This textbook provides an introduction to the grammar of Sumerian, one of the oldest documented languages in the world. It not only synthesizes the results of recent scholarship but introduces original insights on many important questions. The book is designed to appeal to readers of all backgrounds, including those with no prior background in Sumerian or cuneiform writing.

It is written for undergraduate students and structured for a semester-long course: the order of the topics is determined by didactic considerations, with the focus on syntactic analysis and evidence. It explains the functioning of Sumerian grammar in 16 lessons, illustrated with more than 500 fully glossed examples. Each lesson ends with a series of tasks; a solution key to selected exercises can be found at the end of the volume. Above all, this is the first Sumerian textbook that introduces and utilizes the online Assyriological resources available on the internet.

An Introduction to the Grammar of Sumerian has been written 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.
AN INTRODUCTION TO THE GRAMMAR
OF SUMERIAN
AN INTRODUCTION TO THE GRAMMAR OF SUMERIAN

Gábor Zólyomi

with the collaboration of
Szilvia Jáka-Sövegjártó
and
Melinda Hagymássy

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<td>~</td>
<td>reduplication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~PL =</td>
<td>reduplication expressing verbal plurality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~PF =</td>
<td>reduplication expressing present-future tense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 =</td>
<td>first person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 =</td>
<td>second person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 =</td>
<td>third person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A =</td>
<td>agent (subject of a transitive verb)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABL =</td>
<td>ablative case-marker or prefix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABS =</td>
<td>absolutive case-marker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC =</td>
<td>accusative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADV =</td>
<td>adverbiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANT =</td>
<td>prefix of anteriority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COM =</td>
<td>comitative case-marker or prefix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COOR =</td>
<td>coordinator prefix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COP =</td>
<td>copula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVN =</td>
<td>compound verb nominal element</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT =</td>
<td>dative case-marker or prefix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEM =</td>
<td>demonstrative pronoun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DN =</td>
<td>divine name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERG =</td>
<td>ergative case-marker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIN =</td>
<td>finite-marker prefix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN =</td>
<td>genitive case-marker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GN =</td>
<td>geographical name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H =</td>
<td>human</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1 =</td>
<td>locative1 case-marker or prefix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2 =</td>
<td>locative2 case-marker or prefix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L3 =</td>
<td>locative3 case-marker or prefix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L4 =</td>
<td>the archaic locative enclitic =/ne/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MASC =</td>
<td>masculine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MID =</td>
<td>middle prefix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOD =</td>
<td>modal prefix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEG =</td>
<td>negative particle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NH =</td>
<td>non-human</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOM =</td>
<td>nominative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORD =</td>
<td>suffix that forms ordinal numbers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P =</td>
<td>patient (object of a transitive verb)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PF =</td>
<td>present-future, or the marker of the present-future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PL =</td>
<td>plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR =</td>
<td>pronoun</td>
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<tr>
<td>PN =</td>
<td>personal name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POSS =</td>
<td>possessive enclitic</td>
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<tr>
<td>PT =</td>
<td>preterite, or the marker of the preterite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RDP =</td>
<td>reduplication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S =</td>
<td>subject (subject of an intransitive verb)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SG =</td>
<td>singular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUB =</td>
<td>subordinator suffix</td>
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<tr>
<td>STM =</td>
<td>standard marker</td>
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<td>SYN =</td>
<td>syncopated form of a verbal prefix</td>
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<td>TL =</td>
<td>tenseless</td>
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<tr>
<td>TERM =</td>
<td>terminative case-marker or prefix</td>
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<tr>
<td>TN =</td>
<td>temple name</td>
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<td>VEN =</td>
<td>ventive prefix</td>
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With gratitude, I dedicate this book to Géza Komoróczy,
who enticed and inducted me into Assyriology.
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 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 several of the exercises and provided important feedback on earlier versions of this work. I am grateful to my students (Fruzsina Németh, Balázs Kiss, and Gergő Vajda), who visited my Sumerian grammar classes in the academic year of 2015/2016 and 2016/2017, for their help in improving this book.

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.
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 for the grammatical description 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 not produced by native speakers of the language and thus does not form a solid basis for the grammatical description of Sumerian.

¹ On split ergativity in Sumerian see Lesson 9, section 9.1 below.
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 grammatical irregularities, at least compared to the 3rd millennium corpus (see also section 1.4 below). However, many morphological features of the language can first be noted during this period because 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 manly 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)

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 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. 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 “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).

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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.
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 -še₃ or -eš₂) even when one is 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 -aš₂.

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, an important urban centre in the middle of the 3rd millennium BCE in Syria, a closed C₁VC₂ syllable 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 several 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 /tsh/ — 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 the 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 around. 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 most 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 relate to the change in its sociolinguistic status. Its sound system becomes more like that of Akkadian: e.g., the unaspirated voiceless consonants become voiced in most environments. Grammatical distinctions of Sumerian are no longer maintained consistently or are replaced because 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. Several structural interferences from Akkadian can be observed (see Zólyomi 2005b and 2014): 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 introductory 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*), ḫ (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 many 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 *Eléments 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

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


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

One may also consult the “Leipzig-Münchner Sumerischer Zettelkasten” (http://www.assyriologie.uni-muenchen.de/forschung/forschungsprojekte/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 sign 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://krieger2.jhu.edu/neareast/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.


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 based on 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. Crisostomo 2015 is an investigation into the sociolinguistic parameters of Sumerian-Akkadian bilingualism as reflected in writing practices.

Black 1991 remained to be the most important 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 almost 500,000 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 Literary Texts 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 analysed, transliterated, trilingual (Sumerian-English-Hungarian), parallel corpus of all Sumerian royal inscriptions.
The Official Inscriptions of the Middle East in Antiquity (= OIMEA, http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/oimea/) is an ORACC based umbrella project that aims to facilitate quick and easy access to a wide range of open-access editions of ancient Middle Eastern texts, including cuneiform texts in Sumerian.

A survey and assessment 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.
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 be transliterated as mu-na-tšu if it occurs in a inscription of Ur-Nanshe from the 25th c. BCE. There are several 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 must 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.

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.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stops</th>
<th>Affricates</th>
<th>Fricatives</th>
<th>Approximants</th>
<th>Nasals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>vl.</td>
<td>vl. asp.</td>
<td>vl. asp.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BILABIAL</td>
<td>[p] (b)</td>
<td>[pʰ] (p)</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DENTAL OR ALVEOLAR</td>
<td>[t] (d)</td>
<td>[tʰ] (t)</td>
<td>[s] (s)</td>
<td>[ɾ] (r)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LATERAL</td>
<td>[l] (l)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PALATAL</td>
<td>[ʃ] (ʃ)</td>
<td>[ʃ] (ʃ)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VELAR</td>
<td>[k] (k)</td>
<td>[kʰ] (k)</td>
<td>[x] (h)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLOTTAL</td>
<td>[ʔ] (ʔ)</td>
<td></td>
<td>[ɦ] (ɦ)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


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 ([tsʰ]) disappeared from the language by the end of the 3rd millennium: it merged with [ɾ] 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 e₂ = /e/) or */hit/ “river” (later id₂ = /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 /aj/ became /e/ (e.g., */aj/ “water” >”/e/).

Note that the consonant transliterated with the graphoneme {r} was a tap [ɾ], a consonant produced with a very short closure, and not a trill. The voiceless aspirated affricate ([tsʰ]) 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.

Table 2.2: The vowels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FRONT</th>
<th>BACK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HIGH</td>
<td>{i}</td>
<td>{u}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOW</td>
<td>{e}</td>
<td>{a}</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 (= ISO) as in exx. (2), (4), (10) below.

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

e-ma-ta-bala

z₂⁻m₃⁻m₄⁻m₅⁻a₉⁻a₉⁻t₁₀⁻e⁻₃₀⁻bₙa⁻₅₁₀⁻b₅₁₄⁻ø
FIN-VEN-MID-ABL-1.2-CROSS-3.SG.S

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.
LESSON 2

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

\[ i₃-tud-da-a \]
\[ s₂₁-i₃-S₁₁-n-S₁₂-tud-S₁₄-ø-S₁₅ʾ-a-ʾa \]
\[ FIN-3.SG.H.A-bear-3.SG.P-SUB-L₁ \]

— 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)

\[ e-me-sar-sar \]
\[ s₁₁-i₄-m₁₅-b₁₀-i₃-n₃-S₁₁-sar-sar-S₁₄-ø \]

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

\[ i₃-mi-dug₄-dug₄ \]
\[ s₂₁-i₄-m₁₅-b₁₀-i₃-n₃-sar-dug-dug-S₁₄-ø \]

— 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)

\[ be₂-gar-re₂-eš \]
\[ s₁₁-b₁₀-i₄-n₃-sar-S₁₄-eš \]
\[ 3.SG.NH-L₂-3.SG.H.A-place-3.PL \]

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

\[ bi₂-gi₄ \]
\[ s₁₁-b₁₀-i₄-n₃-gi₁-S₁₄-ø \]
\[ 3.SG.NH-L₃-3.SG.H.A-return-3.SG.P \]

— 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.

