel may assimilate to the vowel of the next syllable (although not always shown in the writing), if the syllable starts with an ungemminated consonant, see exx. (224) and (225), but not if the syllable starts with a gemminated consonant, see ex. (226) below.

The reference to the “here”, the location of the speech event, explains the use of the ventive in verbal forms describing the movement of people or goods towards the city of the scribe who created the document as in ex. (217) below.

(217) Nisaba 15, 873 10–12 (Irisagrig, 21st. c.) (P387957)

2 sila₃ tu₇ 2 ku₆, ṣa-lu-um ^{lu₂}kiḡ₂-gi₄-a lugal,
2 sila tu 2 ku=ø ṣalum kiḡ₂ia lugal=ak=ø
2 unit soup 2 fish=ABS PN₂ messenger king=GEN=ABS

ud udu ur₄-de₃ im-ḡen-na-a

ud udu=ø ur-ed=e _{S2}i-_{S4}m-_{S12}ḡen-_{S14}ø-_{S15}'a-'a

day sheep=abs pluck=PF=DAT.NH FIN-VEN-go-3.SG.S-SUB-L1

“2 liters of soup, 2 fish: Salum, the royal messenger, when he came to pluck the sheep.”

In the verbal form describing the opposite movement there is no ventive prefix. The verbal form in ex. (218) below contains the middle prefix /**ba**/- in its separative function, see below in section 11.4.

(218) Nisaba 15, 873 7–9 (Irisagrig, 21st. c.) (P387957)

1 sila₃ tu₇ 1 ku₆, nu-hi-AN ^{lu₂}ki₂-gi₄-a lugal,
 1 sila tu 1 ku=∅ nuhiilum kingia lugal=ak=∅
 1 unit soup 1 fish=ABS PN₁ messenger king=GEN=ABS

ud BAD₃.AN^{ki}-še₃ ba-ḡen-na-a

ud dēr=še _{s₅}ba-_{s₁₂}ḡen-_{s₁₄}∅-_{s₁₅}'a-'a

day GN=term MID-go-3.SG.S-SUB-L1

“1 liter of soup, 1 fish: Nuhi-ilum, the royal messenger, when he left for Der.”

Since the ventive indicates a movement towards the place of the speech event, it may also be used to indicate a movement to a person in the 3rd ps., if his or her location is construed as “here” by the speaker, i.e., the scribe. In ex. (219) below the scribe uses the ventive with the verb “to bring”, whose destination is Barag-namtara, the wife of the ruler. The verbal form used to describe the opposite transaction in ex. (220) does not contain the ventive.

(219) Nik 1, 300 obv. 2:2–rev. 1:2 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222069)

ur-e₂-muš₃, gal dam-gar₃ e₂-mi₂-ke₄, barag-nam-tar-ra [dam]
 uremušak gal-∅ damgar emi=ak=e baragnamtara dam
 PN₁ gal-TL merchant GN₁=GEN=ERG PN₂ spouse

lugal-an-da, ensi₂, lagaš^{ki}-ka-ra, mu-na-de₆

lugalanda ensik lagaš=ak=ak=ra _{s₄}mu-_{s₆}nn-_{s₇}a-_{s₁₁}n-_{s₁₂}de-_{s₁₄}∅

PN₃ ruler GN₂=GEN=GEN=DAT.H VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.A-bring-3.SG.P

“Ur-Emusha, the chief merchant of the Emi, brought (various cosmetics) to Barag-namtara, spouse of Lugal-Anda, ruler of Lagash.”

(220) Nik 1, 300 rev. 2:3–3:4 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222069)

ur-e₂-muš₃-ra, barag-nam-tar-ra, dam lugal-an-da
 uremušak=ra baragnamtara dam lugalanda
 PN₁=DAT.H PN₂ spouse PN₃

ensi₂, lagaš^{ki}-ka-ke₄, e-na-la₂

ensik lagaš=ak=ak=e _{s₂}i-_{s₆}nn-_{s₇}a-_{s₁₁}n-_{s₁₂}la-_{s₁₄}∅

ruler GN₂=GEN=GEN=ERG FIN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.A-weigh-3.S.G.P

“Barag-namtara, spouse of Lugal-Anda, ruler of Lagash, payed (with a certain amount of wool) to Ur-Emusha.”

One should not assume that the scribe and the wife of the ruler stay at exactly the same location, rather it is a kind of subjective alignment between the two that is expressed by the use of the ventive. Here one of the two participants of the transaction is identified as belonging to “here” from the point of view of the scribe.

In the trial records from the end of the 3rd millennium BCE the expression “to come forward as witness” is regularly used with ventive, indicating that the witness occurs at the trial, construed as “here” by the scribe who wrote the text, see e.g., ex. (221) below.

(221) BPOA 1, 382 obv. 7– rev. 2(Umma, 21st c.) (P339042)

^mda-a-ga, ^mgeme₂-^dašnan, ^mnin-en-sag₉

dajaga gemeašnanak ninensag=ø

PN₁ PN₂ PN₃=ABSnam-lu₂-inim-ma-še₃ im-ta-e₃-eš₂namluinimak=še _{s₂i-_{s₄}m-_{s₅}b-_{s₉}ta-_{s₁₂}e-_{s₁₄}eš}

witness=TERM FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-ABL-leave-3.PL.S

“Dajaga, Geme-Ashnan, and Nin-ensag came forward as witnesses.”

Apparently, the use of the ventive divides the deictic space into a “here” and a “there” in Sumerian, and the association with the “here” may be based not only on considerations of physical proximity. When the ventive refers to neither the speaker nor the addressee, but to a 3rd ps. participant, then its use seems to be extended metaphorically to function as an emphatic deictic element. Linguistic empathy is described as “the speaker’s attitude with respect to who, among speech event participants (the speaker and the hearer) and the participants of an event or state that he describes, the speaker takes sides with.” (Kuno 1978: 174).

This use of the ventive is a logical extension of its basic deictic function to refer to a “here-ness”, or “hither-ness”: its use therefore may imply emotional closeness, an evaluative or subjective alignment between the writer or narrator and the participant(s) of an event he describes.

It is expected that in texts of an administrative nature the allative deictic use of the ventive is the typical. In literary texts, however, its more metaphoric, emphatic use may also play a role. In exx. (222) and (223) below, for example, the reference to “here-ness” is more intangible than in an administrative text, but still understandable, as the movement here is directed towards Gudea and the main temple in Girsu respectively, the leader and the symbol of the political community the scribe must have belonged to.

(222) Gudea Cyl. A 15:10 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

gu₃-de₂-a iri-ne₂ gir₂-su^{ki}-še₃ gu₂ mu-na-si-sigudea=ra iri=ane girsu=še gu=ø _{s₄mu-_{s₆}nn-_{s₇}a-_{s₁₂}si-_{s₁₄}e}

PN=DAT.H city=3.SG.H.POSS GN=TERM neck=ABS VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-fill~PF-3.SG.A

“(Magan and Meluhha) gathered for Gudea at his city Girsu.”

(223) Gudea Cyl. A 9:18 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

mu-be₂-e an-zag-ta

mu=be=e anzag=ta

name=3.SG.NH.POSS=DAT.NH horizon=ABL

kur-kur-re gu₂ im-ma-si-sikur~kur=e gu=ø _{s₂i-_{s₄}m-_{s₅}b-_{s₇}a-_{s₁₂}si-_{s₁₄}e}

mountain~PL=ERG neck=ABS FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-DAT-fill~PF-3.SG.A

“In response to its fame all lands will gather from as far as heaven’s borders.”

But then we also have numerous examples where no movement is involved and the use of the ventive may only express some kind of alliance or involvement with participants of the verbal event as in the examples below.

(224) Gudea Cyl. A 12:1–2 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

e₂ ud-de₃ ma-ra-du₃-e
 e=∅ ud=e s₄ma-s₆r-s₇a-s₁₂du-s₁₄e
 house=ABS day=ERG VEN-2.SG-DAT-build-3.SG.A

ŋi₆-e ma-ra-ab-mu₂-mu₂
 ŋi=e s₄ma-s₆r-s₇a-s₁₁b-s₁₂mu~mu-s₁₄e
 night=ERG VEN-2.SG-DAT-3.SG.NH.P-build~PF-3.SG.A

“The day will build the temple for you and the night will make it rise for you.”

(225) Gudea Cyl. A 23:7 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

e₂-a mi-ni-šu₄-šu₄
 e=²a s₄mu-s₁₀ni-s₁₁n-s₁₂šug~šug-s₁₄∅
 temple=L1 VEN-L1-3.SG.H.A-stand.PL~PL-3.SG.P

“He had each of them (= stone basins) stand in the temple.”

(226) Gudea Cyl. B 19:20–21 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

^den-lil₂-ra ^dnin-mah mu-ni-us₂
 enlil=ra ninmah=∅ s₄mu-s₆nn-s₁₀i-s₁₁n-s₁₂us-s₁₄∅
 DN₁=L3.H DN₂=ABS VEN-3.SG.H-L3-3.SG.H.A-be.next-3.SG.P

“He (= Gudea) seated Ninmah next to Enlil.”

(227) Gudea Cyl. B 20:14 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

e₂-^rda¹ lugal ^rim¹-da-^rhul²¹
 e=da lugal=∅ s₂i-s₄m-s₅b-s₈da-s₁₂hul-s₁₄∅
 house=COM owner=ABS FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-COM-rejoice-3.SG.S

“The owner rejoiced over the temple.”

The exact determining factors affecting the emphatic deictic use of the ventive are impossible to discover in the case of an extinct language. One can only speculate that the very frequent use of the ventive in votive and royal inscriptions reflects the alignment that the composers of these texts felt between them and the royal and divine participants. One may mention as support for this assumption the text Iri-kagina 5, where ex. (228) below comes from.¹³ This text narrates from the point of view of Iri-kagina, ruler of Lagash, how Lugal-zagesi, king of Uruk, loots and destroys many of the temples of Lagash. Remarkably all verbal forms in this 105 line long narrative text are without ventive, indicating probably the sense of alienation the composer felt towards the events described.

(228) Iri-kagina 5 obv. 4:1–4 (RIME 1.9.9.5) (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222618)

kug za-gin₃-be₂ ba-ta-keš₂-keš₂
 kug zagin=be=∅ s₅ba-s₉ta-s₁₁n-s₁₂keš~keš-s₁₄∅
 precious.metal lapis.lazuli=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS MID-ABL-3.SG.H.A-bind~PL-3.SG.P

alan-be₂ i₃-gul-gul
 alan=be=∅ s₁i-s₁₁n-s₁₂gul~gul-s₁₄∅
 statute=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS FIN-3.SG.H.A-destroy~PL-3.SG.P

“(He set fire on the temple of the goddess Gatumdug,) collected all its precious metal and lapis lazuli from it for himself, and destroyed all its statues.”

¹³ For an online transliteration and translation of the text, see <http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/etcsri/Q001133>.

11.4 The middle prefix (Slot 5)

Slot 5 accommodates the prefix /ba/-, which functions as the marker of middle voice in Sumerian. Its basic function is to mark that the verbal action or state affects, mentally or physically, the grammatical subject (A or S) or his interests.

The middle marker may occur with the verb i) to signal the inherently middle semantic of the verb; or ii) to add the property of subject affectedness to a verb that is not inherently middle, so that the event will be construed as affecting the subject.

Spontaneous events belong to the inherently middle semantic verbs. In these verbal events the grammatical subject exercises little control or volition, it is, however, highly affected by the event as in exx. (229)–(230) and (232)–(233). Ex. (231) demonstrates that when the verb **uš₂** is used in the meaning “to kill”, then the /ba/- prefix does not occur.

(229) NG 80 obv. 13–14 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P111313)

mu	lu ₂ -gi-gun ₄ -na	šeš	gu ₅ -li	gudu ₄	ba-uš ₂
mu	lugigunak	šeš	guli	gudu=ak=∅	_{S5} ba- _{S12} uš- _{S14} ∅
name	PN ₁	brother	PN ₂	priest=GEN=ABS	MID-die-3.SG.S

i₃-bi₂-la nu-u₃-tuku-a-še₃

ibila=∅ _{S1}nu-_{S2}i-_{S11}n-_{S12}tuku-_{S14}∅-_{S15}'a=ak=še₃

heir=ABS NEG-FIN-3.SG.H.A-have-3.SG.S-SUB=GEN=TERM

“Because Lu-giguna, the brother of Guli, the priest, died, and had no heir,”

(230) NG 138 obv. 5 (Umma, 21st c.) (P200731)

na-ba ba-uš₂

naba=∅ _{S5}ba-_{S12}uš-_{S14}∅

PN=abs MID-die-3.SG.S

“Naba died.”

(231) E-ana-tum 6 4:18–19 (Lagash, 25th c.) (Q001058)

ens₁₂-be₂, mu-uš₂

ensik=be=∅ _{S4}mu-_{S11}n-_{S12}uš-_{S14}∅

ruler=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS VEN-3.SG.H.A-die-3.SG.P

“He killed its ruler”

(232) Amar-Suena 9 32–39 (RIME 3/2.1.3.9) (Ur, 21st c.) (Q000984)

lu₂ e₂ a-ba-sumun, u₃-un-du₃,

lu e=∅ _{S1}u-_{S5}ba-_{S12}sumun-_{S14}∅ _{S1}u-_{S11}n-_{S12}du-_{S14}∅

man house=ABS ANT-MID-old-3.SG.S ANT-3.SG.H.A-build-3.SG.P

“The man, who, after the temple has become dilapidated, rebuilds it,”

(233) Gilgamesh and Huwawa A 113 (ETCSL 1.8.1.5)

ud ^{neš}ma₂ ma₂-gan^{ki} ba-su-a-ba

ud ma magan=∅ _{S5}ba-_{S12}su-_{S14}∅-_{S15}'a=be='a

day boat GN=ABS MID-sink-3.SG.S-SUB=3.SG.NH.POSS=L1

“When the Magan boat sank,”

(234) OIP 115, 126 rev. 5 (Drehem, 21st c.) (P123715)

iti-ta ud 8 ba-ra-zal

itid=ta ud 8=∅ _{S5}ba-_{S9}ta-_{S12}zal-_{S14}∅

month=ABL day 8=ABS MID-ABL-pass-3.SG.S

“8 days elapsed from the month.”

Verbs of grooming, exx. (235), (236), and (237b), and verbs of motion without a change in the location, ex. (237a), (237), and (239), also belong to the inherently middle verbs.

(235) Gilgamesh, Enkidu and the Netherworld 206 (ETCSL 1.8.1.4)

tug₂ dan₂-dan₂-na-ne₂ im-ma-an-mu₄
 tug dan~dan-'a=ane=∅ s₂i-s₄m-s₅ba-s₁₁n-s₁₂mu-s₁₄∅
 cloth clean~PL-PT=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS FIN-VEN-MID-3.SG.H.A-dress-3.SG.P
 “He put on his cleanest garments.”

(236) Dumuzi-Inana E1 6 (ETCSL 4.08.31)

a im-ma-tu₅
 a=∅ s₂i-s₄m-s₅ba-s₁₁n-s₁₂tu-s₁₄∅
 water=abs FIN-VEN-MID-3.SG.H.A-wash-3.SG.P
 “She washed herself.”

(237) Inana’s descent to the netherworld 308 (ETCSL 1.4.1)

saḥar-ra ba-da-an-tuš tug₂ mu-dur₇-ra ba-an-mu₄
 saḥar='a s₅ba-s₈da-s₁₀n-s₁₂tuš-s₁₄∅ tug mudur=ak=∅ s₅ba-s₁₁n-s₁₂mu-s₁₄∅
 dust=L1 MID-COM-L1.SYN-sit-3.SG.S cloth dirt=GEN=ABS MID-3.SG.H.A-dress-3.SG.P
 “She had sat in the dust and clothed herself in a filthy garment.”

(238) Gudea Cyl. A 22:23 (Lagash, 22nd c.)

u₂-a lagaš^{ki}-<ke₄> gud gal-gen₇ a₂ ba-il₂-il₂
 ua lagaš=ak=e gud gal-∅=gen a=∅ s₅ba-s₁₁n-s₁₂il~il-s₁₄∅
 provider GN=GEN=ERG bull big-TL=EQU horn=ABS MID-3.SG.H.A-lift~PL-3.SG.P
 “The provider of Lagaš lifted his horns like a mighty bull.”

(239) Dumuzi’s Dream 164 (ETCSL 1.4.3)

ḡuruš-e ^dutu-ra an-še₃ šu-ne₂ ba-ni-in-zig₃
 ḡuruš=e utu=ra an=še šu=ane=∅ s₅ba-s₁₀ni-s₁₁n-s₁₂zig-s₁₄∅
 man=ERG DN=DAT.H sky=TERM hand=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS MID-L1-3.SG.H.A-raise-3.SG.P
 “The lad raised his hands heavenward to Utu among them.”

In indirect reflexive middle verbs the prefix /**ba**/- marks that a single participant functions both as grammatical subject and either i) as indirect object, or ii) as benefactive, or, iii) with motion verbs, as goal. If these functions were distributed between two participants, the second one would be in the dative.

Verbs of obtaining and receiving are inherently indirect reflexive middle, see exx. (240) and (241) below. Here the participant in question functions both as A and as recipient.

(240) Gudea Cyl. A 2:21–22 (Lagash, 22nd c.)

lugal-a-ne₂ sizkur₂ ra₂-zu-ne₂ gu₃-de₂-a-aš₂
 lugal=ane=e sizkur arazu=ane=∅ gudea=še
 king=3.SG.H.POSS=ERG prayer supplication=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS PN=TERM
 en ^dnin-ḡir₂-su-ke₄ šu ba-ši-ti
 en ninḡirsuk=e šu=e s₅ba-s₆n-s₉ši-s₁₁n-s₁₂ti-s₁₄∅
 lord DN=ERG hand=L3.NH MID-3.SG.H-TERM-3.SG.H.A-approach-3.SG.P
 “His master, Lord Ningirsu, accepted from Gudea his prayer and supplication.”

(241) En-metena 1 3:34–37 (RIME 1.9.5.1) (Lagash, 25th c.) (Q001103)

il₂-le, nam-ensi₂, umma^{ki}-a, šu e-ma-ti
 il=e namensi umma=ak=∅ šu=e s₂i^{-s₄}m^{-s₅}ba^{-s₁₁}n^{-s₁₂}ti^{-s₁₄}∅
 PN=ERG rulership GN=GEN=ABS hand=L3.NH FIN-VEN-MIDD-3.SG.H.A-approach-3.SG.P
 “I claimed the rulership of Umma for himself.”

With verbs of motion, the indirect reflexive use of /ba/- may result in a separative meaning, here the /ba/- prefix marks that the distant goal of the motion and the 3rd ps. subject are the same.

(242) NWHCM 2009.174 obv. 14–16 (Umma, 23th c.) (P480080)

ne-te-ni-ta, kar-da-ḥi^{ki}-še₃, ba-ḥen
 nete=ane=ta kardahi=še s₅ba^{-s₁₂}ḥen^{-s₁₄}∅
 self=3.SG.H.POSS=ABL GN=TERM MID-go-3.SG.S
 “He left on his own for Kardahi.”

(243) AUCT 3, 84 obv. 2–4 (Drehem 21st c.) (P104315)

ud ur-^diškur ensi₂, ḥa-ma-zi^{ki}-ke₄
 ud uriškurak ensik ḥamazi=ak=e
 day PN ruler GN=GEN=ERG
 e₂-gi₄-a-ne₂ ba-an-tum₂-ma-a
 egia=ane=∅ s₅ba^{-s₁₁}n^{-s₁₂}tum^{-s₁₄}∅^{-s₁₅}a^{-s₁₅}a
 bride=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS MID-3.SG.H.A-bring-3.SG.P-SUB=L1
 “When Ur-Ishkur, the ruler of Hamazi, left with his daughter-in-law.”

(244) NG 190 obv. 2:12 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P111354)

ud e₂-gal-e ba-ab-tum₂-ma-ta
 ud egal=e s₅ba^{-s₁₁}b^{-s₁₂}tum^{-s₁₄}∅^{-s₁₅}a^{-s₁₅}ta
 day palace=erg MID-3.SG.NH.A-bring-3.SG.P-SUB=ABL
 “Since the palace took him away,”

The indirect reflexive /ba/- may also be used to indicate that the grammatical subject does something for his own benefit. Here the participant in question functions both as the grammatical subject (A or S) and as the beneficiary.

(245) Iri-kagina 5 obv. 4:1–4 (RIME 1.9.9.5) (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222618)

kug za-gin₃-be₂ ba-ta-keš₂-keš₂
 kug zagin=be=∅ s₅ba^{-s₉}ta^{-s₁₁}n^{-s₁₂}keš^{-s₁₄}keš^{-s₁₄}∅
 precious.metal lapis.lazuli=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS MID-ABL-3.SG.H.A-bind~PL-3.SG.P
 alan-be₂ i₃-gul-gul
 alan=be=∅ s₁i^{-s₁₁}n^{-s₁₂}gul~gul^{-s₁₄}∅
 statute=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS FIN-3.SG.H.A-destroy~PL-3.SG.P
 “(He set fire to the temple of the goddess Gatumdug,) collected all its precious metal and lapis lazuli from it for himself, and destroyed all its statues.”

(246) Gudea Cyl. A 2:24 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

ensi₂-ke₄ ḥa^d-tum₃-dug₃-še₃ ki-nu₂-a-ne₂ ba-gub
 ensik=e ḥatumdug=še kinu=ane=∅ s₅ba^{-s₁₁}n^{-s₁₂}gub^{-s₁₄}∅
 ruler=ERG DN=TERM bed=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS MID-3.SG.H.A-stand-3.SG.P
 “The ruler set up his bed for himself near to Gatumdug.”

(247) Iri-kagina 3 2:15'–18' (RIME 1.9.9.3) (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222610)

lu₂ dam u₃-taka₄, kug gi₇₄ 5-am₆,
 lu=e dam=∅ s₁u-s₁₁n-s₁₂taka-s₁₄∅ kug gi₇ 5=∅=am-∅
 man=ERG wife=ABS ANT-3.SG.H.A-leave-3.SG.P silver unit 5=ABS=COP-3.SG.S

ensi₂-ke₄, ba-de₆

ensik=e s₅ba-s₁₁n-s₁₂de-s₁₄∅

ruler=ERG MID-3.SG.H.A-bring-3.SG.P

“If a man divorced (his) wife, the ruler took 5 shekels of silver for himself.

(248) Gudea Statue E 9:6–12 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232278)

ki-gub-ba-be₂ lu₂ nu-zi-zi
 kiguba=be=∅ lu=e s₁nu-s₂i-s₁₂zi~zi-s₁₄e
 pedestal=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS man=ERG NEG-FIN-rise~PF-3.SG.A

sa₂-dug₄-be₂

lu la-ba-ni-la₂-e

sadug=be=∅ lu=e s₁nu-s₅ba-s₁₀ni-s₁₁b-s₁₂lal-s₁₄e

offering=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS man=ERG NEG-MID-L1-3.SG.NH.P-small-3.SG.A

“No one should lift its (= the statue of Gudea) pedestal, no one should curtail its regular offerings for his own benefit!”

As in a number of other languages the middle marker is also used in verbs with a passive meaning, where the grammatical subject is by definition the participant affected by the verbal event. The middle “marker does not directly express passive meaning; rather, the semantic function or functions it encodes happen to be compatible with the meaning of the passive” (Klaiman: 1991 84). Exx. (249) and (250) show the active and passive, i.e., middle, version of the same year name. In the middle version the A is left unmentioned.

(249) BPOA 7, 1948 rev. 3 (Umma, 21st c.) (P291162)

mu ^damar-^dsuen lugal-e ur-bi₂-lum mu-^hul
 mu amarsuenak lugal=e urbilum=∅ s₄mu-s₁₁n-s₁₂hul-s₁₄∅
 year PN king=ERG GN=ABS VEN-3.SG.H.A-raid-3.SG.P

“The year: Amar-Suena the king raided Urbilum”

(250) BPOA 6, 1287 rev. 10 (Umma, 21st c.) (P292490)

mu ur-bi₂-i₃-lum^{ki} ba-^hul
 mu urbilum=∅ s₅ba-s₁₂hul-s₁₄∅
 year GN=ABS VEN-3.SG.H.A-raid-3.SG.P

“The year: Urbilum was raided.”

(251) Gudea Statue B 4:10 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)

usan₃ la-ba-sag₃
 usan=∅ s₁nu-s₅ba-s₁₂sag-s₁₄∅
 whip=ABS NEG-MID-hit-3.SG.S

“No one was whipped.”

(252) Shulgi D 219 (ETCSL 2.4.2.04)

nin₂ ki-en-gi-ra ba-a-gu-la
 nin kengir='a s₅ba-s₁₀e-s₁₂gul-s₁₄∅-s₁₅'a=∅
 thing homeland=L2.NH MID-L2-destroy-3.SG.S-SUB=ABS

kur-ra ga-am₃-mi-ib-gu-ul

kur='a s₂ga-s₄m-s₅b-s₁₀i-s₁₁b-s₁₂gul

foreign.land=L2.NH MOD-VEN-3.SG.NH-L2-3.SG.NH.P-destroy

“Whatever has been destroyed in the homeland, I shall destroy in the foreign lands!”

(253) NG 41 obv. 5–8 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P110926)

mu gu₅-li ba-gaz-⟨še₃⟩, ejir-a-ne₂ u₃ dam
 mu guli=∅ _{S5}ba-_{S12}gaz-_{S14}∅-_{S15}'a=ak=še ejir=ane u dam
 name PN₁=ABS MID-kill-3.SG.S-SUB=GEN=TERM estate=3.SG.H.=POSS and spouse
 dumu-ne₂ dumu ba-ba-ḡu₁₀-ke₄-ne, ba-ne-šum₂-ma
 dumu=ane=∅ dumu babagū=ak=enē=ra _{S5}ba-_{S6}nnē-_{S7}a-_{S12}šum-_{S14}∅-_{S15}'a=ak
 child=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS child PN₂=GEN=PL=DAT.H MID-3.PL-DAT-give-3.SG.S-SUB=GEN
 “(Lu-Girsu was the commissioner when) Guli’s estate, his wife and child were given over
 to the children of Babagu, because he had been killed (as a punishment).”

The middle /**ba**/ may also mark the emotional affectedness of the grammatical subject. In ex. (254) below it is Gudea who is affected by what he has seen, namely, he likes it. In contrast, in exx. (255) and (256) the divine approval affects the participant in the terminative.

(254) Gudea Cyl. A 13:18 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

ka-al-be-še₃ igi zid ba-ši-bar
 kalak=be=še igi zid-∅=∅ _{S5}ba-_{S9}ši-_{S11}n-_{S12}bar-_{S14}∅
 trench=3.SG.NH.POSS=TERM face right-TL=ABS MID-TERM-3.SG.H.A-direct-3.SG.P
 “He (= Gudea) looked at the clay pit with satisfaction.”

(255) Gudea Cyl. A 1:3 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

^den-lil₂-e en ^dnin-ḡir₂-su₂-še₃
 enlil=e en ninḡirsuk=še
 DN=ERG lord DN=TERM
 igi zid mu-ši-bar
 igi zid-∅=∅ _{S4}mu-_{S6}n-_{S9}ši-_{S11}n-_{S12}bar-_{S14}∅
 face right-TL=ABS VEN-3.SG.H-TERM-3.SG.H.A-direct-3.SG.P
 “Enlil looked at lord Ningirsu with approval.”

(256) Gudea Statue B 3:6–7 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)

ud ^dnin-ḡir₂-su-ke₄, iri-ne₂-še₃
 ud ninḡirsuk=e iri=ane=še
 day DN=ERG city=3.SG.H.POSS=TERM
 igi zid im-ši-bar-ra
 igi zid-∅=∅ _{S2}i-_{S4}m-_{S5}b-_{S9}ši-_{S11}n-_{S12}bar-_{S14}∅-_{S15}'a
 face right-TL=ABS FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-TERM-3.SG.H.A-direct-3.SG.P-SUB
 “When Ningirsu had looked favourably upon his city, ...”

S5 also accommodates a pronominal prefix /**b**/ that functions as the non-human pronominal prefix before the adverbial prefixes of S7–10. It may occur only when S5 is not used by a middle prefix /**ba**/-. For the writings and functioning of the non-human pronominal prefix of S5, see the lessons on the adverbial cases, Lesson 12–14 below.

11.5 The initial pronominal prefixes (Slot 6)

The initial pronominal prefix (= IPP) occupies S6 of the finite verbal form. The IPP functions as the pronominal prefix of the composite adverbial prefixes in S7–10. It specifies the person, gender, and number of the referent of the first prefix in the sequence of the adverbial prefixes, see Lesson 6 section 6.3 above.

Before the dative, the locative2, and the locative3 prefix an allomorph of the ventive prefix in S4 functions as the 1st ps. sg. pronominal prefix.

SINGULAR			PLURAL		
1ST	2ND	3RD	1ST	2ND	3RD
/ʔ/	/r/ or /e/	/nn/ or /n/	/mē/	/enē/	/nnē/

Table 11.1: The initial pronominal prefixes

The 3rd ps. sg. prefix refers only to human participants. Non-human participants are referred to by the prefix **/b/** in S5. The allomorph **/nn/** occurs before a vowel, while **/n/** occurs before a consonant.

The 2nd ps. sg. prefix has two allomorphs: i) **/r/** before a vowel; ii) **/e/** before a consonant. In texts from the 3rd millennium BCE the **/e/** contracts with the preceding vowel and lengthens it, whereas in texts from the 2nd millennium BCE the contraction results in an **/ē/**.

The exact form of the 1st ps. sg. IPP is uncertain, but its existence can be inferred from the form of the preceding prefixes.

Instead of **/enē/**, a periphrastic construction $\dots_{S6}r_{S7}a/s_{10}i\text{---}\dots_{S12}\text{stem-}_{S14}\text{enzen}$ (= ...-2.SG-DAT/L2-...-stem-2.PL) is also attested in literary texts from the first part of the 2nd millennium BCE, referring to a 2nd ps. pl. participant.¹⁴ This construction apparently follows the pattern of 3rd ps. pl. forms of the preterite conjugation, see Lesson 9, section 9.2 above.

For the writings and functioning of the initial pronominal prefixes, see the lessons on the adverbial cases, Lesson 12–14 below.

Further readings

The only detailed description of the finite-marker prefixes in S2 is Jagersma's (2010: 526–549) lengthy account, a masterpiece of linguistic reconstruction. Earlier descriptions discuss the finite-marker, the ventive, and the **/ba/-** prefix under the label “conjugation prefixes”. As this lesson demonstrated the use of this term is not justified.

Civil 2008 discusses nominal and verbal conjunction in Sumerian.

The most detailed description of the functions of the middle voice in Sumerian can be found in Woods's monograph (2008: 87–97, 163–212, 225–267). His survey of the linguistic background of the middle voice is very useful and illuminating.

On the ventive prefix Foxvog 1974 and Krecher 1985 are still the most important studies. Woods 2008 also extensively discusses the function of the ventive prefix; see, however, Keetman 2015 who points out the inherent flaws in Woods's approach, which does not recognize morphological variants conditioned by the morphological context, and assigns functions to the ventive (namely the expression of control to the allomorph **/mu/**) that characterize in fact the conditioning morpheme (the pronominal prefix **/n/**, the 3rd. ps. sg. marker of A in S11), but not the ventive. See also Keetman 2015b. Kouwenberg 2008 discusses the use of the ventive in Akkadian, providing an interesting and illuminating comparison with the Sumerian ventive.

¹⁴ See Attinger 1993: 231, 237.

Exercises

11.1 Look up the new words used in the examples of this lesson in Foxvog's (2016b) or Volk's (2012) glossary, and learn them.

11.2 Study the examples of this lesson carefully and make yourself familiar with their grammatical analysis.

11.3 Try to create the passive version of the following Sumerian clauses by leaving out the A, adding the /ba/- prefix, and transforming the verbal form. You only have to produce the morphemic segmentation and glossing (2nd and 3rd line of the examples). Note that two forms are impossible to form!

a)

en-me-er-kara _{2-ra}	^d en-ki-ke ₄	neš ₂ tug ₂	mu-na-an-šum ₂
enmerkara=ra	enki=e	neš ₂ tug=ø	_{S4} mu- _{S6} nn- _{S7} a- _{S11} n- _{S12} šum- _{S14} ø
PN=DAT.H	DN=ERG	ear=ABS	VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.A-give-3.SG.P

b)

nam-lu _{2-lu7}	šag ₄	iri-na-ka,	ha-ne ₂ -gaz-ze _x (AB ₂ .ŠA ₃ .GE)
namlulu=e	šag	iri=ane=ak='a	_{S1} ha- _{S10} ni- _{S11} n- _{S12} gaz- _{S14} e
people=ERG	heart	city=3.SG.H.POSS=GEN=L1	MOD-L1-3.SG.H.P-kill-3.SG.A

c)

^d nin-ŋir _{2-su-ke4} ,	sa-šuš-gal	u ₃ -ni-šuš
ninŋirsuk=e	sašušgal=ø	_{S2} u- _{S6} nn- _{S10} i- _{S11} n- _{S12} šuš- _{S14} ø
DN=ERG	battle.net=ABS	ANT-3.SG.H-L2-3.SG.H.A-cover-3.SG.P

d)

gu-ti-um ^{ki}	^d en-lil _{2-le}	ma-an-šum ₂
gutium=ø	enlil=e	_{S4} m- _{S7} a- _{S11} n- _{S12} šum- _{S14} ø
GN=ABS	DN=ERG	VEN-DAT-3.SG.H.A-give-3.SG.P

e)

e ₂	ud-de ₃	ma-ra-du _{3-e}
e=ø	ud=e	_{S4} ma- _{S6} r- _{S7} a- _{S12} du- _{S14} e
house=ABS	day=ERG	VEN-2.SG-DAT-build-3.SG.A

f)

ensi-ke ₄	e ₂	mu-du ₃
ensik=e	e=ø	_{S4} mu- _{S11} n- _{S12} du- _{S14} ø
ruler=ERG	house	VEN-3.SG.H.A.-build-3.SG.P

g)

lu ₂	umma ^{ki} -r _{ke4} ,	e ₂ -ki-sur _x (ERIN ₂)-ra-ke ₄ ,	izi	ba-šum ₂
lu	umma=ak=e	ekisurak=e	izi=ø	_{S5} b- _{S7} a- _{S11} n- _{S12} šum- _{S14} ø
man	GN=GEN=ERG	TN=DAT.NH	fire=ABS	3.SG.NH-DAT-3.SG.H.A-give-3.SG.P

11.4 Transliterate the text RTC 19 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P221416) with the help of Volk's sign list (2012). Translate the texts using Foxvog's (2016b) glossary. A copy and photo of the text can be found at <http://cdli.ucla.edu/P221416>. Concentrate on the verbal forms and the human participants, the various goods mentioned are less important. Explain the presence and the lack of the ventive in the verbal forms on the basis of what you have learnt in this lesson.

- 11.5 Compare the verbal forms in exx. (222) and (223) above and explain the difference between them on the basis of what you learnt about the finite marker and the allomorphs of the ventive in this lesson.
- 11.6 Go to the ETCSRI corpus (<http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/etcsri/corpus>) and write “V2=FIN” (without the quotation marks) in the Search Oracc box. Select at least 10 verbal forms and try to explain the presence of the finite-marker on the basis of what you have learnt in this lesson.
- 11.7 Go to the ETCSRI corpus (<http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/etcsri/corpus>) and write “V5=MID” (without the quotation marks) in the Search Oracc box. Select at least 10 verbal forms and try to explain the function of the middle prefix on the basis of what you have learnt in this lesson.

Lesson 12: The dative and the comitative case

This lesson describes the verbal and nominal marking of the dative and the comitative together with their most important uses. We start with the dative case.

12.1 The dative case (Slot 7)

The verbal prefix of the dative case is /a/. The form of the nominal case-marker depends on the grammatical gender of the participant: human verbal participants are case-marked with the enclitic =/ra/; while non-human verbal participants are case-marked with the enclitic =/e/. When the human case-marker is preceded by an open syllable, then the enclitic =/ra/ may be reduced to /r/; and the syllable closing /r/ of the resulting closed syllable /CVr/ will not be written until the end of the 3rd millennium BCE, see, e.g., exx. (267) and (270) below.

The co-occurrence of the noun phrase with a dative case-marker and the dative prefix is very strict: a noun phrase in the dative always occurs together with a corresponding dative prefix in the verbal prefix-chain.

In the verbal prefix-chain the dative is always cross-referenced by a composite adverbial prefix, as its slot (S7) is the nearest to the IPP. The 1st ps. sg. pronominal prefix is expressed by an allomorph of the ventive prefix in S4, and the composite prefix is written as a rule with the grapheme MA, see, e.g., ex. (263) below. The 2nd ps. sg. pronominal prefix is the IPP /r/ in S6, and the composite prefix is written as a rule with the grapheme RA, see, e.g., ex. (264) below. The 3rd ps. sg. human pronominal prefix is the IPP /nn/ in S6, and the composite prefix is written as a rule with the grapheme NA, see, e.g., ex. (272) below. The 3rd ps. sg. non-human prefix is expressed with the prefix /b/ in S5. The 3rd ps. sg. non-human composite prefix is written as a rule with the grapheme BA, see, e.g., ex. (276) below. When, however, preceded by a ventive prefix, the /b/ of the 3rd ps. sg. non-human composite prefix assimilates to /m/, and then it is written as a rule with the grapheme MA, see, e.g., ex. (259) below.

The 1st ps. pl. pronominal prefix is the IPP /mē/ in S6, and the composite prefix is written as a rule with the grapheme ME, see, e.g., ex. (257) below. The 3rd ps. pl. pronominal prefix is the IPP /nnē/ in S6, and the composite prefix is written as a rule with the grapheme NE, see, e.g., ex. (270) below. Both in 1st and 3rd ps. pl. the long vowel of the IPP and the dative prefix are fused to an /ē/.

When followed by a simple locative2 prefix /e/ in the verbal prefix-chain, the dative and the locative2 are fused to /ē/ in the 2nd millennium BCE, see ex. (275) below.

The three most important functions of the dative case are to denote the indirect object, the beneficiary, or the goal of the verbal event. With verbs of giving the dative denotes the recipient of the verb:

(257) FaoS 19, Gir23 obv. 7–rev. 1 (Lagash, 23rd c.) (P217056)

ʾlugal-kaʾ, ʰe₂-me-šum₂-mu

lugalka=e s₁ḥa-s₆mē-s₇a-s₁₂šum-s₁₄e

PN=ERG MOD-1.PL-DAT-give-3.SG.A

“May Lugalka hand it over to us!”

(258) Iri-kagina 5 obv. 1:1–3 (RIME 1.09.09.05) (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222618)

lu₂ umma^{ki}-r^{ke}₄, e₂-ki-sur_x(ERIN₂)-ra-ke₄, izi ba-šum₂
 lu umma=ak=e ekisurak=e izi=∅ s₅b<sup>-s₇a^{-s₁₁n^{-s₁₂šum^{-s₁₄∅}}}
 man GN=GEN=ERG TN=DAT.NH fire=ABS 3.SG.NH-DAT-3.SG.H.A-give-3.SG.P
 “The Ummaite set fire (lit. ‘give fire’) to the Ekibira.”</sup>

(259) Gudea Cyl. A 11:24 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

kalam-e zi-šag₄-ḡal₂ u₃-ma-šum₂
 kalam=e zišagḡal=∅ s₁u<sup>-s₄m<sup>-s₅b^{-s₇a^{-s₁₁b^{-s₁₂šum^{-s₁₄∅}}}}
 land=DAT.NH vigour=ABS ANT-VEN-3.SG.NH-DAT-3.SG.NH.A-give-3.SG.P
 “This will give vigour to the Land,”</sup></sup>

(260) Enmerkar and the lord of Aratta 420 (ETCSL 1.8.2.3)

en-me-er-kara₂-ra ^den-ki-ke₄ ḡeštug₂ mu-na-an-šum₂
 enmerkar=ra enki=e ḡeštug=∅ s₄mu<sup>-s₆nn^{-s₇a^{-s₁₁n^{-s₁₂šum^{-s₁₄∅}}}}
 PN=DAT.H DN=ERG ear=ABS VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.A-give-3.SG.P
 “Enki gave wisdom to Enmerkar.”</sup>

With verbs of speaking the dative denotes the addressee of the verb:

(261) Gudea Cyl. A 2:26–27 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

kug ^dḡa₂-tum₃-dug₃-ra mu-na-ḡen,
 kug ḡatumdug=ra s₄mu<sup>-s₆nn^{-s₇a^{-s₁₂ḡen^{-s₁₄∅}}}
 holy DN=DAT.H VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-go-3.SG.S
 sizkur₂ mu-na-be₂
 sizkur=∅ s₄mu<sup>-s₆nn^{-s₆a^{-s₁₁b^{-s₁₂e^{-s₁₄∅}}}}
 prayer=ABS VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.NH.P-speak.PF-3.SG.A
 “He went to holy Gatumdug and prayed to her.”</sup></sup>

(262) Gudea Cyl. A 2:13 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

ur-saḡ ^rma¹-a-dug₄
 ursaḡ=∅ s₄m<sup>-s₇a^{-s₁₁e^{-s₁₂dug^{-s₁₄∅}}}
 hero=ABS VEN-DAT-2.SG.A-speak-3.SG.P
 “Hero, you have commanded me.”</sup>

(263) Gudea Cyl. A 4:20 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

e₂-a-ne₂ du₃-da ma-an-dug₄
 e=ane=∅ du-ed=¹a s₄m<sup>-s₇a^{-s₁₁n^{-s₁₂dug^{-s₁₄∅}}}
 house=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS build-PF=L2.NH VEN-DAT-3.SG.H.A-speak-3.SG.P
 “He ordered me to build his temple.”</sup>

(264) Gudea Cyl. A 5: 18 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

eš₃ e₂-ninnu-na du₃-ba
 eš eninnu=ane=ak du=be=¹a
 shrine TN=3SG.H.POSS=GEN build=3.SG.NH.POSS=L2.NH
 za-ra ma-ra-an-dug₄
 za=ra s₄ma<sup>-s₆r^{-s₇a^{-s₁₁n^{-s₁₂dug^{-s₁₄∅}}}}
 you=DAT.H VEN-2.SG-DAT-3.SG.H.A-speak-3.SG.P
 “He spoke to you about the building of his shrine, the E-ninnu.”</sup>

(265) The victory of Utu-hegal 28 (ETCSL 2.1.6)

dumu iri-na-ke₄-ne gu₃ mu-ne-de₂-e
 dumu iri=ane=ak=enē=ra gu=∅ s₄mu-s₆nnē-s₇a-s₁₂de-s₁₄e
 child city=3.SG.H.POSS=GEN=PL=DAT.H voice=ABS VEN-3.PL-DAT-pour-3.SG.A
 “He addressed a speech to the citizens of his city: ‘...’.”

(266) Inana’s descent to the netherworld 332 (ETCSL 1.4.1)

gal₅-la₂-ne kug d⁴inana-ra gu₃ mu-na-de₂-e
 galla=enē=e kug inana=ra gu=∅ s₄mu-s₆nn-s₇a-s₁₂de-s₁₄e
 demon=PL=ERG holy DN=DAT.H voice=ABS VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-pour-3.SG.A
 “The demons say to holy Inana: ‘...’.”

The dative may denote the participant affected by the event either benefactively or adversatively, for the latter, see ex. (271) below:

(267) Gudea 2 1–8 (RIME 3/1.1.7.2) (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P431937)

^dba-u₂, dumu an-na, nin-a-ne₂, gu₃-de₂-a, ensi₂
 bau dumu an=ak nin=ane=ra gudea ensik
 DN₁ child DN₂=GEN lady=3.SG.H.POSS=DAT.H RN ruler
 lagaš^{ki}-ke₄, e₂ iri-kug-ga-ka-ne₂, mu-na-du₃
 lagaš=ak=e e irikug=ak=ane=∅ s₄mu-s₆nn-s₇a-s₁₁n-s₁₂du-s₁₄∅
 GN₁=GEN=ERG house GN₂=GEN=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.A-build-3.SG.P
 “For Bau, the child of An, his lady, Gudea, ruler of Lagaš, built her temple in Iri-kug.”

(268) Gudea Statue A 2:1–2 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232274)

dub-šen kug-ga-ne₂, mu-na-dim₂
 dubšen kug=∅=ane=∅ s₄mu-s₆nn-s₇a-s₁₁n-s₁₂dim-s₁₄∅
 treasury.chest holy=TL=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.A-create-3.SG.P
 “He (= Gudea) manufactured her holy treasury chest for her (= Inana).”

(269) Gudea Cyl. B 2:21 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

^dnin-ḡir₂-su e₂-zu mu-ra-du₃
 ninḡirsuk=∅ e=zu=∅ s₄mu-s₆r-s₇a-s₁₁’-s₁₂du-s₁₄∅
 DN=ABS house=2.SG.POSS=ABS VEN-2.SG-DAT-1.SG.A-build-3.SG.P
 “Ningirsu, I have built you your temple!”

(270) Gudea Statue I 3:4–6 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232282)

dinir gal-gal lagaš^{ki}-ke₄-ne,
 dinir gal~gal=∅ lagaš=ak=enē=ra
 god great~PL=TL GN=GEN=PL=DAT.H
 e₂-ne-ne, mu-ne-du₃
 e=anenē=∅ s₄mu-s₆nnē-s₇a-s₁₁n-s₁₂du-s₁₄∅
 house=3.PL.POSS=ABS VEN-3.PL-DAT-3.SG.H.A-build-3.SG.P
 “He built all the great gods of Lagash their temples.”

(271) NG 51 rev. 3 (Umma, 21st c. BCE) (P131780)

lu₂ inim-ma saṇ sa₁₀-a-še₃ mu-ne-ra-e₃
 lu inim=ak saṇ=∅ sa-’a=ak=še s₄mu-s₆nnē-s₈a-s₉ta-s₁₂e-s₁₄∅
 man word=GEN head=ABS buy-PT=GEN=TERM VEN-3.PL-DAT-ABL-leave-3.SG.S
 “(Two persons) came forward as witnesses against them that the slave had been bought.”

With verbs of motion the dative denotes the goal of the motion without, however, implying contact:

(272) Gudea Cyl. A 2:26–27 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

kug ^dḡa₂-tum₃-dug₃-ra mu-na-ḡen,
 kug ḡatumdug=ra _{s4}mu-_{s6}nn-_{s7}a-_{s12}ḡen-_{s14}∅
 holy DN=DAT.H VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-go-3.SG.S
 “He (= Gudea) went to holy Gatumdug.”

(273) Gudea Cyl. A 18:8 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

e₂-e im-ma-ḡen
 e=e _{s2}i-_{s4}m-_{s5}b-_{s7}a-_{s12}ḡen-_{s14}∅
 house=DAT.NH FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-DAT-go-3.SG.S
 “He went to the temple.”

(274) Gudea Cyl. A 15:6 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

elam elam-ta mu-na-ḡen
 elam=∅ elam=ta _{s4}mu-_{s6}nn-_{s7}a-_{s12}ḡen-_{s14}∅
 elamite=ABS GN=ABL VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-go-3.SG.S
 “The Elamites came to him (= Gudea) from Elam.”

The dative may denote the participant who is considered to be the cause of a situation:

(275) Iddin-Dagan B 56 (ETCSL 2.5.3.2)

kur-kur u₂-sal-la mu-e-re-nu₂
 kur~kur=∅ usal=’a _{s4}mu-_{s6}r-_{s7}a-_{s10}e-_{s12}nu-_{s14}∅
 land~PL=ABS meadow=L₂.NH VEN-2.SG-DAT-L₂-lie-3.SG.S
 “All the foreign lands rest on the meadows thanks to you.”

The dative may denote the participant that experiences a sensation or feeling:

(276) Iddin-Dagan B 53 (ETCSL 2.5.3.2)

nam-lugal-zu uḡ₃-e ba-sag₉
 namlugal=zu=∅ uḡ₃=e _{s5}b-_{s7}a-_{s12}sag-_{s14}∅
 kingship=2.SG.POSS=ABS people=DAT.NH 3.SG.NH-DAT-good-3.SG.S
 “Your kingship is good for the people.” = “The people like your kingship.”

(277) Enki and Ninhursaga 262 (ETCSL 1.1.1)

šeš-ḡu₁₀ a-na-zu a-ra-gig
 šeš=ḡu=∅ ana=zu=∅ _{s2}a-_{s6}r-_{s7}a-_{s12}gig-_{s14}∅
 brother=1.SG.POSS=ABS what=2.SG.POSS=ABS FIN-2.SG-DAT-sick-3.SG.S
 ka-ḡu₁₀ ma-gig
 kag=ḡu=∅ _{s4}m-_{s7}a-_{s12}gig-_{s14}∅
 mouth=1.SG.POSS=ABS VEN-DAT-sick-3.SG.S
 “My brother, what part of you hurts?” “My mouth hurts.”

(278) Enmerkar and the lord of Aratta 30 (ETCSL 1.8.2.3)

en kul-aba^{ki}-a-gen₇ nu-mu-na-sag₉
 en kulaba=ak=gen _{s1}nu-_{s4}mu-_{s6}nn-_{s7}a-_{s12}sag-_{s14}∅
 lord GN=GEN=EQU NEG-VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-good-3.SG.S
 “(The lord of Aratta placed on his head the golden crown for Inana.) But he did not please her (= Inana) like the lord of Kulaba.”

The semantic object of the frequently attested compound verb **ki** “place” — **an₂** “to measure” = “to love”, i.e., the verbal participant loved, is in the dative:

(279) Shulgi A 23 (ETCSL 2.4.2.01)

nin₂-si-sa₂-e ki ḥa-ba-an₂-ḡa₂-am₃
 nin₃sis_a=e ki=∅ s₁ḥa-s₅b-s₆a-s₁₁'-s₁₂an-s₁₄∅-s₁₅'a=∅=am-∅
 righteousness=DAT.NH earth=ABS MOD-3.SG.NH-DAT-1.SG.A-measure-3.SG.P-SUB=ABS=COP-3.SG.S
 “I do like righteousness.”

(280) Iri-kagina 14p 1–2 (RIME 1.9.9.14p) (Lagash, 24th c. BCE) (P222652)

^dba-u₂ barag iri-kug-ga-ka 'tum₂'-ma,
 bau barag irikug=ak='a tum-'a=e
 DN dais GN=GEN=L2 worthy-PT=ERG
 iri-'ka'-gi-na-ra 'ki' mu-na-an₂
 irikaginak=ra ki=∅ s₄mu-s₆nn-s₇a-s₁₁n-s₁₂an-s₁₄∅
 PN=DAT.H earth=ABS VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.A-measure-3.SG.P
 “Bau, who is worthy of the dais of Irikug, loves Iri-kagina.”

12.2 The comitative case (Slot 8)

Both the nominal case-marker and the verbal prefix of the comitative case are /**da**/, written as a rule by the grapheme **DA**. When the nominal case-marker is preceded by an open syllable, then the enclitic =/**da**/ may be reduced to /**d**/, in which case the comitative case-marker is often not present graphemically, especially in 3rd millennium BCE. When followed by a locative1 prefix /**ni**/ in the verbal prefix-chain, the comitative prefix may assimilate to /**di**/, and then it is written as a rule with the grapheme **DI**₃ (= TI), see, e.g., ex. (292) below. When followed by a simple locative2 prefix /**e**/ in the verbal prefix-chain, the comitative and the locative2 are fused to /**dē**/ in the 2nd millennium BCE, see ex. (290) below. When followed by a prefix /**b**/ in S11, the closed syllable /**dab**/ is written with the grapheme **DAB**₆ (= URUDU) in the 3rd millennium, see, e.g., ex. (289) below.

The co-occurrence of the noun phrase with a comitative case-marker and the comitative prefix is very strict: a noun phrase in the comitative almost always occurs together with a corresponding comitative prefix in the verbal prefix-chain.

In the verbal prefix-chain the participant in the comitative may be cross-referenced either by a composite or by a simple adverbial prefix, for the latter see, e.g., ex. (283) below. The simple prefix always cross-references a 3rd ps. sg. non-human participant. The 1st ps. sg. pronominal prefix is the IPP /' in S6, see, e.g., exx. (285) and (308) below. The 2nd ps. sg. pronominal prefix is the IPP /**e**/, see, e.g., exx. (288) and (296) below. The 3rd ps. sg. human pronominal prefix is the IPP /**n**/ in S6, see, e.g., exx. (284) and (313) below. The 3rd ps. sg. non-human prefix is expressed with the prefix /**b**/ in S5, see, e.g., ex. (287) below.

The 1st ps. pl. pronominal prefix is the IPP /**mē**/ in S6, see, e.g., ex. (305) below. The 3rd ps. pl. composite prefix is written as a rule with the grapheme **PI**, which is assumed to have a reading **neda** and is used for writing -/_{s6}**nnē**-/_{s8}**da**/-, see, e.g., ex. (270) below.

The comitative in its basic function marks the participant that accompanies another participant in a verbal event. The accompanying participant may be another human or god with the ability to act on his own, see, e.g., ex. (281); an object, see ex. (283); an abstract entity, see, e.g., ex. (286); or even action expressed by a non-finite verbal noun, see ex. (287) below.

(281) En-metena 1 1:39–42 (RIME 1.9.5.1) (Lagash, 25th c.) (Q001103)

en-a2-kal-le, ensi2 umma^{ki}-da ki e-da-sur
 enakale ensik umma=ak=da ki=∅ s₂i^{-s₆}n^{-s₈}da^{-s₁₁}n^{-s₁₂}sur^{-s₁₄}∅
 PN ruler GN=GEN=COM earth=ABS FIN-3.SG.H-COM-3.SG.H.A-press-3.SG.P
 “(E-ana-tum) marked out the boundary together with Enakale, ruler of Umma.”

(282) Inana B 30 (ETCSL 4.07.2)

^diškur-da šeg_x(KA×LI) mu-da-an-gi⁴-gi⁴-in
 išk^{ur}=da šeg=∅ s₄mu^{-s₆}n^{-s₈}da^{-s₁₀}n^{-s₁₂}gi[~]gi^{-s₁₄}en
 DN=COM noise=ABS VEN-3.SG.H-COM-L1.SYN-return~PF-2.SG.A
 “You continually thunder with Iškur.”

(283) Gudea Cyl. A 7:2 (ETCSL 2.1.7; Lagash, 22nd c. BCE)

e2-nin^{nu} anzud²^{muš^{en}} babbar²-ra u3-mu-na-da-kur⁹-re
 enin^{nu} anzud babbar=[’]a s₁u^{-s₄}mu^{-s₆}nn^{-s₇}a^{-s₈}da^{-s₁₀}n^{-s₁₂}kur^{-s₁₄}en
 TN eagle white=L1 ANT-VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-COM-L1.SYN-enter-2.SG.S
 “After you have entered the E-nin^{nu}-the-white-Anzud-bird temple with it (= a drum) before him (= Ningirsu), ...”

(284) RTC 380 rev. 2 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P128533)

elam dab⁵-ba-da mu-da-ŋen-na-me
 elam dab=[’]a-da s₄mu^{-s₆}n^{-s₈}da^{-s₁₂}ŋen^{-s₁₄}∅^{-s₁₅}[’]a=∅=me-eš
 GN seize-PT=COM VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-go-3.SG.S-SUB=ABS=COP-3.PL.S
 “They are the ones who came with the captured Elamite.”

(285) Gudea Cyl. A 1:25 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

inim-ba ha-mu-da-gub
 inim=be=[’]a s₁ha^{-s₄}mu^{-s₆}[’]-s₈da^{-s₁₀}n^{-s₁₂}gub^{-s₁₄}∅
 word=DEM=L1 MOD-VEN-1.SG-COM-L1.SYN-stand-3.SG.S
 “May she stand with me in this matter.”

(286) Gudea Cyl. B 11:13–14 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

nam-šita sag⁹-ga gu³-de²-a-da
 namšita sag=[’]a gudea=ak=da
 entreaty good-PT PN=GEN=COM
 en ^dnin-ŋir²-su-ra mu-na-da-šu⁴-ge-eš²
 en ninŋirsuk=ra s₄mu^{-s₆}nn^{-s₇}a^{-s₈}da^{-s₁₂}šug^{-s₁₄}eš
 lord DN=DAT.H VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-COM-stand.PL-3.PL.S
 “(Bau’s septuplets) stepped forward to lord Ninŋirsu with friendly entreaties on behalf of Gudea.”

(287) Gudea Cyl. A 11:10–11 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

e2-ŋa² uš ki ŋar-ra-be²-da,
 e=ŋu=ak uš ki=∅ ŋar=[’]a=be=da
 house=1SG.POSS=GEN foundation earth=ABS put-PT=3.SG.NH.POSS=COM
 he²-ŋal² he²-da-ŋen
 he^{ŋal}=∅ s₁ha^{-s₂}i^{-s₅}b^{-s₈}da^{-s₁₂}ŋen^{-s₁₄}∅
 plenty=ABS MOD-FIN-3.SG.NH-COM-go-3.SG.S
 “With laying the foundations of my temple abundance will come.”

In ex. (287) above the verbal event expressed by the non-finite verbal noun in the comitative functions as a condition of the event in the main clause. This use

of the comitative anticipates its function to denote the participant which is considered to be the cause of the verbal situation. This use is based on a metonymic extension of accompaniment by implicature: the presence of an accompanying participant is interpreted as a precondition of the verbal event.

(288) Gudea Cyl. A 11:16 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

ki-en-gi-ra₂ i₃ dirig mu-da-de₂
 kiengir='a i dirig-ø=ø _{S4}mu-_{S6}e-_{S8}da-_{S10}n-_{S12}de-_{S14}ø
 GN=L1 oil surplus-TL=ABS VEN-2.SG-COM-L1.SYN-pour-3.SG.S
 "Under you more oil will be poured than ever in Sumer."

(289) Lugal-zagesi 1 3:24-26 (RIME 1.14.20.1) (Uruk, 24th c.) (Q001379)

nam-lu₂-ulu₃, u₂-šim-gen₇,
 namlulu=e ušim=gen
 mankind=ERG greenery=EQU
 šu da₂jal ha-mu-dab₆-dug₄
 šu da₂jal=ø _{S1}ha-_{S4}mu-_{S6}e-_{S8}da-_{S11}b-_{S12}dug-_{S14}ø
 hand wide=ABS MOD-VEN-2.SG-COM-3.SG.NH.A-do-3.SG.P
 "Under you the people do spread as abundantly as grass."

(290) Ur-Ninurta D 33 (ETCSL 2.5.6.4)

u₇₃ u₂-sal-la hu-mu-un-de₃-nu₂
 u₇=ø usal-'a _{S2}hu-_{S4}mu-_{S6}n-_{S8}da-_{S10}e-_{S12}nu-_{S14}ø
 people=ABS meadow=L2.NH MOD-VEN-3.SG. H-COM-L2-lie-3.SG.S
 "May the people rest on the meadows under his rule!"

The comitative may denote one of the acting participants in a naturally reciprocal verbal event:

(291) En-metena 1 1:25-27 (RIME 1.9.5.1) (Lagash, 25th c.)

umma^{ki}-da dam-ha-ra e-da-ak
 umma=da damhara=ø _{S2}i-_{S6}b-_{S8}da-_{S11}n-_{S12}ak-_{S14}ø
 GN=COM battle=ABS FIN-3.SG.NH-COM-3.SG.H.A-make-3.SG.P
 "(Ningirsu) made a battle with Umma."

(292) Gudea Cyl. A 22:12-13 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

^den-ki-da e₂-an-gur₄-ra-ka, šag₄ mu-di₃-ni-ib₂-kuš₂-u₃
 enki=da eangurak='a šag=ø _{S4}mu-_{S6}n-_{S8}da-_{S10}ni-_{S11}b-_{S12}kuš-_{S14}e
 DN=COM TN=L1 heart=ABS VEN-3.SG.H-COM-L1-3.SG.NH.P-be.tired-3.SG.A
 "(Its abzu foundation pegs, big mooring stakes, he drove into the ground so deep,) they could take counsel with Enki in the E-engurak."

(293) Gudea Cyl. A 13:3 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

ama-a dumu-da gu₃ nu-ma-da-de₂
 ama=e dumu=da gu=ø _{S1}nu-_{S4}mu-_{S6}n-_{S8}da-_{S11}n-_{S12}de-_{S14}ø
 mother=ERG child=COM voice=ABS NEG-VEN-3.SG.H-COM-3.SG.H.A-pour-3.SG.P
 "No mother conversed with her child."

With the verbs expressing emotion the comitative denotes the participant that causes emotion. This usage is based on a metonymic extension of accompaniment by implicature: the presence of an accompanying participant is interpreted as the cause of the emotion expressed by the verbal form.

(294) Gudea Cyl. A 19:8–9 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

sig₄ u₃-šub-ba mi-ni-ṅar-ra-ne₂
 sig=∅ ušub='a s₄mu-s₁₀ni-s₁₁n-s₁₂ṅar-s₁₄∅-s₁₅'a=ane=da
 brick=ABS mould=L1 VEN-L1-3.SG.H.A-place-3.SG.P-SUB=3.SG.H.POSS=COM
^dutu im-da-hul₂
 utu=∅ s₂i-s₄m-s₅b-s₈da-s₁₂hul-s₁₄∅
 DN=ABS FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-COM-rejoice-3.SG.S
 “Utu rejoiced over his (= Gudea) putting the brick into the mould.”

(295) Gudea Cyl. B 20:14 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

e₂-^rda¹ lugal ^rim¹-da-^rhul₂¹
 e=da lugal=∅ s₂i-s₄m-s₅b-s₈da-s₁₂hul-s₁₄∅
 house=COM owner=ABS FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-COM-rejoice-3.SG.S
 “The owner rejoiced over the temple.”

(296) Ishme-Dagan J 17–18 (ETCSL 2.5.4.10)

nu-u₈-gig amaš-a kur₉-ra-zu-ne,
 nugig=∅ amaš='a kur-'a=zu=ne
 mistress=ABS sheepfold=L1 enter-PT=2.SG.POSS=LOC4
^dinana amaš ša-mu-u₈-da-hul₂-le
 inanak=∅ amaš=∅ s₂ša-s₄mu-s₆e-s₈da-s₁₂hul-s₁₃ed-s₁₄∅
 DN=ABS sheepfold=ABS MOD-VEN-2.SG-COM-rejoice-PF-3.SG.S
 “Mistress, when you enter the sheepfold, Inana, the sheepfold will indeed rejoice over you.”

(297) E-ana-tum 8 5:9–6:4 (RIME 1.9.3.8) (Lagash, 25th c.) (P431083)

e₂-an-na-tum₂, mu pad₃-da, ^dnin-ṅir₂-su-da
 eanatum mu=∅ pad-'a ninṅirsuk=ak=da
 PN name=ABS call-PT DN=GEN=COM
 kur-kur-re₂ saṅ e-dab₆-sig₃
 kur~kur=e saṅ=∅ s₂i-s₆n-s₈da-s₁₁b-s₁₂sig-s₁₄∅
 land~PL=ERG head=ABS FIN-3.SG.H-COM-3.SG.NH.A-beat-3.SG.P
 “All the lands trembled before Eanatum, called by name by Ningirsu.”

The comitative may express a location next to, at, or by someone or something:

(298) Gudea Cyl. A 22:20 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

^{ḡeš}šar₂-ur₃-be₂ uru₃ gal-gen₇ lagaš^{ki}-da
 šarur=be=∅ uru gal-∅=gen lagaš=da
 weapon=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS standard big-TL=EQU GN=COM
 im-da-sig₉
 s₂i-s₅m-s₅b-s₈da-s₁₁n-s₁₂sig-s₁₄∅
 FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-COM-3.SG.H.A-place-3.SG.P
 “He embedded its Shar-ur weapon beside Lagash like a big standard.”

(299) DP 117 obv. 6:4–5 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P220767)

lugal-keš^{ki}-da, e-da-se₁₂
 lugalkeš=da s₂i-s₆n-s₈da-s₁₂se-s₁₄eš
 PN=COM FIN-3.SG.H-COM-live.PL-3.PL.S
 “They live by Lugal-Keš.”

(300) DP 117 obv. 6:7–8 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P220767)

lugal-e₂-ni-še₃, e-da-se₁₂

lugaleniše=da s₂i-s₆n-s₈da-s₁₂se-s₁₄eš

PN=COM FIN-3.SG.H-COM-live.PL-3.PL.S

“They live by Lugaleniše.”

With the verb **tuku** “to have” the comitative denotes the participant who owes something to someone. This use of the comitative originates in the local meaning “near to, at” of the comitative: “X has something which is at Y” = “Y owes something to X”.

(301) Nik 1, 297 2:2–4 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222066)

sag₉-sag₉-da, ŋišgal-si, e-da-tuku

sagsag=da ŋišgalsi=e s₂i-s₆n-s₈da-s₁₁n-s₁₂tuku-s₁₄ø

PN₁=COM PN₂=ERG FIN-3.SG.H-COM-3.SG.H.A-have-3.SG.P

“Sagsag owes this (= some wool) to Gishgalsi.”

(302) MAD 4, 17 rev. 5–8 (Umma, 23rd c.) (P215179)

8 siki ma-na, ama-e₂-e, barag-nita-da

8 siki mana=ø amae=e baragnita=da

8 wool unit=ABS PN₁=ERG PN₂=COM

ud-be₂-ta, i₃-da-tuku-am₃

ud=be=ta s₂i-s₆n-s₈da-s₁₁n-s₁₂tuku-s₁₄ø-s₁₅’a=ø=am-ø

day=DEM=ABL FIN-3.SG.H-COM-3.SG.H.A-have-3.SG.P-SUB=ABS=COP-3.SG.S

“Barag-nita owed 8 mina wool to Ama-e from that time.”

(303) TSU 12 obv. 1–4 (Nippur, 21st c.) (P135183)

11 udu bar-ŋal₂, ur-^{ŋi}šgigir-da,

11 udu bargal=ø urgigir=da

11 sheep hairy=ABS PN₁=COM

arad₂-e, i₃-da-tuku-am₃

arad=e s₂i-s₆n-s₈da-s₁₁n-s₁₂tuku-s₁₄ø-s₁₅’a=ø=am-ø

PN₂=ERG FIN-3.SG.H-COM-3.SG.H.A-have-3.SG.P-SUB=ABS=COP-3.SG.S

“It was the case that Urgigir owed 11 hairy sheep to Arad.”

(304) NATN 571 obv. 7 (Nippur, 21st c.) (P121269)

kug nu-mu-da-a-tuku

kug=ø s₁nu-s₂i-s₄mu-s₆’-s₈da-s₁₁e-s₁₂tuku-s₁₄ø

silver=ABS NEG-FIN-VEN-1.SG-COM-2.SG.A-have-3.SG.P

“I do not owe you silver.”; lit. “You do not have silver with me.”

(305) NATN 626 obv. 6’ (Nippur, 21st c.) (P121324)

me-da-tuku-a

s₆mē-s₈da-s₁₁n-s₁₂tuku-s₁₄ø-s₁₅’a=ø

1.PL-COM-3.SG.H.A-have-3.SG.P-SUB=ABS

“... (all the silver what) we owe him.”; lit. “he has with us.”

In ex. (306) below the locative₂ case-marker of the debtor (Nagamu) probably reflects the influence of the corresponding Akkadian idiom **išû** “to have”, which construes the debtor with the preposition **eli** “on, over”. Note that the verbal form retained the original comitative prefix.

(306) NRVN 1, 65 obv. 1–4 (Nippur, 21st c.) (P122278)

64 gu-la₂ gi izi

64 gula gi izi=Ø

64 sheaf reed fire=ABS

ur-^dnusku-ke₄, na-ga-mu-ur, an-da-tukuurnuskuk-e nagamu=ra _{S2}a-_{S6}n-_{S8}da-_{S11}n-_{S12}tuku-_{S14}Ø

PN1=ERG PN2=L2.H FIN-3.SG.H-COM-3.SG.H.A-have-3.SG.P

“Nagamu owes 64 sheaf of reed for burning to Ur-Nusku.”

With the verb **ḡal₂** “to be somewhere” the comitative denotes the participant that possesses something. This use of the comitative originates in the local meaning “near to, at” of the comitative: “Something is at X” = “X possesses something”.

(307) UET 3, 744 rev. 5' (Urim, 21st c.) (P137068)

simug-ne in-neda(PI)-ḡal₂simug=enē=da _{S2}i-_{S6}nnē-_{S8}da-_{S12}ḡal-_{S14}Ø

simug=PL=COM FIN-3.PL-COM-exist-3.SG.S

“The smiths have it.”; lit. “This is with the smiths.”

(308) MVN 11, 168 rev. 8 (Umma, 21st c. BCE) (P116181)

še e₂-a nu-mu-da-ḡal₂še=Ø e='a _{S1}nu-_{S4}mu-_{S6}'-_{S8}da-_{S10}n-_{S12}ḡal-_{S14}Ø

grain=ABS house=L1 NEG-VEN-1.SG-COM-L1.SYN-exist-3.SG.S

“I have no grain in the house.”; lit. “There is no grain in the house with me”

The comitative may express ability. In these verbal forms the grammatical subject (A or P) is also cross-referenced by a comitative prefix in the verbal prefix-chain:

(309) NG 132 rev. 1 (Umma, 21st. c.) (P101690)

gud-be₂ nu-mu-da-tum₂gud=be=Ø _{S1}nu-_{S4}mu-_{S6}n-_{S8}da-_{S11}n-_{S12}tum-_{S14}Ø

OX=DEM=ABS NEG-VEN-3.SG.H-COM-3.SG.H.A-bring-3.SG.P

“He was not able to bring that ox.”

(310) Nebraska 19 rev. 22 (Umma, 21st. c.) (P121704)

kišib₃ lu₂ nu-ub-da-su-su-da-nekišib lu _{S1}nu-_{S2}i-_{S5}b-_{S8}da-_{S12}su~su-_{S13}ed-_{S14}Ø-_{S15}'a=enē=ak=Ø

seal man NEG-FIN-3.SG.NH-COM-repay~PF-PF-3.SG.S-SUB=PL=GEN=ABS

“The sealed tablet of the people who cannot pay back.”

(311) En-metena 1 2:27 (RIME 1.9.5.1) (Lagash, 25th c.) (Q001103)

bar še-be₂ nu-da-su₃-su₃-da-kabar še=be=Ø _{S1}nu-_{S2}i-_{S5}b-_{S8}da-_{S12}su~su-_{S13}ed-_{S14}Ø-_{S15}'a=ak='a

outside grain=DEM=ABS NEG-FIN-3.SG.NH-COM-repay~PF-PF-3.SG.S-SUB=GEN=L2.NH

“As this (amount of) barley cannot not be repaid,”

With the compound verb **a₂** “arm” — **anḡ₂** “to measure” = “to instruct” the comitative denotes the participant who is instructed.

(312) Gudea Cyl. A 15:11 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

^dnin-zag-ga-da a₂ mu-da-a_ṭ₂
 ninzaga=da a=∅ ^{s4}mu-^{s6n}n-^{s8}da-^{s11}n-^{s12}a_ṭ-^{s14}∅
 DN=COM arm=ABS VEN-3.SG.H-COM-3.SG.H.A-measure-3.SG.P
 “He commanded Ninzaga.”

With the verb **zah₃** “to be away, to run away” the comitative denotes the participant from whom someone runs away.

(313) ECTJ 50 1–4 (Nippur, 23rd c.) (P020464)

^rm¹lugal-^ra₂¹-zid-da, arad₂ lugal-ki-gal-la, ensi₂-da, in-da-zah₃
 lugalazida arad lugal-kigal=ak=∅ ensik=da ^{s2}i-^{s6}n-^{s8}da-^{s12}zah₃-^{s14}∅
 PN₁ servant PN₂=GEN=ABS ruler=COM FIN-3.SG.H-COM-flee-3.SG.S
 “Lugal-azida, the servant of Lugal-kigal, ran away from the ruler.”

Further readings

For both cases one may consult the corresponding sections of Gragg 1973, Balke 2006, and Jagersma 2010, whose descriptions, however, differ in their approach to cases in Sumerian. The approach of the present textbook’s author is explained in Zólyomi 2010.

The comitative prefix expressing ability is discussed in detail by Gragg 1973: 53–55.

Exercises

- 12.1 Look up the new words used in the examples of this lesson in Foxvog’s (2016b) or Volk’s (2012) glossary, and learn them.
- 12.2 Study the examples of this lesson carefully and make yourself familiar with their grammatical analysis.
- 12.3 Compare exx. (299) and (300) above. How could you explain the graphemic presence of the comitative in the former and its absence in the latter?
- 12.4 Go to the ETCSRI corpus (<http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/etcsri/corpus>) and write “N3=ani.N5=ra” (without the quotation marks) in the Search Oracc box. What orthographic change can be recognized? Can you identify the ruler under which the change started?
- 12.5 Transliterate the text Gudea 4 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232332) (Volk 2012 no. 10) (a copy of the text can be found at <http://cdli.ucla.edu/P232332>) with the help of Volk’s sign list (2012). Translate the text with the help of either Volk’s (2012) or Foxvog’s glossary (2016b). Assign morphemic segmentation and glossing to all words. Then go to the ETCSRI edition of the text (<http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/etcsri/Q000890>), click on the “proofing” link on the left side of the page, and compare your glosses with ETCSRI’s glossing.
- 12.6 Transliterate the text Gudea Statue H (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232281) (Volk 2012 no. 18) (a photo of the text can be found at <http://cdli.ucla.edu/P232281>) with the help of Volk’s sign list (2012). Translate the text with the help of either Volk’s (2012) or Foxvog’s glossary (2016b). Assign morphemic segmentation and glossing to all words. Then go to the ETCSRI edition of the text (<http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/etcsri/Q001547>), click on the “proofing” link on the left side of the page, and compare your glosses with ETCSRI’s glossing.

Lesson 13: The ablative and the terminative case

Slot 9 of the verbal prefix-chain may be filled by either an ablative or a terminative prefix. This distribution may be explained by their converse meaning: the participant in the ablative denotes the source of the verbal event, while the participant in the terminative denotes its goal. This lesson describes the verbal and nominal marking of these cases together with their most important uses. We start with the ablative case.

13.1 The ablative case (slot 9)

Both the nominal case-marker and the verbal prefix of the ablative case are /**ta**/, written as a rule by the grapheme TA. Between two vowels the /**t**/ of the verbal prefix may have been rhotacised to a tap [ɾ], and then the prefix was written with the grapheme RA as in exx. (319) and (324) below.

The co-occurrence of the noun phrase with an ablative case-marker and the ablative prefix is rather loose: adverbially used verbal participants in the ablative may occur regularly without any corresponding prefix in the verbal prefix-chain, see, e.g., exx. (314) and (320) below. The ablative prefix may also occur without cross-referencing any verbal participant; in this case the prefix's function is to modify the meaning of the verb, as in ex. (319) below.

The ablative as a rule is used only with non-human verbal participants; human participants may be referred to with the circumfixal construction **ki** PN=**ak**-**ta** (place PN=GEN=ABL), see, ex. (320) below. In the verbal prefix-chain the participant in the ablative may be cross-referenced either by a composite or by a simple adverbial prefix, for the latter see, e.g., ex. (329) below. The 3rd ps. sg. non-human pronominal prefix is expressed with the prefix /**b**/ . When S5 is occupied by the middle prefix /**ba**/-, then the pronominal prefix /**b**/ may not be used and the ablative prefix occurs in its simple form without a pronominal prefix, see, e.g., ex. (316) below.

The ablative may be used both as an adverbial and as an adnominal case. Used as an adverbial case its basic function is to denote the source or origin of the verbal event.