5 Abbreviations follow the conventions of the Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative (http://cdli.ox.ac.uk/wiki/abbreviations_for_assyriology).
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 (= ni) as in ex. (10) below.\(^6\)

(9) En-metena 23 18 (RIME 1.9.5.23) (Lagash, 25th c.) (P222530)
\[
\text{e-ne₂-pad₃-da-a}
\]
\[
S_{2i}S_{6n}S_{10i}S_{11n}S_{12p}S_{14}'a-'a
\]

(10) DP 103 rev. 2:1 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P220753)
\[
\text{i₃-ni-gi₄}
\]
\[
S_{2i}S_{6n}S_{10i}S_{11n}S_{12g}S_{14}'
\]

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

Based on 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 form 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

\(^6\) 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.
the graphoneme {a}, e.g., ŋar “to place”, or ak “to act”, occur with a “low” version of the verbal prefix, which undergoes vowel assimilation.

Table 2.3: Correspondences of verbal prefixes and verbal bases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PREFIX / STEM</th>
<th>{i}</th>
<th>{u}</th>
<th>{e}</th>
<th>{a}</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>{i}</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>{e}</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 [ʊ].

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PREFIX</th>
<th>VERBAL STEM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LOW</td>
<td>{e} = [e] or [æ] {a} = [a]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>{e} or {a} = [e] or [æ] {u} = [o]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIGH</td>
<td>{i} = [i] {e} = [e]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>{i} = [i] {u} = [u]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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, the vowels of the syllables often appear to be the same in polysyllabic Sumerian words, i.e., they are transliterated with the same graphoneme, e.g., zalag “to be bright”, saḫar “dust”, ǧirîš “foot”, gibîl “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”,
There also exist words which are attested both in forms with two similar
and with two different vowels: a-gu₃ vs. ugu “skull”, a-ne vs. e-ne “he”, ḫa-luh vs. hu-luh “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 /’/ 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 several 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 three 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
LESSON 2

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 in the 3rd mill. BCE. Then fill out Table 3.5, mark the feature that applies to the group of graphonemes in the left with a “+”. Try to explain based on the features why Akkadian borrowed the Sumerian words the way it did.

Table 2.5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sumerian</th>
<th>voice</th>
<th>aspiration</th>
<th>emphatic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>{b}, {d}, {g}</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>{p}, {t}, {k}</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Akkadian</th>
<th>voice</th>
<th>aspiration</th>
<th>emphatic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>{b}, {d}, {g}</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>{p}, {t}, {k}</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>{q}</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

\[
\begin{align*}
e₂-gal & \rightarrow ekallum \quad "palace" \\
kiri₃-dab₅ & \rightarrow kartappum \quad "groom" \\
nu-banda₃ & \rightarrow laputtûm \quad "overseer" \\
barag & \rightarrow parakkum \quad "dais" \\
gada & \rightarrow kitûm \quad "linen" \\
dug₃-gan & \rightarrow tukkannum \quad "bag" \\
u₂-dug₄ & \rightarrow utukkum \quad "demon" \\
\text{gu-za} & \rightarrow kussûm \quad "throne"
\end{align*}
\]

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

\[
\begin{align*}
pisaŋ & \rightarrow pišannum \quad "basket" \\
temen & \rightarrow temennum \quad "foundation" \\
enšíz & \rightarrow išši’akkum \quad "ruler" \\
kiri₃-dab₅ & \rightarrow kartappum \quad "groom" \\
kar & \rightarrow kārum \quad "quay" \\
sukkal & \rightarrow šukkalum \quad "messenger" \\
\text{ɲeʃ-kin₂} & \rightarrow kįškanûm \quad "(a tree)"
\end{align*}
\]
Akkadian \{p\}, \{t\}, \{k\} correspond to voiced graphonemes in Sumerian

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sumerian</th>
<th>Akkadian</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>puršumum</td>
<td>bur-šu-ma</td>
<td>“old person”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aplum</td>
<td>iš-bi₂-la</td>
<td>“heir”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>šāpirum</td>
<td>šabra</td>
<td>“administrator”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>šāmtum</td>
<td>si-im-da</td>
<td>“mark”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mātum</td>
<td>ma-da</td>
<td>“country”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tamkārum</td>
<td>dam-gar₃</td>
<td>“merchand”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mēlērum</td>
<td>ma-al-ga</td>
<td>“counsel”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maškānum</td>
<td>maš-gana₂</td>
<td>“settlement”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>šākinum</td>
<td>šagina</td>
<td>“general”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rākibum</td>
<td>ra-gaba</td>
<td>“rider”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sumerian</th>
<th>Akkadian</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>labirum</td>
<td>libir</td>
<td>“old”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ţēnum</td>
<td>dim₂-ma</td>
<td>“decision”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mašṭarum</td>
<td>maš-dara₃</td>
<td>“inscription”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nāqidum</td>
<td>na-gada</td>
<td>“shepherd”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2 Consider the data below. Try to explain the form of the Sumerian loanwords in Akkadian based on 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sumerian</th>
<th>Akkadian</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>al</td>
<td>allu</td>
<td>“hoe”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gal</td>
<td>kallu</td>
<td>“bowl”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>duḫ</td>
<td>tuḫḫu</td>
<td>“waste”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>us₂</td>
<td>uššu</td>
<td>“foundation”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maz-gurs</td>
<td>makurru</td>
<td>“ship”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ku₃-dim₂</td>
<td>kutinnu</td>
<td>“silversmith”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bīsaŋ</td>
<td>pišannu</td>
<td>“basker”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>muḫaldim</td>
<td>muḫatinnu</td>
<td>“cook”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mar</td>
<td>marru</td>
<td>“shovel”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sumerian</th>
<th>Akkadian</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nar</td>
<td>nāru</td>
<td>“singer”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>en</td>
<td>ěnu</td>
<td>“high priest”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kar</td>
<td>kāru</td>
<td>“quay”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ambar</td>
<td>appāru</td>
<td>“marsh”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>banšur</td>
<td>paššuru</td>
<td>“table”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gala-maḥ</td>
<td>kalamāḥu</td>
<td>“chief lamentation priest”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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-3 NH-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 first describes the general structure of the Sumerian noun phrase. In its second part, it explains the use of the ergative and the absolutive cases, which encode the Agent, the Subject, and the Patient, the primary syntactic functions in Sumerian. In the concluding part of the lesson, the main characteristics of the two adnominal cases, 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.

Table 3.1: The Sumerian nominal template

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.</th>
<th>2.</th>
<th>3.</th>
<th>4.</th>
<th>5.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HEAD</td>
<td>MODIFIER</td>
<td>POSSESSOR</td>
<td>PLURAL-MARKER</td>
<td>CASE-MARKER</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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, 22nd c.) (P232275)

\[
\begin{align*}
{d}nin-njir₂-su-ra \\
pₙninjirsuk=ₚₙra \\
p₁DN=ₚₙDAT.H \\
“for the god Ningirsu”
\end{align*}
\]
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.

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.

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 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.

Table 3.2: The enclitic possessive pronouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1ST PERSON</th>
<th>2ND PERSON</th>
<th>3RD PERSON</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SG</td>
<td>-ŋu₁₀ (=/ŋu/)</td>
<td>-zu (=/zu/)</td>
<td>h. -(a)-ne₂ (=/ane/)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>nh. -be₂ (=/be/)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PL</td>
<td>-me (=/mē/)</td>
<td>-zu-ne-ne (=/zunenē/)</td>
<td>-(a)-ne₂-ne (=/anenē/)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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)

\texttt{dēn-lil₂, lugal kur-kur-ra,}
\texttt{p₁enlil p₁lugal p₃[p₁kur~kur=p₅ak]}
\texttt{p₁DN p₁king p₃[p₁land~PL=p₅GEN]}
\texttt{ab-ba diŋir-diŋir-re₂-ne-ke₄}
\texttt{p₁abba p₃[p₁diŋir~diŋir=p₄enē=p₅ak]=p₅e}
\texttt{p₁father p₃[p₁god~PL=p₄PL=p₅GEN]=p₅ERG}

"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: =/o/, =/e/, =/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 \(=\text{/ra/}, \=\text{/(')a/}, \text{and} \=\text{/e/}\), and one of the verbal affixes \(/i/ \text{or} /e/ \text{in S10}\) are used as markers of more than one case. Based on the correspondences between nominal case-markers and verbal affixes eleven cases may be distinguished in Sumerian:

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

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 remaining part of this lesson.

Several scholars assume the existence of an adverbiative case. Instead of the adverbiative 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.

7 Verbal structural positions will be referred to as “slots” \(=\text{S}\) throughout this book to distinguish them from the structural positions of the noun phrase, referred to as “positions” \(=\text{P}\).
3.2 The ergative and the absolutive case

The ergative and the absolutive encode 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 =/ø/.

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)
ensi₂-ke₄ e₂ mu-du₃
p₁ensik=₃e p₁e=₃ø s₄mu-S₁₁n-S₁₂du-S₁₄ø
p₁ruler=₃erg p₁house=₃abs 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 kur₉ “to enter”, the god Nin-geshzida, is in the absolutive case.