(314) SACT 1, 154 obv. 6 (Drehem, 21st c.) (P128909)

ud umma^{ki}-ta i₃-im-ŋen-na-a
ud umma=ta s₂i⁻s₄m⁻s₁₂ŋen-s₁₄Ø-s₁₅'a='a
day GN=ABL FIN-VEN-go-3.SG.S-SUB=L1
"When she came from Umma."

(315) Gudea Statue B 8:6-9 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)

lu₂ e₂-ninnu-ta im-ta-ab-E₃.E₃-a
lu eninnu=ta s₂i⁻s₄m⁻s₅b⁻s₉ta-s₁₁b⁻s₁₂ed₂-s₁₄e⁻s₁₅'a
lu TN=ABL FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-ABL-3.SG.P-leave-3.SG.A-SUB
"The one who takes it (= the statue) out of the Eninnu."

(316) Gudea Cyl. A 19:13 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

bisaŋ u₃-šub-ba-ta sig₄ ba-ta-il₂
bisaŋ ušub=ak=ta sig=Ø s₅ba-s₉ta-s₁₁n⁻s₁₂il-s₁₄Ø
basket brick.mold=GEN=ABL brick MID-ABL-3.SG.H.A-raise-3.SG.P
"He lifted the brick out of the frame of the mould."

(317) En-metena 1 2:1–3 (RIME 1.9.5.1) (Lagash, 25th c.) (Q001103)

eg₂-be₂ id₂-nun-ta, gu₂-eden-na-še₃, ib₂-ta-ni-e₃
 eg=be=∅ idnun=ta guedenak=še s₂i-s₅b-s₉ta-s₁₀ni-s₁₁n-s₁₂e-s₁₄∅
 dike=DEM=ABS GN=ABL GN=TERM FIN-3.SG.NH-ABL-L1-3.SG.H.A-leave-3.SG.P
 “He made the dike lead from the Id-nun until the Gu-edena.”

(318) Gudea Statue A 3:6–4:1 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232274)

kur ma₂-gan^{ki}-ta, esi^{na₄} im-ta-e₁₁
 kur magan=ta esi=∅ s₂i-s₄m-s₅b-s₉ta-s₁₁n-s₁₂e-s₁₄∅
 mountain GN=ABL diorite=ABS FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-ABL-3.SG.H.A-go.down-3.SG.P
 “He brought down diorite from the mountain of Magan.”

(319) NG 51 rev. 3 (Umma, 21st c. BCE) (P131780)

lu₂ inim-ma sa₇ sa₁₀-a-še₃ mu-ne-ra-e₃
 lu inim=ak sa₇ sa-’a=ak=še s₄mu-s₆nnē-s₈a-s₉ta-s₁₂e-s₁₄∅
 man word=GEN head buy-PT=GEN=TERM VEN-3.PL-DAT-ABL-leave-3.SG.S
 “(Two persons) came forward as witnesses against them that the slave had been bought.”

(320) AUCT 1, 942 rev. 5–6 (Drehem, 21st c.) (P103787)

ki puzur₄-er₃-ra-ta, ba-zig₃
 ki puzurera=ak=ta s₅ba-s₁₂zig-s₁₄∅
 place PN=GEN=ABL MID-raise-3.SG.S
 “These were deducted from Puzur-Era.”

(321) DP 339, rev. 2:3–3:1 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P220989)

iri-ka-gi-na, lugal, lagaš^{ki}-ke₄, e₂-gal-ta e-ta-ed₂-de₃
 irikaginak lugal lagaš=ak=e egal=ta s₂i-s₅b-s₉ta-s₁₁b-s₁₂ed-s₁₄e
 RN king GN=GEN=ERG palace=ABL FIN-3.SG.NH-ABL-3.SG.NH.P-leave-3.SG.A
 “Irikagina, king of Lagash, will supply them from the palace.”

(322) DP 512 rev. 2:1–4 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P221162)

šul-me, agrig-ge, e₂-gal-ta, e-ta-ṇar
 šulme agrig=e egal=ta s₂i-s₅b-s₉ta-s₁₁n-s₁₂ṇar-s₁₄∅
 PN steward=ERG palace=ABL FIN-3.SG.NH-ABL-3.SG.H.A-place-3.SG.P
 “Šulme, the steward, supplied them from the palace.”

When the participant in the ablative is a set of similar entities, then the ablative may have a separative meaning. In ex. (323) Gudea is selected out of a group of people. In ex. (324) the month (**iti**) is considered as a set of days. In ex. (325) the word **ab₂** “cow” refers to a group of cows.

(323) Gudea Statue B 3:10–11 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)

šag₄ lu₂ 216.000-ta, šu-ne₂
 šag lu 216.000=ak=ta šu=ane=∅
 heart man 216.000=GEN=ABL hand=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS
 ba-ta-an-dab₅-ba-a
 s₅ba-s₉ta-s₁₁n-s₁₂dab-s₁₄∅-’a=’a
 MID-ABL-3.SG.H.A-seize-3.SG.P-SUB=L1
 “(When) he selected him out of 216.000 people,”

(324) OIP 115, 126 rev. 5 (Drehem, 21st c.) (P123715)

iti-ta ud 8 ba-ra-zal
 itid=ta ud 8=Ø s₅ba-s₉ta-s₁₂zal-s₁₄Ø
 month=ABL day 8=ABS MID-ABL-pass-3.SG.S
 “8 days elapsed from the month.”

(325) SAT 1, 189 rev. 2 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P131298)

ab₂-ta ninin₂-na
 ab=ta ninin-’a
 COW=ABL encircle-PT
 “(these animals are) separated from the cows”

In ex. (326) below the adverbial ablative is used in the meaning “apart from, in addition”.

(326) E-ana-tum 5 6:2-5 (RIME 1.9.3.5) (Lagash, 25th c.) (P222400)

nam-ens₂, lagaš^{ki}-ta, ṛnam¹-lugal kiš^{ki},
 namensik lagaš=ak=ta namlugal kiš=ak=Ø
 rulership GN=GEN=ABL kingship GN=GEN=ABS
 mu-na-ta-šum₂
 s₄mu-s₆nn-s₇a-s₉ta-s₁₁n-s₁₂šum-s₁₄Ø
 VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-ABL-3.SG.H.A-give-3.SG.P
 “In addition to the rulership of Lagash, she also gave him the kingship of Kiš.”

The adverbial ablative may also denote the participant that functions as the tool or instrument with which an action is carried out, as in exx. (327), (328), and (329) below.

(327) JCS 10, 28 no. 5 obv. 6 (Drehem, 21st c.) (P111899)

1 udu niga lugal-e ṇiri₂-ta in-gaz
 1 udu niga=Ø lugal=e ṇiri=ta s₂i-s₁₁n-s₁₂gaz-s₁₄Ø
 1 sheep fattened king=ERG dagger=ABL FIN-3.SG.H.A-kill-3.SG.P
 “One fattened sheep killed by the king with a dagger.”

(328) En-metena 1 1:8-13 (RIME 1.9.5.1) (Lagash, 25th c.) (Q001103)

me-salim, lugal kiš^{ki}-ke₄ inim ḫiš^dšaran-na-ta,
 mesalim lugal kiš=ak=e inim iš^dšaran=ak=ta
 RN king GN=GEN=ERG word DN=GEN=ABL
 eš₂-gana₂ be₂-ra,
 ešgana=Ø s₅b-s₁₀i-s₁₁n-s₁₂ra-s₁₄Ø
 measuring.line=ABS 3.SG.NH-L2-3.SG.H.A-hit-3.SG.P
 ki-ba na bi₂-du₃
 ki-be-’a na=Ø s₅b-s₁₀i-s₁₁n-s₁₂du-s₁₄Ø
 ki=DEM=L2.NH stone=ABS 3.SG.NH-L2-3.SG.H.A-build-3.SG.P
 “By the order of Ištaran, Mesalim, king of Kish, laid the measuring line on it, and set up a stela on that place.”

(329) E-ana-tum 1 obv. 16:17 (RIME 1.9.3.1) (Lagash, 25th c. BCE) (P222399)

nam e-na-ta-kud

nam=Ø _{S2}i-_{S6}nn-_{S8}a-_{S9}ta-_{S11}n-_{S12}kud-_{S14}Ø

fate=ABS FIN-3.SG.H-DAT-ABL-3.SG.H.A-cut-3.SG.P

“(E-ana-tum gave the great battle-net of Enlil to the Ummaite, and) made him swear a promissory oath by it.”¹⁵

The ablative may also be used in a temporal sense: noun phrases in the ablative answer the question “since when?” as in exx. (330) and (331) below.

(330) TCS 1, 148 obv. 6 (Umma, 21st cc) (P141927)

mu ^dšu-^dsuen lugal-ta

mu šusuen lugal=ta

year RN king=ABL

“Since the year: Šu-Suen (became) king”

(331) Nik 1, 156 rev. 1:4 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P221925)

ejir₄ gurun₂-ma-ta

ejir gurun=ak=ta

back inspection=GEN=ABL

“After stock-taking”

When used as an adnominal ablative, the noun phrase in the ablative is in an attributive relation with another noun, i.e., it functions as its modifier. The most common function of the adnominal ablative is to denote the (recent) location of an entity.

The noun phrase in the ablative may relate syntactically to the modified noun in three different ways:

i) the noun phrase in the ablative may be part of the noun phrase whose head is the modified noun. In ex. (332), it occupies P2 of the noun phrase whose head it modifies, and is followed by a possessive pronominal enclitic in P3 and a case-marker in P5. In ex. (342), the noun phrase **kug-babbar 8 gin₄-ta** functions as the modifier of **har**, and is followed by a case-marker in P5. In ex. (345) it occupies P2 of a noun phrase that itself functions as the possessor of another noun phrase.

ii) the noun phrase in the ablative is outside the noun phrase whose head it modifies. In exx. (333), (334), (335), and (336) the noun phrase in the ablative is unlikely to be part of the noun phrase whose head it modifies. Syntactically it is a separate noun phrase that nevertheless functions as the attribute of the noun phrase in the ergative in exx. (333), (336), and (338); in the absolutive in exx. (337) and (326), in the locative1 in ex. (334), and in the locative2 in ex. (335).

iii) Both the noun phrase in the ablative and the noun phrase whose head it modifies function as separate arguments of the same verb. Consequently the noun phrase in the ablative has double case-markers: the inner, ablative case-marker signifies its function as a modifier, the outer case-marker signifies its function as a verbal argument. In ex. (341) each of the women of former days is characterized by having married two men; the former noun phrase functions as the A of the verb, signaled by the ergative case-marker, while the latter functions as the patient of the verb signalled by the absolutive. In ex. (340) each of the ten

¹⁵ On the causative interpretation of this example, see Lesson 15, section 15.4 below.

bulls is to be replaced with two cows (signalled by the ablative); and the cows are also in the absolutive as the S of the non-finite verbal form.

(332) Gudea Cyl. A 2:2–3 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

^dnanše nin₉ diŋir sirara₆-ta-ŋu₁₀
_{P1}nanše _{P1}nin _{P1}diŋir _{P2}[sirara=ta]=_{P3}ŋu=_{P5}e
_{P1}DN _{P1}sister _{P1}god _{P2}[GN=ABL]=_{P3}1.SG.POSS=_{P5}ERG

šag₄-be₂ ħa-ma-pad₃-de₃
 šag=be=∅ _{S1}ħa-_{S4}m-_{S8}a-_{S12}pad-_{S14}e
 heart=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS MOD-VEN-DAT-find-3.SG.A

“May my Nanshe, the sister, the goddess from Sirara, reveal its meaning to me!”

(333) Gudea Statue H 3:1–5 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232281)

nin dumu ki aŋ₂ an kug-ga-ke₄,
 nin dumu ki=∅ aŋ-∅ an kug=ak=e
 lady child earth=ABS measure-TL DN₁ holy=GEN=ERG

ama ^dba-u₂, e₂-tar-sir₂-sir₂-ta,
 ama bau=e etarsirsir=ta
 mother DN₂=ERG TN=ABL

gu₃-de₂-a ^rnam¹-til₃ mu-na-šum₂
 gudea=ra namtil=∅ _{S4}mu-_{S6}nn-_{S8}a-_{S11}n-_{S12}šum-_{S14}∅
 PN=DAT.H life=ABS VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.A-give-3.SG.P

“The lady, beloved daughter of the holy An, mother Bau of the Etarsirsir gave Gudea life.”

(334) Gudea Statue F 1:12–2:1 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232279)

^dġa₂-tum₃-dug₃, nin-a-ne₂,
 ġatumdug nin=ane=e
 DN lady=3.SG.H.POSS=ERG

la^{aš}_{ki}, iri ki aŋ₂-ġa₂-ne₂-ta
 la^{aš} iri ki=∅ aŋ-∅=ane=ta
 GN city place=ABS measure-TL-3.SG.H.POSS=ABL

unu₆ šuba₃-a, mu-ni-tud-da-a
 unu šuba=^aa _{S4}mu-_{S10}ni-_{S11}n-_{S12}tud-_{S14}∅-_{S15}^a=^aa
 dwelling shining=L1 VEN-L1-3.SG.H.A-bear-3.SG.P-SUB=L1

“..., to whom Gatumdug, his lady from Lagash, her beloved city, gave birth in the shining sanctuary.”

(335) Gudea Statue B 1:17–19 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)

sa₂-dug₄-na e₂ ^dnin-ġirsu-ka-ta
 sadug=ane=^aa e ninġirsuk=ak=ta
 offer=3SG.POSS=L2.NH house DN=GEN=ABL

inim ħe₂-eb₂-gi₄
 inim=∅ _{S1}ħa-_{S2}i-_{S5}b-_{S10}(i>)∅-_{S12}gi-_{S14}∅
 word=ABS MOD-FIN-3.SG.NH-L2.SYN-return-3.SG.S

“May his regular offering in the temple of Ningirsu be withdrawn!”

(336) Gudea Cyl. A 16:15–16 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

hur-sa_ḡ uruda-ke₄ ki-maš-ta,hursa_ḡ uruda=ak=e kimaš=ta

mountain copper=GEN=ERG GN=ABL

ni₂-be₂ mu-na-ab-pad₃ni=be=∅ _{S4}mu-_{S6}nn-_{S7}a-_{S11}b-_{S12}pad-_{S14}∅

self=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.NH.A-find-3.SG.P

“The copper mountain in Kimash revealed itself to him.”

(337) VS 27, 47 rev. 1:1 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P020363)

[šu]-ni_ḡin₂ 119 u₈ sila₄-be₂-ta ud₅ ‘maš¹-be₂-tašuni_ḡin 119 u=∅ sila=be=ta ud=∅ maš=be=ta

total 119 ewe=ABS lamb=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABL goat=ABS kid=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABL

“Total: 119 ewes together with their lambs, and goats with their kids”

(338) DP 224 obv. 6:5–9 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P220874)

du-du, sa_ḡḡa, dam dumu-ne₂-ta,dudu sa_ḡḡa=e dam dumu=ane=ta

PN official=ERG wife child=3.SG.H.POSS=ABL

e₂ ki-sal₄-la-ka, i₃-gu₇-nee kisal=ak=’a _{S2}i-_{S10}n-_{S12}gu-_{S14}enē

house GN=GEN=L1 FIN-L1.SYN-eat-3.PL.A

“Dudu, the temple administrator, together with his wife and child will consume them in the temple of Kisal.”

The adnominal ablative may have a distributive use: the expression in the ablative then denotes an attribute that characterizes each individual member of a set, as in exx. (339), (340), (341), and (342) below. In ex. (339) each package is characterized by containing 15 bundles; in ex. (340) each bull of a group of 10 bulls is to be replaced with two cows; and in ex. (341) each woman is said to have married two men. In ex. (342) each of the persons mentioned received 2 rings, and each ring is of 8 shekels of silver.

(339) SA 149 1–2 (Umma, 21st c.) (P128727)

720 sa gi gu-kilib-ba 15 sa-ta

720 sa gi=ak gukilib=’a 15 sa=ta

720 bundle reed=GEN package=L1 15 bundle=ABL

“720 bundles of reed, in each packages (there are) 15 bundles.”

(340) AUCT 1, 181 1–2 (Drehem, 21st. c.) (P103027)

10 gud niga, ab₂ 2-ta ki-ba ḡa₂-ḡa₂

10 gud niga ab 2=ta=∅ ki=be=’a ḡa~ḡa-ed

10 ox fattened cow 2=ABL=ABS place=3.SG.NH.POSS=L2.NH put~PF-PF

“Ten fattened bulls: to be replaced with 2 cows each”

(341) Iri-kagina 3 3:20'–22' (RIME 1.9.9.3) (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222610)

munus ud-be₂-ta-ke₄-ne nita 2-ta
 munus ud=be=ta=ak=ene=e nita 2=ta=ø
 woman day=DEM=ABL=GEN=PL=ERG man 2=ABL=ABS

i₃-tuku-am₃

{S2}i-{S11}n-_{S12}tuku-_{S14}ø-_{S15}'a=ø=am-ø

FIN-3.SG.H.A-have-3.SG.P-SUB=ABS=COP-3.SG.S

"The women of old days married two men each."

(342) AUCT 1, 942 5–8 (Drehem, 21st. c.) (P103787)

2 ḥar kug-babbar 8 giṇ₄-ta-ta,
 2 _{P1}ḥar _{P2}[kugbabbar 8 giṇ=ta]=_{P5}ta
 2 _{P1}ring _{P2}[silver 8 unit=ABL]=_{P1}ABL
^dšul-gi-nu-ri nar munus, ba-la-la dumu a-ga-lum
 šulginuri nar munus balala dumu agalum
 PN₁ singer woman PN₂ child PN₃

ud ma-ri₂-tum mu-ni-kur₉-re-ša

ud maritum=ø _{S4}mu-_{S10}ni-_{S11}n-_{S12}kur-_{S14}eš-_{S15}'a-'a

day instrument=ABS VEN-L1-3.SG.H.A-enter-3.PL-SUB-L1

"Each person 2 silver rings of eight shekels of silver each: Šulgi-nuri, female singer, and Balala, son of Agalum: when they brought in the *maritum*-instrument."

13.2 The terminative case (slot 9)

The nominal case-marker of the terminative is /še/ written the sign ŠE₃. The verbal prefix is /ši/, written with the sign ŠI.

Around the middle of the 3rd millennium BCE the vowel of the terminative prefix /ši/ assimilated to the vowel of the following syllable in respect of vowel height (the so-called 'vowel harmony' of the literature). The "high" form was written with the grapheme ŠI, transliterated as ši-; while the "low" form was written with grapheme ŠE₃, transliterated as še₃-, see, e.g., ex. (354) below.

When the nominal case-marker is preceded by an open syllable, then the enclitic =/še/ may be reduced to /š/, in which case the terminative case-marker is often not present graphemically, especially in the 3rd millennium BCE, see, e.g., ex. (356) below.

The co-occurrence of the noun phrase with a terminative case-marker and the terminative prefix is rather loose: adverbially used verbal participants in the terminative often occur without any corresponding prefix in the verbal prefix-chain, see, e.g., exx. (345) and (373) below.

The terminative may be used with both human and non-human verbal participants. In the verbal prefix-chain the participant in the terminative may be cross-referenced either by a composite or by a simple adverbial prefix, for the latter see, e.g., ex. (354) below. The simple prefix always cross-references a 3rd ps. sg. non-human participant.

The 1st ps. sg. pronominal prefix is the IPP /' in S6, see, e.g., ex. (371) below. The 2nd ps. sg. pronominal prefix is the IPP /e/ in S6, see, e.g., ex. (370) below.

The 3rd ps. sg. human pronominal is expressed with the prefix /n/ in S6. The 3rd ps. sg. non-human pronominal prefix is expressed with the prefix /b/ in S5 of the verbal template. When S5 is occupied by the middle prefix /ba/-, then the pronominal prefix /b/ may not be used and the terminative prefix occurs in its simple form without a pronominal prefix, see, e.g., ex. (417) below.

The 3rd ps. pl. human pronominal prefix is the IPP /**nnē**/ in S6, see, ex. (349) below.

The basic function of the terminative is to denote the destination or goal of the verbal event.

(343) En-ana-tum I 2 rev. 4:10–5:2 (RIME 1.9.4.2) (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222496)

eg₂ ki-sur-ra, ^dnin-^ṅir-^ṛsu¹-ka-še₃, mu-gaz
 eg kisura=ak ninṅirsuk=ak=še _{S4}mu-_{S11}n-_{S12}gaz-_{S14}-Ø
 dyke border DN=GEN=TERM VEN-3.SG.H.A-kill-3.SG.P
 “(Enanatum) drove (Umluma, ruler of Umma) back until the border canal of Ningirsu,”

(344) Gudea Cyl. A 2:5 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

iri-ne₂ ninṅin^{ki}-še₃ id₂-ninṅin^{ki}-du-a ma₂ mu-ni-ri
 iri=ane ninṅin=še idnṅindua=^ʾa ma=Ø _{S4}mu-_{S10}ni-_{S11}n-_{S12}ri-_{S14}Ø
 city=3.SG.H.POSS GN=TERM WN=L1 boat=ABS VEN-L1-3.SG.H.A-impose-3.SG.P
 “He directed the boat on the canal Id-Ninṅin-dua towards her city Ninṅin.”

(345) Gudea Cyl. A 4:5 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

ensi₂-ke₄ kisal diṅir sirara₆-ta-ka
 ensik=e _{P1}kisal _{P3}[_{P1}diṅir _{P2}[sirara=ta]=_{P5}ak]=_{P5}^ʾa
 ruler=ERG _{P1}courtyard _{P3}[_{P1}god _{P2}[GN=ABL]=_{P5}GEN]=_{P5}L1
 saṅ an-še₃ mi-ni-il₂
 saṅ=Ø an=še _{S4}mu-_{S10}ni-_{S11}n-_{S12}il-_{S14}Ø
 head=ABS sky=TERM VEN-L1-3.SG.H.A-raise-3.SG.P
 “The ruler raised his head high (lit., ‘towards the sky’) in the courtyard of the goddess from Sirara.”

(346) Gudea Cyl. A 15:10 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

gu₃-de₂-a iri-ne₂ ṅir₂-su^{ki}-še₃ gu₂ mu-na-si-si
 gudea=ra iri=ane ṅirsu=še gu=Ø _{S4}mu-_{S6}nn-_{S7}a-_{S12}si-_{S14}e
 PN=DAT city=3.SG.H.POSS GN=TERM neck=ABS VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-fill~PF-3.SG.A
 “(Magan and Meluhha) gathered for Gudea at his city Girsu.”

(347) Gudea Cyl B 5:4–5 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

ur-saṅ e₂-a-na ku₄-ku₄-da-ne₂,
 ur-saṅ=Ø e=ane=^ʾa ku~ku-ed-^ʾa=ane=e
 hero=ABS house=3.SG.H.POSS=L1 enter~PF-PF-SUB-3.SG.H.POSS=L3.NH
 ud me₃-še₃ gu₃ ^ṅar-am₃
 ud me=še gu=Ø ṅar-Ø=Ø=am-Ø
 storm battle=TERM sound=ABS put-TL=ABS=COP-3.SG.S
 “As the warrior entered his temple, he was a storm roaring into battle.”

(348) NG 120b rev. 9–10 (Umma, 21st c.) (P131776)

nag-su^{ki}-še₃ ḥa-za-num₂-e, mu-na-an-laḥ₅
 nagsu=še hazanum=e _{S4}mu-_{S6}nn-_{S7}a-_{S11}n-_{S12}laḥ-_{S14}Ø
 GN=TERM mayor=ERG VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.A-bring.PL-3.SG.P
 “The mayor took them (= the sheep) for him to Nagsu.”

(349) SNAT 125 obv. 4–7 (unknown, 21st c.) (P129886)

ur-^dnin-tur₅-ke₄, ur-^dsuen u₃, nin-dub-sar dam-ne₂-še₃,
urninturak=e ursuen u nindubsar dam=ane=še
PN₁=ERG PN₂ and PN₃ wife=3.SG.H.POSS=TERM

in-ne-ši-sa₁₀

{S2}i-{S6}nnē-_{S9}ši-_{S11}n-_{S12}sa-_{S14}∅

FIN-3.PL-TERM-3.SG.H.A-buy-3.SG.P

“Ur-Nintura bought (a maiden) from (lit. ‘bartered [a maiden] towards’) Ur-Suen and Nindubsar, his wife (for 2 and 2/3 shekels of silver).”

(350) HSS 3, 42 rev. 2:1 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P221351)

ḡiš-zi e₂-muhaldim-še₂, ḡal₂-la
ḡišzi emuhaldim=še ḡal-’a
wall kitchen=term exist-PT
“wall that lies towards the kitchen”

The destination of the verbal event may also be an abstract entity but not a locality. The noun phrase in the terminative may then denote the result, see exx. (351)–(353), purpose, see exx. (355)–(360), or the reason of the verbal event, see exx. (361)–(364).

Abstract destination = result

(351) DP 307 obv. 2:1–6 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P220957)

ku₆ hab₂-še₃ ak-de₃ amar-girid₂^{ki} muhaldim-ra
ku=∅ hab=še ak-ed=e amargirid muhaldim-ra
fish=ABS fish.oil=TERM make-PF=DAT.NH PN cook=DAT.H

en-ig-gal nu-banda₂ e-na-šum₂

eniggal nubanda=e _{S2}i-_{S6}nn-_{S7}a-_{S11}n-_{S12}šum-_{S14}∅

PN overseer=ERG FIN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.A-give-3.SG.P

“En-iggal, the overseer, has given the fish to Amar-Girid, the cook, so that he (= A.) makes them into fish-oil (?).”

(352) Gudea Statue A 3:2–3 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232274)

alan-na-ne₂-še₃, mu-tud
alan=ane=še _{S4}mu-_{S11}n-_{S12}tud-_{S14}∅
statue=3.SG.H.POSS=TERM VEN-3.SG.H.A-bear-3.SG.P
“He made it (= diorite) into his own statue.”

(353) Gudea Statue B 5:45–47 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)

^{ḡi}šeren-be₂, ig gal-še₃, mu-dim₂
eren=be=∅ ig gal-∅=še _{S4}mu-_{S11}n-_{S12}dim-_{S14}∅
cedar=DEM=ABS door great-TL=TERM VEN-3.SG.H.A-make-3.SG.P
“He manufactured the cedar-beams into big doors.”

Abstract destination = purpose

(354) Aya-Ane-pada 6 1–5 (RIME 1.13.6.6) (Ur, 24th c.) (P222841)

^{dr}nin¹-a-zu₅, lu₂-dug₃-[ga], nam-til₃, aya₂-an-ne₂-pad₃-da-še₃,
ninazu=ra luduga=e namtil ayaanepada=ak=še
DN=DAT.H PN=ERG life PN=GEN=TERM

a mu-na-še₃-ru

a=∅ _{S4}mu-_{S6}nn-_{S7}a-_{S9}ši-_{S11}n-_{S12}ru-_{S14}∅

water=ABS VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-TERM-3.SG.H.A-impose-3.SG.P

“To Nin-azu, Luduga dedicated this for the well-being of Aya-Ane-pada.”

Note that in the following example there are two verbal participants in the terminative:

(355) Anonymous Nippur 6 1-7 (Nippur, 24th c.) (P222761)

^dnin-lil₂, ^den-lil_x(E₂)-la₂, dumu ad-da-ke₄,
 ninlil=ra enlilak dumu adda=ak=e
 DN=DAT.H PN₁ child PN₂=GEN=ERG
 ga-til₃-la-še₃, nam-til₃, dam dumu-na-še₃,
 gatila=še namtil dam dumu=ane=ak=še
 offering=TERM life wife child=3.SG.H.POSS=GEN=TERM

a mu-na-ru

a=∅ _{S4}mu-_{S6}nn-_{S7}a-_{S11}n-_{S12}ru-_{S14}∅

water=ABS VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.A-impose-3.SG.P

“To Ninlil, Enlila, child of Adda, dedicated this (vessel) as a votive offering for the well-being of his spouse and child.”

(356) E-ana-tum 1 obv. 4:22-23 (RIME 1.9.3.1) (Lagash, 25th. c.) (P222399)

e₂-an-na, ^dinana, eb-gal-ka-ka, a-tum₂
 eana inanak ebgal=ak=ak='a _{S2}a-_{S5}b-_{S10}(i>)∅_{S12}tum-_{S14}∅
 TN₁ DN TN₂=GEN=GEN=L2.NH FIN-3.SG.NH-L2.SYN-worthy.of-3.SG.S

mu mu-ne₂-še₂₁

mu=še _{S4}mu-_{S6}nn-_{S10}i-_{S11}n-_{S12}še-_{S14}∅

name=TERM VEN-3.SG.H-L2-3.SG.H.A-call-3.SG.P

“(Inana) named (lit. ‘called as name’) him (= E-ana-tum) ‘He is worthy of the E-ana of Inana of the Ebgal’.”

(357) Ishme-Dagan 7 1-7 (RIME 4.1.4.7) (Isin, 20th. c.)(Q001951)

^diš-me-^dda-gan, lugal ki-en-gi ki-uri-ra, ud ^den-lil₂-le, ^dnin-urta,
 išmedagan lugal kengir kiuri=ak=ra ud enlil=e ninurta
 PN king GN GN=GEN=L3.H day DN=ERG DN

ur-sa₇ kalag-ga-ne₂, maškim-še₃, mu-ni-in-tuku-a

urs₇ kalag=ane=∅ maškim=še _{S4}mu-_{S6}nn-_{S10}i-_{S11}n-_{S12}tuku-_{S14}∅-_{S15}'a='a

hero strong=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS deputy=TERM VEN-3.SG.H-L3-3.SG.H.A-have-3.SG.P-SUB=L1

“When Enlil appointed Ninurta, his powerful warrior, as commissioner to Išme-Dagan, king of Sumer and Akkad.”

(358) Iri-kagina 14q 1-2 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222653)

iri-ka-gi-na, nam-sipad-še₃ mu-tud
 irikaginak=∅ namsipad=še₃ _{S4}mu-_{S11}n-_{S12}tud-_{S14}∅
 PN=ABS shepherdship=TERM VEN-3.SG.H.A-bear-3.SG.P

“(Bau) gave birth to Irikagina so that he becomes a shepherd.”

(359) En-ana-tum I 3 15-16 (RIME 1.9.4.3) (Lagash, 24th c.) (P431100)

ur ḥa-lu-ub₂, i₃-du₈-še₃ mu-na-durun_x(TUŠ.TUŠ)-na

ur halub idu=še _{S4}mu-_{S6}nn-_{S7}a-_{S11}n-_{S12}durun-_{S14}∅-_{S15}'a='a

lion halub.tree doorkeeper=TERM VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.A-sit.PL-3.SG.P-SUB=L2.NH

“... on the *halub*-tree lions which he seated for him as doorkeepers.”

(360) AUCT 1, 328 5–6 (Drehem, 21st c.) (P103173)

1 gud šu-gid₂, e₂-muhaldim-še₃
 1 gud šugid emuhaldim=še
 1 bull supply kitchen=TERM
 “1 bull, supply for the kitchen”

Abstract destination = reason

(361) Gudea Cyl. A 4:16 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

a-ne saŋ-ŋa₂-ne₂-še₃ diŋir-ra-am₃
 ane=∅ saŋ=ane=še diŋir=∅=am-∅
 3.SG.PR=ABS head=3.SG.H.POSS=TERM god=ABS=COP-3.SG.S
 “He, because of his head, was a god.”

(362) Gudea Cyl. A 23:26 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

lugal mu-ne₂-še₃ kur tuku₂-tuku₂-e
 lugal mu=ane=še kur=∅ tuku~tuku-∅=e
 king name=3.SG.H.POSS=TERM mountain=ABS rock~PL-TL=ERG
 “The king, at whose name (lit. ‘because of whose name’) all foreign countries tremble.”

With the compound verb **šu** “hand” — **ti** “to approach” = “to receive” the terminative denotes the participant from whom something is received:

(363) Gudea Cyl. A 2:21–22 (Lagash, 22nd c.)

lugal-a-ne₂ sizkur₂ ra₂-zu-ne₂ gu₃-de₂-a-aš₂
 lugal=ane=e sizkur arazu=ane=∅ gudea=še
 king=3.SG.H.POSS=ERG prayer supplication=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS PN=TERM
 en ^dnin-ŋir₂-su-ke₄ šu ba-ši-ti
 en ninŋirsuk=e šu=e _{s5}ba-_{s6}n-_{s9}ši-_{s11}n-_{s12}ti-_{s14}∅
 lord DN=ERG hand=L3.NH MID-3.SG.H-TERM-3.SG.H.A-approach-3.SG.P
 “His master, Lord Ningirsu, accepted from Gudea his prayer and supplication.”

The terminative is used in the constuction **mu** “name”/**bar** “outside” **NP=ak/possessive pronoun=še**, which means “because of” (see also ex. [81] in Lesson 5, section 5.3. above):

(364) LEM 178 7 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P112521)

bar-ŋu₁₀-še₃ šu he-bar-re
 bar=ŋu=še šu=∅ _{s1}ha-_{s2}i-_{s5}b-_{s10}(i>)∅ _{s12}bar-_{s14}e
 outside=1.SG.POSS=TERM hand=ABS MOD-FIN-3.SG.NH-L2.SYN-open-3.SG.A
 “May he release it because of me!”

(365) OIP 121, 470 111 (Drehem, 21st c.) (P124200)

mu šagina ŋišbun_x(Kl.BI) tuš-ša-ne-še₃
 mu šagina ŋišbun=∅ tuš-’a=enē=ak=še
 name general meal=ABS sit-PT=PL=GEN=TERM
 “because of the generals who are having a meal”

The terminative may also be used in a temporal sense: noun phrases in the terminative answer the question “until when, how long”:

(366) TCS 1, 56 rev. 5 (Umma, 21st. c.) (P145646)

ud-te-ta ɲi₆-ba-še₃
 udten=ta ɲiba=še
 evening=ABL midnight=TERM
 “from evening until midnight”

The terminative is used in the construction **igi NP=ak/possessive pronoun=še**, which means “before, in the presence of”:

(367) Sargon 11 36–37 (RIME 2.1.1.11) (Agade, 23rd c.) (Q001403)

igi-ne₂-še₃, ninda i₃-gu₇-e
 igi=ane=še ninda=∅ s₂i_{-s11}b_{-s12}gu_{-s14}e
 face=3.SG.H.POSS=TERM bread=ABS FIN-3.SG.NH.P-eat-3.SG.A
 “(5400 people) eat (daily) before him (= Sharrukin)”

Verbs of seeing may construe their perceptual target with the terminative as in the following examples:

(368) Gudea Cyl. A 1:3 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

^den-lil₂-e en ^dnin-ɲir₂-su₂-še₃
 enlil=e en ninɲirsuk=še
 DN=ERG lord DN=TERM
 igi zid mu-ši-bar
 igi zid=∅=∅ s₄mu_{-s6}n_{-s9}ši_{-s11}n_{-s12}bar_{-s14}∅
 face right=TL=ABS VEN-3.SG.H-TERM-3.SG.H.A-direct-3.SG.P
 “Enlil looked at lord Ningirsu with approval.”

(369) Gudea Statue B 3:6–7 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)

ud ^dnin-ɲir₂-su-ke₄, iri-ne₂-še₃
 ud ninɲirsuk=e iri=ane=še
 day DN=ERG city=3.SG.H.POSS=TERM
 igi zid im-ši-bar-ra
 igi zid=∅=∅ s₂i_{-s4}m_{-s5}b_{-s9}ši_{-s11}n_{-s12}bar_{-s14}∅_{-s15}'a
 face right=TL=ABS FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-TERM-3.SG.H.A-direct-3.SG.P-SUB
 “When Ningirsu had looked favourably upon his city,”

(370) Shulgi R 2 (ETCSL 2.4.2.18)

[a]-r¹a¹ ^den-lil₂-le igi zid mu-u₃-ši-bar
 aja enlil=e igi zid=∅=∅ s₄mu_{-s6}e_{-s9}ši_{-s11}n_{-s12}bar_{-s14}∅
 father DN=ERG face right=TL=ABS VEN-2.SG-TERM-3.SG.H.A-direct-3.SG.P
 “Father Enlil looked at you with approval.”

(371) Ishme-Dagan A Segment A 103 (ETCSL 2.5.4.01)

igi nam-til₃-la-ka-ne₂ ɲu-mu-ši-in-bar
 igi namtil=ak=ane=∅ s₁ɲa_{-s4}mu_{-s6}'_{-s9}ši_{-s11}n_{-s12}bar_{-s14}∅
 face life=GEN=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS MOD-VEN-1.SG-TERM-3.SG.H.A-direct-3.SG.P
 “She indeed looked at me with her life-giving look.”

(372) Gudea Cyl. A 19:24 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

ab₂ amar-be₂-še₃ igi ɲal₂-la-gen₇
 ab amar=be=še igi=∅ ɲal-'a=gen
 cow calf-3.SG.NH.POSS=TERM eye=ABS exist-PT-EQU
 “Like a cow keeping an eye on its calf, ...”

In some cases the terminative appears to express not destination, but location next to something, as in the following examples:

(373) En-ana-tum I 3 15–16 (RIME 1.9.4.3) (Lagash, 24th c.) (P431100)

e₂-še₃ mu-na-si-si-ga

e=še_{S4} mu_{S6} nn_{S7} a_{S11} n_{S12} sig~sig_{S14} Ø_{S15} 'a

house=TERM VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.A-fill~PL-3.SG.P-SUB

“(when ...) he set them (= cedar trees) up around the temple.”

(374) Gudea Cyl. A 2:24 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

ensi₂-ke₄ ḡa₂-tum₃-dug₃-še₃ ki-nu₂-a-ne₂ ba-gub

ensik=e ḡatumdug=še kinu=ane=Ø_{S5} ba_{S11} n_{S12} gub_{S14} Ø

ruler=ERG DN=TERM bed=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS MID-3.SG.H.A-stand-3.SG.P

“The ruler set up his bed for himself near to Gatumdug.”