(18)  Gudea Statue E 8:11–15 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232278)
diŋir-ra-ne₂, dnin-ŋeš-zid-da, ... mu-na-da-kur₉-kur₉
p₁diŋir=₃ane p₁ninŋešzidak=₃ø s₄mu-S₆n-S₇a-S₈da-S₁₀n-S₁₂kur-S₁₄ø
“His (= Gudea’s) personal god, Nin-geshzida, 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 3.4 below illustrates the difference between ergative and accusative languages:
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 a 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, 22nd c.) (P232275)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ERGATIVE</td>
<td>ergative</td>
<td>absolutive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACCUSATIVE</td>
<td>nominative</td>
<td>accusative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“in the courtyard of Ningirsu, my lord”

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

“his master’s temple”
The nominal template and the non-adverbal cases

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

ama        dumu-dumu-ne        nin-a-ne₂
p₁ama       p₃[p₁dumu-dumu=p₄enē=p₅ak]    p₁nin=p₃ane=p₅ra
p₁mother    p₃[p₁child~PL=p₄PL=p₅GEN]    p₁lady=p₃3.SG.H.POSS=p₅DAT.H
"to the mother of all children, his lady"

(22) Ur-Namma 14 6 (RIME 3/2.1.1.14) (Ur, 21st c.) (P227125)

lugal       ki-en-gi        ki-uri-ke₄
p₁lugal     p₃[p₁kengir]       p₁kiuri=p₃ak]=p₅e
p₁king      p₃[p₁Sumer]        p₁Akkad=p₃GEN]=p₅ERG
"king of Sumer and Akkad"

If 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
p₁ninšubur    p₁nin=p₃ane=p₅ra
p₁DN          p₁lady=p₃3.SG.H.POSS=p₅DAT.H
"for Ninshubur, his lady"

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

dnin-njir₂-su₂,    ez₂-ninnu-ra
p₁ningirsuk    p₃[p₁eninnu=p₅ak]=p₅ra
p₁DN          p₃[p₁TN=p₅GEN]=p₅DAT.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) similative constructions, which express sameness of manner. In English, the equative and the similative constructions are different, as the examples in Table 3.5 below show:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPAREE</th>
<th>PARAMETER MARKER</th>
<th>PARAMETER</th>
<th>STANDARD MARKER</th>
<th>STANDARD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i)</td>
<td>You</td>
<td>are</td>
<td>as</td>
<td>kind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii)</td>
<td>Ninurta</td>
<td></td>
<td>roars</td>
<td>like</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Sumerian, however, the equative and similative constructions are the same, neither of them contains a parameter marker, and the standard marker is the equative enclitic =/gen/ in both. 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 5:19 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P247619)

\[ dba-u₂-gen₇-a-ba-sag₉ \]
\[ p₁bau=p₂gen \]
\[ p₁aba=p₅ø \]
\[ S₂l-S₁2sag-S₁4ø \]
\[ p₁DN=p₅EQU \]
\[ p₁who=p₅ABS \]
\[ FIN-fine-3SG.S \]

“Who-is-as-kind-as-the-goddess-Bau?”

Exx. (26) and (27) below are similative 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/:
The nominal template and the non-adverbal cases

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

\[ud-sakar\quad gibil-ø-gen\quad men\quad bi₂-il₂\]

\[P₁ud sakar\quad P₂gibil-ø=P₅gen\quad P₁men=P₅ø\quad s₅b-s₁₀i-s₁₁n-s₁₂il-s₁₄ø\]

\[P₁crescent.moon\quad P₂new-TL=P₅EQU\quad P₁crown=ABS\quad 3.SG.NH-L₃-3.SG.H.A-carry-3.SG.P\]

“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)

\[urim₂ki-e\quad gud-gen\quad saŋ\quad an-še₃\]

\[P₁urim=P₅e\quad P₁gud=P₅gen\quad P₁saŋ=P₅ø\quad P₁an=P₅še\]

\[P₁GN=₃₅ERG\quad P₁bull=₃₅EQU\quad P₁head=₃₅ABS\quad P₁sky=₃₅TERM\]

\[mu-dab₆-il₂\]

\[s₄mu₃₅en-s₇da-s₁₁b-s₁₂il-s₁₄ø\]


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

Constructions with the enclitic copula may also be used in a simulative 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, constitutes 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 based on 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, based on 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 simulative 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 based on the transliterations and translations provided. The grammatical function of the noun phrases is indicated in brackets.

a) arad₂ nin-a-na-ke₄ “his lady’s servant” (A)
b) iri-ne₂ “his city” (A)
c) nin diŋir-re-e-ne “the lady of the gods” (S)
d) lugal-ŋu₁₀ “my master” (A)
e) nam-ti₃ šeš-a-ne-ne “the life of his brothers” (P)
f) nin₂ šu-ŋa₂ “the thing of my hand” (S)
g) arad₂-zu “your servant” (S)
h) inim diŋir-re₂-ne “the order of the gods” (P)
i) e₂ iri nam-lugal-ŋa₂-ka “the temple of the city of my kingship” (P)
j) dumu ensi₇ lagaš⁶-ka₄ “the son of the ruler of Lagash” (A)
k) ama diŋir-re-ne-ke₄ “the mother of the gods” (A)
l) lugal an-ub-da limmu₂-ba-ke₄ “the king of the four quarters” (A)
m) diŋir-ŋu₁₀-gen₇ “like my personal god”
 n) šu maḫ-ne₂ “his mighty hand” (P)
o) mu-be₂ “its name” (S)
p) dumu diŋir-ra-ne-ne-ke₄-ne “the children of their gods” (A)
q) e₂-ne-ne “their temple” (P)
r) diŋir-re-ne “the gods” (A)
s) bad₃ gal-be₂ “its great wall” (P)
t) lugal-ne₇ “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 arad₂ lugalkigal=ak=ø
   PN₁    PN₂
b) namlugal₂ kiš=ak=ø
   kingship GN
The nominal template and the non-adverbial cases

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-∅=ʾa
   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. p₁a-zu p₃[p₁šeš=p₃ane=p₄enē=p₅ak]=p₅∅
2. p₁a-zu p₃[p₁šeš=p₃anē=p₅ak]=p₄enē=p₅∅

b)
1. p₁anše p₂libir-∅ p₃[p₁šeš=p₃ŋu=p₅ak]=p₅∅
2. p₁anše p₃[p₁šeš=p₂libir-∅=p₃ŋu=p₅ak]=p₅∅

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

a) p₁e p₃[p₁diŋir p₂gal-∅=p₅ak]=p₄enē=p₅∅
   “the temples of the great god”
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 phoneme before 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 phoneme before and/or after the plural-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 phoneme 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 diḫir-re₂-ne-ke₄
P₁gud P₃[P₁diḫir=P₄enê=P₅ak]=P₅e
P₁ox P₃[P₁god=P₄PL=P₅GEN]=P₅ERG
“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 affect 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

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

\[\text{ki šum₂-ma, ensi₂-ka} \]
\[\text{p₁ki p₂[šum₃=ak]} p₃[ensik₃=ak]=₃ø \]
\[\text{p₁place p₂[onion=GEN]} p₃[ruler=GEN]=₃ABS \]
“the onion-plot of the ruler”

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

\[\text{šum₂-ma, ensi₂-ka} \]
\[\text{p₁ki p₂[šum₃=ak]} p₃[ensik₃=ak]=₃ø \]
\[\text{p₁herder p₂[donkey=GEN]} p₃[3.SG.H.POSS]=₃ABS \]
“his donkey herder”

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

\[\text{ki banšur-ra-ŋu₁₀} \]
\[\text{p₁ki p₂[banšur=ak]} p₃[u₁₀]=₃e \]
\[\text{p₁place p₂[table=GEN]} p₃[3.SG.POSS]=₃L3.NH \]
“at my dining place”

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

\[\text{4 usan₃ mar gibil} \]
\[\text{4 p₁usan p₂[mar=ak]} p₂gibil=₂ø \]
\[\text{4 p₁whip p₂[wagon=GEN]} p₂[3.SG.L.POSS]=₃L3.NH \]
“4 new wagon whips”

If ex. (29) were altered by placing the possessor ensik₃=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)

\[\text{ki šum₂-ma, ensi₂-ka} \]
\[\text{p₁ki p₂[šum₃=ak]} p₃[ensik₃=ak]=₃ø \]
\[\text{p₁place p₂[onion=GEN]} p₃[ruler=GEN]=₃ABS \]
“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 P1gu P2[anše=ak] “donkey neck” functions as the modifier in another, superordinate non-referential genitive: P1tug P2[gu anše=ak=ak] “donkey neck cloths”.

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

26 tug₂ gu₂ anše-ka sumun
26 P1tug P2[P1gu P2[P1anše=P5ak]=P5ak] P2sumun-ø=P5ø
26 P1cloth P2[P1neck P2[P1donkey=GEN=P5GEN]=P5GEN] P2old-TL=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 3/1.1.7.8) (Lagash, 22nd c.) (Q000892)

e₂ ŋirsu ki-ka-ne₂
P1e P2[ŋirsu=GEN]=P33.SG.H.POSS=ABS
P1temple P2[GN=GEN]=P3.SG.H.POSS=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 e₂ “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/.
The left-dislocated possessor and the possessee may be separated by another noun phrase:

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

e₂-a  
d₄=ke₄  
neš-ḫur-be₂  

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)

d₄=en-li₂-la₂  
lu₂  
šag₄-ga-na-kam  

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 8:39–42 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)

gu₃=de₂-a, ensi₂,  
lagaš₃i₃-ka,  

The left-dislocated possessor may stand in front of the relative clause's head noun:

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

e₂-a  
ni₂  
gal-be₂  

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

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

e₂-a  
d₄=ke₄  
neš-ḫur-be₂  

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)

d₄=en-li₂-la₂  
lu₂  
šag₄-ga-na-kam  

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 8:39–42 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)

gu₃=de₂-a, ensi₂,  
lagaš₃i₃-ka,  

The left-dislocated possessor may stand in front of the relative clause's head noun:

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

e₂-a  
ni₂  
gal-be₂  

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

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

e₂-a  
d₄=ke₄  
neš-ḫur-be₂  

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.

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gu₃=de₂-a, ensi₂,  
lagaš₃i₃-ka,  

The left-dislocated possessor may stand in front of the relative clause's head noun:

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

e₂-a  
ni₂  
gal-be₂  

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

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

e₂-a  
d₄=ke₄  
neš-ḫur-be₂  

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)

d₄=en-li₂-la₂  
lu₂  
šag₄-ga-na-kam  

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 8:39–42 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)

gu₃=de₂-a, ensi₂,  
lagaš₃i₃-ka,  

The left-dislocated possessor may stand in front of the relative clause's head noun:
In the following example the possessum of the left-dislocated possessor $e=ak$ (house=$\text{GEN}$) 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)

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, because 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.
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)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{den-lil₂,} & \quad \text{lugal} & \quad \text{kur-kur-ra,} \\
\text{p₁enlil} & \quad \text{p₁lugal} & \quad \text{p₃[p₁kur~kur=P₅ak]} \\
\text{p₁DN} & \quad \text{p₁king} & \quad \text{p₃[p₁land~PL=P₅GEN]} \\
\text{ab-ba} & \quad \text{diŋir-diŋir-re₂-ne-ke₄} \\
\text{p₂abba} & \quad \text{p₃[p₁diŋir~diŋir=P₄enē=P₅ak]=P₅e} \\
\text{p₁father} & \quad \text{p₃[p₁god~PL=P₄PL= P₅GEN]=P₅ERG} \\
& \quad \text{“Enlil, the king of all lands, the father of all gods”}
\end{align*}
\]

One could argue that in constructions like ex. (41) above, the three units of the appositive construction are considered as a single unit from a 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 nammaḫne, ensik lagaš=ak “Nam-mahne, the ruler of Lagash” functions as the possessor of the possessum namtīl “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 (RIME 3/1.12.7) (Lagash, 21st c.) (Q000932)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{nam-til₃,} & \quad \text{nam-maḥ-ne₂,} & \quad \text{ensiz,} & \quad \text{lagaš⁴~ka-še₃} \\
\text{p₁namtīl} & \quad \text{p₃[p₁nammaḫne]} & \quad \text{p₁ensik} & \quad \text{p₃[p₁lagaš=ak]=P₅ak]=P₃e} \\
\text{p₁life} & \quad \text{p₃[p₁PN]} & \quad \text{p₁ruler} & \quad \text{p₃[p₁GN=PSGEN]=PSGEN]=PSTERM} \\
& \quad \text{“for the well-being of Nam-mahne, ruler of Lagaš”}
\end{align*}
\]

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 clause.
(43) Iri-kagina 5 obv. 1:12–13 (RIME 1.9.9.5) (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222618)

barag\textsuperscript{d}en-lil\textsubscript{2}-la\textsubscript{2}, barag\textsuperscript{d}utu-ka

\textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{1}}barag \textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{3}[\textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{1}}enlil=\textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{5}}ak]} \textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{1}}barag \textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{3}[\textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{1}}utu=\textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{5}}ak]=\textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{5}}a}

\textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{1}}dais \textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{3}[\textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{1}}DN\textsuperscript{1}=\textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{5}}GEN]} \textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{1}}dais \textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{3}[\textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{1}}DN\textsuperscript{2}=\textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{5}}GEN]=\textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{5}}L2.NH}

“(He looted) the pedestal of Enlil and the pedestal of Utu.”

Like 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 (\textit{ensik kurkur=ak}), the case-marker is not present in the first one (\textit{baragbarag kiengir}). In ex. (44) therefore enclitic 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\textsuperscript{ki-en-gi}, ensiz\textsuperscript{kur-kur-ra}

[[\textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{1}}barag-barag \textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{3}kiengir}] \textsuperscript{[\textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{1}}ensik \textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{3}kur=\textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{5}}ak]=\textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{5}}ø}}

[[\textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{1}}dais~\textsuperscript{PL} \textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{3}GN\textsuperscript{1}}] \textsuperscript{[\textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{1}}ruler \textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{3}land~\textsuperscript{PL}=\textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{5}}GEN]=\textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{5}}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 in the last of the three genitive constructions.

(45) En-metena 4 5:4–8 (RIME 1.09.05.04) (Lagash, 25th c.) (Q001117)

dumu\textsuperscript{unug\textsuperscript{ki}}, dumu\textsuperscript{larsam\textsuperscript{ki}}, dumu\textsuperscript{pas-ti-bir-ra\textsuperscript{ki}-ka}

[[\textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{1}}dumu \textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{3}unug}] \textsuperscript{[\textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{1}}dumu \textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{3}larsam} \textsuperscript{[\textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{1}}dumu \textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{3}patibira}=\textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{5}}ak]=\textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{5}ak}}]

[[\textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{1}}child \textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{3}GN\textsuperscript{1}}] \textsuperscript{[\textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{1}}child \textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{3}GN\textsuperscript{2}}] \textsuperscript{[\textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{1}}child \textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{3}GN\textsuperscript{3}=\textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{5}}GEN]=\textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{5}GEN}}]

[ama\textsuperscript{-gi=be\textsubscript{2}}, e\textsuperscript{-\textsuperscript{ŋar}}

\textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{1}}amargi=\textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{1}}be=\textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{5}ø}

\textsuperscript{S\textsuperscript{2}i\textsuperscript{n}=S\textsuperscript{12}ŋar\textsuperscript{-}S\textsuperscript{14}ø}

\textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{1}}freedom=\textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{3}SG.NH.POSS=\textsuperscript{p\textsubscript{5}}ABS}

“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 phoneme before and/or after the case-marker! Try to find differences depending on the provenience 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 (maḫ-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
Genitive constructions

i) the shepherd of his kind mother's donkeys (sag-ʾa = kind-PT)
j) the shepherd of his kind mother's healthy donkeys (zid-ʾo = healthy-TL)
k) the mother of his donkey shepherd
l) the mother of his reliable donkey shepherd (zid-ʾo = 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 king's scribe  f) the king of all lands
b) my wife's children  g) the hero's donkey
c) the servant of my father's house  h) the father of all gods
d) the servant of my father's house  i) the well-being of my brothers
e) the courtyard of my lord  j) the shepherd's garment

4.6 Determine which sentences contain a left-dislocated genitive construction based only on 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) namnundakišara=ak ur=be=ø na=ʾa mu-nn-a-ni-n-du-ø
c) id=be=ʾa uš=ø mu-r-a-n-de-ø
d) e melem=be=ø an=e usʾaʾašė
e) e=ŋu=ak ni gal-ø=be kalamʾa=mu-n-ri-ø
f) ibila dudu=ak=enē=e kag=aneneʾa ba-ni-n-gen-eš
g) ane=ø saŋ=ane=še diŋir-ø=am-ø
h) e ninjirsuk=ak=ø eridu=gen ki sikil-ø=ʾa b-i-n-du-ø
i) gudea lu eʾa duʾa=ak=ak namtil=ane=ø ḫa-i-sud-ø

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

4.8 In Lesson 3, section 3.1 above, ex. (46) (= ex. [14]) was used to demonstrate the structure of the Sumerian nominal template. Relabel its brackets now based on what you have learnt in this lesson about modifying genitive constructions.
4.9 Please use the enclitic possessive pronouns, the plural-marker, the ergative, absolutive, or genitive case-marker, and the Sumerian translation of the words listed below to create the nominal constructions defined by the position of their constituents. Provide morphemic segmentation and glossing to them, as well. Use your creativity, more than one solutions are possible. Note that one of the constructions is erroneous.
Words: temple, child, king, great, kind, mighty, mother, city, shepherd, donkey, god, man, true, heart, Enlil, Girsu

a) P1 P2 P4 P5
b) P1 P2 P3[P1 P3 P5] P4 P5
c) P1 P3[P1 P5] P5
d) P1 P2[P1 P5] P3 P5
e) P1 P3 P5 P5
f) P1 P5 P1 P3 P5
g) P1 P4 P5 P1 P3 P5
h) P1 P5 P1 P3 P5 P3[P1 P3 P5] P5

4.10 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?
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 adverbiative 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 (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 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 (/że/ “you”) is in focus, i.e., it expresses an exhaustive identification, as the English translation also indicates. The second pronoun (/ŋe/ “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)

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{sig-ta} \quad \text{igi-nim-še}_3 \quad \text{en} \quad \text{gal-be}_2 \quad \text{za-e-me-en} \\
&\text{sig=ta} \quad \text{iginim=še} \quad \text{en} \quad \text{gal=be=∅} \quad \text{ze=∅=me-en} \\
&\text{low=ABL} \quad \text{upper=TERM} \quad \text{lord big=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS} \quad 2.SG.PR=ABS=COP-2.SG.S \\
&\text{ŋe}_2\text{e}=e \quad \text{us}_2\text{sa-zu-me-en} \\
&\text{ŋe=∅} \quad \text{us-ʾa=zu=∅=me-en} \\
\end{align*}
\]

“(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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1ST PERSON</th>
<th>2ND PERSON</th>
<th>3RD PERSON</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SG</strong></td>
<td>ŋe₂₆-e (/ŋe/)</td>
<td>za-e (/ze/)</td>
<td>a-ne (/ane/), e-ne (/ene/)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PL</strong></td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>a-ne-ne (/anenē/), e-ne-ne (/enē/)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.
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 ŋišma₂ bi₂-in-du₈
aba=ø=am-ø ma=e S5b-S10i-S11n-S12du-S14ø
“Who caulked the boat?”