(375) Gudea Cyl. A 13:16 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

pi₃saṇ u₃-šub-ba-še₃ maš₂ ba-ši-nu₂

pi₃saṇ ušub=ak=še_{S5} maš=Ø_{S9} ši_{S11} n_{S12} nu_{S14} Ø

frame mould=GEN=TERM kid=ABS MID-TERM-3.SG.H.A-lie-3.SG.P

“At the brick-mould he had a kid lie down.”

Further readings

For both cases one may consult the corresponding sections of Gragg 1973, Balke 2006, and Jagersma 2010, whose descriptions, however, differ in their approach to cases in Sumerian. The approach of the present textbook’s author is explained in Zólyomi 2010.

The constructions used with the compound verb **igi — bar** are discussed in Zólyomi 2007b. This study also discusses the changes in these constructions on the influence of Akkadian.

The interpretation of ex. (334) above and the function of the adnominal ablative are discussed in Bauer 2005.

On the different constructions used with the adnominal ablative, see Sövegjártó 2011: 31–32, who convincingly argues in connection with the equative case that a noun phrase in an adnominal case may not be part of the noun phrase whose head it modifies.

Exercises

13.1 Look up the new words used in the examples of this lesson in Foxvog’s (2016b) or Volk’s (2012) glossary, and learn them.

13.2 Study the examples of this lesson carefully and make yourself familiar with their grammatical analysis.

13.3 Transliterate the text of NG 1 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P111896) (a handcopy of the text can be found at <http://cdli.ucla.edu/P111896>) with the help of Volk’s sign list (2012), the text is no. 32 in Volk’s (2012) chrestomathy. Translate the text with the help of either Volk’s (2012) or Foxvog’s glossary (2016b). Assign morphemic segmentation and glossing to the verbal forms.

13.4 Transliterate the text of NG 124 (Nippur, 21st c.) (PP134570) (a handcopy of the text can be found at <http://cdli.ucla.edu/P134570>) with the help of Volk’s sign list (2012),

the text is no. 36 in Volk's (2012) chrestomathy. Translate the text with the help of either Volk's (2012) or Foxvog's glossary (2016b). Assign morphemic segmentation and glossing to the verbal forms.

- 13.5 Transliterate the text VS 14, 35 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P020049) with the help of Volk's sign list (2012). A copy and photo of the text can be found at <http://cdli.ucla.edu/P020049>. The text is no. 42 in Volk's (2012) chrestomathy. Translate the text with the help of Volk's (2012) or Foxvog's (2016b) glossary. For the numerical expression used in them you may consult ORACC's preliminary description of metrological expressions (<http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/doc/downloads/numref.pdf>), or Powell's entry in the *Reallexikon der Assyriologie* (1987–90).

Lesson 14: The locative cases

Slot 10 of the verbal prefix-chain is the last of the slots containing an adverbial prefix. It may be filled with the verbal marker of either of three cases: locative1, locative2, and locative3. This lesson describes the verbal and nominal marking of these three cases together with their most important uses.

14.1 The adverbial cases of Slot 10

The verbal marking of the adverbial cases of S10 shows a variety of forms depending on the morphological environment. These forms can be classified into various groups on the basis of i) whether the prefixes have a simple or a composite form and ii) whether the FPP in S11 is empty.

There may be a number of reasons why S11 is empty: i) the verbal form is intransitive, see, e.g., ex. (401) below; ii) in a transitive present-future verbal form no prefix cross-references the non-human P, see, eg., ex. (414) below; iii) in verbal forms containing the modal-prefix /ga/- no prefix cross-references the non-human P, see, e.g. ex. (421) below; or iv) in imperative forms no prefix cross-references the non-human P, see, e.g., ex. (411) below.

For a summary of the forms of the verbal markers of the three locative cases see Table 14.1 below; for the detailed description of the various forms listed in this table see the subsections on the respective cases below (note that Table 14.1 lists only attested forms). For a summary of their nominal markers and functions, see Table 14.2 below.

Table 14.1 below shows that there are important differences among the verbal markings of the locative cases. The locative1 is only cross-referenced by simple prefixes. The locative3 has no syncopated and simple forms; when S11 is not used for cross-referencing another verbal participant, it is cross-referenced by a final pronominal prefix in S11, see section 14.4 below for the details.

	COMPOSITE FORM		SIMPLE FORM		FPP
	S11 filled	S11 empty	S11 filled	S11 empty	
L1	—	—	$s_{10}/ni/^{a)}$ (L1)	$s_{10}/n/^{b)}$ (L1.SYN)	—
L2	$s_4/mu/-_{s_{10}}/e/^{c)}$ (VEN-L2) $s_6/r/-_{s_{10}}/i/^{d)}$ (2.SG-L2) $s_6/nn/-_{s_{10}}/i/^{e)}$ (3.SG.H-L2) $s_5/b/-_{s_{10}}/i/^{f)}$ (3.SG.NH-L2) $s_6/nn\bar{e}/-_{s_{10}}/e/^{g)}$ (3.PL-L2)	$s_4/mu/-_{s_{10}}/e/^{h)}$ (VEN-L2) $s_6/r/-_{s_{10}}/i/ \rightarrow s_6/?/-_{s_{10}}/\emptyset/^{i)}$ (2.SG-L2) \rightarrow (2.SG-L2.SYN) $s_6/nn/-_{s_{10}}/i/ \rightarrow s_6/n/-_{s_{10}}/\emptyset/^{j)}$ (3.SG.H-L2) \rightarrow (3.SG.H-L2.SYN) $s_5/b/-_{s_{10}}/i/ \rightarrow s_5/b/-_{s_{10}}/\emptyset/^{k)}$ (3.SG.NH-L2) \rightarrow (3.SG.NH-L2.SYN) $s_6/nn\bar{e}/-_{s_{10}}/e/^{l)}$ (3.PL-L2)		— — — $s_{10}/e/^{m)}$ (L2) —	
L3	$s_4/mu/-_{s_{10}}/e/^{n)}$ (VEN-L3) $s_6/r/-_{s_{10}}/i/^{o)}$ (2.SG-L3) $s_6/nn/-_{s_{10}}/i/^{p)}$ (3.SG.H-L3) $s_5/b/-_{s_{10}}/i/^{q)}$ (3.SG.NH-L3) $s_6/nn\bar{e}/-_{s_{10}}/e/^{r)}$ (3.PL-L3)				$s_{11}/^{s)}$ (1.SG) $s_{11}/\bar{e}/^{t)}$ (2.SG) $s_{11}/b/^{u)}$ (3.SG.NH)

Table 14.1: The verbal marking of the locative cases

[**a**] exx. (376), (378), (379); (380), (381a), (382), (437); **b**) exx. (377), (381b), (383); **c**) ex. (403), (408); **d**) ex. (390); **e**) exx. (166), (387), (391), (393), (399), (406), (409b); **f**) exx. (167), (384), (388), (400), (402), (407), (410), (422); **g**) ex. (394); **h**) exx. (392), (411); **i**) ex. (405); **j**) ex. (386), (415), (416); **k**) exx. (389), (395), (409a), (413), (418); **l**) ex. (414); **m**) exx. (168), (396a), (397), (398), (401), (412), (417), (420), (421); **n**) (431); **o**) ex. (404), (438); **p**) exx. (424), (432), (439); **q**) exx. (425), (428), (433), (440), (443), (444); **r**) ex. (441); **s**) ex. (423); **t**) ex. (436); **u**) exx. (427); (430), (434), (435), (437), (442)]

The locative2 and locative3 both differ from the locative1 in implying movement to or location outside an entity; the locative1 implies movement into or location inside an entity. The difference between the locative2 and locative3 encodes a difference in relative orientation: both patterns imply proximity and contact from outside, but the locative2 implies horizontal direct contact (= above),

while the locative3 implies a non-horizontal direct contact (= beside). The local meanings of the three locative cases of S10 are summarized in Table 14.2 below:

CASE	FUNCTION		NOMINAL MARKERS	
	LOCATION “at”	DESTINATION “to”	HUMAN	NON-HUMAN
LOCATIVE1	inessive	illative	—	=/’a/
LOCATIVE2	superessive	sublative	=/ra/	=/’a/
LOCATIVE3	adessive	allative	=/ra/	=/e/

Table 14.2: The meaning of the locative cases

14.2 The locative1

The locative1 is used only with non-human verbal participants. The locative1 prefix /ni/ has no composite form, only a simple form: it always occurs without a pronominal prefix, and always refers to a 3rd ps. non-human participant. The nominal case-marker of the locative1 is =/’a/.

If S11 contains no morpheme and consequently the locative1 prefix forms an open unstressed syllable, then the vowel of the prefix /ni/ becomes syncopated, and the prefix is reduced to /n/. Instructive about this phenomenon are the two forms of the same verb in ex. (381) below: the first verbal form is transitive, S11 is filled with the morpheme /n/ and the locative1 prefix has the form /ni/; the second verbal form is intransitive in which S11 is empty, and the locative1 prefix has the syncopated form /n/. The prefix /ni/, the non-syncopated form of the locative1 prefix, is written as a rule with the grapheme NI.

The syncopation of the locative1 prefix results in the compensatory lengthening of the finite marker, indicated by plene-writing from the end of the 3rd millennium BCE, see ex. (377) below.

The vowel of the locative1 prefix /ni/ assimilates to the vowel of the following syllable in respect to vowel height (the so-called “vowel harmony” of the literature) around the middle of the 3rd millennium BCE. Both forms were written with the grapheme NI, but it is assumed in this textbook that the “high” and the “low” forms were /ni/ and /ne/ respectively, reflected by the transliteration **ni**- and **ne**2-.

In its basic function the locative1 indicates a location inside something, see, e.g., ex. (338) above, exx. (376) and (377) below; or a movement inside something, see exx. (378)–(380) below. The location may also be within an abstract entity like a “statement”, as in ex. (381) below.

(376) En-metena 1 6:28–29 (RIME 1.9.5.1) (Lagash, 25th c.) (Q001103)

šag₄ iri-na-ka, ḥa-ne2-gaz-ze_x(AB2.ŠA3.GE)

šag iri=ane=ak=’a s₁ḥa-s₁₀ni-s₁₁n-s₁₂gaz-s₁₄e

heart city=3.SG.H.POSS=GEN=L1 MOD-L1-3.SG.H.P-kill-3.SG.A

“May (the people) kill him in the middle of his city!”

(377) MVN 3, 363 rev. 3–5 (Drehem, 21st c.) (P113923)

kišib₃ ur-^dšul-pa-e₃-ka beše₇ ur-^dba-u₂-kakišib uršulpaek=ak beše₇ urbauk='aseal PN₁=GEN basket PN₂=L1i₃-in-ḡal₂-la-ta tur-re-dams₂i-_{s10}n-_{s11}ḡal-_{s14}ø-_{s15}'a=ta tur-ed=ø=am-ø

FIN-L1.SYN-exist-3.SG.S-SUB=ABL small-PF=ABS=COP-3.SG.S

“These (various animals) are to be subtracted from the sealed tablet of Uršulpae that is in the basket of Urbau.”

The locative₁ may be the very first prefix of a verbal form. Illuminating about this phenomenon are the two forms of the same verb in exx. (378) and (379) below: both forms are transitive and must contain a locative prefix, ex. (379) differs only in the presence of a ventive prefix.

Verbal forms like the one in ex. (378) were earlier transliterated as **i₃-ḡar** (_{s2}i-_{s11}n-_{s12}ḡar-_{s14}ø = FIN-3.SG.H.A-place-3.SG.P). Verbal forms like the one in ex. (380), however, suggest that the form should start with a prefix /ni/: because of the vowel harmony, a form like _{s2}i-_{s11}n-_{s12}ḡar-_{s14}ø would be written as **e-ḡar** around the middle of 3rd millennium BCE. In the context of ex. (380) the graphemes NI GAR may therefore only be transliterated as **ne₂-ḡar** (_{s10}ni-_{s11}n-_{s12}ḡar-_{s14}ø = L1-3.SG.H.A-put-3.SG.P), but not as **i₃-ḡar**.

(378) Gudea Cyl. A 18:24 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

gu₃-de₂-a im u₃-šub-ba ni-ḡargudea=e im=ø ušub='a _{s10}ni-_{s11}n-_{s12}ḡar-_{s14}ø

PN=ERG clay=ABS mould=L1 L1-3.SG.H.A-place-3.SG.P

“Gudea put clay into the mould.”

(379) Gudea Cyl. A 19:8–9 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

sig₄ u₃-šub-ba mi-ni-ḡar-ra-ne₂sig=ø ušub='a _{s4}mu-_{s10}ni-_{s11}n-_{s12}ḡar-_{s14}ø-_{s15}'a=ane=da

brick=ABS mould=L1 VEN-L1-3.SG.H.A-put-3.SG.P-SUB=3.SG.H.POSS=COM

^dutu im-da-hul₂utu=ø _{s2}i-_{s4}m-_{s6}b-_{s8}da-_{s12}hul-_{s14}ø

DN=ABS FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-COM-rejoice-3.SG.S

“Utu rejoiced over his (= Gudea) putting the brick into the mould.”

(380) DP 601 obv. 1:3–2:1 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P221251)

a₂-ne₂-kur-ra, saḡ apin-ke₄, numun ne₂-ḡaranekura saḡ apin=ak=e numun=ø _{s10}ni-_{s11}n-_{s12}ḡar-_{s14}ø

PN head plough=GEN=ERG seed=ABS L1-3.SG.H.A-PLACE-3.SG.P

“Anekura, the chief ploughman sowed it with seeds”; lit. “put the seeds in (the earth)”

(381) NG 99 rev. 1:2–5 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P111162)

i₃-bi₂-la du-du-ke₄-ne ka-ga-ne-ne-a ba-ni-gi-in-ešibila dudu=ak=ene=e kag=anenē='a _{s5}ba-_{s10}ni-_{s11}n-_{s12}ḡin-_{s14}eš

heir PN=GEN=PL=ERG mouth=3.PL.POSS=L1 MID-L1-3.SG.H.A-confirm-3.PL

mu inim i₃-bi₂-la-ne-ka ba-an-gi-na-še₃mu inim ibila=enē=ak='a _{s5}ba-_{s10}n-_{s12}ḡin-_{s14}ø-_{s15}'a=ak=še

name word heir=PL=GEN=L1 MID-L1.SYN-confirm-3.SG.S-SUB=GEN=TERM

“The heirs of Dudu confirmed this in their account (lit. ‘in their mouths’). Since it has been verified in the statement of the heirs, ...”

The locative1 may denote the verbal participant which functions as the material with which a verbal action is carried out:

(382) En-metena 1 5:12–13 (RIME 1.9.5.1) (Lagash, 25th c.) (Q001103)

nam-nun-da-ki-ŋar-ra, ur₂-be₂
 namnundakiŋara=ak ur=be=∅
 CN=GEN base=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS

na₄-a mu-na-ni-du₃

na='a s₄mu-s₆nn-s₇a-s₁₀ni-s₁₁n-s₁₂du-s₁₄∅
 stone=L1 VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-L1-3.SG.H.A-build-3.SG.P

“He built the fundamentals of Namnunda-kigara from stone.”

(383) Gudea Cyl. A 16:25 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

sipad-de₃ e₂ kug-ga mu-du₃-e
 sipad=e e=∅ kug='a s₄mu-s₁₀n-s₁₂du-s₁₄e
 shepherd=ERG house=ABS silver=L1 VEN-L1.SYN-build-3.SG.A

“The shepherd was going to build the temple from silver.”

14.3 The locative2

The locative2 may be used both with human and non-human verbal participants. In the verbal prefix-chain the participant in the locative2 may be cross-referenced either by a composite or by a simple adverbial prefix. The form of the nominal case-marker of the locative2 depends on the grammatical gender of the participant: human verbal participants are case-marked with the enclitic =/ra/; while non-human verbal participants are case-marked with the enclitic =/'a/.

The locative2 prefix has two allomorphs: i) /i/ after a consonant; ii) /e/ after a vowel.

In the 1st ps. sg. composite form the 1st ps. sg. pronominal prefix is expressed by the /mu/ allomorph of the ventive prefix in S4, see, e.g., ex. (403) below. The 2nd ps. sg. pronominal prefix is the IPP /r/ in S6, see, e.g., ex. (404) below.

The 3rd ps. sg. human pronominal prefix is the IPP /nn/ in S6, and the composite prefix is written as a rule with the grapheme NI, see, e.g., ex. (387) below. However, around the middle of the 3rd millennium BCE the vowel of the composite locative2 prefix /nni/ assimilates to the vowel of the following syllable in respect to vowel height (the so-called “vowel harmony” of the literature). Both the “high” and the “low” forms were written with the grapheme NI, but it is assumed in this textbook that the “high” and the “low” forms were /ni/ and /ne/ respectively, reflected by the transliteration **ni-** and **ne₂-**; for the latter, see, e.g., ex. (393) below.

The 3rd ps. sg. non-human prefix is expressed with the prefix /b/ in S5, and the composite prefix is written as a rule with the grapheme NE, transliterated as **bi₂-**, see, e.g., ex. (400) below. However, around the middle of the 3rd millennium BCE the vowel of the composite locative2 prefix /bi/ assimilated to the vowel of the following syllable in respect of vowel height (the so-called ‘vowel harmony’ of the literature). The “high” form was written with the grapheme NE, transliterated as **bi₂-**; while the “low” form was written with grapheme BI, transliterated as **be₂-**, see, e.g., ex. (402) below.

The 3rd ps. pl. human pronominal prefix is the IPP /nnē/ in S6, see, e.g., ex. (394) below.

If S11 contains no morpheme and consequently the composite locative2 prefix forms an open unstressed syllable, then the vowel /i/ of the 2nd ps. sg, 3rd sg. human, and 3rd ps. sg. non-human locative2 prefix becomes syncopated. The 3rd ps. sg. human composite prefix prefix is reduced to /n/, see ex. (386) below. The 3rd ps. sg. non-human composite prefix prefix is reduced to /b/, see, e.g., exx. (389) and (395) below. In case of the 2nd ps. sg composite prefix, it may not be decided on the basis of the attested forms which allomorph of the 2nd ps. sg. IPP is used; thus in Table 14.1 and in ex. (405) below a question mark indicates the uncertainty of the form.

The syncopation of the locative2 prefix results in the compensatory lengthening of the finite marker, indicated by plene-writing from the end of the 3rd millennium BCE, see ex. (395) below. Compare this example with ex. (427) below. In ex. (427) a 3rd ps. sg. non-human locative3 is cross-referenced by the final pronominal prefix /b/ in S11. Here no syncopation took place, consequently there is no lengthening of the finite marker either.

The simple locative2 prefix always cross-references a 3rd ps. sg. non-human participant. If S11 contains no morpheme, then the simple prefix /e/ contracts with the preceding vowel and lengthens it in the 3rd millennium BCE, see, e.g., ex. (401) below, whereas in texts from the 2nd millennium BCE the contraction results in an /ē/, see exx. (397) and (398) below.

It is unclear what happens with the simple locative2 prefix, when S11 is filled with a morpheme, as the orthography as a rule does not suggest its presence. The problem can be demonstrated by a comparison between exx. (384) and (385). Both sentences are about the building of a temple on a ritually clean place, and contain a transitive preterite verbal form. Ex. (385) differs in the presence of a participant in the dative. Consequently, a simple locative2 prefix should occur in the verbal form, yet nothing indicates in the writing of the verbal form that there is an /e/ between the dative prefix and the FPP. Since verbal forms like the one in ex. (385), do not change to **mu-ne-du₃** (_{S4}mu-_{S6}nn-_{S7}a-_{S10}e-_{S11}n-_{S12}du-_{S14}∅ = VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-L2-3.SG.H.A-build-3.SG.P) in the 2nd millennium BCE, one cannot but assume that the simple locative2 prefix /e/ is not present in these forms.

In its basic function the locative2 indicates a location above or on top of someone or something, or a movement to the top of someone or something:

(384) Gudea Statue B 4:7–9 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)

e₂ ^dnin-_{nir2}-su-ka, eridug^{ki}-gen₇,

e ningirsuk=ak=∅ eridug=gen

house DN=GEN=ABS GN=EQU

ki sikil-la bi₂-du₃

ki sikil=∅='a _{S5}b-_{S10}i-_{S11}n-_{S12}du-_{S14}∅

place pure=TL=L2.NH 3.SG.NH-L2-3.SG.H.A-build-3.SG.P

“He (= Gudea) has built the temple of Ningirsu in a place as pure as Eridu.”

(385) Gudea Statue F 3:6–7 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232279)

iri-kug-ga ki dadag-ga-a
 irikug='a ki dadag-'a='a
 GN=L1 place bright-PT=L2.NH

e2 mu-na-du3

e=∅ s4mu-s6nn-s7a-s11n-s12du-s14∅

house=ABS VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.A-build-3.SG.P

“He built the temple for her in a purified place in Irikug.”

(386) Amar-Suena 9 45–46 (RIME 3/2.1.3.9) (Ur, 21st c.) (Q000984)

muš^dnanna he2-en-ṅar

muš nanna=ak=∅ s1ha-s2i-s6n-s10(i>)∅-s12ṅar-s14∅

snake DN=GEN=ABS MOD-FIN-3.SG.H-L2-place-3.SG.S

“May the snake of Nanna fall upon him!”

(387) En-metena 1 6:21–23 (RIME 1.9.5.1) (Lagash, 25th c.) (Q001103)

^dnin-ṅir2-su-ke4, sa-šuš-gal u3-ni-šuš

ninṅirsuk=e sašušgal=∅ s2u-s6nn-s10i-s11n-s12šuš-s14∅

DN=ERG battle.net=ABS ANT-3.SG.H-L2-3.SG.H.A-cover-3.SG.P

“After Ningirsu had thrown a battle-net on him (= the Ummaite),”

(388) En-metena 1 1:28–29 (RIME 1.9.5.1) (Lagash, 25th c.) (Q001103)

inim^den-lil2-la2-ta sa-šuš-gal bi2-šuš

inim enlil=ak=ta sašušgal=∅ s5b-s10i-s11n-s12šuš-s14∅

word DN=GEN=ABL battle.net=ABS 3.SG.NH-L2-3.SG.H.A-cover-3.SG.P

“By the order of Enlil, he (= Ningirsu) threw a battle net on it (= the city Umma).”

(389) E-ana-tum 1 obv. 18:21–22 (RIME 1.9.3.1) (Lagash, 25th c.) (P222399)

umma^{ki}-a, an-ta he2-šuš

umma='a an=ta s1ha-s2i-s5b-s10(i>)∅-s12šuš-s14∅

GN=L2.NH sky=ABL MOD-FIN-3.SG.NH-L2.SYN-cover-3.SG.P

“May (the battle net of Ninhursaga ...) be thrown on Umma from above!”

(390) Ninurta G 66–68 (ETCSL 4.27.07)

kug ama^dnanše dug4-ga-na-ab

kug ama nanše s1dug-s2a-s6nn-s7a-s11b

holy mother DN speak-FIN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.P

^dutu-gen7 a2 bad hu-mu-ri-in-gub

utu=gen a bad-∅=∅ s2ha-s4mu-s6r-s10i-s11n-s12gub-s14∅

DN=EQU arm open-TL=ABS MOD-VEN-2.SG-L2-3.SG.H.A-put-3.SG.P

“Ask the holy mother Nanše to cast her protecting arms over you as if she were the god Utu!”

(391) Iri-kagina 14f 1 (RIME 1.9.9.14f) (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222642)

^dnin-ṅir2-su-ke4 iri-ka-gi-na-ra anzud2^{mušen}-gen7

ninṅirsuk=e irikaginak=ra anzud=gen

DN=ERG PN=L2.H anzud.bird=EQU

a2 bad mu-ni-gub

a bad-∅=∅ s4mu-s6nn-s10i-s11n-s12gub-s14∅

arm open-TL=ABS VEN-3.SG.H-L2-3.SG.H.A-put-3.SG.P

“Like the Anzud bird, Ningirsu has placed his outstretched arms over Iri-kagina.”

(392) Gudea Cyl. A 3:17 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

nin- η u₁₀ ^d η a₂-tum₃-dug₁₀ η a₂-ra η a-mu-u₃-šub
 nin= η u gatumdug= \emptyset η a=ra _{s1} η a-_{s4}mu-_{s10}e-_{s12}šub-_{s14} \emptyset
 lady=1.SG.POSS DN=ABS 1.SG.PR=L2.H MOD-VEN-L2-fall-3.SG.S

“Gatumdug, my lady, may (your hand) fall on ME!”

(393) VS 14, 121 (= AWL 184) rev. 1:3 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P020137)¹⁶

gu₂-na, e-ne₂- η ar
 gu=ane='a _{s2}i-_{s6}nn-_{s10}i-_{s11}n-_{s12} η ar-_{s14} \emptyset
 neck=3.SG.H.POSS=L2.NH FIN-3.SG.H-L2-3.SG.H.A-place-3.SG.P

“(En-iggall, the overseer) has entered it as his debt (lit. ‘put him on his neck’).”

(394) VS 14, 20 (= AWL 183) rev. 1:1–4 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P020007)¹⁷

šubur, nu-banda₃, gu₂-ne-ne-a, e-ne- η ar
 šubur nubanda=e gu=anenē='a _{s2}i-_{s6}nnē-_{s10}e-_{s11}n-_{s12} η ar-_{s14} \emptyset
 PN overseer=ERG neck=3.PL.POSS=L2.NH FIN-3.PL-L2-3.SG.H.A-place-3.SG.P

“Šubur, the overseer, has entered it (= a given amount of silver) as their (= 3 fishermen) debt (lit. ‘put them on their neck’).”

(395) MVN 9, 85:5–6 (Umma, 21st c.) (P115728)

ugu₂ ur- ^{η es}gigir-ka-ka, i₃-ib₂- η al₂
 ugu urgigirak=ak='a _{s2}i-_{s5}b-_{s10}(i>) \emptyset -_{s12} η al-_{s14} \emptyset
 skull PN=GEN=L2.NH FIN-3.SG.NH-L2.SYN-exist-3.SG.S

“They are on the account (lit. ‘on the skull’) of Ur-gigira.”

(396) Shulgi D 219 (ETCSL 2.4.2.04)

nin₂ ki-en-gi-ra ba-a-gu-la
 nin₂ kengir='a _{s5}ba-_{s10}e-_{s12}gul-_{s14} \emptyset -_{s15}'a= \emptyset
 thing homeland=L2.NH MID-L2-destroy-3.SG.S-SUB=ABS

kur-ra ga-am₃-mi-ib-gu-ul
 kur='a _{s2}ga-_{s4}m-_{s5}b-_{s10}i-_{s11}b-_{s12}gul
 foreign.land=L2.NH MOD-VEN-3.SG.NH-L2-3.SG.NH.P-destroy

“Whatever has been destroyed in the homeland, I shall destroy in the foreign lands!”

(397) Iddin-Dagan B 56 (ETCSL 2.5.3.2)

kur-kur u₂-sal-la mu-e-re-nu₂
 kur~kur= \emptyset usal='a _{s4}mu-_{s6}r-_{s7}a-_{s10}e-_{s12}nu-_{s14} \emptyset
 land~PL=ABS meadow=L2.NH VEN-2.SG-DAT-L2-lie-3.SG.S

“All the foreign lands rest on the meadows thanks to you.”

(398) Ur-Ninurta D 33 (ETCSL 2.5.6.4)

u η ₃ u₂-sal-la hu-mu-un-de₃-nu₂
 u η = \emptyset usal-'a _{s2}hu-_{s4}mu-_{s6}n-_{s8}da-_{s10}e-_{s12}nu-_{s14} \emptyset
 people=ABS meadow=L2.NH MOD-VEN-3.SG.H-COM-L2-lie-3.SG.S

“May the people rest on the meadows under his rule!”

¹⁶ The L2 prefix agrees in person and number with the possessor of the “neck”, a case of external possession, see Lesson 15 below.

¹⁷ The L2 prefix agrees in person and number with the possessor of the “neck”, a case of external possession, see Lesson 15 below.

(399) NG 205 obv. 1:2-4 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P111164)

^migi-sag⁹-ga urdu₂ maš-gu-la-ra, i₃-bi₂-la maš-gu-la-ke₄-ne,
 igisaga urdu mašgula=ak=ra ibila mašgula=ak=enē=e
 PN₁ slave PN₂=GEN=L2.H heir PN₂=GEN=PL=ERG

inim in-ni-^ηa₂jar^{ar}-eš

inim=∅ _{s2}i-_{s6}nn-_{s10}i-_{s11}n-_{s12}jar-_{s14}eš

word=ABS FIN-3.SG.H-L2-3.SG.H.A-place-3.PL

“The heirs of Maš-gula raised a claim for (lit. ‘put a word on’) Igi-saga, the slave of Maš-gula”

(400) NG 194 31’ (Lagash, 21st c.) (P110833)

lu₂-ge-na ab₂-ba inim bi₂-jar

lugena=e ab=be=’a inim=∅ _{s5}b-_{s10}i-_{s11}n-_{s12}gar-_{s14}∅

PN=ERG COW=DEM=L2.NH word=ABS 3.SG.NH-L2-3.SG.H.A-place-3.SG.P

“(Ur-Ninmarki has bought a cow from Abakala.) Lugena raised a claim for (lit. ‘put a word on’) that cow.”

(401) NGU 212 obv. 1:2 (Umma, 21st c.) (P142272)

kug-ba inim ba-a-^ηa₂-ar

kug=be=’a inim=∅ _{s5}ba-_{s10}e-_{s12}jar-_{s14}∅

silver=DEM=L2.NH word=ABS MID-L2-put-3.SG.S

“(It was established that Dinili has bought Agi for 6 shekels of silver.) A claim has been raised for that silver.”

(402) Iri-kagina 5 obv. 1:8-9 (RIME 1.9.9.5) (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222618)

e₂ gal ti-ra-aš₂-ka, šu be₂-bad

e gal-∅ tiraš=ak=’a šu=∅ _{s5}b-_{s10}i-_{s11}n-_{s12}bad-_{s14}∅

house big-TL GN=GEN=L2.NH hand=ABS 3.SG.NH-L2-3.SG.H.A-open-3.SG.P

“He looted (lit. ‘opened the hand on’) the great temple of Tiraš.”

With the compound verb **nam** “fate” — **tar** “to cut” = “to determine the fate”, the locative2 denotes the participant for whom a fate was determined:

(403) Lugal-zagesi 1 3:32-33 (RIME 1.14.20.1) (Uruk, 24th c.) (Q001379)

nam sag⁹-ga mu-tar-re-eš₂-a

nam sag-’a=∅ _{s4}mu-_{s10}e-_{s11}n-_{s12}tar-_{s14}eš-’a=’a

fate good-PT=ABS VEN-L2-3.SG.H.A-cut-3.PL-SUB=L1

“The good fate they have determined for me”

(404) Shulgi D 384 (ETCSL 2.4.2.4)

nam dug₃ gu₂-mu-ri₂-ib₂-tar

nam dug-∅=∅ _{s2}ga-_{s4}mu-_{s6}r-_{s10}i-_{s11}b-_{s12}tar

fate good-TL=ABS MOD-VEN-2.SG-L2-3.SG.NH.P-cut

“I will determine a good fate for you!”

(405) Gudea Cyl. B 20:18 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

sig₄ e₂-ninnu nam he₂-tar

sig eninnu=∅ nam=∅ _{s1}ha-_{s2}i-_{s11}?-_{s12}tar-_{s14}∅

brick TN=abs fate=ABS MOD-FIN-L2-cut-3.SG.S

“O brickwork of E-ninnu, may a fate be determined for you!”

(406) Gudea Statue D 5:4–7 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232277)

^dnin-*ḡir*₂-su-ke₄, gu₃-de₂-a-ar, lu₂ e₂ du₃-a-ra
 ninḡirsuk=e gudea=ra lu e=∅ du-∅=ak=ra
 DN=ERG PN=L2.H man house=ABS build-TL=GEN=L2.H

nam dug₃ mu-ni-tar
 nam dug-∅=∅ _{S4}mu-_{S6}nn-_{S10}i-_{S11}n-_{S12}tar-_{S14}∅
 fate good-TL=ABS VEN-3.SG.H-L2-3.SG.H.A-cut-3.SG.P

“Ningirsu, has determined a good fate for Gudea, the temple-builder.”

(407) Shulgi F 30 (ETCSL 2.4.2.6)

ud-ba an-ne₂ ki-en-gi-ra nam bi₂-in-tar^{ar}
 ud=be='a an=e kiengir='a nam=∅ _{S5}b-_{S10}i-_{S11}n-_{S12}tar-_{S14}∅
 day=DEM=L1 DN=ERG GN=L2.NH fate=ABS 3.SG.NH-L2-3.SG.H.A-cut-3.SG.P

“On that day An determined a fate for Sumer.”

With the compound verb **mu** “name” — **še**₂₁ “to call” = “to name”, the locative2 denotes the participant who is given a name:

(408) Gudea Cyl. A 10:12–14 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

an lugal diḡir-re-ne-ke₄, ^dnin-*ḡir*₂-su lugal išib an-na
 an lugal diḡir=enē=ak=e ninḡirsuk lugal=∅ išib an=ak=∅
 DN₁ king god=PL=GEN=ERG DN₂ king=ABS priest DN₁=GEN=ABS

mu-še₃ mu-še₂₁
 mu=še _{S4}mu-_{S10}e-_{S11}n-_{S12}še-_{S14}∅
 name=TERM VEN-L2-3.SG.H.A-call-3.SG.P

“An, king of the gods, called me ‘Ningirsu, the king, is the *išib* priest of An’.”

(409) E-ana-tum 1 obv. 4:22–23 (RIME 1.9.3.1) (Lagash, 25th. c.) (P222399)

e₂-an-na, ^dinana, eb-gal-ka-ka, a-tum₂
 eana inanak ebgal=ak=ak='a _{S2}a-_{S5}b-_{S10}(i>)∅_{S12}tum-_{S14}∅
 TN₁ DN TN₂=GEN=GEN=L2.NH FIN-3.SG.NH-L2.SYN-worthy.of-3.SG.S

mu mu-ne₂-še₂₁
 mu=še _{S4}mu-_{S6}nn-_{S10}i-_{S11}n-_{S12}še-_{S14}∅
 name=TERM VEN-3.SG.H-L2-3.SG.H.A-call-3.SG.P

“(Inana) named him ‘He is worthy of the E-ana of Inana of the Ebgal’.”

(410) Sargon 16 12–13 (Agade, 24th c.) (Q000835)

barag baṣṣur an-na mu-še₃ be₂-še₂₁
 barag=∅ baṣṣur an=ak=∅ mu=še _{S5}b-_{S10}i-_{S11}n-_{S12}še-_{S14}∅
 altar=ABS table DN=GEN=ABS name=TERM 3.SG.NH-L2-3.SG.H.A-call-3.SG.P

“She named (the altar) ‘The altar is An’s table’.”

With the compound verb **šu** “hand” — **bar** “to open” = “to release” the locative2 denotes the participant released:

(411) Dumuzi-Inana D 19 (ETCSL 4.08.04)

šu ba-mu-u₈
 šu=∅ _{S1}ba-_{S4}mu-_{S10}ē
 hand=ABS open-VEN-L2

“(My sister,) release me!”

(412) MVN 15, 218 obv. 4–rev. 1 (Umma, 21st c.) (P131033)

ur-^dhendur-saṅ-ga¹, še-na
 urhendursan=ak še=ane='a
 PN=GEN grain=3.SG.H.POSS=L2.NH

šu ḥa-mu-na-a-ba-re
 šu=∅ _{S1}ḥa-_{S4}mu-_{S6}nn-_{S7}a-_{S10}e-_{S12}bar-_{S14}e
 hand=ABS MOD-VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-L2-open-3.SG.A
 “May he release Ur-Hendursaga’s grain!”

(413) TCS 1, 72 obv. 6 (unknown, 21st c.) (P145657)

anše-ba šu ḥe2-eb-bar-e
 anše=be='a šu=∅ _{S1}ḥa-_{S2}i-_{S5}b-_{S10}(i>)∅-_{S12}bar-_{S14}e
 donkey=DEM=L2.NH hand=ABS MOD-FIN-3.SG.NH-L2.SYN-open-3.SG.A
 “May that donkey be released!”

(414) TCS 1, 240 rev. 3 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P145739)

šu ḥa-mu-ne-bar-re
 šu=∅ _{S1}ḥa-_{S4}mu-_{S6}nnē-_{S10}e-_{S12}bar-_{S14}e
 hand=ABS MOD-VEN-3.PL-L2-open-3.SG.A
 “May he release them!”

With the verb **du₃** “to hold on, to detain” the locative2 denotes the participant detained:

(415) MVN 6, 1 obv. 4–5 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P217677)

ur-lum-ma-ra, lu2 ba-ra-ba-du3
 urlummak=ra lu=∅ _{S2}bara-_{S5}ba-_{S6}n-_{S10}(i>)∅-_{S12}du-_{S14}∅
 PN=L2.H person=ABS MOD-MID-3.SG.H-L2.SYN-hold-3.SG.S
 “Definitely no one detained Ur-Lumma.”

(416) TCS 1, 48 obv. 3–rev. 2 (unknown, 21st. c) (P145641)

ur-^dnanše dumu-dab5 lu2-^dna-ru2-a-ka-ra,
 urnanše dumudab lunaruak=ak=ra
 PN1 worker PN2=GEN=L2.H
 eš2-giri17-eš2, na-ba-du3
 ešgiri=eš _{S2}nan-_{S5}ba-_{S6}n-_{S10}(i>)∅-_{S12}du-_{S13}ed-_{S14}∅
 nose.rope=ADV MOD-MID-3.SG.H-L2.SYN-hold-PF-3.SG.S
 “He should not detain Ur-Nashe, the worker of Lu-Narua by (lit. ‘in the manner of’) a nose-rope.”