(50) Enmerkar and En-suhaul-Ana 121 (ETCSL 1.8.2.4)

en unug ki-ga en kul-aba₄ ra a-na ga-an-na-ab-be₂
en unug=ak en kulaba=ak=ra ana=ø S2ga-S6nn-S7a-S11b-S12e
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)

niŋ₂ na-me a₂-be₂ la-ba-ra-e₃
p₁niŋ p₂name=p₃ø a=be=ta nu-ba-ta-e-ø
p₁thing p₂some=p₃ABS arm=3.SG,NH.POSS=ABL NEG-MID-ABL-leave-3.SG.S
“Nothing escaped their clutches.”
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.

Table 5.2: The reflexive pronouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1ST PERSON</th>
<th>2ND PERSON</th>
<th>3RD PERSON</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SG</td>
<td>ni₂-ŋu₁₀ (ni=ŋu)</td>
<td>ni₂-zu (ni=ŋu)</td>
<td>h.: ni₂-te-ne₂ (nite=ane)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nh.:</td>
<td>ni₂-te₂ (ni=be)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PL</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>nite₂-te-ne₂ (nite=anenê)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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. (483) 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)

\[ \text{ni₂-te-ne-ne ba-ra-an-sa₁₀-aš₂} \]
\[ \text{nīte=anenē=ø} \]
\[ \text{saḥba-S₁₀₁-s₁₀₂-s₁₀₄-s₁₀₆} \]
\[ \text{self=3.PL.POSS=ABS MID-ABL-3.SG.H.A-barter-3.PL} \]

“They sold themselves.”

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

\[ \text{ne-te-ni-ta, kar-da-ḫi ki-še₃, ba-ŋen} \]
\[ \text{nete=ane=ta kardaḫi=še ba-ŋen-ø} \]

“He left on his own for Kardahi.”

The reflexive pronoun may function as the emphatic form of the possessive enclitic, occupying P3 of the noun phrase:

(57) E-ana-tum 3 3:15–16 (RIME 1.9.3.3) (Lagash, 25th c) (Q001067)

\[ \text{iri mete-na, šu ḫe₂-na-zig₃} \]
\[ \text{P¹iri P³nite=ane=P₅ʾa šu=ø} \]
\[ \text{S¹ḫa-S₂i-S₆n-S₇a-S₁₀n-S₁₂zig-S₁₄ø} \]
\[ \text{P¹city P³self=3.SG.H.POSS=ABL hand=ABS MOD-FIN-3.SG.H-DAT-L₁.SYN-rise-3.SG.S} \]

“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)

\[ \text{nam-lu₂-lu₇ iri-na, šu u₃-na-zig₃} \]
\[ \text{namlulu=e iri=ane=a šu=ø} \]
\[ \text{S¹u-S₆n-S₇a-S₁₀n-S₁₂zig-S₁₄ø} \]
\[ \text{people=ERG city=3.SG.H.POSS=L₁ hand=ABS ANT-3.SG.H-DAT-L₁.SYN-rise-3.SG.S} \]
\[ \text{sag₄ iri-na-ka, ḫa-ne₂-gaz-zeₓ(AB₂.ŠA₃.GE)} \]
\[ \text{sag iri=ane=ak=ʾa S¹ḫa-S₁₀₁n-S₁₁n-S₁₂gaz-S₁₄e} \]
\[ \text{heart city=3.SG.H.POSS=GEN=L₁ MOD-L₁-3.SG.H.P-kill-3.SG.A} \]

“After there has been a revolt against him in his city, may the people kill him in the middle of his city!”

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.
Demonstrative pronouns

Six 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. (60) and (61) 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,
\[p₁\text{eg}=p₃\text{be}=p₅\text{ak}\]
\[p₁\text{levee}=p₃\text{DEM}=p₅\text{GEN}\]
mu-be₂
mu=be=ø=am-ø
name=3.SG.NH.P.OSS=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
\[p₁\text{inscriptions}=p₂\text{DEM}=p₅\text{ABS}\]
\[s₂\text{a}=s₁₁\text{b}=s₁₂\text{halam}=s₁₄\text{e}=s₁₅\text{ʾa}=ø\]

person = p₁\text{inscription}=p₂\text{DEM}=p₅\text{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
\[p₁\text{amar}=p₂\text{e}=p₅\text{ø}\]
\[p₁\text{calf}=p₂\text{DEM}=p₅\text{ABS} \quad \text{who}=\text{GEN}=\text{COP}-3.SG.S\]

"Whom does this calf belong to?"

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

ud-ne maš-ṇis-ka,
\[p₁\text{ud}=p₂\text{nē}\]
\[p₁\text{day}=p₂\text{DEM} \quad \text{vision}=L₁\]

"On this day, in a dream, ...."
(63) Gudea Statue B 9:6-7 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)
gud-gen₇, ud-ne-na ḫe₂-gaz
gud=gen p₁ud=p₂nēn=p₅ʾa s₁ḥa₃i-s₁₂gaz-s₁₄ø
ox=EQU p₁day=p₂DEM=p₅L₁ MOD-FIN-kill-3.PL.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=ø=am-ø p₁nē=p₅ø
what=ABS=COP-3.SG.S p₁DEM=p₅ABS
"What is this?"

(65) FaoS 17, 45 10 (Nippur, 21st c.) (P123220)
ne-me arad₂ ḫa-me
p₁nē=p₅ø=me-eš arad=ø s₁ḥa₃me-s₁₄eš
p₁DEM=p₅ABS=COP-3.PL.S slave=ABS MOD-COP-3.PL.S
"(Ipquša and Shu-Ninnug 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-u₃ u₃-[u₄] re-a-ke₄-ne
p₁namlulu p₃[u₄]ud=p₂re=p₅ak]=p₄enē=p₅e
p₁people p₃[p₁day=p₂DEM=p₅GEN]=p₄PL=p₅ERG
"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:

Table 5.3: The demonstrative pronouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>&quot;this&quot; near the speaker</th>
<th>&quot;that&quot; within view of the speaker</th>
<th>&quot;that&quot; outside of the view of the speaker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>=/e(n)/</td>
<td>=/še/</td>
<td>=/re(n)/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(=)/nē(n)/</td>
<td>=/še/</td>
<td>=/re(n)/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>=/e(n)/</td>
<td>=/re(n)/</td>
<td>=/be/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 frequently attested with the equative case-marker as in ex. (67) below.

(67) Gudea Statue B 6:77–7:3 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)
\[
e₂ \text{ ur}_5 \text{-gen}_7 \text{ dim}_2 \text{-ma}, \text{ ensi}_2 \text{ dili=e},
\]
house DEM=EQU make-PT=ABS ruler single=ERG
\[
\text{dnin-ŋir}_2 \text{-su-ra}, \text{ nu-na-du}_3,
\]
ninŋirsuk=ra S1nu-S2i-S6nn-S7a-S11n-S12du-S14ø
“No ruler ever built a temple fashioned like this for Ningirsu.”

5.2 Adverbs of manner and the adverbiative

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

The basic form of the adverbiative enclitic is \=/eš/. In many contexts, the enclitic of the adverbiative and the terminative case-marker are written with the same grapheme, ŠE₃, which may be read either as –še₃ or –eš₂, consequently the adverbiative and the terminative cases 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 adverbiative 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)
\[
e₂ \text{ lugal-na} \text{ zid-de}_3 \text{-eš}_2 \text{ mu-du}_3
\]
“He built his master’s temple in the appropriate manner.

(69) Gudea Statue B 3:8–9 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)
\[
\text{gu}_3 \text{-de}_2 \text{-a,} \text{ sipad} \text{ zid-še}_3 \text{ kalam-ma}
gudea=ø sipad zid-ø=še kalam=’a
\]
PN=ABS shepherd right-TL=TERM land=4.L1
After a word ending in a vowel the terminative case-marker =/še/ reduces to /š/; the adverbiative 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 adverbiative 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 =eš im-mi-ak


“(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)

urim₅ =eš gil-sa-aš, ḫe₂-mi-ak


“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 adverbiative is to form an adverb of manner. The adverbiative 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 adverbiative 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 adverbiative enclitic is probably a loan from the Akkadian terminative-adverbial -iš into Sumerian.
(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
```

"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 ex. (74) below.

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

```
abzu barag kug-ga gal-be₂ tum₂-ma-zu
abzu barag kug-ʾa gal-ʾø=be tum-ʾa=zu
```

"That you are greatly suited for the abzu, the holy throne ...."

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

```
šeba=ane=ø ul-ʾa=beS2al-S12til-S14ʾa=ø=am-ø
```

"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 adverbiative:

(75) Anam A 38 (ETCSL 2.7.1.1)