(417) TCS 1, 229 rev. 3–4 (unknown, 21st c.) (P145730)

a-šag4 in-dab5-ba-na, na-ba-a-du3
 ašag _{S2}i-_{S11}n-_{S12}dab-_{S14}∅-_{S15}'a=ane='a _{S2}nan-_{S5}ba-_{S10}e-_{S12}du-_{S13}ed-_{S14}∅
 field FIN-3.SG.H.A-seize-3.SG.P-SUB=3.SG.H.POSS-L2.NH MOD-MID-L2-hold-PF-3.SG.S
 “He should not retain the field he has seized for himself.”

With the compound verb **inim** “word” — **gi4** “to return” = “to withdraw, cancel” the locative2 denotes the participant withdrawn:

(418) Gudea Statue B 1:17–19 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)

sa₂-dug₄-na e₂ ^dnin-ṅirsu-ka-ta
 sadug=ane='a e ninṅirsuk=ak=ta
 offer=3.SG.NH.POSS=L2.NH house DN=GEN=ABL

inim ḥe₂-eb₂-gi₄inim=∅ s₁ḥa-s₂i-s₅b-s₁₀(i>)∅-s₁₂gi-s₁₄∅

word=ABS MOD-FIN-3.SG.NH-L2.SYN-return-3.SG.S

“May his regular offering in the temple of Ningirsu be withdrawn!”

With verbs of speaking the locative₂ denotes the participant about whom someone speaks, see also exx. (263) and (264) above:

(419) BM 24108 obv. 3–rev. 1 (Lagash 21st c.) (P145596)

maš-gu-la-ra, 1(geš₂) še gur,
 mašgula=ra 60 še gur=∅
 PN₁=DAT.H 60 barley unit=ABS

ʾšum₂-mu¹-da, ḥe₂-na-dug₄šum-ed-'a s₁ḥa-s₂i-s₆nn-s₇a-s₁₁'-s₁₂dug-s₁₄∅

give-PF-L2.NH MOD-FIN-3.SG.H-DAT-1.SG.A-speak-3.SG.P

“I did tell him to give 60 gurs of barley to Maš-gula!”

(420) Gudea Cyl. A 6:1–2 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

e₂-a du₃-ba mul kug-ba
 e=ak du=be=ak mul kug=be='a
 house=GEN building=3.SG.NH.POSS=GEN star holy=3.SG.NH.POSS=L2.NH

gu₃ ma-ra-a-de₂gu=∅ s₄mu-s₆r-s₇a-s₁₀e-s₁₂de-s₁₄e

voice=ABS VEN-2.SG-DAT-L2-pour-3.SG.A

“She (= goddess Nisaba) will announce to you the holy stars auguring the building of the temple.”

(421) Gudea Cyl. A 9:10 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

ṅarza-ṅa₂ mul an kug-ba
 ṅarza=ṅu=ak mul an kug-∅=be='a
 regulation=1.SG.POSS=GEN star sky holy-TL=3.SG.NH.POSS=L2.NH

gu₃ ga-mu-ra-a-de₂gu=∅ s₂ga-s₄mu-s₆r-s₇a-s₁₀e-s₁₂de

voice=ABS MOD-VEN-2.SG-DAT-L2-pour

“Let me tell you the pure stars of heaven indicating my regulations!”

(422) NRVN 1, 115 rev. 3–4 (Nippur, 21st c.) (P122331)

i₃-la₂ nu-la₂, 3 giṅ₄ kug-babbar
 s₂i-s₁₁n-s₁₂la-s₁₄∅ s₁nu-s₂i-s₁₁n-s₁₂la-s₁₄∅ 3 giṅ kugbabbar=∅
 FIN-3.SG.H.A-weight-3.SG.P NEG-FIN-3.SG.H.A-weight-3.SG.P 3 unit silver=ABS

la₂-da bi₂-dug₄la-ed='a s₅b-s₁₀i-s₁₁n-s₁₂dug-s₁₄∅

weight-PF=L2.NH 3.SG.NH-L2-3.SG.H.A-speak-3.SG.P

“He said that if he paid it back (by the agreed time, it would be all right); if he did not, he would pay 3 shekels of silver.”

14.4 The locative3

The locative3 may be used both with human and non-human verbal participants. The form of the nominal case-marker of the locative3 depends on the grammatical gender of the participant: human verbal participants are case-marked with the enclitic *=/ra/*; while non-human verbal participants are case-marked with the enclitic *=/e/*.

The verbal marking of the locative3 differs in one important respect from the verbal marking of the locative1 and locative2: when the IPP in S11 is not used for cross-referencing another verbal participant, then locative3 is cross-referenced *not* by a syncopated composite prefix, but by a final pronominal prefix in S11.

Similarly to the locative2 prefix, the locative3 prefix in S10 probably also has two allomorphs: i) */i/* after a consonant; ii) */e/* after a vowel, for the latter, see ex. (441) below.

In the 1st ps. sg. composite form the 1st ps. sg. pronominal prefix is expressed by the */mu/* allomorph of the ventive prefix in S4, see, e.g., ex. (431) below. In the 2nd ps. sg. composite form of the locative3 prefix, the pronominal prefix is the IPP */r/* in S6, see, e.g., ex. (438) below.

The 3rd ps. sg. human pronominal prefix is the IPP */nn/* in S6, and the composite prefix is written as a rule with the grapheme NI, see ex. (424) and (439) below. However, around the middle of the 3rd millennium BCE the vowel of the composite locative2 prefix */nni/* assimilates to the vowel of the following syllable in respect of vowel height (the so-called “vowel harmony” of the literature). Both the “high” and the “low” forms were written with the grapheme NI, but it is assumed in this textbook that the “high” and the “low” forms were */ni/* and */ne/* respectively, reflected by the transliteration *ni-* and *ne2-*; for the latter, see, ex. (432) below.

The 3rd ps. sg. non-human prefix is expressed with the prefix */b/* in S5, and the composite prefix is written as a rule with the grapheme NE, transliterated as *bi2-*, see, e.g., ex. (428) below. However, around the middle of the 3rd millennium BCE the vowel of the composite locative3 prefix */bi/* assimilates to the vowel of the following syllable in respect of vowel height (the so-called ‘vowel harmony’ of the literature). The “high” form was written with the grapheme NE, transliterated as *bi2-*; while the “low” form was written with grapheme BI, transliterated as *be2-*, see, ex. (444) below.

The 3rd ps. pl. human pronominal prefix is the IPP */nnē/* in S6, see, e.g., ex. (441) below.

When S11 is filled with a morpheme and the verbal form contains another adverbial prefix, then no locative3 prefix may occur in the prefix-chain. We have a number of contrasting examples ([425] vs. [426] and [428] vs. [429] below), which differ only in the presence of a dative prefix. In the forms with the dative, the orthography does not indicate the presence of a simple locative3 prefix. The locative3 may therefore only be cross-referenced by a composite adverbial prefix or by a final pronominal prefix in S11, but not by a simple adverbial prefix in the verbal prefix-chain.

In its basic function the locative3 indicates a location next to someone or something, or a movement to someone or something. The verb *us2* “to be next to” goes always with the locative3, see exx. (423)–(428) below.

(423) Gudea Cyl. A 3:11 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)¹⁸

zarj-ŋu₁₀ mu-us₂
zag=ŋu=e s₄mu-s₁₁’-s₁₂us-s₁₄∅
side=1.SG.POSS=L3.NH VEN-1.SG.L3-be.next-3.SG.S
‘‘It attaches to my side.’’

(424) Gudea Cyl. B 19:20–21 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

^den-lil₂-ra ^dnin-mah mu-ni-us₂
enlil=ra ninmah=∅ s₄mu-s₆nn-s₁₀i-s₁₁n-s₁₂us-s₁₄∅
DN₁=L3.H DN₂=ABS VEN-3.SG.H-L3-3.SG.H.A-be.next-3.SG.P
‘‘He (= Gudea) seated Ninmah next to Enlil.’’

(425) Gudea Cyl. A 4:4 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

kar nin₆in^{ki}-na-ke₄ ma₂ bi₂-us₂
kar nin₆in=ak=e ma=∅ s₅b-s₁₀i-s₁₁n-s₁₂us-s₁₄∅
quay GN=GEN=L3.NH boat=ABS 3.SG.NH-L3-3.SG.H.A-be.next-3.SG.P
‘‘He (= Gudea) moored the boat at the quay of Nigin.’’

(426) Ur-Ningirsu II 3 2:6–7 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (Q000929)

abul-inim-si-sa₂-a-ke₄ e₂ ^dnanše mu-na-us₂
abulinimsisak=e e nanše=ak=∅ s₄mu-s₆nn-s₇a-s₁₁n-s₁₂us-s₁₄∅
Inimsisa.gate=L3.NH house DN=GEN=ABS VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.A-be.next-3.SG.P
‘‘He made the temple of Nanše adjacent to the Inimsisa-gate for him.’’

(427) Gudea Statue G 2:9–10 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232280)

^dnin-ŋiš-zid-da eŋer-be₂ ib₂-us₂
ninŋišzida=∅ eŋer=be=e s₁i-s₁₁b-s₁₂us-s₁₄∅
DN=ABS back=3.SG.NH.POSS=L3.NH FIN-3.SG.NH.L3-be.next-3.SG.S
‘‘Nin-gish-zida followed them.’’

(428) En-metena 1 2:6–8 (RIME 1.9.5.1) (Lagash, 25th c.) (Q001103)

na-ru₂-a, me-salim-ma, ki-be₂ bi₂-gi₄
naru’a mesalim=ak=∅ ki=be=e s₅b-s₁₀i-s₁₁n-s₁₂gi-s₁₄∅
stele PN=GEN=ABS place=3.SG.NH.POSS=L3.NH 3.SG.NH-L3-3.SG.H.A-return-3.SG.P
‘‘He restored the stele of Mesalim (lit. ‘returned it to its place’).’’

(429) Gudea Statue B 5:17 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)

ki-be₂ mu-na-gi₄
ki=be=e s₄mu-s₆nn-s₇a-s₁₁n-s₁₂gi-s₁₄∅
place=3.SG.NH.POSS=L3.NH VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.A-return-3.SG.P
‘‘He restored it for him (lit. ‘returned it to its place’).’’

(430) TUT 105 obv. 2:5 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P135678)

2 sila₃ ŋi^šig lugal-ke₄ ba-ab-ak
2 sila=∅ ig lugal=ak=e s₅ba-s₁₁b-s₁₂ak-s₁₄∅
2 unit door king=GEN=L3.NH MID-3.SG.NH.L3-make-3.SG.S
‘‘2 sila (oil) were applied to the door of the king.’’

¹⁸ The L3 prefix agrees in person and number with the possessor of the ‘‘side’’, a case of external possession, see Lesson 15 below.

(431) NG 202 rev. 9 (Umma, 21st c.) (P131781)

ka₃-li-am₃ igi-še₃ gešba₂^{ba} mu-ra
 kali=Ø=am-Ø igi=še gešba=Ø s₄mu-s₁₀e-s₁₁n-s₁₂ra-s₁₄Ø
 PN=ABS=COP-3.SG.S face=TERM fist=ABS VEN-L3-3.SG.H.A-hit-3.SG.P

“(Durgarni killed Kali. Durgarni was questioned, and he said:) ‘It was Kali who first punched me’.”

(432) E-ana-tum 1 obv. 9:2-3 (RIME 1.9.3.1) (Lagash, 24th. c.)

e₂-an-na-tum₂-ra lu₂ ti mu-ne₂-ra
 eanatum=ra lu=e ti=Ø s₄mu-s₆nn-s₁₀i-s₁₁n-s₁₂ra-s₁₄Ø
 PN=L3.H man=ERG arrow=ABS VEN-3.SG.H-L3-3.SG.H.A-hit-3.SG.P

“Someone shot an arrow at E-ana-tum.”

With the compound verb **si** “horn” — **sa₂** “to be equal” = “to be straight, proper, ready” the locative₃ denotes the participant made straight, ready, or proper:

(433) Gudea Statue R 1:6-7 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232290)

lu₂ bi₃-lu₅-da di₂ir-re-ne-ke₄,
 lu biluda di₂ir=enē=ak=e
 man rite god=PL=GEN=L3.NH

si bi₂-sa₂-sa₂-a
 si=Ø s₅b-s₁₀i-s₁₁n-s₁₂sa~sa-s₁₄Ø-s₁₅’a=e
 horn=ABS 3.SG.NH-L3-3.SG.H.A-equal~PL-3.SG.P-SUB=ERG

“(Gudea,) the man who performed the rites of the gods properly”

(434) Lugal-zagesi 1 3:27-28 (RIME 1.14.20.1) (Uruk, 24th c.) (Q001379)

ubur an-na-ke₄ si ḥa-mu-dab₅-sa₂
 ubur an=ak=e si=Ø s₁ḥa-s₄mu-s₆’-s₈da-s₁₁b-s₁₂sa-s₁₄Ø
 udder heaven=GEN=L3.NH horn=ABS MOD-VEN-1.SG-COM-3.SG.NH.L3-equal-3.SG.S

“Under my rule the heavenly udder will certainly be ready!”

With the compound verb **mi₂** “woman” — **dug₄** “to do” = “to care for, to praise” the locative₃ denotes the participant cared for:

(435) Gudea Cyl. A 7:16 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

ḡeš-e mi₂ im-e
 ḡeš-e mi=Ø s₂i-s₄m-s₁₁b-s₁₂e-s₁₄e
 wood=L3.NH woman=ABS FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH.L3-do-3.SG.A

“(Gudea checked the wood piece by piece), taking great care of the wood.”

(436) Nanna C Segment B 16 (ETCSL 4.13.03)

mi₂ ga-e-dug₄
 mi=Ø s₂ga-s₁₁e-s₁₂dug
 woman=ABS MOD-2.SG.L3-do

“I shall praise you!”

In verbal forms, where the IPP in S11 is not used for cross-referencing a non-human P, the locative₃ is cross-referenced *not* with a prefix in S10, but with an FPP in S11. In ex. (437) below the prefix /b/ in S11 cross-references the non-human participant, “the boat”, in locative₃. In S14 the pronominal suffix cross-references the word **šerkan** “ornament”, which functions as S, the Agent of the

verbal activity is not present in the clause. S10 is used by the locative1 prefix. The verbal form ex. (437) thus contains the markers of more than one locative cases.

(437) Shulgi D 360 (ETCSL 2.04.02.04)

an-gen₇ mul-a še-er-ka-an mi-ni-ib₂-dug₄
 an=gen mul='a šerkan=∅ _{S4}mu-_{S10}ni-_{S11}b-_{S12}dug-_{S14}∅
 sky=EQU star=L1 ornament=ABS VEN-L1-3.SG.NH.L3-do-3.SG.S
 “It (= the boat) was decorated with stars like the sky.”

Examples like exx. (430), (434), and (437) above, in which the verbal marker of locative3 in S11 is preceded either by another adverbial prefix (comitative in ex. [434], locative1 in ex. [437]) or by a middle prefix (in ex. [430]), provide further evidence that the prefix /b/ before the stem in a locative3 function may only be an IPP and not the syncopated form of the composite prefix /bi/- (_{S5}b-_{S10}i- = 3.SG.NH-L3-).

An important secondary function of the locative3 is to denote the causee in causative constructions of transitive verbs. The verb **gu**₇ “to eat” provides several examples demonstrating this function of the locative3. This verb is often used in the meaning “to make someone eat” = “to feed someone”. The participant who does the actual eating (= the “eater”) is in the locative3 case, the “feeder”, who causes someone to eat is in the ergative, and the food consumed is in the absolutive. The “feeder” may be missing from the clause, and then verbal form is the passive form of a causative, as in ex. (442) below.

(438) Lipit-Eshtar D 6 (ETCSL 2.5.5.4)

ga nam-šul-la mi-ri-in-gu₇
 ga namšul=ak=∅ _{S4}mu-_{S6}r-_{S10}i-_{S11}n-_{S12}gu-_{S14}∅
 milk manliness=GEN=ABS VEN-2.SG-L3-3.SG.H.A-eat-3.SG.P
 “She (= the goddess Nintur) has fed you with the milk of vigour.”; lit. “She made you consume the milk of vigour.”

(439) MVN 3, 36 obv. 3:2–7 (Isin, ED IIIb) (P222204)

1/2 kug ma-na, ma-hir, dumu amar-šuba_x(MUŠ₃.KUR.ZA)-ra,
 1/2 kug mana=∅ mahir dumu amaršuba=ra
 1/2 silver unit=ABS PN₁ child PN₂=L3.H
 a-pa-e₃ azlag₂, sam₂-še₃, i₃-ni-gu₇
 apa'e azlag=e sam=še _{S2}i-_{S6}nn-_{S10}i-_{S11}n-_{S12}gu-_{S14}∅
 PN₃ fuller=ERG price=TERM FIN-3.SG.H-L3-3.SG.H-eat-3.SG.P
 “Apa-e, the fuller, made Mahir, the son of Amar-šuba, receive (lit. ‘eat’) half mana of silver as the price.”

(440) Shulgi H Segment D 19 (= Ni 2275 iv 19) (ETCSL 2.4.2.08)

u₇-e u₂ nir-ḡal₂ ḡa-bi₂-ib₂-gu₇-e
 u₇=e u nirḡal=∅ _{S1}ḡa-_{S5}b-_{S10}i-_{S11}b-_{S12}gu-_{S14}e
 people=L3.NH food fine=ABS MOD-3.SG.NH-L3-3.SG.NH.P-eat-3.SG.A
 a dug₃ ḡa-bi₂-na₈-na₈
 a dug=∅ _{S1}ḡa-_{S5}b-_{S10}i-_{S11}b-_{S12}na-na-_{S14}e
 water sweet=ABS MOD-3.SG.NH-L3-3.SG.NH.P-drink~PF-3.SG.A
 “May he (= Shulgi) make the people eat fine food, may he make them drink sweet water!”

(441) MVN 3, 1 obv. 3:4 (Isin, ED IIIb) (P222204)

in-ne-gu₇

{S2}i-{S6}nnē-_{S10}e-_{S11}n-_{S12}gu-_{S14}∅

FIN-3.PL-L3-3.SG.H-eat-3.SG.P

“He made them receive (lit. ‘eat’) (a certain amount of silver).”

(442) OIP 121, 54:3 (Drehem, 21st c.) (P123784)

ad₆-be₂ ur-gir₁₅-re ba-ab-gu₇

ad=be=∅ urgir=e _{S5}ba-_{S11}b-_{S12}gu-_{S14}∅

carcass=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS dog=L3.NH MID-3.SG.NH.L3-eat-3.SG.S

“The dogs were fed with their carcasses”; lit. “The dogs were made eat their carcasses.”

When the causee is a non-human inanimate, or dead participant without the ability to act on its own, the causee may be interpreted as the instrument with which the verbal action is carried out:

(443) Gudea Cyl. A 15:22 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

^{ḡeš}eren-be₂ tun₃ gal-e im-mi-kud

eren=be=∅ tun gal-∅=e _{S2}i-_{S4}m-_{S5}b-_{S10}i-_{S11}n-_{S12}kud-_{S14}∅

cedar=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS axe great-TL=L3.NH FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-L3-3.SG.H.A-cut-3.SG.P

“He cut down its cedars with great axes.”; lit. “He made the great axes cut its cedars”.

(444) Ur-Nanshe 17 3:3-6 (Lagash, 25th c.) (Q001025)

ur-nimin, dam, ^dnanše,

urnimin dam nanše=ak=∅

PN spouse DN=GEN=ABS

maš be₂-pad₃

maš=e _{S5}b-_{S10}i-_{S11}n-_{S12}pad-_{S14}∅

goat=L3.NH 3.SG.NH-L3-3.SG.H.A-find-3.SG.P

“He chose Ur-nimin (as) the spouse of Nanše with a goat (i.e., by extispicy) (lit. ‘made the goat choose’).”

Further readings

For the cases of S10 one may consult the corresponding sections of Gragg 1973, Balke 2006, and Jagersma 2010, whose descriptions, however, differ in their approach to cases in Sumerian; and in fact none of them assume the existence of three locative cases. The approach of the present textbook’s author is explained in Zólyomi 2010.

The most important paper is Jagersma 2006 on the verbal marking of the locative3; note, however, that he discusses it under the name “oblique object”. A critical discussion of Jagersma’s “oblique object” is Zólyomi 2014b.

Zólyomi 2014 discusses in detail the system of local cases in Sumerian and its changes under the influence of Akkadian in the first part of the 2nd millennium BCE.

Exercises

14.1 Look up the new words used in the examples of this lesson in Foxvog’s (2016b) or Volk’s (2012) glossary, and learn them.

14.2 Study the examples of this lesson carefully and make yourself familiar with their grammatical analysis.

- 14.3 Transliterate the text of NG 99 obv. 2:15–rev. 1:31 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P111162) (a handcopy of the text can be found at <http://cdli.ucla.edu/P111162>) with the help of Volk's sign list (2012), the text is no. 38 in Volk's (2012) chrestomathy. Translate the text with the help of either Volk's (2012) or Foxvog's glossary (2016b). Assign morphemic segmentation and glossing to the verbal forms.
- 14.4 Transliterate the text of NG 17 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P110828) with the help of Volk's sign list (2012). A copy of the text can be found in Volk's (2012) chrestomathy; the text is no. 37 in the chrestomathy. Translate the text with the help of either Volk's (2012) or Foxvog's glossary (2016b). Assign morphemic segmentation and glossing to the verbal forms.
- 14.5 Transliterate the text VS 14, 94 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P020109) with the help of Volk's sign list (2012). A copy and photo of the text can be found at <http://cdli.ucla.edu/P020109>. The text is no. 44 in Volk's (2012) chrestomathy. Translate the text with the help of Volk's (2012) or Foxvog's (2016b) glossary. For the numerical expressions used in them you may consult ORACC's preliminary description of metrological expressions (<http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/doc/downloads/numref.pdf>), or Powell's entry in the *Reallexikon der Assyriologie* (1987–90).

Lesson 15: Constructions involving an “extra” verbal participant

All the constructions discussed in this lesson are characterized by the presence of a verbal participant that may be considered additional from a certain point of view. In *causative constructions* there is a further participant, the “causer” present. In *compound verb* constructions the participant functioning as P is non-referential and forms a semantic unit with the verb. The participant truly affected by the verbal action is therefore construed with an adverbial case. In case of *external possession* both the possessor and the possessum of an inalienable possession are separate verbal participants. In case of *dative promotion* the finite verb has two participants which may be cross-referenced in S10 of the verbal prefix-chain. One of them will be promoted to the status of indirect object marked with the dative case. This lesson will describe the most important characteristics of these four constructions.

15.1 The causative construction

Sumerian is a language without a morphologically marked causative. The causative verbal form differs from the corresponding non-causative form only in the increased number of participants.

In causatives of intransitive verbs the underlying S becomes P:

INTRANSITIVE		CAUSATIVE
		A
S	→	P

Table 15.1

Ex. (445) below is a hypothetical intransitive clause that may form the basis of the actual ex. (446). In ex. (445) the person “I” is the verbal participant who steps on a bed. In ex. (446) the same person does the actual stepping, but the clause has an additional verbal participant, Inana, who causes “me” to step on the bed. The causer functions as the A of ex. (446) and is marked accordingly in S11 with a 3rd ps. sg. human FPP. The S of ex. (445) functions as the P in ex. (446). Since the pronominal suffix in S14 cross-references the participant in the absolutive, both the S in ex. (445) and the P in ex. (446) is cross-referenced with the same morpheme. In other words, the two verbal forms in exx. (445) and (446) differ only in the presence of a further verbal participant, the causer; and no other morpheme indicates its causative meaning.

(445)

*^{ḡiṣ}nu₂ gi-rin-na ḥe₂-ib₂-gub-en
 nu girin-ø='a _{S1}ḥa-_{S2}i-_{S5}b-_{S10}(i>)ø-_{S12}gub-_{S14}en
 bed flowery-TL=L2.NH MOD-FIN-3.SG.NH-L2.SYN-stand-1.SG.S
 “I indeed stepped onto the flowery bed.”

(446) Ishme-Dagan A 105 (ETCSL 2.5.04.01)

^{ḡiṣ}nu₂ gi-rin-na he₂-bi₂-in-gub-en
 nu girin-ø='a _{S1}ḥa-_{S5}b-_{S10}i-_{S11}n-_{S12}gub-_{S14}en
 bed flowery-TL=L2.NH MOD-3.SG.NH-L2-3.SG.H.A-stand-1.SG.P
 “She (= Inana) indeed made me step onto the flowery bed.”

In causatives of transitive verbs the underlying A will be marked with the locative3 case:

TRANSITIVE		CAUSATIVE
		A
A	→	L3
P	→	P

Table 15.2

In ex. (447) the predicate is the transitive form of the verb **gu₇** “to eat”: the overseers (= the “eaters”) function as the A, the consumed bread, (= the “food”) as the P. In ex. (448) the “eaters”, the people, the participants who does the actual eating, are in the locative3 case. The function of A is taken over by the causer, here Shulgi, who makes the people eat (and drink). The two verbal forms in exx. (447) and (448) differ only in the presence of a further verbal participant, the causer; and no other morpheme indicates its causative meaning. In contrast to the causative of intransitive verbs, however, one of the participants of the underlying transitive form cannot retain its case in the causative form: the “eater”, the causee, i.e., the underlying A, will become an adverbial participant in the locative3.

(447) CUSAS 3, 385 obv. 6 (Garshana, 21st c.) (P323799)

5 sila₃ ninda ugula lu₂-ḥuṇ-ṇa₂-e-ne ib₂-gu₇
 5 sila ninda=∅ ugula luḥuṇa=enē=e s₂i_{-S11}b_{-S12}gu_{-S14}∅
 5 measure bread=ABS overseer hireling=PL=ERG FIN-3.SG.NH.A-eat-3.SG.P
 “Five silas of bread: the overseers of the hirelings consumed it.”

(448) Shulgi H Segment D 19 (ETCSL 2.4.2.08)

uṇ₃-e u₂ nir-ṇa₂ ḥa-bi₂-ib₂-gu₇-e
 uṇ=e u nirṇal-∅=∅ s₁ḥa_{-S5}b_{-S10}i_{-S11}b_{-S12}gu_{-S14}e
 people=L3.NH food fine-TL=ABS MOD-3.SG.NH-L3-3.SG.NH.P-eat-3.SG.A
 a dug₃ ḥa-bi₂-na₈-na₈
 a dug-∅=∅ s₁ḥa_{-S5}b_{-S10}i_{-S11}b_{-S12}na~na_{-S14}e
 water sweet-TL=ABS MOD-3.SG.NH-L3-3.SG.NH.P-drink~PF-3.SG.A
 “May he (= Shulgi) make the people eat fine food, may he make them drink sweet water!”

The causer may be missing from the clause, and then verbal form is the passive form of a causative, as in ex. (449) below. In this example the middle prefix indicates that the verbal participant cross-referenced in S11 functions as a causee, someone who was made to eat by an unspecified A, the causer. This example may be contrasted with ex. (450), in which the A is also unspecified, but here the missing participant must be interpreted as the “eater”.

In other words, both exx. (449) and (450) are passive verbal forms (signalled by the presence of the middle prefix), but the former is the passive of a causative (similar to ex. [448]), signalled by the presence of the /b/ in S11; while the latter is the passive of a transitive form (similar to ex. [447]), signalled by the emptiness of S11.

(449) OIP 121 54:3 (Drehem, 21st c.) (P123784)

ad₆-bi ur-gir₁₅-re ba-ab-gu₇
 ad=be=∅ urgir=e s₅ba-s₁₁b-s₁₂gu-s₁₄∅
 carcass=POSS.3.SG.NH=ABS dog=L3.NH MID-3.SG.NH.L3-eat-3.SG.S

“The dogs were fed with their carcasses”; lit. “The dogs were made to eat their carcasses.”

(450) DP 80 obv. 2:1–5 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P220730)

ki-a-naṭ-ṇa₂, ba-gu₇
 kianṇ=’a s₅ba-s₁₀n-s₁₂gu-s₁₄∅
 place.libation=L1 MID-L1.SYN-eat-3.SG.S

“(Two sheep) were consumed at the place of libations.

15.2 The compound verbs

A compound verb is the combination of a verb and a noun phrase where the noun phrase is non-referential and consequently forms a semantic unit with the verb. The combination of **igi** “eye” and **bar** “to direct”, for example, is used in the meaning “to look at”, literally “to eye-direct”. The syntactic function of the noun phrase is typically P, but occasionally the noun phrase may be a participant in the locative3 case.

Functionally these constructions compensate for the lack of derivational affixes deriving verbs from nouns. Two verbs, **dug₄** “to do” and **ak** “to act”, are used especially often as light verbs, i.e., as the verbal part of compound verbs functioning as verbalizers: **inim** “word” and **dug₄** means, for example, “to say”, and **nam-lugal** “kingship” and **ak** means “to rule as a king”.

The meaning of the compound verbs often requires another verbal participant which is affected by the verbal action. This participant functions as a kind of “semantic object” in addition to the grammatical object. The case of this semantic object varies, it appears to depend idiosyncratically on the verb. The locative3 (e.g., **igi** “eye” — **du₈** “open” = “to look”) and the locative2 (e.g., **inim** “word” — **ṇar** “to place” = “to claim”) are the cases most often attested in this use, but there are compound verbs also with the dative (**ki** “place” — **ṇ₂** “to measure (?)” = “to love”), the terminative (**igi** “eye” — **bar** “to direct” = “to look at”), and the comitative (**a₂** “arm” — **ṇ₂** “to measure (?)” = “to instruct”). Here are some instances involving compound verbs, but the reader may find many more examples in the previous lessons on adverbial cases.

(451) Enmerkar and the lord of Aratta 554 (ETCSL 1.8.2.3)

en aratta^{ki}-ke₄ gig-e igi bi₂-in-du₈
 en aratta=ak=e gig=e igi=∅ s₅b-s₁₀i-s₁₁n-s₁₂du-s₁₄∅
 lord GN=GEN=ERG wheat=L3.NH eye=ABS 3.SG.NH-L3-3.SG.H.A-open-3.SG.P

“The lord of Aratta looked at the wheat.”

(452) Utu-hegal 1 6–8 (RIME 2.13.6.1) (Uruk, 22nd c.) (Q000876)

ki-sur-ra lagaš^{ki}-ka, lu₂ urim₅-ka-ke₄,
 kisura lagaš=ak=’a lu urim=ak=e
 territory GN=GEN=L2.NH person GN=GEN=ERG

inim bi₂-ṇar
 inim=∅ s₅b-s₁₀i-s₁₁n-s₁₂ṇar-∅
 word=ABS 3.SG.NH-L2-3.SG.H.A-place-3.SG.P

“The man from Urim raised a claim on the territory of Lagash.”

(453) Iri-kagina 14p 1-2 (RIME 1.9.9.14p) (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222652)

^d ba-u ₂	barag	iri-kug-ga-ka	tum ₂ -ma
bau	barag	irikug=ak= ³ a	tum- ³ a=e
DN	seat	GN=GEN=L2.NH	be.suitable-PT=ERG

iri-ka-gi-na-ra	ki	mu-na-a ₂
irikaginak=ra	ki=∅	_{S4} mu- _{S6} nn- _{S7} a- _{S11} n- _{S12} a ₂ - _{S14} ∅
PN=DAT.H	earth=ABS	VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.A-measure-3.SG.P

“The goddess Bau, who is worthy of the seat of the city Irikug, loves Irikagina.”

(454) Gudea Cyl. A 1:3 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

^d en-lil ₂ -e	en	^d nin- ₂ gir ₂ -su ₂ -še ₃
enlil=e	en	nin ₂ girsuk=še
DN=ERG	lord	DN=TERM

igi	zid	mu-ši-bar
igi	zid-∅=∅	_{S4} mu- _{S6} n- _{S9} ši- _{S11} n- _{S12} bar- _{S14} ∅
face	right-TL=ABS	VEN-3.SG.H-TERM-3.SG.H.A-direct-3.SG.P

“The god Enlil looked at lord Ningirsu with approval (lit. ‘with true eyes’).”

(455) Shulgi G 8 (ETCSL 2.4.2.07)

^d en-lil ₂ -da	a-ba	a ₂	mu-da-an-a ₂
enlil=da	aba=e	a=∅	_{S4} mu- _{S6} n- _{S8} da- _{S11} n- _{S12} a ₂ - _{S14} ∅
DN=COM	who=ERG	arm=ABS	VEN-3.SG.H-COM-3.SG.H.A-measure-3.SG.P

“Who ever instructed divine Enlil?”

15.3 The external possession construction

External possession is the grammatical phenomenon when in a semantic possessor-possessum relationship the possessor is expressed externally to the noun phrase that contains the possessum, and occurs as a separate verbal participant. Cross-linguistically external possession constructions are as a rule allowed for only when the possessor is human and the possessum is inalienable. Body-part expressions are thus the most common possessa that may occur in external possession constructions.

External possession manifests itself in Sumerian in clauses in which a body-part expression and its possessor occur as separate constituents, and the verbal form cross-references either only the possessor, or both the possessor and the body part. In the former case the possessor and the body-part are in the same case, see, ex. (456) below; in the latter the possessor is in the dative, whereas the body-part is in the locative1, see ex. (459) below.

In ex. (456) below the possessor of the word **šu** “hand” is the god Ningirsu. The word ^dnin-₂gir₂-su, however, is not in P3 of the noun phrase whose head is **šu** “hand”. It is a separate constituent and occupies a sentence-initial position; P3 of **šu** “hand” is filled by a resumptive pronominal enclitic that agrees in person, gender, and number with the possessor (=ane : 3.SG.H.POSS). Both the possessor (^dnin-₂gir₂-su) and the inalienable possessum (**šu**) are in the locative2 case. The composite locative2 prefix of the verbal form shows agreement with the human possessor, but not with the possessum. The agreement with the possessor instead of the inalienable possessum may signal that the predicate is construed to be about the possessor.

(456) E-ana-tum 4 2:3–6 (Lagash, 25th c.) (P222460)

^dnin-*ṅir*₂-su-ra, ^{a-šag}₄ašag ki aṅ₂-ne₂,
 ninṅirsuk=ra ašag ki=∅ aṅ-∅=ane
 DN=L2.H field place=ABS measure-TL=3.SG.H.POSS
 gu₂-eden-na, šu-na mu-ni-gi₄
 guedenak=∅ šu=ane='a _{s4}mu-_{s6}nn-_{s10}i-_{s11}n-_{s12}gi-_{s14}∅
 GN=ABS hand=3.SG.H.POSS=L2.NH VEN-3.SG.H-L2-3.SG.H.A-return-3.SG.P
 “He returned (Ningirsu’s) beloved field, the Gu-edena, under Ningirsu’s control.”

In ex. (457) the possessor is not present in the sentence. Nevertheless, the composite locative2 prefix of the verbal form show agreement not with the grammatically non-human inalienable possessum (= *ṅiri*₃ “foot”) but with the human possessor, who is present in the sentence only as a 3rd ps. sg. human possessive enclitic attached to the word *ṅiri*₃.

(457) Lugal-zagesi 1 1:44–45 (RIME 1.14.20.1) (Uruk, 24th c.) (Q001379)

kur-kur ṅiri₃-na e-ne₂-seg₁₀-ga-a
 kur~kur=∅ ṅiri=ane='a _{s2}i-_{s6}nn-_{s10}i-_{s11}n-_{s12}seg-_{s14}∅-_{s15}'a-'a
 land~PL=ABS foot=3.SG.H.POSS=L2.NH FIN-3.SG.H-L2-3.SG.H.A-place-3.SG.P-SUB-L1
 “(when) he (= Enlil) made all the countries serve him (= Lugalzagesi) (lit. ‘threw all the countries to his feet’).”

In ex. (458) below the copula shows agreement with the 2nd ps. sg. possessor, but not with the grammatically non-human inalienable possessum *igi* “face”. The possessor is present in the sentence only as a 2nd ps. sg. human possessive enclitic attached to the word *igi*.

(458) Iddin-Dagan D 30 (ETCSL 2.5.3.4)

igi-zu huš-me-en
 igi=zu=∅ huš-∅=∅=me-en
 face=2.SG.POSS=ABS awesome-TL=ABS=COP-2.SG.S
 “Your face is awesome.”

In ex. (459) below the inalienable possessum (= *kag* “mouth”) is in the locative1 case. The locative1 case may only cross-reference a non-human verbal participant, there exist no 3rd. ps. sg. human composite locative1 prefix. Consequently the possessor of *kag* “mouth” is expressed as the indirect object and is cross-referenced accordingly with a dative prefix in the verbal form.

(459) Ishme-Dagan A 90 (ETCSL 2.5.4.01)

^dutu niṅ₂-si-sa₂ inim gi-na,
 utu=e niṅsisa inim gin-'a=∅
 DN=ERG justice word firm-PT=ABS
 ka-ṅa₂ ḥa-ma-ni-in-ṅar
 kag=ṅu='a _{s1}ḥa-_{s4}m-_{s7}a-_{s10}ni-_{s11}n-_{s12}ṅar-_{s14}∅
 mouth=1.SG.POSS=L1 MOD-1.SG-DAT-L1-3.SG.H.A-place-3.SG.P
 “The god Utu put justice and reliable words in my mouth.”
 “Utu legte mir Gerechtigkeit und zuverlässige Worte in den Mund”.

The German translation of ex. (459) is shown here to demonstrate how easily the sentence may be translated into German, which itself knows external

possession: “*Die Mutter wusch dem Kind die Haare*” = “The mother washed the child’s hair.”

15.4 The dative promotion

Except for verbal forms in which the locative3 is cross-referenced by an FPP, the verbal markers of the cases locative1, locative2 and locative3 occupy the same verbal slot, S10. When in a transitive verbal form, which otherwise would case-mark one of its participants (X) with either the locative2 or locative3, the use of a locative2 or locative3 prefix is obstructed because of the use of another verbal prefix, then this participant X will be promoted to the status of indirect object and will be construed with the dative. The use of the dative may well be due to its function to denote the participant affected by the verbal activity.

Two types of obstruction are attested in our texts. The more common type is when the S10 is occupied by a locative1 prefix as in exx. (461) and (463) below.

The compound verb **nam** “fate” — **tar** “to cut” = “to determine a fate” case-marks the participant whose the fate is determined with the locative2, see ex. (460) below. The same participant is in the dative in ex. (461), where a participant in the locative1 is also cross-referenced in the verbal form.

(460) Ninazu A 26 (ETCSL 4.17.1)

[an]-ne₂ nam dug₃ mu-ri-in-tar
 an=e nam dug-ø=ø _{S4}mu-_{S6}r-_{S10}i-_{S11}n-_{S12}tar-_{S14}ø
 DN=ERG fate good-TL=ABS VEN-2.SG-L2-3.SG.H.A-cut-3.SG.P
 “The god An has determined a good destiny for you.”

(461) Shulgi P Segment C 25 (ETCSL 2.4.2.16)

ubur₂ kug-_{ru}10-a nam ma-ra-ni-tar
 ubur kug=_{ru}’a nam=ø _{S4}ma-_{S6}r-_{S7}a-_{S10}ni-_{S11}’-_{S12}tar-_{S14}ø
 bosom holy=1.SG.POSS=L1 fate=ABS VEN-2.SG-DAT-L1-1.SG.A-cut-3.SG.P
 “I have decided your fate with my holy bosom.”

The compound verb verb **si** “horn” — **saz** “to be equal” = “to be straight, proper, ready” denotes the participant that is affected by the verbal action with the locative3 as shown in ex. (462) below. The same participant is in the dative in the next example, ex. (463), where the location of the verbal action is specified with a place adverbial in the locative1.

(462) Gudea Statue R 1:6-7 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232290)

lu₂ bi₃-lu₅-da di_{ir}re-ne-ke₄,
 lu biluda di_{ir}=enē=ak=e
 man rite god=PL=GEN=L3.NH
 si bi₂-sa₂-sa₂-a
 si=ø _{S5}b-_{S10}i-_{S11}n-_{S12}sa~sa-_{S14}ø-_{S15}’a=e
 horn=ABS 3.SG.NH-L3-3.SG.H.A-equal~PL-3.SG.P-SUB=ERG
 “(Gudea,) the man who performed the rites of the gods properly”

(463) Gudea Statue D 2:13-3:2 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232277)

šag₄-ba ni₂-mi₂-us₂-sa₂, ^dba-u₂, nin-a-na-ke₄,
 šag=be='a ni₂mussa bau nin=ane=ak=e
 heart=3.SG.NH.POSS=L1 bridal.gift DN lady=3.SG.H.POSS=GEN=DAT.NH

si ba-ni-sa₂-sa₂

si=∅ s₅b-s₇a-s₁₀ni-s₁₁n-s₁₂sa~sa-s₁₄∅

horn=ABS 3.SG.NH-DAT-L1-3.SG.H.A-equal~PL-3.SG.P

“Within it, he (= Gudea) prepared the bridal gifts of Bau, his lady.”

The other type of obstruction can be observed in ex. (464) below. The second verb here is a causative that should look like **nam=∅** s₁i-s₆**nn**-s₁₀i-s₁₁n-s₁₂**kud**-s₁₄∅ (fate=ABS FIN-3.SG.H-L3-N3.SG.H.A-cut-3.SG.P) “he (= E-ana-tum) made him (= the Ummaite) swear (a promissory oath)”. The presence of an ablative prefix in S9, however, makes it impossible for a composite locative3 prefix to occur on two accounts: a) since the ablative in S9 precedes the locative3 prefix in S10 the pronominal prefix /**nn**/ in S6 could not refer to a participant in the locative3; b) since the locative3 is the second adverbial prefix in the verbal form it should refer to a non-human participant. Both non-compliances with Krecher’s rule about the functioning of the adverbial prefixes, see Lesson 6 above, may be circumvented by promoting the original causee to the dative.

(464) E-ana-tum 1 obv. 16:12-17 (RIME 1.9.3.1) (Lagash, 25th c. BCE) (P222399)

lu₂ ^rumma^{ki₇}-ra, e₂-an-na-tum₂-me, sa-šuš-gal, ^den-lil_x(E₂)-la₂,
 lu umma=ak=ra eanatum=e sašušgal enlil=ak=∅
 person GN=GEN=DAT.H PN=ERG net DN=GEN=ABS

e-na-šum₂, nam e-na-ta-kud

s₂i-s₆**nn**-s₇a-s₁₂n-s₁₄šum-s₁₄∅ nam=∅ s₁i-s₆**nn**-s₇a-s₉ta-s₁₁n-s₁₂kud-s₁₄∅

FIN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.A-give-3.SG.P fate=ABS FIN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.A-cut-3.SG.P

“E-ana-tum gave the great battle-net of Enlil to the Ummaite, and made him swear a promissory oath by it.”

Further readings

In the first part of the 2nd millennium BCE the verbal prefixes cross-referencing the underlying A (i.e., the causee) in causatives of transitive verbs will be reinterpreted as causative markers, the detailed description of this development can be found in Zólyomi 2005b: 347–353.

The definition of compound verbs is controversial in Sumerology. A good reading to start with is Attinger’s description in Attinger 1993: 178–182. Zólyomi 1996 reviews Attinger’s book and also discusses his definition. Attinger 2004 uses the position of question words for the identification of compound verbs. Attinger gives a summary of his views in Attinger 2007: 24–26, which he concludes like this: “En bref, et contrairement à Zólyomi, je crois que la distinction entre verbes composés et verbes non composés est moins de nature que de degré.” A conclusion one would find hard to disagree with. An often quoted work on compound verbs is Karahashi’s unpublished but easily available dissertation (Karahashi 2000). For those who can read Hungarian, Tanos 2015 is an interesting study on the semantics of compound verbs in Sumerian.

On compounds with the verb **dug₄**, the comprehensive work is Attinger 1993. For the numerous compounds with the verb **ak**, one should consult the vocabulary entry the verb in PSD, together with Attinger’s review (Attinger 2005).

On the semantics of some of the compounds with the verb **ak**, see also Ebeling 2007.

The constructions used with the compound verb **igi — bar** are discussed in Zólyomi 2007b. This study also discusses the changes in these constructions due to the influence of Akkadian.

The most detailed description of external possession in Sumerian can be found in Zólyomi 2005. Jagersma’s account of the phenomenon is in Jagersma 2010: 396–398. For the linguistic treatment of the phenomenon, see Payne and Barshi 1999. Dative promotion is discussed in Zólyomi 1999: 238–242, called there as “four-participant verbal forms”.

Exercises

15.1 Look up the new words used in the examples of this lesson in Foxvog’s (2016b) or Volk’s (2012) glossary, and learn them.

15.2 Study the examples of this lesson carefully and make yourself familiar with their grammatical analysis.

15.3 Try to reconstruct the underlying transitive clause of the following actual examples of causative constructions. You only have to produce the morphemic segmentation and glossing (2nd and 3rd line of the examples).

(465) Išme-Dagan 7 1–7 (RIME 4.1.4.7) (Isin, 20th c.) (Q001951)

^d iš-me- ^d da-gan,	lugal	ki-en-gi	ki-uri-ra,	ud	^d en-lil ₂ -le,	^d nin-urta,
išmedagan	lugal	kengir	kiuri=ak=ra	ud	enlil=e	ninurta
PN	king	GN	GN=GEN=L3.H	day	DN=ERG	DN

ur-sa ₇	kalag-ga-ne ₂ ,	maškim-še ₃ ,	mu-ni-in-tuku-a
ursar ₇	kalag=ane=ø	maškim=še	_{S4} mu- _{S6} nn- _{S10} i- _{S11} n- _{S12} tuku- _{S14} ø- _{S15} ’a=’a
hero	strong=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS	deputy=TERM	VEN-3.SG.H-L3-3.SG.H.A-have-3.SG.P-SUB=L1

“When Enlil appointed Ninurta, his powerful warrior, as commissioner to Išme-Dagan, king of Sumer and Akkad,”

(466) Ur-Ninurta D 34 (ETCSL 2.5.6.4)

^d ur- ^d nin-urta-ke ₄	u ₇ ₃	šar ₂ -re
urninurtak=e	u ₇	šar-ø=e
PN=ERG	people	numerous-TL=L3.NH

us ₂	zid	he ₂ -bi ₂ -ib-dab ₅ -be ₂
us	zid-ø=ø	_{S1} ha- _{S5} b- _{S10} i- _{S11} b- _{S12} dab- _{S14} e
path	right-TL=ABS	MOD-3.SG.NH-L3-3.SG.NH.P-take-3.SG.A

“May Ur-Ninurta make numerous people follow the just path.”

(467) Gudea Cyl. B 5:20 (ETCSL 2.1.7) (Lagash, 22nd c.)

gud	i ₃	udu	i ₃	e ₂ -e	bi ₂ -dab ₅
gud	i	udu	i=ø	e=e	_{S5} b- _{S10} i- _{S11} n- _{S12} dab- _{S14} ø
ox	fat	sheep	fat=ABS	temple=L3.NH	3.SG.NH-L3-3.SG.H.A-receive-3.SG.P

“He (= Gudea) made the temple receive (i.e., ‘allotted to the temple’) fattened oxen and sheep.”

15.4 Create causative forms from the following examples. Insert the god Ningirsu as the causer. You have to produce only the morphemic segmentation and glossing (2nd and 3rd line of the examples).

a)

lu₂ inim-ma sa₇ sa₁₀-a-še₃ mu-ne-ra-e₃
 lu inim=ak sa₇ sa-'a=ak=še s₄mu-s₆nnē-s₈a-s₉ta-s₁₂e-s₁₄∅
 man word=GEN head buy-PT=GEN=TERM VEN-3.PL-DAT-ABL-leave-3.SG.S

b)

ensi-ke₄ e₂ mu-du₃
 ensik=e e=∅ s₄mu-s₁₁n-s₁₂du-s₁₄∅
 ruler=ERG house VEN-3.SG.H.A.-build-3.SG.P

c)

e₂-da lugal im-da-hul₂
 e=da lugal=∅ s₂i-s₄m-s₅b-s₈da-s₁₂hul-s₁₄∅
 house=COM owner=ABS FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-COM-rejoice-3.SG.S

d)

e₂-e im-ma-ŋen
 e=e s₂i-s₄m-s₅b-s₇a-s₁₂ŋen-s₁₄∅
 house=DAT.NH FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-DAT-go-3.SG.S

e)

^damar-^dsuen lugal-e ur-bi₂-lum mu-ḫul
 amarsuenak lugal=e urbilum=∅ s₄mu-s₁₁n-s₁₂ḫul-s₁₄∅
 PN king=ERG GN=ABS VEN-3.SG.H.A-raid-3.SG.P

f)

umma^{ki}-a, ki-ŋa₂ i₃-durun_x(KU.KU)-ne₂-eš₂
 umma='a ki=ŋu='a s₂i-s₅b-s₁₀(i>)∅-s₁₂durun-s₁₄eš
 GN=L2.NH place=1.SG.POSS=L2.NH FIN-3.SG.NH-L2.SYN-sit.PL-3.PL.S

15.5 Please, explain the case-marking of the word ^dnin-hur-sa₇ in the following example!

Which word is cross-referenced by the composite locative2 prefix, and why?

(468) E-ana-tum 1 obv. 4:24-26 (RIME 1.9.3.1) (Lagash, 25th c. BCE) (P222399)

^dnin-hur-sa₇-ra, dub₃ zid-da-na,
 ninhursajak=ra dub zid-a=ane='a
 DN=L2.H knee right-PT=3.SG.H.POSS=L2.NH

mu-ni-tuš

s₄mu-s₆nn-s₁₀i-s₁₁n-s₁₂tuš-s₁₃∅
 VEN-3.SG-L2-3.SG.H.A-sit-3.SG.P

"She (= Inana) has made him (= Eanatum) sit on the right knee of the goddess Ninhursaga."

15.6 Example (469) below is the only verbal form from the 3rd millennium BCE that does not obey Krecher's rule about the number of composite adverbial prefixes in the prefix-chain as discussed in Lesson 6, section 6.3 above. What is wrong with it? Do you have any explanation?

(469) E-ana-tum 1 rev. 5:32-36 (RIME 1.9.3.1) (Lagash, 25th c. BCE) (P222399)

^d nin-ki,	nam-ne	ma-ni-ku ⁵ -ra ² ,
ninki	nam=ane=∅	_{S4} m- _{S7} a- _{S6} nn- _{S10} i- _{S11} n- _{S12} kud- _{S14} ∅- _{S15} 'a=e
DN	fate=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS	VEN-DAT-3.SG.H-L3-3.SG.H.A-kud-3.SG.P-SUB=ERG
umma ^{ki} ,	muš ki-ta	giri ³ -ba
umma=ak	muš ki=ta=e	giri=be='a
GN=GEN	snake earth=ABL=L3.NH	foot=3.SG.NH.POSS-L2.NH
zu ²	ḥe ² -mi-du ³ -du ³ -e	
zu=∅	_{S1} ḥa- _{S2} i- _{S4} m- _{S5} b- _{S10} i- _{S11} b- _{S12} du~du- _{S14} e	
tooth=ABS	MOD-FIN-3.SG.NH-L2-3.SG.NH.L3-hold~PF-3.SG.A	

“(If he violates this agreement), may the goddess Ninki, by whom he has sworn, have snakes from the ground bite Umma’s feet!”

15.7 Transliterate the text of NG 205 obv. 1–13 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P111164) (a handcopy of the text can be found at <http://cdli.ucla.edu/P111164>) with the help of Volk’s sign list (2012). Translate the text with the help of Foxvog’s glossary (2016b). Assign morphemic segmentation and glossing to the verbal forms.

Lesson 16: Negation and modality

The modal prefixes of the finite verbal form may occur either in S1 or S2. The prefix /**ha**/ and the other modal prefixes differ in respect of whether they may co-occur with the finite-marker prefix. The prefix /**ha**/ may be followed by a finite-marker, the other modal prefixes may not. Consequently, this textbook assumes that /**ha**/ occurs in S1, while all the other modal prefixes occupy S2 and are in complementary distribution with the finite-markers. S1 also accommodates the negative particle. This lesson describes the most important uses of these morphemes, together with the imperative form of the verb, in which the verbal stem moves into S1 of the prefix-chain.

16.1 The negative particle

Indicative verbal forms are negated with the particle /**nu**/- prefixed to the verbal form. It is also used with non-finite verbal forms, see ex. (472) below. In finite verbal forms that would start with a finite-marker without the negative particle, the particle /**nu**/ is followed by a finite-marker. Its /**u**/ contracts with it, resulting in /**ū**/, which, however, is not always indicated in the writing as in ex. (470).

The vowel of the prefixed particle may occasionally assimilate to the vowel of the next syllable. Before a syllable /**ba**/- or /**bi**/- the prefixed particle changes to /**la**/- and /**li**/- respectively, see. ex. (474) below; but the writing may not reflect this sound change, see ex. (473) below.

(470) BM 24108 rev. 2-3 (Lagash 21st c.) (P145596)

a-na-aš-am₃, nu-u₃-na-šum₂
 ana-še=am-ø s₁nu-s₂i-s₆nn-s₇a-s₁₁n-s₁₂šum-s₁₄ø
 what=TERM=COP-3.SG.S NEG-FIN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.A-give-3.SG.P
 “Why did not he give it to him?”

(471) MVN 11, 168 rev. 8 (Umma, 21st c. BCE) (P116181)

še e₂-a nu-mu-da-ḡal₂
 še=ø e='a s₁nu-s₄mu-s₆'-s₈da-s₁₀n-s₁₂ḡal-s₁₄ø
 grain=ABS house=L1 NEG-VEN-1.SG-COM-L1.SYN-exist-3.SG.S
 “I have no grain in the house.”; lit. “There is no grain in the house with me”

(472) Gudea Cyl. A 15:19 (Lagash, 22nd. c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

kur ḡ₁₅erin-na lu₂ nu-ku₄-ku₄-da
 kur erin=ak lu=ø nu-ku~ku-ed-ø]_{-p₅}'a
 mountain cedar=GEN man=ABS NEG-enter~PF-PF-3.SG.S=L1
 “into the mountain of cedars which no one is to penetrate”

(473) Gudea Statue B 5:4 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)

ama-er₂-ke₄ er₂ nu-bi₂-dug₄
 amaerak=e er=ø s₁nu-s₅b-s₁₀i-s₁₁n-s₁₂dug-s₁₄ø
 wailing.woman=ERG tears NEG-3.SG.NH-L2-3.SG.H.A-speak-3.SG.P
 “The wailing woman did not utter laments.”

The particle /**nu**/- is generally thought to be used only for the negation of indicative forms, cf. “[nu] is not used if a modal form is to be negated,” (Edzard

2003: 114). Nevertheless, it may have modal meanings with present-future verbal forms, as in ex. (474) below.

(474) Gudea Statue E 9:6–12 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232278)

ki-gub-ba-be ₂	lu ₂	nu-zi-zi
kiguba=be=∅	lu=e	_{S1} nu- _{S2} i- _{S12} zi~zi- _{S14} e
pedestal=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS	man=ERG	NEG-FIN-rise~PF-3.SG.A
sa ₂ -dug ₄ -be ₂	lu	la-ba-ni-la ₂ -e
sadug=be=∅	lu=e	_{S1} nu- _{S5} ba- _{S10} ni- _{S11} b- _{S12} lal- _{S14} e
offering=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS	man=ERG	NEG-MID-L1-3.SG.NH.P-small-3.SG.A

“No one should lift its (= the statue of Gudea) pedestal, no one should curtail its regular offerings for himself!”

The negative particle may also occur without any verbal form: the negative equivalent of a copular clause with a 3rd ps. sg. S and an enclitic copula is negated solely with the negative particle /**nu**/- and the negative clause contains no copula. An instructive example is ex. (475) below, where the first clause is negated with the particle /**nu**/-, while the second is negated with an independent copula prefixed with the negation particle /**nu**/-.

(475) Gudea Statue B 7:49–50 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)

alan-e,	u ₃	kug	nu
_S [alan=e=∅]	u	_{PC} [kug=∅]	nu
_S [statue=DEM=ABS]	and	_{PC} [silver=ABS]	NEG
za-gin ₃	nu-ga-am ₃		
_{PC} [zagin=∅]	_{S1} nu- _{S2} i- _{S3} nga- _{S12} me- _{S14} ∅		
_{PC} [lapis.lazuli=ABS]	NEG-FIN-COOR-COP-3.SG.S		

“This statue is of neither silver nor lapis lazuli.”

The affirmative equivalent of the first clause would contain the 3rd ps. sg. form of the enclitic copula (***kug=∅=am-∅** : silver=ABS=COP-3.SG.S), while the affirmative equivalent of the second clause would contain an independent copula because of the presence of a coordinator prefix in S3 (*_{S2}**i-_{S3}nga-_{S12}me-_{S14}∅** : FIN-COOR-COP-3.SG.S). The difference in the way the two clauses are negated in ex. (475) is conditioned thus by the form of the copula in the corresponding affirmative clauses.

16.2 Modality

The linguistic literature on modality usually distinguishes two main types of modality: epistemic and deontic modality. Epistemic modality refers to the “evaluation of the chances that a certain hypothetical state of affairs under consideration (or some aspect of it) will occur, is occurring or has occurred in a possible world” (Nuyts 2001: 21). Deontic modality indicates the speaker’s degree of requirement of, desire for, or commitment to the realisation of the proposition expressed by his utterance.

The notions of epistemic and deontic modality were applied to Sumerian by Miguel Civil (2000) for the first time. This textbook follows him in using these notions, but the description given here is different from Civil’s. Table 16.1 below summarizes the uses of the modal prefixes; + refers to affirmative, - to negative forms.

EPISTEMIC			DEONTIC		
+	-		+	-	
	WEAK	STRONG		WEAK	STRONG
/ḥa/-	/na(n)/-	/bara/-	/ga/-, /ḥa/-, imperative	/na(n)/-	/bara/-
			/nuš/-		
/na/-					
/ša/-					

Table 16.1

Table 16.2 shows the correspondences between affirmative and negative forms:

EPISTEMIC		DEONTIC	
+	-	+	-
/ḥa/- (certain)	/bara/-	/ga/-	/bara/-
/ḥa/- (possible)	/na(n)/-	imperative	/na(n)/-
		/ḥa/- (precative)	/na(n)/-

Table 16.2

The imperative

The imperative expresses a direct command. It is marked not by a prefix: in the imperative form of the verb, the verbal stem occurs in S1 instead of its usual position in S12, with the consequence that all verbal prefixes are positioned after the stem in imperative verbal forms. One could state that it is the verbal stem itself that is prefixed in imperative forms.

The imperative forms always use the preterite stem. The 3rd ps. sg. prefix /b/ cross-referencing a P may be missing from S11; the orthography, however, may not help in deciding this issue; so, for example, in ex. (476) below, only the writing **du₃-ma**, but not **du₃-ma-ab** is expected in the 23rd c. BCE. See, however, ex. (477) below, in which the /b/ is clearly indicated by the orthography. The imperative is negated with the modal-prefix **na(n)-**, see ex. (499) below.

(476) CUSAS 17, 13 2:1 (RIME 1.14.add21.01) (unknown, cca. 23th c.) (P251599)

e₂-ḡu₁₀ du₃-ma
e=ḡu=∅ s₁du₃-s₄m₇-s₇a₁₁b
house=1SG.POSS=ABS build-VEN-DAT-3NH.P
“Build up my temple for me!”

(477) NG 20 obv. 7 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P128442)

10 giḡ₄ kug-babbar-am₃ šum₂-ma-ab,
10 gig kug-babbar=∅=am-∅ s₁šum₃-s₄m₇-s₇a₁₂b
10 unit silver=ABS=COP-3.SG.S give-VEN-DAT-3.SG.NH.P
“Give me ten shekels of silver!”

Singular S or A is not marked with any verbal pronominal affix, plural S or A is cross-referenced with the suffix **-nzen/** in S14. As the construction treats S and A alike, it can be said to have a nominative-accusative conjugation pattern. In imperative forms the finite-marker prefix is **/a/-**, see exx. (478) and (479) below.

(478) TCS 1, 142 rev. 4 (Nippur, 21st c.) (P145683)

e₂-a-ne₂ gul-a
 e=ane=∅ s₁gul-s₂a
 house=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS destroy-FIN
 “Destroy his house!”

(479) NG 208 obv. 17 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P135570)

kišib-ḡu₁₀ zi-ra-ab
 kišib=ḡu=∅ s₁zir-s₂a-s₁₁b
 seal=1.SG.POSS=ABS break-FIN-3.SG.NH.P
 “Destroy my sealed tablet!”

The prefix /ga/-

The prefix **/ga/-** occupies S2 of the verbal prefix-chain, it is in complementary distribution with the finite-marker prefix. The prefix **/ga/-** is only used in 1st ps. sg. or pl. Its meaning can be paraphrased as “It is my/our intention to VERB”. It is characterised by a special construction that uses the preterite stem but cross-references the P with the final pronominal prefix in S11.¹⁹ As in present-future verbal forms the final pronominal prefix in S11 may be missing if the P is a 3rd ps. sg. non-human. Singular S or A is not marked with any verbal pronominal affix, plural S or A is cross-referenced with the suffix **-/enden/** in S14. As the construction treats S and A alike, it can be said to have a nominative-accusative conjugation pattern. Modal forms with the prefix **/ga/-** are negated with the modal-prefix **/bara/-**, see ex. (494) below.

(480) Gudea Cyl. A 3:14–15 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

ḡissu-zu-še₃, ni₂ ga-ma-ši-ib₂-te
 ḡissu=zu=še ni=∅ s₂ga-s₄m-s₅ba-s₉ši-s₁₁b-s₁₂ten
 shade=2.SG.POSS=TERM self=ABS MOD-VEN-3.SG.NH-TERM-3.SG.NH.P-cool
 “I will cool off in your shade!”

(481) NATN 571 obv. 12–rev. 1 (Nippur, 21st c.) (P121269)

2 ma-na kug-babbar-ḡam₃, ga-la₂
 2 mana kugbabbar=∅=am-∅ s₂ga-s₁₂la
 2 unit silver=ABS=COP-3.SG.S MOD-weigh
 “(He said to him:) I will pay two pounds of silver!”

(482) Shulgi D 219 (ETCSL 2.4.2.04)

nig₂ ki-en-gi-ra ba-a-gu-la
 niḡ kengir=[’]a s₅ba-s₁₀e-s₁₂gul-s₁₄∅-s₁₅[’]a=∅
 thing homeland=L2.NH MID-L2-destroy-3.SG.S-SUB=ABS

kur-ra ga-am₃-mi-ib-gu-ul
 kur=[’]a s₂ga-s₄m-s₆b-s₁₀i-s₁₁b-s₁₂gul
 foreign.land=L2.NH MOD-VEN-3.SG.NH-L2-3.SG.NH.P-destroy
 “Whatever has been destroyed in the homeland, I will destroy in the foreign country.”

The prefix **/ga/-** may not be used with stative verbs. Thus, forms like ***ga-me-en** do not exist; instead, the modal-prefix **/ḡa/-** is used with the copula:

¹⁹ For a rare exception in a text from the first part of the 2nd millennium BCE, see ex. (50) above in Lesson, section 5.1.

(483) Lugal-zagesi 1 3:35–36 (RIME 1.14.20.1) (Uruk, 24th c.) (Q001379)

sipad saṅ-gu⁴-ḡal², da-ri² ḡe²-me
 sipad saṅgūjal=Ø dari=še s₁ḡa-s₂i-s₁₂me-s₁₄en
 shepherd foremost=ABS forever=TERM MOD-FIN-COP-1.SG.S
 “May I be the foremost shepherd forever!”

The prefix /ḡa/-

The prefix /ḡa/-, written with the grapheme **HA**, can be used as a marker of both epistemic and deontic modality. In finite verbal forms that would start with a finite-marker without the prefix /ḡa/-, the prefix is followed by a finite-marker. The vowel of the prefix then contracts with the finite marker /i/-, the contracted form, /ḡē/-, is written as a rule with the grapheme **HEz**. The prefix /ḡa/- may also assimilate to the vowel of a following syllable, see, exx. (486) and (493) below.

As an epistemic marker, /ḡa/- can have a weak meaning: “it is possible that ...”, or a strong meaning: “it is a certainty/necessity that ...”. When it expresses epistemic possibility, then transitive verbs usually use the present-future tense, while when it expresses epistemic certainty, then the verb uses as a rule the preterite tense. An epistemic /ḡa/- in its weak meaning is negated with the modal prefix /na(n)/-, see, ex. (500) below; in its strong meaning with the prefix /bara/-, see, e.g., ex. (498) below.

Clauses with a verbal form prefixed with /ḡa/- expressing epistemic possibility are often to be translated as conditionals, like in exx. (484) and (485) below. In ex. (485), for example, the interpretations “if he strikes with it” and “if he breaks it” derive from the epistemic meanings “he may strike with it”, and “he may break it” respectively.

(484) Lugalbanda and the Anzud bird 106 (ETCSL 1.8.2.2)

dinir ḡe²-me-en
 dinir=Ø s₁ḡa-s₂i-s₁₂me-s₁₄en
 god=ABS MOD-FIN-COP-2.SG.S
 “if you are a god,”

(485) The Axe of Nergal 9–11 (ETCSL 5.7.3)

ḡe²-sag³-ge a²-ne² na-an-kuš²-u³,
 s₁ḡa-s₂i-s₁₂sag-s₁₄e a=ane=Ø s₂nan-s₁₂kuš²-u³-s₁₄Ø
 MOD-FIN-hit-3.SG.A arm=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS MOD-be.tired-3.SG.S
 ḡe²-eb²-ta-ku⁵-e, ga-mu-na-ab-silim
 s₁ḡa-s₂i-s₅b-s₉ta-s₁₂ku-s₁₄e s₂ga-s₄mu-s₆nn-s₇a-s₁₁b-s₁₂silim
 MOD-FIN-3.SG.NH-ABL-break-3.SG.A MOD-VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.NH.P-heal
 “If he strikes with it (= the axe), his arm cannot get tired; if he breaks it, I will repair it for him.”

As a deontic marker, the prefix /ḡa/- expresses a realizable wish, a request, or an advice. Transitive action verbs prefixed with a deontic /ḡa/- use the present-future tense.

(486) FaoS 19, Gir23 obv. 7–rev. 1 (Lagash, 23rd c.) (P217056)

lugal-ka¹, ḡe²-me-šum²-mu
 lugalka=e s₁ḡa-s₆mē-s₇a-s₁₂šum-s₁₄e
 PN=ERG MOD-1.PL-DAT-give-3.SG.A
 “May Lugalka hand it over to us!”

(487) TCS 1, 61 3–6 (Nippur, 21st c.) (P134662)

^mer₃-ra-ga-ši-ir, dumu nibru^{ki}-kam,
 erragašir=Ø dumu nibru=ak=Ø=am-Ø
 PN=ABS child GN=GEN=ABS=COP-3.SG.S

ur-sag₉-ga, ḥa-mu-na-šum₂-mu
 ursaga=ra s₁ḥa-s₄mu-s₆nn-s₇a-s₁₁n-s₁₂šum-s₁₄e
 PN=DAT.H MOD-VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.P-give-3.SG.A

“(Tell Ea-bani:) ‘He must hand over Erra-gashir, (who is) a citizen of Nippur, to Ursaga!’”

(488) Shulgi H Segment D 19 (ETCSL 2.4.2.08)

uḡ₃-e u₂ nir-ḡal₂ ḥa-bi₂-ib₂-gu₇-e
 uḡ=e u nirḡal-Ø=Ø s₁ḥa-s₅b-s₁₀i-s₁₁b-s₁₂gu-s₁₄e
 people=L3.NH food fine-TL=ABS MOD-3.SG.NH-L3-3.SG.NH.P-eat-3.SG.A

a dug₃ ḥa-bi₂-na₈-na₈
 a dug-Ø=Ø s₁ḥa-s₅b-s₁₀i-s₁₁b-s₁₂na-na-s₁₄e
 water sweet-TL=ABS MOD-3.SG.NH-L3-3.SG.NH.P-drink~PF-3.SG.A

“May he (= Shulgi) make the people eat fine food, may he make them drink sweet water!”

As a marker of deontic modality expressing a realizable wish, /ḥa/- can be contrasted with the prefix /nuš/- which expresses an unrealizable wish: in ex. (489) below, Inana mourns the dead king Ur-Namma, and she knows that her wish may not be fulfilled.

(489) Ur-Namma A 213 (ETCSL 2.4.1.1)

sipad-ḡu₁₀ ḥi-li-a-ne₂ nu-uš-ma-an-ku₄-ku₄
 sipad=ḡu=Ø ḥili=ane=e s₂nuš-s₄m-s₇a-s₁₀n-s₁₂ku~ku-s₁₃ed-s₁₄Ø
 shepherd=1.SG.POSS=ABS prime=3.SG.H.POSS=L3 MOD-VEN-DAT-L1.SYN-enter~PF-PF-3.SG.S

ḡe₂₆-e ba-ra-ḡku₄-ku₄¹-de₃-en
 ḡe=Ø s₂bara-s₁₀n-s₁₂ku~ku-s₁₃ed-s₁₄en
 1.SG.PR=ABS MOD-L1.SYN-enter~PF-PF-1.SG.

“If only my shepherd could enter before me in it in his prime — I will certainly not enter it (= E-ana temple) otherwise!”

A special feature of the verbal forms prefixed with /ḥa/- is that intransitive and stative verbs always use the preterite tense in whatever function, epistemic or deontic, the prefix is used. Both ex. (490), an intransitive verb, and ex. (491), passive of a transitive, use the preterite form of verb, and they have deontic meaning.

(490) Gudea Statue C 4:1 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232276)

nam-til₃-la-ne₂ ḥe₂-sud
 namtil=ane=Ø s₁ḥa-s₂i-s₁₂sud-s₁₄Ø
 life=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS MOD-FIN-long-3.SG.S
 “May his (= Gudea) life be long!”

(491) Gudea Statue B 9:26 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)

gu₄-gen₇ ud-ne-na ḥe₂-gaz
 gu=gen ud=nēn=’a s₁ḥa-s₃i-s₁₂gaz-s₁₄Ø
 bull=EQU day=DEM=L1 MOD-FIN-kill-3.SG.S
 “May he be killed like a bull on the very day!”

When in the sequence of two clauses both use a modal form of the verb, then the second clause may often be translated as a purpose clause, as in exx. (492) and (493) below. A similar construction is also attested in Akkadian (see Huehnergard 1997: 147 [16.4]), so this construction may be another example of mutual influence between the two languages.

(492) Letter from Kug-Nanna to the god Ninšubur Segment B 6 (ETCSL 3.3.39)

šag₄ ib₂-ba-zu ga-ab-ḥuṇ-e
 šag ib-'a=zu=∅ s₂ga-s₁₁b-s₁₂ḥuṇ-s₁₄e
 heart angry-PT-2.SG.POSS=ABS MOD-3.SG.NH.P-pacify-3.SG.A

ur₅-zu ḥe₂-bur₂-e
 ur=zu=∅ s₁ḥa-s₂i-s₁₂bur-s₁₃ed=s₁₄∅
 liver=2.SG.POSS=ABS MOD-FIN-release-PF-3.SG.S

“Let me to soothe your angry heart, so that your spirit will be assuaged.

(493) Ninurta G 66–68 (ETCSL 4.27.07)

kug ama ^dnanše dug₄-ga-na-ab
 kug ama nanše s₁dug-s₂a-s₆nn-s₇a-s₁₁b
 holy mother DN speak-FIN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.P

^dutu-gen₇ a₂ bad hu-mu-ri-in-gub
 utu=gen a bad-∅=∅ s₂ḥa-s₄mu-s₆r-s₁₀i-s₁₁n-s₁₂gub-s₁₄∅
 DN=EQU arm open-TL=ABS MOD-VEN-2.SG-L2-3.SG.H.A-put-3.SG.P

“Ask the holy mother Nanše to cast her protecting arms over you as if she were the god Utu!”

The prefix /bara/-

The prefix **/bara/-** occupies S2 of the verbal prefix-chain, it is in complementary distribution with the finite-marker prefix. The negative modality prefix **/bara/-** is used as the negative counterpart of both deontic **/ga/-** and strong epistemic **/ḥa/-**. When it negates a **/ga/-**-form, then the verbal form is present-future as a rule, see also ex. (489) above. When it negates a **/ḥa/-**-form, then the verbal form is preterite as a rule.

One can assume that all three verbal forms express the same kind of modality in ex. (494) below. The first two verbal forms use the prefix **/ga/-**, while the third the prefix **/bara/-**. The co-occurrence of these forms reveal that **/bara/-** may be used as the negative counterpart of **/ga/-**.

(494) BE 3/1, 4 obv. 4–6 (Nippur, 21st c.) (P105558)

e₂-za ga-gub ga-am₃-ta-e₃
 e₂=zu='a s₂ga-s₁₀n-s₁₂gub s₂ga-s₄m-s₅b-s₉ta-s₁₂e
 house=2.SG.POSS=L1 MOD-L1.SYN-stand MOD-VEN-3.SG.NH-ABL-leave

ba-ra-ba-zaḥ₃-de₃-^ren₆¹
 s₂bara-s₅ba-s₁₂zah-s₁₃ed-s₁₄en
 MOD-MID-run.away-PF-1.SG.S

“I will serve in your house, I will go out of it, but I will not run away!”

(495) E-ana-tum 1 obv. 20:2–21:1 (RIME1.9.3.1) (Lagash, 25th c.) (P222399)

eg₂ pa₅-be₂, šu-bala ba-ra-ak-ke₄
 eg pa=be=e šubala=∅ s₂bara-s₁₁b-s₁₂ak-s₁₄en
 levee ditch=3.SG.NH.POSS=L3.NH change=ABS MOD-3.SG.NH.L3-make-1.SG.A

“I will (never ever) change its levees and ditches!”

The prefix **/bara/-** is also the negative counterpart of the prefix **/ḥa/-** when expressing epistemic certainty, meaning something like “certainly not” or “absolutely not”:

(496) TCTI 2, 3916 rev. 4–5 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P133112)

zi lugal diri-ga-še₃ ba-ra-a-su
 zi lugal=ak dirig-’a=še s₂bara-s₁₁’-s₁₂sug-s₁₄∅
 life king=GEN exceed-PT=TERM MOD-1.SG.A-repay-3.SG.P
 “By the king’s life! I certainly did not pay back too much!”

(497) MVN 6, 1 obv. 4–5 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P217677)

ur-lum-ma-ra, lu₂ ba-ra-ba-du₃
 urlummak=ra lu=∅ s₂bara-s₅ba-s₆n-s₁₀(i>)∅-s₁₂du-s₁₄∅
 PN=L2.H person=ABS MOD-MID-3.SG.H-L2.SYN-hold-3.SG.S
 “Definitely no one detained Ur-Lumma.”

One can assume that all three verbal forms express the same kind of modality in ex. (498) below. The first two verbal forms use the prefix **/bara/-**, while the third one the prefix **/ḥa/-** in a strong epistemic meaning. The co-occurrence of these forms reveal that **/bara/-** may be used as the negative counterpart of **/ḥa/-**.

(498) Shulgi A 70–71 (ETCSL 2.4.2.01)

ni₂ ba-ra-ba-da-te su ba-ra-ba-da-zig₃
 ni=∅ s₂bara-s₅ba-s₆’-s₈da-s₁₂ten-s₁₄∅ su=∅ s₂bara-s₅ba-s₆’-s₈da-s₁₂-zig-s₁₄∅
 fear=ABS MOD-MID-1.SG-COM-approach-3.SG.S flesh=abs MOD-MID-1.SG-COM-rise-3.SG.S
 pirij ban₃-da-gen₇ gur₅-ru-uš ḥu-mu-bur₂-bur₂
 pirij banda-∅=gen gurus=∅ s₁ḥa-s₄mu-s₁₁’-s₁₂bur~bur-s₁₄∅
 lion banda-TL=EQU CVN=abs MOD-VEN-1.SG.A-glow?~PL-3.SG.P
 “(I, the king, however,) could certainly not be scared, nor could I be terrified. I did *rush forth* like a fierce lion.”