```
4en-lil₂-še₃ maḥ-be₂-eš₂ ṅal₂-me-en
enlil=še maḥ=be=eš ṅal-ø=ø=me=en
```

"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 unanalysable words, while
the other numbers are probably compound numerals which are either additive or multiplicative, or both.

1  /diš/ or /aš/  
2  /min/  
3  /eš/  
4  /limmu/  
5  /ya/  
6  /aš/  
7  /imin/  
8  /ussu/  
9  /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)
šitaₓ(KAK.GIŠ) ur saŋ 3-še₃, mu-na-dim₂
šita ur P1saŋ P23=P5še S4mu-S6n-S7a-S11n-S12dim-S14ø
“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= p₃’a
burial.mound=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS p₁place p₂5= p₄l₂.NH
i₃-mi-dub
S₂i₅m-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.
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 2:16–18’ (RIME 1.9.9.3) (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222610)

“If a man divorced (his) wife, the ruler received 5 shekels of silver for himself.”

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

“(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)

\[
\text{di } \text{til-la } \text{di-kud } \text{lugal } 7-\text{ba} \\
\text{di } \text{til-ʾa } \text{P3[di dikud } \text{P2[lugal=P5ak]} \text{P17=P3be=SG=GEN]} \text{P5ø} \\
\text{case complete-PT } \text{P3[judge P2[king=P5GEN]} \text{P17=P33.SG.NH.POSS=SG=GEN]} \text{P5ABS}
\]

Lit. “a closed case of royal judges, seven of them” = “a closed case of the seven royal judges”

(83) Amar-Suena 5 2:1 (RIME3 /2.1.3.5) (Ur, 21st c.) (P227059)

\[
\text{lugal } \text{an-ub-da limmu}_2-ba-ke_4 \\
\text{king } \text{P3[anubda P1limmu=P3be=SG=GEN]} \text{P5e} \\
\text{four}=3.PL.POSS=TERM
\]

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)

\[
\text{limmu-ne-ne} \\
\text{P1limmu=P3anenē=SG=TERM} \\
\text{four}=3.PL.POSS=TERM
\]

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)

\[
\text{ud } 7-kam-ma-ka } \text{e}_2-e \text{ im-mi-dab}_5 \\
\text{ud } 7-kama=ʾa } \text{e=e } \text{S2i-S4m-S5b-S10i-S11n-S12dab-S14ø} \\
\text{day 7-ORD=11 } \text{house=L3.NH } \text{FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-L3-3.SG.H.A-encircle-3.SG.P}
\]

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


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

The adverbiative 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 adverbiative is a kind of derivational formative, but does not rule out that the Sumerian adverbiative =/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 ₃[dumu=ane=ø] ṗc₃=ø=am=ø ṗs₃=₃[ba=₂gub=₂s₁₄=š=ète₃ = incorrect]
   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 ṗešma₂ bi₂-in-du₈
   aba=ø=am-ø ma=₃=₀=₄=₀ boat=₃.NH ₃.SG=H=3.SG.H.A-caulk-3SG.P
   “Who caulked the boat?”
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.
i) Who is this man?
j) He built the house of his mother quickly.
k) the three royal sons
l) 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/etscri/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.

The finite verb is almost always the last constituent of the clause; only in literary texts may a constituent stand behind it.
Table 6.1: The verbal template

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Slot 1</th>
<th>Modal prefix (ha), negative particle, prefix of anteriority, stem (in imperative forms)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slot 2</td>
<td>Finite-marker prefix, modal prefixes (all the other)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slot 3</td>
<td>Coordinator prefix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slot 4</td>
<td>Ventive (cislocative) prefix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slot 5</td>
<td>Middle prefix or the 3.SG.NN pronominal prefix /b/ (specifying the person, gender and number of the first in the sequence of adverbial prefixes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slot 6</td>
<td>Initial Pronominal Prefix (= IPP) (specifying the person, gender and number of the first in the sequence of adverbial prefixes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slot 7</td>
<td>Adverbial I: dative prefix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slot 8</td>
<td>Adverbial II: comitative prefix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slot 9</td>
<td>Adverbial III: ablative or terminative prefix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slot 10</td>
<td>Adverbial IV: locative1, locative2, or locative3 prefix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slot 11</td>
<td>Final Pronominal Prefix (= FPP) (referring to A or P, depending on the tense, or locative3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slot 12</td>
<td>stem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slot 13</td>
<td>present-future marker (in intransitive verbs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slot 14</td>
<td>pronominal suffix (referring A, S, or P depending on the tense)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slot 15</td>
<td>subordinator</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 S14 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 /ʾa/. 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 ñeštug₂ mu-na-an-šum₂
eńmerkara=ra enkid=e ñeštug=ø
PN=DAT.H DN=ERG ear=ABS
“Enki gave wisdom to Enmerkara.”

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 identify the syntactic function of the verbal participant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NOUN PHRASE</th>
<th>ADVERBAL PREFIX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>REFERENTIAL EXPRESSION</td>
<td>Enmerkara /nn/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CASE-MARKER</td>
<td>=/ra/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>/a/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 subsequent adverbial 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)
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 ga-mu-ra-a-de₂
gu=øS2ga-S4mu-S6r-S7a-S10e-S12de
voice=ABS MOD -VEN-2.SG-DAT-

"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-ŋir₂-su-ke₄, sa-šuš-gal-ne₂, u₃-ni-šuš
ninjirsuk=e sašušgal=ane=ø S2u-S6nn-S10i-S11n-S12šuš-S14ø

"After Ningirsu had thrown his 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 depending on the structure of the prefix-chain: only the first of the adverbial prefixes of a finite verb may be composite preceded by a pronominal prefix, every subsequent adverbial prefix is simple and refers to a 3rd ps. non-human verbal participant. Or, conversely, only a composite adverbial prefix containing a human initial pronominal prefix can refer to a 3rd ps. 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/ prefix in S5, which may diachronically
be related to the middle prefix, is used in this function. The mutually exclusive distribution of the middle prefix of S5 and the 3rd ps. sg. non-human pronominal prefix /b/ 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 with a human reference may occur in a composite form, as its 3rd ps. sg. human pronominal prefix occupies S6, but in ex. (90) below the locative2 with a non-human reference 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-šum₂ [ba-b-a-šum-ø:
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-ŋar
ud ba-nu-ø-a a’a ss̅ba-š̃e-S̅8da-S̅12ŋar-S̅14ø
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-ŋa₂-ar
da=S̅5ba-S̅10e-S̅12ŋar-S̅14ø
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)
bisaŋ u₃-šub-ba-ta sig₄ ba-ta-il₂
bisaŋ ušub=ak=ta sig=ø ss̅ba-S̅9ta-S̅11n-S̅12il-S̅14ø
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.
The victory of Utu-hegal 29 (ETCSL 2.1.6)

gu-ti-um₉i  d₄n₃₃i-l₃₃i₂-le  ma-an-S₄m-S₇a-S₁₁n-S₁₂Šum-S₁₄ø


“Enlil has given Gutium to me.”

iii) The locative₁ prefix /ni/ in S₁₀ has no composite form, 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.

The structure and functioning of the adverbial prefixes impose restrictions on their co-occurrences. Some of these restrictions will be discussed in later lessons. The restriction on the co-occurrence of the composite 3rd ps. sg. human dative prefix and the simple locative₂ or locative₃ prefix in transitive preterite verbal forms will be discussed in Lesson 14, sections 14.3 and 14.4. Co-occurrence restrictions circumvented by changing one of the incompatible adverbial prefixes into a dative prefix will be discussed in Lesson 15, section 15.4.

6.4 The prefixes of S₁–₅

The first slot of the finite verbal form contains the prefix of negation and the modal prefix /ḫa/-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 /ḫa/-, and the finite prefixes. The modal prefixes will be treated in Lesson 16, section 16.2 below, together with the prefix /ḫa/-.

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 centre that may be the location of the speech event or one of the
speech act participants, the speaker or the addressee. The middle prefix in 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)

\[
gu₃-de₂-a \quad i₃-zig
\]
\[
gudea=ø \quad S₂l-S₁₂zig-S₁₄ø
\]
\[
PN=ABS \quad FIN-rise-3.SG.S
\]
\[
"Gudea woke up."
\]

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)

\[
id₂-nun-ta, \quad mu-bi-kur-ra,
\]
\[
idnun=ta \quad mubikura=še
\]
\[
WN=ABL \quad GN=TERM
\]
\[
e-na-ta-ni-e₃
\]
\[
S₂l-S₆nn-S₅r-S₉ta-S₁₀ni-S₁₁r-S₁₂e-S₁₄ø
\]
\[
\]
\[
"(For Ningirsu, his master who loves him, En-metena) extended it (= the boundary levee) from the Idnun canal until Mubikura."