The prefix na(n)-

The prefix **/na(n)/-** occupies S2 of the verbal prefix-chain, it is in complementary distribution with the finite-marker prefix. The prefix **/na(n)/-** is used with dynamic transitive verbs in the present-future and with intransitive and stative verbs in the past tense. The negative modal prefix **/na(n)/-** has two basic functions. Firstly, it is the negative counterpart of the imperative:

(499) The instructions of Shuruppak 154 (ETCSL 5.6.1)

[kar]-kid na-an-sa₁₀-sa₁₀-an
 karkid=∅ s₂na-s₁₁n-s₁₂sa~sa-s₁₄en
 prostitute=ABS MOD-3.SG.H.P-buy~PF-2.SG.A
 “Do not buy a prostitute!”

Secondly, it is the negative counterpart of the prefix **/ḥa/-** when expressing deontic modality. One can assume that both verbal forms express the same kind of modality in ex. (500) below. The first verbal forms use the prefix **/na(n)/-**, while the second the prefix **/ḥa/-** in a deontic meaning. The co-occurrence of these forms reveal that **/na(n)/-** may be used as the negative counterpart of deontic **/ḥa/-**.

(500) Gudea Statue C 4:13-16 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232276)

^{ηi}gu-za gub-ba-na suhuš-be₂
 guza gub-'a=ane=ak suhuš-be=∅
 chair stand-PT-3.SG.H.POSS=GEN foundation=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS

na-an-gi-ne₂ numun-a-ne₂ he₂-til
{S2}nan-{S12}gin-_{S14}e numun=ane=∅ _{S1}ha-_{S12}i-_{S12}til-_{S14}∅
 MOD-firm-3.SG.A seed=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS MOD-FIN-end-3.SG.S

“May she not make firm the foundation of his standing throne! May his offspring come to an end!”

Non-negative /na/- and /ša/-

These two prefixes also occupy S2 of the verbal prefix-chain, they are in complementary distribution with the finite-marker prefix. The meaning of the prefix **/na/-** and **/ša/-** are difficult to ascertain. Both prefixes appear to express affirmative epistemic modality. Between the two, the prefix **/na/-** is known better. It occurs often in the mythical opening passages of narrative texts, but also in contexts where it expresses strong epistemic certainty, as in ex. (501) below.

(501) Gudea Statue B 6:77-7:4 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)

e₂ ur₅-gen₇ dim₂-ma, ensi₂ dili-e
 e ur=gen dim-'a=∅ ensi dili=e
 house DEM=EQU make-PT=ABS ruler single=ERG

^dnin-^ηir₂-su-ra, nu-na-du₃, na-mu-du₃
 ninjirsuk=ra _{S1}nu-_{S2}i-_{S6}nn-_{S7}a-_{S11}n-_{S12}du-_{S14}∅ _{S2}na-_{S4}mu-_{S11}n-_{S12}du-_{S14}∅
 DN=DAT.H NEG-FIN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.A-build-3.SG.P MOD-VEN-3.SG.H.A-build-3.SG.P

“No ruler but he (= Gudea) has ever built a temple fashioned like this for the god Ningirsu.” = lit. “No ruler has ever built a temple fashioned like this for the god Ningirsu, but he (= Gudea) did built it.”

One could speculate that the affirmative epistemic prefix **/na/-** became a marker of “hearsay” evidentiality by associating epistemic certainty with the reliability of knowledge inherited from ancient times. In its epistemic meaning the prefix **/na/-** might have been largely supplanted by the prefix **/ha/-**.

Further readings

The most important descriptions of the traditional approach to the modal prefixes in Sumerian are Edzard 1971 and 2003: 113–130. An important contribution to the topic is Attinger 1993: 288–297, who takes notice of many of the shortcomings of the traditional approach. Civil’s description with the introduction of the modern linguistic terminology can be found in Civil 2000.

In a number of grammatical environments the negative modal prefix **/na(n)/-** and the affirmative **/na/-** may be written with the same grapheme NA. The arguments for the separation of the two morphemes can be found in Attinger 1993: 289–291 and Jagersma 2010: 565–569. The most detailed study on the affirmative **/na/-** is the unpublished work of Ecklin (2005).

A description of the affirmative **/na/-** as a prefix of evidentiality is Marsal 2012.

Exercises

16.1 Look up the new words used in the examples of this lesson in Foxvog’s (2016b) or Volk’s (2012) glossary, and learn them.

16.2 Study the examples of this lesson carefully and make yourself familiar with their grammatical analysis.

16.3 Compare the examples below! Why does ex. (502) use the negated form of an independent copula; and why do the other two examples use only the /nu/ particle without a copula?

(502) NG 32 obv. 3 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P110613)

arad ur-^dkuš-^dba-u₂-ka nu-u₃-me-en₃
 arad urkušbauk=ak=∅ _{s1}nu-_{s2}i-_{s12}me-_{s14}en
 slave PN=GEN=ABS NEG-FIN-COP-1.SG.S
 “I am not a slave of Ur-Kuš-Bau.”

(503) E-ana-tum 1 rev. 10:23-25 (RIME1.9.3.1) (Lagash, 25th c.) (P222399)

na-ru₂-a, mu-be₂, lu₂-a nu
 narua=ak mu-be=∅ lu=ak nu
 stele=GEN name=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS person=GEN NEG
 “The stele’s name is not that of man.”

(504) The Lament for Urim and Sumer A95 (ETCSL 2.2.3)

dam-ηu₁₀ nu
 dam=ηu=∅ nu
 wife=1.SG.POSS=ABS NEG
 “(The father turned away from his wife saying:) ‘She is not my wife’.”

16.4 Explain the form of the negative prefix in the example below!

(505) Gudea Statue B 4:10 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)

usan₃ la-ba-sag₃
 usan=∅ _{s1}nu-_{s5}ba-_{s12}sag-_{s14}∅
 whip=ABS NEG-MID-hit-3.SG.S
 “No one was whipped.”

16.5 Explain the meaning of the modal-prefix, the form of the locative3 prefix, and the tense of the verb in the following example!

(506) Gudea Statue B 1:17–19 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)

sa₂-dug₄-na e₂ ^dnin-ηirsu-ka-ta
 sadug=ane=’a e ninηirsuk=ak=ta
 offer=3.SG.NH.POSS=L2.NH house DN=GEN=ABL

inim ηe₂-eb₂-gi₄
 inim=∅ _{s1}ha-_{s2}i-_{s5}b-_{s10}(i>)∅-_{s12}gi-_{s14}∅
 word=ABS MOD-FIN-3.SG.NH-L2.SYN-return-3.SG.S

“May his regular offering in the temple of Ningirsu be withdrawn!”

16.6 Negate the following modal forms!

a)

iri mete-na, šu ηe-na-zig₃
 iri nite=ane=’a šu=∅ _{s1}ha-_{s2}i-_{s6}nn-_{s7}a-_{s10}n-_{s12}zig-_{s14}∅
 city self=3.SG.H.POSS=L1 hand=ABS MOD-FIN-3.SG.H-DAT-L1.SYN-rise-3.SG.S
 “May there be a revolt against him in his own city!”

b)

ḡarza-ḡa₂ mul an kug-ba
 ḡarza=ḡu=ak mul an kug=be='a
 regulation=1.SG.POSS=GEN star sky holy=3.SG.NH.POSS=L2.NH

gu₃ ga-mu-ra-a-de₂
 gu=∅ s₂ga-s₄mu-s₆r-s₇a-s₁₀e-s₁₂de
 voice=ABS MOD-VEN-2.SG-DAT-L2-pour

“Let me tell you the pure stars of heaven indicating my regulations!”

c)

gud-gen₇, ud=ne-na ḡe₂-gaz
 gud=gen ud=nēn='a s₁ḡa-s₂i-s₁₂gaz-s₁₄∅
 ox=EQU day=DEM=L1 MOD-FIN-kill-3.SG.S

“May he be slaughtered like an ox on the very day!”

d)

urim^{ki}-e gil-sa-aš, ḡe₂-mi-ak
 urim=e gilsa=eš s₁ḡa-s₂i-s₄m-s₅b-s₁₀i-s₁₁n-s₁₂ak-s₁₄∅
 GN=L3.NH treasure=ADV MOD-FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-L3-3.SG.H.A-act-3.SG.P

“He donated indeed (the drained swamp) to Urim for ever.” = lit. “He made indeed Urim treat (the drained swamp) in the manner of a treasure.”

e)

inim-ba ḡa-mu-da-gub
 inim=be='a s₁ḡa-s₄mu-s₆'-s₈da-s₁₀n-s₁₂gub-s₁₄∅
 word=DEM=L1 MOD-VEN-1.SG-COM-L1.SYN-stand-3.SG.S

“May she stand with me in this matter!”

f)

an-ta ḡe₂-ḡal₂ ḡa-mu-ra-ta-ḡen
 an=ta ḡeḡal=∅ s₁ḡa-s₄mu-s₆r-s₇a-s₉ta-s₁₂ḡen-s₁₄∅
 sky=ABL abundance=ABS MOD-VEN-2.SG-DAT-ABL-go-3.SG.S

“Abundance comes down to you from heaven.”

g)

niḡ₂ ki-en-gi-ra ba-a-gu-la
 niḡ kengir='a s₅ba-s₁₀e-s₁₂gul-s₁₄∅-s₁₅'a=∅
 thing homeland=L2.NH MID-L2-destroy-3.SG.S-SUB=ABS

kur-ra ga-am₃-mi-ib-gu-ul
 kur='a s₂ga-s₄m-s₅b-s₁₀i-s₁₁b-s₁₂gul
 foreign.land=L2.NH MOD-VEN-3.SG.NH-L2-3.SG.NH.P-destroy

“Whatever has been destroyed in the homeland, I shall destroy in the foreign lands!”

16.7 Please, look up the context of the following two exx. on the ETCSL website! Compare the use of the modal forms in them! Try to explain their use on the basis of what you have learnt in this lesson.

(507) Dumuzi's Dream 91 (ETCSL 1.4.3)

nin₉-ḡu₁₀ saḡ u₂-a ga-an-šub ki-ḡu₁₀ na-ab-pad₃-[de₃]

“My sister, I will duck down my head in the grass! Don't reveal my whereabouts to them!”

(508) Dumuzi's Dream 144 (ETCSL 1.4.3)

gu⁵-li- η u¹⁰ sa η u₂-a η e₂-en-šub ki-ne₂ ba-ra-zu

"My friend must have ducked down his head in the grass, I have no idea about his whereabouts."

16.8 Add morphemic segmentation and glossing to the following letter-orders, and translate them with the help of Volk's (2012) or Foxvog's glossary (2016b). For the numerical expression used in them you may consult ORACC's preliminary description of metrological expressions (<http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/doc/downloads/numref.pdf>), or Powell's entry in the *Reallexikon der Assyriologie* (1987–90).

a) LEM 180 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P107192)

obv.

1. η a-bu₃-bu₃
2. u₃-na-a-dug₄
3. 1(ban₂) ziz₂
4. lu₂-^diškur-ra

rev.

1. η a-mu-na-ab-šum₂-mu
2. kišib₃-ba-ne₂-ta
3. ga-ab-ta-tur

b) TCS 1, 269 (unknown, 21st c.) (P145756)

obv.

1. ur-^dšara₂
2. u₃-na-a-dug₄
3. 1/2(diš) gi η ₄ kug-babbar
4. e₂-zid- η u¹⁰

5. η a-na-ab-šum-mu

rev.

1. η e₂₆-e u₃- η en
2. ga-na-ab-šum₂

c) MVN 6, 429 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P114829)

obv.

1. lugal-gu₂-gal-ra
2. u₃-na-a-dug₄
3. 2(u) 2(aš) gu₂ gi-zi
4. di η ir-sukkal-ra

5. η e₂-na-ab-šum₂-mu

rev.

1. na-mi-gur-re
2. a-ma-ru-kam
3. a-ba šeš- η u¹⁰-ge₂

d) TCS 1, 128 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P111261)

obv.

1. lu₂-^dšara₂
2. u₃-na-a-dug₄
3. ^mur-^dlamma
4. u₃ ba-za

rev.

1. lu₂ na-an-ba-du₃
2. ze₂-e-me maškim-a-ne₂
3. ^r η e₂¹-me

e) LEM 87 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P112518)

obv.

1. na-ne₂-^rra¹
2. u₃-na-a-dug₄
3. ^msi- η ar-kalam-ma
4. ^mur-meš₃

5. dumu lugal-ka-gi-na-me-eš

rev.

1. η iri₃-se₃-ga e₂ ^dnin-e₂-gal-ka šag₄ mar-sa-me-eš
2. na-an-ba-na-a-du₃

f)) TCS 1, 142 (Nippur, 21st c.) (P145683)

obv.

1. lugal-ezen-ra
2. u₃-na-a-dug₄
3. amar-šuba munu₄-mu₂
4. lu₂-^dnin-šubur-ka-ra
5. lu₂ i₃-ḡeš na-ne-zi-zi

rev.

1. a₂-aḡ₂ saḡḡa-kam
2. tukum-bi
3. ḡeš nu-ra-tug₂-ga
4. e₂-a-ne₂ gul-a

g) BM 24108 (Lagash 21st c.) (P145596)

obv.

1. na-ne₂
2. u₃-na-a-dug₄
3. maš-gu-la-ra
4. 1(ḡeš₂) še gur
5. ṽšum₂-mu¹-da

rev.

1. ḡe₂-na-dug₄
2. a-na-aš-am₃
3. nu-u₃-na-šum₂
4. ḡe₂-na-ab-šum₂-mu
5. inim-be₂ na-ba-ab-gur-re

16.9 Transliterate the text of FaoS 19, Gir21 (Lagash, 23rd c.) (P213588) (a handcopy of the text can be found at <http://cdli.ucla.edu/P213588>) with the help of Volk's sign list (2012). Translate the text with the help of Volk's (2012) or Foxvog's glossary (2016b). Assign morphemic segmentation and glossing to the verbal forms.

16.10 Transliterate the text of FaoS 19, Um5 (unknown, 23rd c.) (P215523) (a handcopy of the text can be found at <http://cdli.ucla.edu/P215523>) with the help of Volk's sign list (2012). Translate the text with the help of Volk's (2012) or Foxvog's glossary (2016b). Assign morphemic segmentation and glossing to the verbal forms.

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Solution key to selected exercises

2.1

Sumerian	voice	aspiration	emphatic
{b}, {d}, {g}			
{p}, {t}, {k}		+	

Akkadian	voice	aspiration	emphatic
{b}, {d}, {g}	+		
{p}, {t}, {k}			
{t}, {q}			+

In Sumerian both series of stops were pronounced voiceless, their distinctive feature being aspiration. Consequently, both series were “heard” as voiceless by Akkadian native speakers. In Akkadian all three series of stops were pronounced without aspiration. Consequently, all three series were “heard” as sounds without aspiration by Sumerian native speakers.

2.2

Sumerian words were stressed on the last syllable. In group a) of the Sumerian loan words into Akkadian the last consonant of the original Sumerian word becomes geminated in Akkadian, making the penultimate syllable of the Akkadian word heavy. The stress on the last syllable of the original Sumerian word may thus also be retained in the Akkadian word. In group b) of the Sumerian loan words, the syllable structure of the Akkadian word did not have to be adapted, as the loaned Sumerian word’s long last vowel made the penultimate syllable heavy without any change.

2.3

- a) {še} (term): ḡal₂, pad₃
- b) {mi} (ven-3nh-loc2/3): gi₄, gur, tud
- c) {ne} (loc1-3): ḡal₂, tar
- d) {i} (fin): dim₂, tuš, gi₄, sig

3.2

- a) nin-a-na-ke₄
 nin=ane=ak=e
 lady=3.SG.H.POSS=GEN=ERG
- b) iri-ne₂
 iri=ane=e
 city=3.SG.H.POSS=ERG
- c) nin diḡir-re-e-ne
 nin diḡir=enē=ak=∅
 lady god=PL=GEN=ABS
- d) lugal-ḡu₁₀
 lugal=ḡu=e
 king=1.SG.POSS=ERG

- e) nam-til₃ šeš-a-ne-ne
 namtil šeš=anenē=ak=∅
 life brother=3.PL.POSS=ABS
- f) niḡ₂ šu-ḡa₂
 niḡ šu=ḡu=ak=∅
 thing hand=1.SG.POSS=GEN=ABS
- g) arad₂-zu
 arad=zu=∅
 servan=2.SG.POSS=ABS
- h) inim diḡir-re₂-ne
 inim diḡir=enē=ak=∅
 word god=PL=GEN=ABS
- i) e₂ iri nam-lugal-ḡa₂-ka
 e iri namlugal=ḡu=ak=ak=∅
 house city kingship=1.SG.POSS=GEN=GEN=ABS
- j) dumu ensi₂ lagaš^{ki}-ka-ke₄
 dumu ensik lagaš=ak=ak=e
 child ruler GN=GEN=GEN=ERG
- l) ama diḡir-re-ne-ke₄
 ama diḡir=enē=ak=e
 mother god=PL=GEN=ERG
- m) lugal an-ub-da limmu₂-ba-ke₄
 lugal anubda limmu=be=ak=e
 king quarter 4=3.SG.NH.POSS=GEN=ERG
- n) diḡir-ḡu₁₀-gen₇
 diḡir=ḡu=gen
 god=1.SG.POSS=EQU
- o) šu maḡ-ne₂
 šu maḡ-∅=ane=∅
 hand mighty-TL=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS
- p) mu-be₂
 mu=be=∅
 name=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS
- q) diḡir-ra-na-ke₄
 diḡir=ane=ak=e
 god=3.SG.H.POSS=GEN=ERG
- r) e₂-ne-ne
 e=anenē=∅
 house=3.PL.POSS=ABS

- s) diŋir-re-ne
 diŋir=enē=e
 god=PL=ERG
- t) bad₃ gal-be₂
 bad gal-∅=be=∅
 wall great=TL=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS
- u) lugal-ne₂
 lugal=ane=ra
 king=3.SG.NH.POSS=DAT.H

3.3

- a) $\begin{matrix} p_1 \text{lugalazida} & p_1 \text{arad} & p_3[p_1 \text{lugalkigal}=p_5 \text{ak}]=p_5 \emptyset \\ p_1 \text{PN}_1 & p_1 \text{slave} & p_3[p_1 \text{PN}_2=p_5 \text{GEN}]=p_5 \text{ABS} \end{matrix}$
 “Lugal-azida, the slave of Lugal-kigal”
- b) $\begin{matrix} p_1 \text{namlugal} & p_3[p_1 \text{kiš}=p_5 \text{ak}]=p_5 \emptyset \\ p_1 \text{kingship} & p_3[p_1 \text{GN}=p_5 \text{GEN}]=p_5 \text{ABS} \end{matrix}$
 “the kingship of Kish”
- c) $\begin{matrix} p_1 \text{biluda} & p_3[p_1 \text{diŋir}=p_4 \text{enē}=p_5 \text{ak}]=p_5 \text{e} \\ p_1 \text{rite} & p_3[p_1 \text{god}=p_4 \text{PL}=p_5 \text{GEN}]=p_5 \text{L3.NH} \end{matrix}$
 “the rites of the gods”
- d) $\begin{matrix} p_1 \text{diŋir} & p_2 \text{galgal-}\emptyset & p_3[p_1 \text{lagaš}=p_5 \text{ak}]=p_4 \text{enē}=p_5 \text{e} \\ p_1 \text{god} & p_2 \text{big}\sim\text{PL-TL} & p_3[p_1 \text{GN}=p_5 \text{GEN}]=p_4 \text{PL}=p_5 \text{ERG} \end{matrix}$
 “the great gods of Lagash”
- e) $\begin{matrix} p_1 \text{e}=p_3 \text{nu}=p_5 \emptyset \\ p_1 \text{e}=p_3 \text{1.SG.POSS}=p_5 \text{ABS} \end{matrix}$
 “my temple”
- f) $\begin{matrix} p_1 \text{namtil}=p_3 \text{ane}=p_5 \emptyset \\ p_1 \text{life}=p_3 \text{3.SG.H.POSS}=p_5 \text{ABS} \end{matrix}$
 “his life”
- g) $\begin{matrix} p_1 \text{kisura} & p_3[p_1 \text{ninġirsuk}=p_5 \text{ak}]=p_5 \text{e} \\ p_1 \text{border} & p_3[p_1 \text{DN}=p_5 \text{GEN}]=p_5 \text{L3.NH} \end{matrix}$
 “to Ningirsu’s border”
- h) $\begin{matrix} p_1 \text{en} & p_3[p_1 \text{aratta}=p_5 \text{ak}]=p_5 \text{e} \\ p_1 \text{lord} & p_3[p_1 \text{GN}=p_5 \text{GEN}]=p_5 \text{ERG} \end{matrix}$
 “the lord of Aratta”
- i) $\begin{matrix} p_1 \text{zapag}=p_3 \text{zu}=p_5 \emptyset \\ p_1 \text{cry}=p_3 \text{2.SG.POSS}=p_5 \text{ABS} \end{matrix}$
 “your cry”
- j) $\begin{matrix} p_1 \text{nu} & p_2 \text{girin-}\emptyset=p_5 \text{'a} \\ p_1 \text{bed} & p_2 \text{pure-TL}=p_5 \text{L2.NH} \end{matrix}$
 “onto the flowery bed”

k) p_1a $\text{p}_2\text{dug-}\emptyset=\text{p}_5\emptyset$
 p_1water $\text{p}_2\text{sweet-TL}=\text{p}_5\text{ABS}$
 “sweet water”

l) $\text{p}_1\text{mesalim}$ $\text{p}_3[\text{p}_1\text{lugal}] = \text{p}_5\text{ak}] = \text{p}_5\text{e}$
 p_1PN $\text{p}_3[\text{p}_1\text{king}] = \text{p}_5\text{GN} = \text{p}_5\text{GEN}] = \text{p}_5\text{ERG}$
 “Mesalim, king of Kish”

3.4

- a) 1. The child of his brothers
 2. The children of his brother
 b) 1. The old donkey of my brother
 2. The donkey of my old brother

3.5

- a) the plural-marker is not used with non-human nouns
 b) it should be: p_1azu $\text{p}_2\text{zid-}\emptyset$ $\text{p}_3[\text{p}_1\text{lugal} = \text{p}_5\text{ak}] = \text{p}_4\text{enē} = \text{p}_5\emptyset$
 c) the case-marker is missing at the end of the noun phrase
 d) the case-marker is missing at the end of the noun phrase
 e) the plural-marker is not used with non-human nouns
 f) —
 g) it should be: p_1geme $\text{p}_2\text{libir-}\emptyset$ $\text{p}_3[\text{p}_1\text{damgar} = \text{p}_5\text{ak}] = \text{p}_5\emptyset$

4.4

- a) p_1dumu $\text{p}_2\text{zid-}\emptyset$ $\text{p}_3[\text{p}_1\text{lugal} = \text{p}_5\text{ak}] = \text{p}_4\text{enē} = \text{p}_5\emptyset$
 p_1child $\text{p}_2\text{true-TL}$ $\text{p}_3[\text{p}_1\text{king} = \text{p}_5\text{GEN}] = \text{p}_4\text{PL} = \text{p}_5\text{ABS}$
- b) p_1dumu $\text{p}_2\text{zid-}\emptyset$ $\text{p}_3[\text{p}_1\text{lugal}] = \text{p}_2\text{mah-}\emptyset = \text{p}_5\text{ak}] = \text{p}_4\text{enē} = \text{p}_5\emptyset$
 p_1child $\text{p}_2\text{true-TL}$ $\text{p}_3[\text{p}_1\text{king}] = \text{p}_2\text{mighty-TL} = \text{p}_5\text{GEN}] = \text{p}_4\text{PL} = \text{p}_5\text{ABS}$
- c) p_1dumu $\text{p}_2\text{zid-}\emptyset$ $\text{p}_3[\text{p}_1\text{lugal}] = \text{p}_2\text{mah-}\emptyset = \text{p}_4\text{enē} = \text{p}_5\text{ak}] = \text{p}_4\text{enē} = \text{p}_5\emptyset$
 p_1child $\text{p}_2\text{true-TL}$ $\text{p}_3[\text{p}_1\text{king}] = \text{p}_2\text{mighty-TL} = \text{p}_4\text{PL} = \text{p}_5\text{GEN}] = \text{p}_4\text{PL} = \text{p}_5\text{ABS}$
- d) p_1dumu $\text{p}_2\text{zid-}\emptyset$ $\text{p}_3[\text{p}_1\text{lugal}] = \text{p}_2\text{mah-}\emptyset$ $\text{p}_3[\text{p}_1\text{kur} = \text{p}_5\text{ak}] = \text{p}_5\text{ak}] = \text{p}_4\text{enē} = \text{p}_5\emptyset$
 p_1child $\text{p}_2\text{true-TL}$ $\text{p}_3[\text{p}_1\text{king}] = \text{p}_2\text{mighty-TL}$ $\text{p}_3[\text{p}_1\text{land} = \text{p}_5\text{GEN}] = \text{p}_5\text{GEN}] = \text{p}_4\text{PL} = \text{p}_5\text{ABS}$
- e) p_1dumu $\text{p}_2\text{zid-}\emptyset$ $\text{p}_3[\text{p}_1\text{lugal}] = \text{p}_2\text{mah-}\emptyset$ $\text{p}_3[\text{p}_1\text{kur} \sim \text{kur} = \text{p}_5\text{ak}] = \text{p}_5\text{ak}] = \text{p}_4\text{enē} = \text{p}_5\emptyset$
 p_1child $\text{p}_2\text{true-TL}$ $\text{p}_3[\text{p}_1\text{king}] = \text{p}_2\text{mighty-TL}$ $\text{p}_3[\text{p}_1\text{land} \sim \text{PL} = \text{p}_5\text{GEN}] = \text{p}_5\text{GEN}] = \text{p}_4\text{PL} = \text{p}_5\text{ABS}$
- f) p_1dumu $\text{p}_2\text{zid-}\emptyset$ $\text{p}_3[\text{p}_1\text{lugal}] = \text{p}_2\text{mah-}\emptyset$
 p_1child $\text{p}_2\text{true-TL}$ $\text{p}_3[\text{p}_1\text{king}] = \text{p}_2\text{mighty-TL}$
 $\text{p}_3[\text{p}_1\text{kur} \sim \text{kur} = \text{p}_5\text{ak}] = \text{p}_4\text{enē} = \text{p}_5\text{ak}] = \text{p}_4\text{enē} = \text{p}_5\emptyset$
 $\text{p}_3[\text{p}_1\text{land} \sim \text{PL} = \text{p}_5\text{GEN}] = \text{p}_4\text{PL} = \text{p}_5\text{GEN}] = \text{p}_4\text{PL} = \text{p}_5\text{ABS}$
- g) p_1sipad $\text{p}_3[\text{p}_1\text{anše} = \text{p}_3\text{ane} = \text{p}_5\text{ak}] = \text{p}_5\emptyset$
 $\text{p}_1\text{shepherd}$ $\text{p}_3[\text{p}_1\text{donkey} = \text{p}_3\text{3.SG.H.POSS} = \text{p}_5\text{GEN}] = \text{p}_5\text{ABS}$
- h) p_1sipad $\text{p}_3[\text{p}_1\text{anše}] = \text{p}_3[\text{p}_1\text{ama} = \text{p}_5\text{ak}] = \text{p}_5\text{ak}] = \text{p}_5\emptyset$
 $\text{p}_1\text{shepherd}$ $\text{p}_3[\text{p}_1\text{donkey}] = \text{p}_3[\text{p}_1\text{mother} = \text{p}_5\text{GEN}] = \text{p}_5\text{GEN}] = \text{p}_5\text{ABS}$
- i) p_1sipad $\text{p}_3[\text{p}_1\text{anše}] = \text{p}_3[\text{p}_1\text{ama}] = \text{p}_2\text{sag-}'\text{a} = \text{p}_5\text{ak}] = \text{p}_5\text{ak}] = \text{p}_5\emptyset$
 $\text{p}_1\text{shepherd}$ $\text{p}_3[\text{p}_1\text{donkey}] = \text{p}_3[\text{p}_1\text{mother}] = \text{p}_2\text{kind-PT} = \text{p}_5\text{GEN}] = \text{p}_5\text{GEN}] = \text{p}_5\text{ABS}$

j) $\begin{matrix} p_1 \text{ sipad} & p_3 [p_1 \text{ anše} & p_2 \text{ zid-}\emptyset & p_3 [p_1 \text{ ama} & p_2 \text{ sag-}'a=p_5 \text{ ak}] = p_5 \text{ ak}] = p_5 \emptyset \\ p_1 \text{ shepherd} & p_3 [p_1 \text{ donkey} & p_2 \text{ healthy-TL} & p_3 [p_1 \text{ mother} & p_2 \text{ kind-PT} = p_5 \text{ GEN}] = p_5 \text{ GEN}] = p_5 \text{ ABS} \end{matrix}$

k) $\begin{matrix} p_1 \text{ ama} & p_3 [p_1 \text{ sipad} & p_2 [p_1 \text{ anše} = p_5 \text{ ak}] = p_3 \text{ ane} = p_5 \text{ ak}] = p_5 \emptyset \\ p_1 \text{ mother} & p_3 [p_1 \text{ shepherd} & p_2 [p_1 \text{ donkey} = p_5 \text{ GEN}] = p_3 \text{ 3.SG.H.POSS} = p_5 \text{ GEN}] = p_5 \text{ ABS} \end{matrix}$

l) $\begin{matrix} p_1 \text{ ama} & p_3 [p_1 \text{ sipad} & p_2 [p_1 \text{ anše} = p_5 \text{ ak}] \\ p_1 \text{ mother} & p_3 [p_1 \text{ shepherd} & p_2 [p_1 \text{ donkey} = p_5 \text{ GEN}] \end{matrix}$
 $p_2 \text{ zid-}\emptyset = p_3 \text{ ane} = p_5 \text{ ak}] = p_5 \emptyset$
 $p_2 \text{ reliable-TL} = p_3 \text{ 3.SG.H.POSS} = p_5 \text{ GEN}] = p_5 \text{ ABS}$

m) $\begin{matrix} p_1 \text{ ama} & p_2 \text{ sag-}'a & p_3 [p_1 \text{ sipad} & p_2 [p_1 \text{ anše} = p_5 \text{ ak}] \\ p_1 \text{ mother} & p_2 \text{ kind-PT} & p_3 [p_1 \text{ shepherd} & p_2 [p_1 \text{ donkey} = p_5 \text{ GEN}] \end{matrix}$
 $p_2 \text{ zid-}\emptyset = p_3 \text{ ane} = p_5 \text{ ak}] = p_5 \emptyset$
 $p_2 \text{ reliable-TL} = p_3 \text{ 3.SG.H.POSS} = p_5 \text{ GEN}] = p_5 \text{ ABS}$

4.5

a) $\begin{matrix} p_1 \text{ dubsar} & p_3 [p_1 \text{ lugal} = p_5 \text{ ak}] = p_5 \emptyset \\ p_1 \text{ scribe} & p_3 [p_1 \text{ king} = p_5 \text{ GEN}] = p_5 \text{ ABS} \end{matrix}$

$p_1 \text{ lugal} = p_5 \text{ ak}$ $p_1 \text{ dubsar} = p_3 \text{ ane} = p_5 \emptyset$
 $p_1 \text{ king} = p_5 \text{ GEN}$ $p_1 \text{ scribe} = p_3 \text{ 3.SG.H.POSS} = p_5 \text{ ABS}$

b) $\begin{matrix} p_1 \text{ dumu} & p_3 [p_1 \text{ dam} = p_3 \text{ ɲu} = p_5 \text{ ak}] = p_4 \text{ enē} = p_5 \emptyset \\ p_1 \text{ child} & p_3 [p_1 \text{ spouse} = p_3 \text{ 1.S.G.POSS} = p_5 \text{ GEN}] = p_4 \text{ PL} = p_5 \text{ ABS} \end{matrix}$

$p_1 \text{ dam} = p_3 \text{ ɲu} = p_5 \text{ ak}$ $p_1 \text{ dumu} = p_3 \text{ ane} = p_4 \text{ enē} = p_5 \emptyset$
 $p_1 \text{ spouse} = p_3 \text{ 1.S.G.POSS} = p_5 \text{ GEN}$ $p_1 \text{ child} = p_3 \text{ 3.SG.H.POSS} = p_4 \text{ PL} = p_5 \text{ ABS}$

c) $\begin{matrix} p_1 \text{ arad} & p_3 [p_1 \text{ e} & p_3 [p_1 \text{ abba} = p_3 \text{ ɲu} = p_5 \text{ ak}] = p_5 \text{ ak}] = p_5 \emptyset \\ p_1 \text{ servant} & p_3 [p_1 \text{ house} & p_3 [p_1 \text{ father} = p_3 \text{ 1.SG.POSS} = p_5 \text{ GEN}] = p_5 \text{ GEN}] = p_5 \text{ ABS} \end{matrix}$

$p_1 \text{ e}$ $p_3 [p_1 \text{ abba} = p_3 \text{ ɲu} = p_5 \text{ ak}] = p_5 \text{ ak}$ $p_1 \text{ arad} = p_3 \text{ be} = p_5 \emptyset$
 $p_1 \text{ house}$ $p_3 [p_1 \text{ father} = p_3 \text{ 1.SG.POSS} = p_5 \text{ GEN}] = p_5 \text{ GEN}$ $p_1 \text{ servant} = p_3 \text{ 3.SG.NH.POSS} = p_5 \text{ ABS}$

d) $\begin{matrix} p_1 \text{ arad} & p_3 [p_1 \text{ e} & p_3 [p_1 \text{ abba} = p_3 \text{ ɲu} = p_5 \text{ ak}] = p_5 \text{ ak}] = p_5 \emptyset \\ p_1 \text{ servant} & p_3 [p_1 \text{ house} & p_3 [p_1 \text{ father} = p_3 \text{ 1.SG.POSS} = p_5 \text{ GEN}] = p_5 \text{ GEN}] = p_5 \text{ ABS} \end{matrix}$

$p_1 \text{ abba} = p_3 \text{ ɲu} = p_5 \text{ ak}$ $p_1 \text{ arad}$ $p_3 [p_1 \text{ e} = p_3 \text{ ane} = p_5 \text{ ak}] = p_5 \emptyset$
 $p_1 \text{ father} = p_3 \text{ 1.SG.POSS} = p_5 \text{ GEN}$ $p_1 \text{ servant}$ $p_3 [p_1 \text{ house} = p_3 \text{ 3.SG.H.POSS} = p_5 \text{ GEN}] = p_5 \text{ ABS}$

e) $\begin{matrix} p_1 \text{ kisal} & p_3 [p_1 \text{ lugal} = p_3 \text{ ɲu} = p_5 \text{ ak}] = p_5 \emptyset \\ p_1 \text{ courtyard} & p_3 [p_1 \text{ king} = p_3 \text{ 1.S.G.POSS} = p_5 \text{ GEN}] = p_5 \text{ ABS} \end{matrix}$

$p_1 \text{ lugal} = p_3 \text{ ɲu} = p_5 \text{ ak}$ $p_1 \text{ kisal} = p_3 \text{ ane} = p_5 \emptyset$
 $p_1 \text{ king} = p_3 \text{ 1.S.G.POSS} = p_5 \text{ GEN}$ $p_1 \text{ courtyard} = p_3 \text{ 3.SG.H.POSS} = p_5 \text{ ABS}$

f) $\begin{matrix} p_1 \text{ lugal} & p_3 [p_1 \text{ kur~kur} = p_5 \text{ ak}] = p_5 \emptyset \\ p_1 \text{ king} & p_3 [p_1 \text{ land~PL} = p_5 \text{ GEN}] = p_5 \text{ ABS} \end{matrix}$

$p_1 \text{ kur~kur} = p_5 \text{ ak}$ $p_1 \text{ lugal} = p_3 \text{ be} = p_5 \emptyset$
 $p_1 \text{ land~PL} = p_5 \text{ GEN}$ $p_1 \text{ king} = p_3 \text{ 3.SG.N.H.POSS} = p_5 \text{ ABS}$

g) $\begin{matrix} p_1 \text{anše} & p_3[p_1 \text{ursan} = p_5 \text{ak}] = p_5 \emptyset \\ p_1 \text{donkey} & p_3[p_1 \text{hero} = p_5 \text{GEN}] = p_5 \text{ABS} \end{matrix}$

$\begin{matrix} p_1 \text{ursan} = p_5 \text{ak} & p_1 \text{anše} = p_3 \text{ane} = p_5 \emptyset \\ p_1 \text{hero} = p_5 \text{GEN} & p_1 \text{donkey} = p_3 \text{3.SG.H.POSS} = p_5 \text{ABS} \end{matrix}$

h) $\begin{matrix} p_1 \text{abba} & p_3[p_1 \text{dinir} \sim \text{digir} = p_4 \text{enē} = p_5 \text{ak}] = p_5 \emptyset \\ p_1 \text{father} & p_3[p_1 \text{god} \sim \text{PL} = p_4 \text{PL} = p_5 \text{GEN}] = p_5 \text{ABS} \end{matrix}$

$\begin{matrix} p_1 \text{dinir} \sim \text{digir} = p_4 \text{enē} = p_5 \text{ak} & p_1 \text{abba} = p_3 \text{anenē} = p_5 \emptyset \\ p_1 \text{god} \sim \text{PL} = p_4 \text{PL} = p_5 \text{GEN} & p_1 \text{father} = p_3 \text{3.PL.POSS} = p_5 \text{ABS} \end{matrix}$

i) $\begin{matrix} p_1 \text{namtil} & p_3[p_1 \text{šeš} = p_3 \eta u = p_4 \text{enē} = p_5 \text{ak}] = p_5 \emptyset \\ p_1 \text{life} & p_3[p_1 \text{brother} = p_3 \text{1.SG.POSS} = p_4 \text{PL} = p_5 \text{GEN}] = p_5 \text{ABS} \end{matrix}$

$\begin{matrix} p_1 \text{šeš} = p_3 \eta u = p_4 \text{enē} = p_5 \text{ak} & p_1 \text{namtil} & p_3 \text{anenē} = p_5 \emptyset \\ p_1 \text{brother} = p_3 \text{1.SG.POSS} = p_4 \text{PL} = p_5 \text{GEN} & p_1 \text{life} = p_3 \text{3.PL.POSS} = p_5 \text{ABS} \end{matrix}$

j) $\begin{matrix} p_1 \text{tug} & p_3[p_1 \text{sipad} = p_5 \text{ak}] = p_5 \emptyset \\ p_1 \text{garment} & p_3[p_1 \text{shepherd} = p_5 \text{GEN}] = p_5 \text{ABS} \end{matrix}$

$\begin{matrix} p_1 \text{sipad} = p_5 \text{ak} & p_1 \text{tug} = p_3 \text{ane} = p_5 \emptyset \\ p_1 \text{shepherd} = p_5 \text{GEN} & p_1 \text{garment} = p_3 \text{3.SG.H.POSS} = p_5 \text{ABS} \end{matrix}$

4.6

b), e), i)

Look for a noun phrase whose last case-marker is the genitive.