\]

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

\[
a-šag₄ašag \quad tum-de₁,
\]
\[
ašag=ø \quad tum-ed=e
\]
\[
field=ABS \quad bring-GEN=DAT.NH \quad FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-ABL-L2-come-PF-3.SG.S-SUB
\]
\[
"who crosses (the boundary levees) 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

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.

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.

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/etcsr) on 1 August 2013.
Table 6.3: Co-occurrences of the adverbial prefixes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>DAT</th>
<th>COM</th>
<th>ABL</th>
<th>TERM</th>
<th>L1</th>
<th>L2</th>
<th>L3(v10)</th>
<th>L3(v11)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ALONE</td>
<td>857</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COM</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TERM</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L3(v10)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L3(v11)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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”. 
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-chain obstructs its presence, 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. (308) 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 /b-i/ in S5 and S10. The noun phrase in the ergative, and the noun phrase in the locative2 are “missing” from the sentence. Both 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 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)

\[
\text{inim} \quad \text{\dag en-lil-la₂-ta,} \quad \text{sa-šuš-gal} \quad \text{bizišuš}
\]

\[
\text{inim} \quad \text{enlil=ak=ta} \quad \text{sašušgal=ø} \quad \text{s₂b-S₁₀-S₁₁n-S₁₂šuš-S₁₄ø}
\]

word \quad \text{DN=GEN=ABL battle.net=ABS} \quad \text{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, e.g., ex. (96) above, and ex. (98) below, in which the ablative prefix modifies the meaning of the verb sa₁₀ “to barter” to “to sell”.

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

\[
\text{ni₂-te-ne-ne} \quad \text{ba-ra-an-sa₁₀-aš₂}
\]

\[
\text{nite=anenē=ø} \quad \text{s₂ba-S₁₀-S₁₁n-S₁₂ša-S₁₄eš}
\]

\[
\text{self=3.PL.POSS=ABS} \quad \text{MID-ABL-3.SG.H.A-barter-3.PL}
\]

"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.
LESSON 6

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) \(S_4mu-S_6n-S_8da-S_12ak-S_{14}e\)

b) \(S_1ha-S_2i-S_6mē-S_7a-S_{11}b-S_{12}\šum-S_{14}e\)

c) \(S_4mu-S_6n\nnē-S_7a-S_9ta-S_{12}e-S_{14}ø\)

d) \(S_2i-S_6n-S_8da-S_{11}n-S_{12}\tuku-S_{14}ø\)

e) \(S_2i-S_{10}n-S_{12}gu-S_{14}enē\)

f) \(S_5ba-S_9ši-S_{11}n-S_{12}nu-S_{14}ø\)

g) \(S_4mu-S_6n-S_7a-S_{10}\ni-S_{11}n-S_{12}du-S_{14}ø\)

h) \(S_2a-S_6r-S_7a-S_{12}gî-S_{14}ø\)

i) \(S_1ha-S_4mu-S_6-\ša-S_{11}n-S_{12}\gub-S_{14}ø\)

ej) \(S_4mu-S_{10}\ni-S_{11}n-S_{12}il-S_{14}ø\)

k) \(S_4mu-S_6n-S_9ši-S_{11}n-S_{12}bar-S_{14}ø\)

6.4 Assign the glossed morphemes to slots and try to translate the verbal forms based on 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) \(FIN-3.SG.NH-ABL-3.SG.H.A-place-3.SG.P\)
6.5 Try to pair the verbal forms with the matching translations. You do not have to know the meaning of the stem, just concentrate on the slots and the information hidden in the glosses.

- S2na-S11n-S12sa-sa-S14en MOD-3.SG.H-P-stem-PF-2.SG.A “They stepped forward to him with ....”
- S1ṭa-S2l-S12til-S14∅ MOD-FIN-stem-3.SG.S “He also demolished it.”
- S1u-S4μn-S11n-S12σda-S10n-S12kur-S14en “After he had thrown it on him, ....”
- S2a-S5b-S9ta-S11n-S12gu-S14∅-S15ʾa FIN-3.SG.NH-ABL-3.SG.HA-stem-3.SG.P-SUB “Do not buy her!”
- S1u-S6nn-S10i-S11n-S12šuš-S14∅ “It cannot be tired.”
- S2i-S3nḥa-S11n-S12σg-S14∅ FIN-COOR-3.SG.A-stem-3.SG.P “From which he consumed it.”
- S2l-S6nē-S9ši-S11n-S12σa-S14∅ FIN-3.PL-TERM-3.SG.HA-stem-3.SG.P “After you had entered to her into it with them, ....”
- S4μn-S6n-S7a-S8da-S12šug-S14eš VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-COM-stem.PL-3.PL.S “He bought her from them (lit. ‘bartered for them’).”
- S1u-S11n-S12taka-S14∅ ANT-3.SG.HA-stem-3.SG.P “May it come to an end!”
- S2n-S12kušu-S13σed-S14∅ MOD-stem-PF-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 copy 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/etc-sri/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 copy 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:

- \( pTSTEM-\emptyset \) (stem-\( tl \)) tenseless non-finite verbal form
- \( pTSTEM-\acute{\text{a}} \) (stem-\( pt \)) preterite non-finite verbal form
- \( pfSTEM-ed \) (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. (118) 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. (119) below:

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

\[
\text{nam-erim}_2\text{-be}_2, \quad \text{ku}_5\text{-ru-dam} \\
\text{namerim=be}=\emptyset \quad \text{kur-ed}=\emptyset=\text{am-}\emptyset \\
oath=\text{3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS} \quad \text{cut-PF=ABS=COP-3.SG.S}
\]

“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=\emptyset sar-\emptyset** : tablet=\text{ABS} write-TL) “he who writes tablets”, **ku₃ dim₂** “goldsmith” < **ku₃ dim₂** (**kug=\emptyset dim-\emptyset** : metal=\text{ABS} fashione-TL) “he who fashions metal”.

Adjective-like compound constructions are normally based on tenseless non-finite verbal forms: **usu tuku** (**usu=\emptyset tuku-\emptyset** : power=\text{ABS} have-TL) “powerful”, **igi ŋal₂** (**igi=\emptyset ŋal-\emptyset** : eye=\text{ABS} exist-TL) “wise”.

Compound verbs with nominal parts that derive from non-finite verbal forms also use tenseless non-finite verbal forms: **šu-tag — dug₄** “to decorate” < **šu=\emptyset tag-\emptyset=\emptyset** : hand=\text{ABS} touch=\text{TL}=\text{ABS} “to do hand touching”, see also ex. (175) 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 (131) 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 niškim “sign”, and consequently is in the genitive.

(101) Gudea Cyl. A 9:9 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)
e₂-gu₁₀ du₃-da
e=ŋu=ø du-ed=ak
house=1.SG.POSS=ABS build-PF=GEN
niškim-be₂ ga-ra-ab-šum₂
niškim=be=ø s₂g₆₇a₅-S₁₁b₅-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=ø du-ed=ʾa s₄m₄₅a₃-S₁₁n₅-S₁₂dug-S₁₄ø
“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 saŋ “slave”, functions as a verbal noun. It is the possessor of the expression lu₂ inim-ma “witness”, and consequently is in the genitive.

Non-finite verbal forms and relative clauses
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 -ʾa/. 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 functional and structural similarity between the constructions in 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.
Non-finite verbal forms and relative clauses

(104) Iri-kagina 1 12:23–28 (RIME 1.9.9.1) (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222607)

nu-siki nu-ma-kuš, lu₂ a₂ tuku,
nusiki numakuš=ø lu a=ø tuku=ø=ra
orphan widow=ABS person arm=ABS have-TL-DAT.H
nu-na-ŋa₂-ŋa₂-a, dnin-ŋir₂-su-da, iri-ka-gi-na-ke₄,
S1nu-S2i-S6nn-S7a-S11n-S12ŋa~ŋa-S14ʾa=ak ninŋirsuk=da irikagenak=e
inim-be₂ ka e-da-keše₂
inim=be=e kag=ø S2i-S6n-S8da-S11n-S12keše-S14ø
“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 ŋeškiri₄,
P1[lu inim=ak] P3[Kiri=ø
P1[person word=GEN] P3[garden=ABS
ur-dnanše-ra ba-na-gid₂-da-me
ur-nanšek=ra S5ba-S6nn-S7a-S12gid-S14ø-S15ʾa=ak]=ø=me-eš
“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: P₁bar P₃[complement clause]=ak=P₅ʾa (outside [complement clause]=GEN=L2.NH) or P₁mu
P₃[complement clause]=ak=P₅šē (name [complement clause]=GEN=TERM)
“because of …” as in ex. (106) below (with bar), and in ex. (231) (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-sus-su₃-da-ka
bar še=be=ø S1nu-S2i-S₃b=S₈da-S₁₂su-S₁₃ed-S₁₄ø-S₁₅ʾa=akʾa
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 -/(ʾ)₇a/ 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)-(110), and (112) below. In non-finite relative clauses, the verbal form is a non-finite verbal form: in exx. (114), (115), and (118) a tenseless, in exx. (111), (113), (116) and (117) a preterite, and in ex. (119) 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. (117), or by a noun phrase in the genitive case, as the possessor of the relativized noun as in exx. (113) and (116). 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-ʾa : 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. (118) 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 luḫ-ḫa “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 S5b-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 luḫ-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 15–16 (RIME 1.9.5.7) (Lagash, 25th c.) (P222539)

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.) (Q001086)

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)

The ruler who withdraws (the regular offerings) ...

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

The daylight that had risen for you on the horizon ....

---

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) Nabi-Enlil to Iter-pisha 1 (Nippur, 19th c.)

lugal du-tu-gen₇ kalam-ma-na e₃-a-ra
P₁ lugal P₂ du-tu-gen kalam=ane’a e₃-a =P₅ ra
P₁ king P₂ [DN=EQU land=3.SG.H.POSS=L2.NH leave-PT]=P₅ DAT.H
“(Say) to the king who rose over his land like divine Utu!”