4.7

$\begin{matrix} p_1 \text{barag} & p_3[p_1 \text{enlil} = p_5 \text{ak}] = p_5 'a & p_1 \text{barag} & p_3[p_1 \text{utu} = p_5 \text{ak}] = p_5 'a \\ p_1 \text{dais} & p_3[p_1 \text{DN1} = p_5 \text{GEN}] = p_5 \text{L2.NH} & p_1 \text{dais} & p_3[p_1 \text{DN2} = p_5 \text{GEN}] = p_5 \text{L2.NH} \end{matrix}$

$\begin{matrix} [p_1 \text{barag} \sim \text{barag} & p_3[p_1 \text{kiengir} = p_5 \text{ak}] & p_1 \text{ensik} & p_3[p_1 \text{kur} \sim \text{kur} = p_5 \text{ak}] = p_5 \emptyset \\ [p_1 \text{dais} \sim \text{PL} & p_3[p_1 \text{GN} = p_5 \text{GEN}] & p_1 \text{ruler} & p_3[p_1 \text{land} \sim \text{PL} = p_5 \text{GEN}] = p_5 \text{ABS} \end{matrix}$
or

$\begin{matrix} p_1 \text{barag} \sim \text{barag} & p_3[p_1 \text{kiengir} = p_5 \text{ak}] = p_5 \emptyset & p_1 \text{ensik} & p_3[p_1 \text{kur} \sim \text{kur} = p_5 \text{ak}] = p_5 \emptyset \\ p_1 \text{dais} \sim \text{PL} & p_3[p_1 \text{GN} = p_5 \text{GEN}] = p_5 \text{ABS} & p_1 \text{ruler} & p_3[p_1 \text{land} \sim \text{PL} = p_5 \text{GEN}] = p_5 \text{ABS} \end{matrix}$

$\begin{matrix} [p_1 \text{dumu} & p_3[p_1 \text{unug} = p_5 \text{ak}] & p_1 \text{dumu} & p_3[p_1 \text{larsam} = p_5 \text{ak}] & p_1 \text{dumu} & p_3[p_1 \text{patibira} = p_5 \text{ak}] = p_5 \text{ak} \\ [p_1 \text{child} & p_3[p_1 \text{GN1} = p_5 \text{GEN}] & p_1 \text{child} & p_3[p_1 \text{GN2} = p_5 \text{GEN}] & p_1 \text{child} & p_3[p_1 \text{GN3} = p_5 \text{GEN}] = p_5 \text{GEN} \end{matrix}$

4.8

$\begin{matrix} \text{sipad} & \text{udu} & \text{siki-ka-ke4-ne} \\ p_1 \text{sipad} & p_3[p_1 \text{udu} & p_2[p_1 \text{siki} = p_5 \text{ak}] = p_5 \text{ak}] = p_4 \text{enē} = p_5 \text{e} \\ p_1 \text{shepherd} & p_3[p_1 \text{sheep} & p_2[p_1 \text{wool} = p_5 \text{GEN}] = p_5 \text{GEN}] = p_4 \text{PL} = p_5 \text{ERG} \end{matrix}$

5.3

a)

$\begin{matrix} \text{mu} & \text{dumu-ne2} & \text{3-am3} & \text{ba-gub-ba-še3} \\ \text{mu} & s[\text{dumu} = \text{ane} = \emptyset] & p_c[3 = \emptyset] = \text{am} - \emptyset & s_5 \text{ba} - s_{12} \text{gub} - s_{14} \emptyset - s_{15} 'a = \text{ak} = \text{še} \\ \text{name} & s[\text{child} = \text{3.SG.H.POSS} = \text{ABS}] & p_c[3 = \text{ABS}] = \text{COP-3.SG.S} & \text{MID-stand-3.SG.S-SUB} = \text{GEN} = \text{TERM} \end{matrix}$

a-ba-am₃ ^{gi}ma₂ bi₂-in-du₈
 aba=∅=am-∅ ma=e _{S5}b_{-S10}i_{-S11}n_{-S12}du_{-S14}∅
 who=ABS=COP-3.SG.S boat=L3.NH 3.SG.NH-L3-3.SG.H.A-caulk-3SG.P

c)

za-gen₇ a-ba an-ga-kalag
 za=gen aba=∅ _{S2}a_{-S3}nga_{-S12}kalag_{-S14}∅
 2.SG.PR=EQU who=ABS FIN-COOR-strong-3.SG.S
 a-ba an-ga-an-da-sa₂
 aba=∅ _{S2}a_{-S3}nga_{-S6}nn_{-S8}da_{-S12}sa_{-S14}∅
 who=ABS FIN-COOR-3SG-COM-equal-3SG.S

d)

amar-e a-ba-am₃ ba-an-tum₂
 amar=e aba=∅=am-∅ _{S5}ba_{-S11}n_{-S12}tum_{-S14}∅
 calf=DEM who=ABS=COP-3.SG.S MID-3.SG.H.A-lead-3.SG.P

e)

a-ba-am₃ za-e-me-en
 aba=∅=am-∅ ze=∅-me-en
 who=ABS=COP-3.SG.S 2.SG.PR=ABS=COP-2SG.S

5.4

a) 5 gi₄ kug-sig₁₇-am₃,
 5 gi₄ kugsig=∅=am-∅
 5 unit gold=ABS=COP-3.SG.S

b) ensi iri 2-na-ke₄
 ensik iri 2=ak=e
 ruler city 2=GEN=ERG

c) e₂-e
 e=e=∅
 house=DEM=ABS

or

c) e₂-be₂
 e=be=∅
 house=DEM=ABS

d) eg₂-ba
 eg=be=ak
 canal=DEM=GEN

e) šag₄ iri ni₂-te-ne-ne-ka,
 šag iri nite=anenē='a
 heart city self=3.PL.POSS=L1

f) me-a
 me='a
 wh=L1

- g) a-na-aš
ana=še
what=TERM
- h) kug-babbar na-me nu-mu-da-a-tuku
kugbabbar name=ø nu-mu-'-da-e-tuku-ø
silver some=ABS NEG-VEN-1.SG-COM-2.SG.A-have-3.SG.P
- i) a-ba-am₃ lu₂-ne-e
aba=ø=am-ø lu=nē=ø
who=ABS=COP-3.SG.S person=DEM=ABS
- k) e₂ ama-na ul₄-la-be₂
e ama=ane=ak=ø ul-'a=be
house mother=3.SG.H.POSS=GEN=ABS hurry-PT=3.SG.NH.POSS
mu-du₃
mu-n-du-ø
ven-3.SG.H.A-build-3.SG.P
- l) dumu lugal-la 3-am₃
dumu lugal=ak=ø 3=ø=am-ø
child king=GEN=ABS 3=ABS=COP-3.SG.S
- m) e₂ 3-kam-ma-ka
e 3-kamak='a
house 3-ORD=L1

6.3

- a) _{S4}VEN-_{S6}IPP-_{S8}COM-_{S12}STEM-_{S14}pronominal suffix (*composite comitative*)
b) _{S1}MOD-_{S2}FIN-_{S6}IPP-_{S7}DAT-_{S11}FPP-_{S12}STEM-_{S14}pronominal suffix (*composite dative*)
c) _{S4}VEN-_{S6}IPP-_{S7}DAT-_{S9}ABL-_{S12}STEM-_{S14}pronominal suffix (*composite dative, simple ablative*)
d) _{S2}FIN-_{S6}IPP-_{S8}COM-_{S11}FPP-_{S12}STEM-_{S14}pronominal suffix (*composite comitative*)
e) _{S2}FIN-_{S10}L1-_{S12}STEM-_{S14}pronominal suffix (*simple locative1*)
f) _{S5}MID-_{S9}TERM-_{S11}FPP-_{S12}STEM-_{S14}pronominal suffix (*simple terminative*)
g) _{S4}VEN-_{S6}IPP-_{S7}DAT-_{S10}L1-_{S11}FPP-_{S12}STEM-_{S14}pronominal suffix (*composite dative, simple locative1*)
h) _{S2}FIN-_{S6}IPP-_{S7}DAT-_{S12}STEM-_{S14}pronominal suffix (*composite dative*)
i) _{S1}MOD-_{S4}VEN-_{S6}IPP-_{S8}COM-_{S11}FPP-_{S12}STEM-_{S14}pronominal suffix (*composite comitative*)
j) _{S4}VEN-_{S10}L1-_{S11}FPP-_{S12}STEM-_{S14}pronominal suffix (*simple locative1*)
k) _{S4}VEN-_{S6}IPP-_{S9}TERM-_{S11}FPP-_{S12}STEM-_{S14}pronominal suffix (*composite terminative*)

6.4

- a) _{S2}FIN-_{S4}VEN-_{S5}3.SG.NH-_{S7}DAT-_{S12}give-_{S14}3.SG.A
“She will give it to it.”
- b) _{S4}VEN-_{S6}3.SG.H-_{S7}DAT-_{S11}3.SG.NH.P-_{S12}speak.PF-_{S14}3.SG.A
“He says to him: ‘...’.”
- c) _{S1}ANT-_{S4}VEN-_{S5}3.SG.NH-_{S7}DAT-_{S11}3.SG.NH.A-_{S12}give-_{S14}3.SG.P
“After she had given to it,”
- d) _{S2}FIN-_{S5}3.SG.NH-_{S9}ABL-_{S11}3.SG.H.A-_{S12}place-_{S14}3.SG.P
“She supplied them from it.”

e) s_4 VEN- s_6 3.SG.H- s_7 DAT- s_{10} L1- s_{11} 3.SG.H.A- s_{12} build- s_{14} 3.SG.P
 “He built it in it for her.”

f) s_1 ANT- s_4 VEN- s_6 3.SG.H- s_7 DAT- s_8 COM- s_{10} L1- s_{12} enter- s_{14} 2.SG.S
 “After you had entered to her into it with them.”

6.5

s_2 na- s_{11} n- s_{12} sa~sa- s_{14} en
 “Do not buy her!”

s_1 ha- s_2 i- s_{12} til- s_{14} ∅
 “May it come to an end!”

s_1 u- s_4 mu- s_6 nn- s_7 a- s_8 da- s_{10} n- s_{12} kur- s_{14} en
 “After you had entered to her into it with them,”

s_2 a- s_5 b- s_9 ta- s_{11} n- s_{12} gu- s_{14} ∅- s_{15} ’a
 “From which he consumed it.”

s_1 u- s_6 nn- s_{10} i- s_{11} n- s_{12} šuš- s_{14} ∅
 “After he had thrown it on him,”

s_2 i- s_3 nga- s_{11} n- s_{12} sig- s_{14} ∅
 “He also demolished it.”

s_2 i- s_6 nnē- s_9 ši- s_{11} n- s_{12} sa- s_{14} ∅
 “He bought her from them (lit. ‘bartered for them’).”

s_4 mu- s_6 nn- s_7 a- s_8 da- s_{12} šug- s_{14} eš
 “They stepped forward to him with”

s_1 u- s_{11} n- s_{12} taka- s_{14} ∅
 “After he left her,”

s_2 nan- s_{12} kušu- s_{14} ∅
 “It cannot be tired.”

8.3

a) iri^{ki} -ba, $^{d}šu$ - d suen, $diŋir$ -be₂-em
 iri =be=ak $šusuen$ =∅ $diŋir$ =be=∅=am-∅
 $city$ =3.SG.NH.POSS=GEN PN =ABS god =3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS=COP-3.SG.S
 “Of their town, Shu-Suen is its protective god.”

b) da -du $maškim$ -be₂-em
 $dadu$ =∅ $maškim$ =be=∅=am-∅
 PN =ABS $commissioner$ =3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS=COP-3.SG.S
 “Dadu was its commissioner.”

c) ^{d}nin -lil₂-la₂ hi -li $šag$ ₄-ga-na-me-en
 $ninlil$ =ak $hili$ $šag$ =ane=ak=∅=me-en
 DN =GEN $delight$ $heart$ =3.SG.H.POSS=GEN=ABS=COP-2.SG.S
 “As for Ninlil, you are the delight of her heart.”

- d) en za-e-me-en lugal za-e-me-en
 en=∅ ze=∅=me-en lugal=∅ ze=∅=me-en
 lord=ABS 2.SG.PR=ABS=COP-2.SG.S king=ABS 2.SG.PR=ABS=COP-2.SG.S
 “The lord is you, the king is you.”

- e) ^mer₃-ra-ga-ši-ir, dumu nibru^{ki}-kam,
 erragašir=∅ dumu nibru=ak=∅=am-∅
 PN₁=ABS child GN=GEN=ABS=COP-3.SG.S

ur-sag₉-ga, ḥa-mu-na-šum₂-mu

ursaga=ra ḥa-mu-nn-a-n-šum-e

PN₂=DAT.H MOD-VEN=3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.P-give-3.SG.A

“May he hand over Erra-gashir, (who is) a citizen of Nippur, to Ursaga!”

- f) sipad-me e₂ mu-du₃
 sipad=∅=me-en e=∅ mu-’-du-∅
 shepherd=ABS=COP-1.SG.S house=ABS VEN-1.SG.A-build-3.SG.P
 “I, the shepherd, have built the temple.”

- g) ^dutu-am₃ an-šag₄-ge im-si
 utu=am anšag=e i-m-b-si-∅
 DN=STM heaven=L3.NH FIN-VEN=3.SG.NH.L3-fill-3.SG.S
 “It fills the midst of the heavens like the god Utu.”

- h) ^{neš}meš₃ zid-dam kurun₃ kug mu-un-il₂
 meš zid-∅=am kurun kug-∅=∅ mu-n-il-∅
 tree true-TL=STM fruit holy-TL=ABS VEN-3.SG.H.A-bear-3.SG.P
 “He bears holy fruits like a true *mesh*-tree.”

- i) diḡir an ki-a za-e-me-en i₃-zalag-ge-en
 diḡir an ki=ak=∅ ze=∅=me-en i-zalag-en
 god sky earth=GEN=ABS 2.SG.PR=ABS=COP-2.SG.S FIN-shine-2.SG.A
 “It is you who illuminates for the gods of heaven and earth.”

8.4

- a) ud=be=’a gudea=∅ ensik lagaš=ak=∅=am-∅
 day=DEM=L1 PN=ABS ruler GN=GEN=ABS=COP-3.SG.S
- b) ninḡirsuk=ak ensik=∅ lu šag=ane=ak=∅=am-∅
 DN=GEN ruler=ABS person heart=3.SG.H.POSS=GEN=ABS=COP-3.SG.S
- c) lugal=∅=me-en e gal-∅ diḡir maḡ-∅=ḡu=enē=ak=∅
 king=ABS=COP-1.SG.S house great-TL god mighty-TL=1.SG.POSS=PL=GEN=ABS
 mu-’-du-∅
 VEN-1.SG.A-build-3.SG.P
- d) aba=∅=am-∅ ze=∅=me-en
 who=ABS=COP-3.SG.S 2.SG.PR=ABS=COP-2.SG.S
- e) ninḡirsuk=∅ diḡir maḡ-∅ gudea ensik lagaš=ak=ak=∅=am-∅
 DN=ABS god mighty-TL PN ruler GN=GEN=GEN=ABS=COP-3.SG.S
- f) ensik lagaš=ak=∅ ze=∅=me-en
 ruler GN=gen=abs 2.SG.PR=ABS=COP-2.SG.S

- g) dikud lugal=ak 7=be=ø=me-eš
judge king=GEN 7=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS=COP=3.PL.S
- h) sag-'a=ø=am-ø
kind-PT=ABS=COP-3.SG.S
- i) dam=ŋu=ø nu
spouse=1.SG.POSS=ABS NEG
- j) lugal urim=ak=ø nu-i-me-en
king GN=GEN=ABS NEG-FIN-COP-2.SG.S
- k) lugal urim=ak=ø nu
king GN=GEN=ABS NEG
- l) lugal urim=ak=ø nu-i-nga-me-eš
king GN=GEN=ABS NEG-FIN-COOR-COP-3.PL.S
- m) e=ane=ak ningirsuk=ø diŋir=be=ø=am-ø
house=3.SG.H.POSS=GEN DN=ABS god=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS=COP=3.SG.S
- n) anše=am kugsig=ø mu-n-il-ø
donkey=STM gold=ABS VEN-3.SG.H.A-bear-3.SG.P

8.5

For an analysis of this passage, see Zólyomi 2014: 52-54 (the open access book available at <http://www.degruyter.com/view/product/447760>)

9.3

- a) mu-ni-n-ak-ø
VEN-L1-3.SG.H.A-act-3.SG.P
- b) mu-r-a-n/b-mu-ø
VEN-2.SG-DAT-3.SG.H.A/3.SG.NH.A-grow-3.SG.P
- c) i-nn-i-b-gi~gi-ø
FIN-3.SG.H-L2-3.SG.NH.P-return~PF-3.SG.A
- or
- c) i-n-(i>)ø-gi~gi-ø
FIN-3.SG.H-L2.SYN-return~PF-3.SG.A
- d) mu-r-a-n-du-ø
VEN-2.SG-DAT-3.SG.H.A-build-3.SG.P
- e) m-a-b-šum-e
VEN-DAT-3.SG.NH.P-give-3.SG.A
- g) ba-ni-b-gin-enē
MID-L1-3.SG.NH.P-confirm-3.PL.A
- or
- g) ba-n-gin-enē
MID-L1.SYN-confirm-3.PL.A

h) b-i-b-ŋa~ŋa-enē
3.SG.NH-L2-3.SG.NH.P-place~PF-3.PL.A

or

h) i-b-(i>)ø-ŋa~ŋa-enē
FIN-3.SG.NH-L2.SYN-place~PF-3.PL.A

i) gu=ø m-a-n-sig-eš
neck=ABS VEN-DAT-3.SG.H.A-fill~PF-3.PL

j) mu-nn-a-b-dim-e
VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.NH.P-create-3.SG.A

k) sizkur=ø s₄mu-nn-a-n-dug-ø
prayer=ABS VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.A-speak-3.SG.P

10.6

a) kug ŋatumdug=ra mu-nn-a-ere-eš
holy DN=DAT.H VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-go.PL-3.PL.S

b) umma='a ki=ŋu='a i-b-(i>)ø-tuš-ø
GN=L2.NH place=1.SG.POSS=L2.NH FIN-3.SG.NH-L2.SYN-sit-3.SG.S

c) ensik=be=ø s₄mu-n-ug-ø
ruler=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS VEN-3.SG.H.A-die.PL-3.SG.P

d) gud=be=ø nu-mu-n-da-n-laḥ-ø
ox=DEM=ABS NEG-VEN-3.SG.H-COM-3.SG.H.A-bring.PL-3.SG.P

e) lugalkeš=da i-n-da-til-ø
PN=COM FIN-3.SG.H-COM-live-3.SG.S

f) nagsu=še hazanum=e mu-nn-a-n-tum-ø
GN=TERM mayor=ERG VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.A-bring-3.SG.P

g) inim=be='a ḥa-mu-'-da-n-sug-eš
word=DEM=L1 MOD-VEN-1.SG-COM-L1.SYN-stand.PL-3.PL.S

h) en ninḡirsuk=ra mu-nn-a-da-gub-ø
lord DN=DAT.H VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-COM-stand-3.SG.S

11.3

a) enmerkar=ra ḡeštug=ø i-m-ba-nn-a-šum-ø
PN=DAT.H ear=ABS FIN-VEN-mid-3.SG.H-DAT-give-3.SG.S

b) šag iri=ane=ak='a ḥa-ba-n-gaz-ø
heart city=3.SG.H.POSS=GEN=L1 MOD-MID-L1.SYN-kill-3.SG.S

c) sašušgal=ø u-ba-n-(i>)ø-šuš-ø
battle.net=ABS ANT-MID-3.SG.H-L2.SYN-cover-3.SG.S

d) —

e) e=∅ i-m-ba-r-a-du-∅
house=ABS FIN-VEN-MID-2.SG-DAT-build-3.SG.S

f) e=∅ i-m-ba-du-_{S14}∅
house FIN-VEN-MID-build-3.SG.S

g) —

11.5

The two verbal forms differ only in the grammatical gender of the participant in the dative. This results in a different allomorph of the ventive prefix (/mu/ vs. /m/); and the latter allomorph of the ventive in turn requires the presence of the finite-marker.

12.3

In the first example the personal name ends with a closed syllable, the form of the comitative enclitic is therefore /=da/. In the second example the personal name ends in a vowel, the form of the comitative enclitic is therefore /=d/, the short /a/ drops. The writing of this /=d/ would require a VC sign, AD, which is not used.

15.3

išmedagan lugal kengir kiuri=ak=e ud ninurta
PN king GN GN=GEN=ERG day DN

ursan kalag=ane=∅ maškim=še mu-n-tuku-_{S14}∅-_{S15}'a='a
hero strong=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS deputy=TERM VEN-3.SG.H.A-have-3.SG.P-SUB=L1

uṣ šar-∅=e
people numerous-TL=ERG

us zid-∅=∅ ḥa-i-b-dab-e
path right-TL=ABS MOD-FIN-3.SG.NH.P-take-3.SG.A

gud i udu i=∅ e=e i-b-dab-∅
ox fat sheep fat=ABS temple=ERG FIN-3.SG.NH.A-receive-3.SG.P

15.4

a) ninḡirsuk=e
DN=ERG

lu inim=ak saṣ sa-'a=ak=še mu-nnē-a-n-ta-e-∅
man word=GEN head buy-PT=GEN=TERM VEN-3.PL-DAT-ABL-3.SG.H.A-leave-3.SG.P

b) ninḡirsuk=e ensik=ra e=∅ mu-nn-i-n-du-∅
DN=ERG ruler=L3.H house VEN-3.SG.H-L3-3.SG.H.A.-build-3.SG.P

c) ninḡirsuk=e e=da lugal=∅ _{S2}i-m-b-da-n-hul-∅
DN=ERG house=COM owner=ABS FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-COM-3.SG.H.A-rejoice-3.SG.P

d) ninḡirsuk=e e=e i-m-b-a-n-ḡen-∅
DN=ERG house=DAT.NH FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-DAT-3.SG.H.A-go-3.SG.P

e) ninḡirsuk=e amarsuenak lugal=ra urbilum=∅ mu-nn-i-n-ḡul-∅
DN=ERG PN king=L3.H GN=ABS VEN-3.SG.H-L3-3.SG.H.A-raid-3.SG.P

- f) ninjirsuk=e umma='a ki=ŋu='a b-i-n-durun-∅
 DN=ERG GN=L2.NH place=1.SG.POSS=L2.NH 3.SG.NH-L2-3.SG.H.A-sit.PL-3.SG.P

15.5

The example demonstrates the phenomenon external possession. The word ^dnin-hur-sag is in human locative2. It is cross-referenced by a composite locative2 prefix in the verbal prefix-chain. Ninhursag is the inalienable possessor of the word **dub** “knee” in the clause. It is, however, not in P3 of the noun phrase whose head is **dub** “knee”. It is a separate constituent and occupies a sentence-initial position; P3 of **dub** “knee” is filled by a resumptive pronominal enclitic that agrees in person, gender, and number with the possessor (=ane : 3.SG.H.POSS). Both the possessor (^dnin-hur-sag) and the inalienable possessum (**dub**₃) are in the locative2 case. The composite locative2 prefix of the verbal form shows agreement with the human possessor, but not with the possessum.

15.6

The dative prefix apparently precedes the 3rd ps. sg. IPP. The example may indicate that the structure of the verbal prefix-chain is the result of a long process.

16.3

The negative equivalent of a copular clause with a 3rd ps. sg. S and an enclitic copula is negated solely with the negative particle /nu/- and the negative clause contains no copula. The first example is in the 1st ps. sg., so it has to be negated with a negated form of the the independent copula.

16.4

Before a syllable /ba/- the prefixed negative particle /nu/- changes to /la/-.

16.5

The modal prefix /**ha**/- has a deontic meaning expressing a wish. The verbal form is intransitive, S11 contains no FPP. Consequently, the composite 3rd. ps. sg. non-human locative2 prefix becomes syncopated. Intransitive and stative verbs prefixed with /**ha**/- always use the preterite tense in whatever function, epistemic or deontic, the prefix is used.

16.6

- a) iri mete-na, šu na-na-zi-zi
 iri nite=ane='a šu=∅ _{s2}na(n)-_{s6}nn-_{s7}a-_{s10}n-_{s12}zi~zi-_{s13}ed-_{s14}∅
 city self=3.SG.H.POSS=L1 hand=ABS MOD-3.SG.H-DAT-L1.SYN-rise-PF-3.SG.S

“May there be no revolt against him in his own city!”

- b) ŋarza-ŋa2 mul an kug-ba
 ŋarza=ŋu=ak mul an kug=be='a
 regulation=1.SG.POSS=GEN star sky holy=3.SG.NH.POSS=L2.NH

gu3 ba-ra-mu-ra-a-de2-e
 gu=∅ _{s2}bara-_{s4}mu-_{s6}r-_{s7}a-_{s10}e-_{s12}de-_{s14}en
 voice=ABS MOD-VEN-2.SG-DAT-L2-pour-1.SG.A

“I will not tell you the pure stars of heaven indicating my regulations!”

- c) gud-gen7, ud=ne-na na-an-gaz-e
 gud=gen ud=nēn='a _{s2}nan-_{s12}gaz-_{s13}ed-_{s14}∅
 ox=EQU day=DEM=L1 MOD-kill-PF-3.SG.S

“He should not be slaughtered like an ox on the very day!”

d) urim^{ki}-e gil-sa-aš, ba-ra-mi-ak
 urim=e gilsa=eš _{s2}bara-_{s4}m-_{s5}b-_{s10}i-_{s11}n-_{s12}ak-_{s14}∅
 GN=L3.NH treasure=ADV MOD-VEN-3.SG.NH-L3-3.SG.H.A-act-3.SG.P
 “He certainly did not donate (the drained swamp) to Urim for ever.”

e) inim-ba nam-mu-da-gub-be₂
 inim=be='a _{s2}na(n)-_{s4}mu-_{s6}'-_{s8}da-_{s10}n-_{s12}gub-_{s13}ed-_{s14}∅
 word=DEM=L1 MOD-VEN-1.SG-COM-L1.SYN-stand-PF-3.SG.S
 “May she not stand with me in this matter!”

f) an-ta ḥe₂-ḡal₂ ba-ra-mu-ra-ta-ḡen
 an=ta ḥeḡal=∅ _{s2}bara-_{s4}mu-_{s6}r-_{s7}a-_{s9}ta-_{s12}ḡen-_{s14}∅
 sky=ABL abundance=ABS MOD-VEN-2.SG-DAT-ABL-go-3.SG.S
 “Abundance certainly does not come down to you from heaven.”

g) niḡ₂ ki-en-gi-ra ba-a-gu-la
 niḡ kengir='a _{s5}ba-_{s10}e-_{s12}gul-_{s14}∅-_{s15}'a=∅
 thing homeland=L2.NH MID-L2-destroy-3.SG.S-SUB=ABS

kur-ra ba-ra-am₃-mi-ib-gu-ul-le-en
 kur='a _{s2}bara-_{s4}m-_{s5}b-_{s10}i-_{s11}b-_{s12}gul-_{s14}en
 foreign.land=L2.NH MOD-VEN-3.SG.NH-L2-3.SG.NH.P-destroy-1.SG.A
 “Whatever has been destroyed in the homeland, I shall not destroy in the foreign lands!”

16.7

In the first clause of the first example the 1st ps. speaker expresses his intention to duck down his head. His second clause is a negated imperative. In the first clause of the second example, the speaker expresses epistemic certainty. His second clause is negated epistemic certainty.

16.8

a)
 ḥa-bu₃-bu₃, u₃-na-a-dug₄,
 ḥabubu=ra _{s1}u-_{s6}nn-_{s7}a-_{s11}e-_{s12}dug-_{s14}∅
 PN1=DAT.H ANT-3.SG.H-DAT-2.SG.A-speak-3.SG.P
 1(ban₂) ziz₂, lu₂-^diškur-ra, ḥa-mu-na-ab-šum₂-mu,
 1 ziz=∅ luiškur=ra _{s1}ḥa-_{s4}mu-_{s6}nn-_{s7}a-_{s11}b-_{s12}šum-_{s14}e
 1 emmer=ABS PN2=DAT.H MOD-VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.NH.P-give-3.SG.A
 kišib₃-ba-ne₂-ta, ga-ab-ta-tur
 kišib=ane=ta _{s2}ga-_{s5}b-_{s9}ta-_{s12}tur
 tablet=3.SG.H.POSS=ABL MOD-3.SG.NH-ABL-small
 “Please tell Habubu: He should give 10 litres of emmer wheat to Lu-Ishkur! I will deduct it from his tablet.”

b)

ur-^dšara₂ u₃-na-a-dug₄, 1/2(diš) gi₄ kug-babbar
 uršara=ra s₁u-s₆nn-s₇a-s₁₁e-s₁₂dug-s₁₄∅ 1/2 gi₄ kugbabbar=∅
 PN=DAT.H ANT-3.SG.H-DAT-2.SG.A-speak-3.SG.P 1/2 unit silver=ABS

e₂-zid-ŋu₁₀, ha-na-ab-šum-mu
 ezidŋu=ra s₁ha-s₂i-s₆nn-s₇a-s₁₁b-s₁₂šum-s₁₄e
 PN₂=DAT.H MOD-FIN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.NH.P-give-3.SG.A

ŋe₂₆-e u₃-ŋen, ga-na-ab-šum₂
 ŋe=∅ s₁u-s₁₂ŋen-s₁₄∅ s₂ga-s₆nn-s₇a-s₁₁b-s₁₂šum
 1.SG.PR=ABS ANT-go-3.SG.S MOD-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.NH.P-give

“Please tell Ur-Shara: ‘He should give half a shekel of silver to Ezidgu! I myself, when he comes, will give it back to him!’”

c)

lugal-gu₂-gal-ra, u₃-na-a-dug₄, 2(u) 2(aš) gu₂ gi-zi
 lugalgugal=ra s₁u-s₆nn-s₇a-s₁₁e-s₁₂dug-s₁₄∅ 22 gu gi₂=∅
 PN₁=DAT.H ANT-3.SG.H-DAT-2.SG.A-speak-3.SG.P 22 unit reed=ABS

dijir-sukkal-ra, he₂-na-ab-šum₂-mu
 dijirsukkal=ra s₁ha-s₂i-s₆nn-s₇a-s₁₁b-s₁₂šum-s₁₄e
 PN₂=DAT.H MOD-FIN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.NH.P-give-3.SG.A

na-mi-gur-re, a-ma-ru-kam
 s₂nan-s₄m-s₅b-s₁₀i-s₁₁b-s₁₂gur-s₁₄e amaru=ak=∅=am-∅
 MOD-VEN-3.SG.NH-L2-3.SG.NH.P-return-3.SG.A flood=GEN=ABS=COP-3.SG.S

a-ba šeš-ŋu₁₀-ge₂
 aba=∅ šeš=ŋu=gen
 who=ABS brother=1.SG.POSS=EQU

“Please tell Lugal-gugal: ‘He should give 660 kilograms of fodder reed to Dingir-sukkal! He should not bring up this again! It is urgent! Who is like my brother?’”

d)

lu₂-^dšara₂, u₃-na-a-dug₄,
 lušarak=ra s₁u-s₆nn-s₇a-s₁₁e-s₁₂dug-s₁₄∅
 PN₁=DAT.H ANT-3.SG.H-DAT-2.SG.A-speak-3.SG.P

^mur-^dlamma, u₃ ba-za, lu₂ na-an-ba-du₃
 urlamma u baza=ra lu=∅ s₂nan-s₅ba-s₆n-s₁₀(i>)∅-s₁₂du-s₁₃ed-s₁₄∅
 PN₂ and PN₃=L2.H person=ABS MOD-MID-3.SG.H-L2.SYN-hold-PF-3.SG.S

ze₂-e-me maškim-a-ne₂, ¹he₂¹-me
 ze=∅=me-en maškim=ane=∅ s₁ha-s₂i-s₁₂me-s₁₄en
 2.SG.PR=ABS=COP-2.SG.S deputy=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS MOD-FIN-COP-2.SG.S

“Please tell Lu-Shara: ‘No one should detain Ur-Lamma and Baza! It is you who should be their (lit. ‘his’) bailiff!’.”

e)

na-ne₂-ra¹, u₃-na-a-dug₄,nane=ra s₁u-s₆nn-s₇a-s₁₁e-s₁₂dug-s₁₄∅PN₁=DAT.H ANT-3.SG.H-DAT-2.SG.A-speak-3.SG.P^msi-ŋar-kalam-ma, ^mur-meš₃, dumu lugal-ka-gi-na-me-eš

siŋarkalamak urmeš=∅ dumu lugalkaginak=∅=me-eš

PN₂ PN₃=ABS child PN₄=ABS=COP-3.PL.Sŋiri₃-se₃-ga e₂ ^dnin-e₂-gal-ka šag₄ mar-sa-me-eš

ŋirisega e ninegal=ak=ak šag marsa=∅=me-eš

servant house DN=gen=gen heart shipyard=ABS=COP-3.PL.S

na-an-ba-na-a-du₃s₂nan-s₅ba-s₆nn-s₇a-s₁₀e-s₁₂du-s₁₃ed-s₁₄∅

MOD-MID-3.SG.H-DAT-L2-hold-PF-3.SG.S

“Please tell Nane: ‘No one should detain Sigar-kalama and Urmesh, the children of Lugal-kagina, servants in the temple of Ninegal, shipyard assistants, because of him!’”

f)

lugal-ezen-ra, u₃-na-a-dug₄lugalezen=ra s₁u-s₆nn-s₇a-s₁₁e-s₁₂dug-s₁₄∅PN₁ ANT-3.SG.H-DAT-2.SG.A-speak-3.SG.Pamar-šuba munu₄-mu₂, lu₂-^dnin-šubur-ka-ra, lu₂ i₃-ŋešamaršuba munumu luninšuburakak²⁰=ra lu=e iŋeš=∅PN₂ maltster PN₃=DAT.H person=ERG sesame.oil=ABSna-ne-zi-zi, a₂-aŋ₂ saŋŋa-kam,s₂nan-s₆nnē-s₇a-s₁₂zi~zi-s₁₄e aarja saŋŋa=ak=∅=am-∅

MOD-3.PL-DAT-expend~PF-3.SG.A order chief=GEN=ABS=COP-3.SG.S

tukum-bi ŋeš nu-ra-tug₂-ga,tukumbi ŋeš=∅ s₁nu-s₆r-s₇a-s₁₁n-s₁₂tuku-s₁₄∅-s₁₅'a=∅=am-∅

if wood=ABS NEG-2.SG-DAT-3.SG.H.A-have-3.SG.P-SUB=ABS=COP=3.SG.S

e₂-a-ne₂

gul-a

e=ane=∅

s₁gul-s₂a

house=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS destroy-FIN

“Please tell Lugal-ezen: ‘No one may issue sesame oil to Amar-shuba, the maltster, and Lu-Ninshuburka. This is the order of the chief temple administrator! Should anyone not heed you, destroy his house!’”

²⁰ Cf., e.g., BM 106482 (P200719) obv. 8.

g)

na-ne₂, u₃-na-a-dug₄, maš-gu-la-ra
 nane=ra s₁u-s₆nn-s₇a-s₁₁e-s₁₂dug-s₁₄∅ mašgula=ra
 PN₁=DAT.H ANT-3.SG.H-DAT-2.SG.A-speak-3.SG.P PN₂=DAT.H

1(geš₂) še gur, 'šum₂-mu¹-da, he₂-na-dug₄
 60 še gur=∅ šum-ed='a s₁ha-s₂i-s₆nn-s₇a-s₁₁'-s₁₂dug-s₁₄∅
 60 barley unit=ABS give-PF=L2.NH MOD-FIN-3.SG.H-DAT-1.SG.A-speak-3.SG.P

a-na-aš-am₃, nu-u₃-na-šum₂
 ana=še=am-∅ s₁nu-s₂i-s₆nn-s₇a-s₁₁n-s₁₂šum-s₁₄∅
 what=TERM=COP-3.SG.S NEG-FIN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.A-give-3.SG.P

he₂-na-ab-šum₂-mu
 s₁ha-s₂i-s₆nn-s₇a-s₁₁b-s₁₂šum-s₁₄e
 MOD-FIN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.NH.P-give-3.SG.A

inim-be₂ na-ba-ab-gur-re
 inim=be=∅ s₂nan-s₅ba-s₁₁b-s₁₂gur-s₁₄e
 word=DEM=ABS MOD-VEN-MID-3.SG.NH.P-return-3.SG.A

“Please tell Nane: ‘I did tell him to give 18,000 liters of barley to Maš-gula! Why did not he give it to him? He must give it to him! He should not bring up this issue again!’”