Exxs. (112) and (113) 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.

(112) 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 mu-S₆ nn-S₇ a-S₁₁ n-S₁₂ dug-S₁₄ ø-S₁₅ ’a]=P₅ še

saŋ sig ba-ši-ŋar
saŋ sig-ø=ø S₅ ba-S₉ ši-S₁₂ n-S₁₃ jar-S₁₄ ø

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

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

inim duga-ga dnin-ŋir₂-su-ka-še₃,
P₁ inim P₂ [duga-’a] P₃ [ninjirsuk=ak]=P₅ še
P₁ word P₂ [speak-PT] P₃ [DN=GEN]=P₅ TERM

saŋ sig ba-ši-ŋar
saŋ sig-ø=ø S₅ ba-S₉ ši-S₁₂ n-S₁₃ jar-S₁₄ ø

“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 exxs. (109), (114), and (118); the S in exxs. (110), (111) and (115); the P in exxs. (112), (113), (116), and (117), the indirect object in ex. (108); a place adverbial in exx. (107) (in the ablative) and (119) (in the locative1).

(114) 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.”

---

11 This Old Babylonian literary letter is published by Kleinerman and Gadotti (2013: 154–162).
Even possessors of verbal participants may be relativized, as shown by the following examples:

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

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{lu} & \quad 3 \quad \text{suku-be} & \quad \text{lu} & \quad \text{id-lu-a} \\
\text{p1[lu} & \quad 3] & \quad \text{p2[suku=be=0]} & \quad \text{s2i-s12[a-s14=0-s15, a]=p5e} \\
\text{p1[man} & \quad 3] & \quad \text{p2[prebend=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS} & \quad \text{fin-small=3.SG.S-SUB]=p5ERG} \\
\end{align*}
\]

“the three men whose subsistence land was curtailed”
The relative clauses play an important role in the interclausal syntax of Sumerian as temporal subordination is usually expressed with the construction $P_1$ noun $P_2$[relative clause]$=P_5$case-marker. There is no difference between constructions in which the A of the subordinate clause is the same as the A, see ex. (122), or S, see ex. (123), of the main clause, and constructions in which the A is different from the A of the main clause, see exx. (124) and (125) 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”.

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 $=\text{/e/}$. There is no difference between constructions in which the A of the subordinate clause is the same as the A, see ex. (122), or S, see ex. (123), of the main clause, and constructions in which the A is different from the A of the main clause, see exx. (124) and (125) 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”.

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

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{e₂} & \quad \text{n-injir₂-su-ka} & \quad \text{du₃-de₃}, \\
\text{e} & \quad \text{n-injir₃.uk=ak=ø} & \quad \text{du-ed=e} \\
\text{house} & \quad \text{DN=GEN=ABS} & \quad \text{build-PF=DAT,NH}
\end{align*}
\]
Non-finite verbal forms and relative clauses

gu₃-de₂-a iri-ne₂ ŋir₂-su ki-še₃ gu₂ mu-na-si-si
gudea=ra iri=ane ŋirsu=še gu=ø S₄mu-S₆nn-S₇a-S₁₂si-si-S₁₄e
“To build the temple of Ningirsu (Magan and Meluhha) gathered for Gudea at his
city Girsu.

(123) 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-S₁₅ʾa
field=ABS bring-PF=DAT.NH FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-ABL-L2-cross-PF-3.SG.S-SUB
“who crosses (the boundary levees) to take away fields”

(124) DP 307 obv. 2:1–6 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P220957)
ku₆ hab₂-še₃ ak-de₃, amar-girid₂ ki muhaldim-ra,
ku=ø 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 S₂i-S₆nn-S₇a-S₁₁n-S₁₂šum-S₁₄ø
“En-iggal, the overseer, gave fish to Amar-Girid, the cook, so that he (= Amar-
Girid) makes them into fish-oil(?).”

(125) SNAT 535 1–5 (Umma, 21st c.) (P130295)
ur-dḫal-⸢mu⸣-[ša₄-ke₄], lugal-ušur₄ simug-[ra], ḫa-zi-in dim₂-e-⸢de₃⸣
urḥalmuṣak=e lugaluṣur simug=ra ḫazin=ø dim-ed=e
PN₁=ERG PN₂ smith=DAT.H axe=ABS create-PF=DAT.NH
1 2/₃ ma-na zabar, ṭinⁿ-na-an-šum₂
1 2/₃ mana zabar=ø S₂i-S₆nn-S₇a-S₁₁n-S₁₂šum-S₁₄ø
“Ur-Halmusha gave Lugal-ushur, the smith, 1 and 2/₃ manas of bronze, to produce
an axe.”

Examples like (126) 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.

(126) Gudea Cyl. A 19:3 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)
u₃-šub mu-dub₂
ušub=ø S₄mu-S₁₁n-S₁₂dub-S₁₄ø
mould=ABS VEN-3.SG.H.A-shake-3.SG.P
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.

Table 7.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERSON</th>
<th>PRETERITE FORMS</th>
<th>PRESENT-FUTURE FORMS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.SG</td>
<td>(p_1\text{STEM}^{-1}\text{a-}\nu_1\text{=}\text{ne}) (stem-PT=1.SG.POSS=L4)</td>
<td>(p_1\text{STEM}\text{-ed}^{-1}\text{a-}\nu_1\text{=}\text{ne}) (stem-PF-SUB=1.SG.POSS=L4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.SG</td>
<td>(p_1\text{STEM}^{-1}\text{a-}\nu_2\text{=}\text{ne}) (stem-PT=2.SG.POSS=L4)</td>
<td>(p_1\text{STEM}\text{-ed}^{-1}\text{a-}\nu_2\text{=}\text{ne}) (stem-PF-SUB=2.SG.POSS=L4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.SG HUMAN</td>
<td>(p_1\text{STEM}^{-1}\text{a-}\nu_3\text{=}\text{e}) (stem-PT=3.SG.H.POSS=L3.NH)</td>
<td>(p_1\text{STEM}\text{-ed}^{-1}\text{a-}\nu_3\text{=}\text{e}) (stem-PF-SUB=3.SG.H.POSS=L3.NH)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.SG NON-HUMAN</td>
<td>(p_1\text{STEM}^{-1}\text{a-}\nu_3\text{=}\text{e}) (stem-PT=3.SG.NH.POSS=L3.NH)</td>
<td>(p_1\text{STEM}\text{-ed}^{-1}\text{a-}\nu_3\text{=}\text{e}) (stem-PF-SUB=3.SG.NH.POSS=L3.NH)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.PL</td>
<td>(p_1\text{STEM}^{-1}\text{a-}\nu_3\text{=}\text{e}) (stem-PT=3.PL.POSS=L3.NH)</td>
<td>(p_1\text{STEM}\text{-ed}^{-1}\text{a-}\nu_3\text{=}\text{e}) (stem-PF-SUB=3.PL.POSS=L3.NH)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 analysed 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 ku~ku-da-ne (= ku~ku-ed=ane=e) “at his entering” as ku~ku-ed-'a=ane=e. The preterite forms express anteriority, see ex. (127)
below, while the present-future forms express simultaneity, see ex. (128) below, with the verbal event of the main clause.

(127) Lugalbanda in the mountain cave 241 (ETCSL 1.8.2.1)
nu₂-a-zu-ne uŋ₃ ši-mu-e-da-nu₂
nu-ʾa=zu=ne uŋ=ø S₂ša-S₄mu-S₆e-S₇da-S₁₂nu-S₁₄ed-S₁₆ø
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.”

(128) Nam-mahne 6 2:2–5 (RIME 3/1.1.12.6) (Lagash, 21st c.) (P234696)
dḷamma tar-sir₂-sir₂-ra, kisal ḍba-u₂-ka ku₄(REC56)-ku₄(REC56)-da-ne₂,
lamma tarsirsir=ak=ø kisal bau=ak=ʾa ku=ku-edʾa=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=ø ŋeštug=ane=ʾa
alan=DEM=ERG lady=1.SG.POSS=ABS ear-3.SG.H.POSS=L₁
mu-na-ri-gu₂
s₄mu-S₆nu-S₇a-S₁₀ni-S₁₁n-S₁₂rugu-S₁₄e
VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-L₁-3.SG.H.P-whitstand-3.SG.A
“When whenever the protective spirit of Tarsirsir enters the courtyard of Bau, this
statue will attract my lady’s attention towards him.”

The verbal stem /du/, the present-future stem of the verb ŋen “to go”, forms
the 3rd ps. forms of the construction without an -/ed/ and -/ʾa/ suffix:

(129) ABTR 13 rev. 5 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P100201)
[a]-dam-šaḥkl-še₃ du-ne-ne
adamšaḥ=še du=anene=e
GN=TERM go.PF=3.PL.POSS=L₃.NH
“When they were going to Adamshah”.

(130) MVN 22, 71 obv. 8 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P206204)
a-dam-šaḥkl-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 locative and ablative was well established. The construction is also attested with the word dili “single”: dili-ŋu₁₀-ne “on my own, I alone”, dili-zu-ne “on your own, you alone”, see ex. (131) below, dili-ne₂ “on his own, he alone”.

(131) Ibbi-Suen B Segment A 37 (ETCSL 2.4.5.2)
  dili-zu-ne₂ maḫ-me-en
  dili=zu=ne maḫ-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)

7.4 Transliterate the text Shu-Suen 12 (RIME 3/2.1.4.12, ex. 2) (Ur, 21st c.) (P226510) (a copy and 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 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. (132) contains a 3rd ps. sg. enclitic copula cliticized to the last unit of the predicate complement:

(132) En-metena 7 21–22 (RIME 1.9.5.7) (Lagash, 25th c.) (P222539)
ud-ba du-du, sanṭa d nin-nir₂-su₂-ka-kam
ud=be=ʾa [dudu=ø] PC[saŋŋa ninŋirsuk=ak=ø]=am-ø
day=DEM=L1 [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.

Table 9.1: Forms of the copula

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SINGULAR</th>
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<th>PLURAL</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1ST</td>
<td>2ND</td>
<td>3RD</td>
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<tr>
<td>INDEPENDENT</td>
<td>-me-en</td>
<td>-me-en</td>
<td>-me-ø</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENCLITIC</td>
<td>=me-en</td>
<td>=me-en</td>
<td>=am-ø</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 –ams(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. (133) below. In ex. (134) 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. (135), where the preceding morpheme is written with a phonographic sign, the contraction is reflected also by the writing.

(133) BM 106540 obv. 3 (Umma, 21st c.) (P200724)
nin₉-ŋu₁₀-um
PC[nin=ŋu=ø]=am-ø
PC[sister=1.SG.POSS=ABS]=COP-3.SG.S
“She is my sister.”

(134) Gudea Statue B 7:54 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)
naesi-am₃
PC[esi=ø]=am-ø
PC[diorit=ABS]=COP-3.SG.S
“(The statue) is of diorite.”
Non-verbal predication and other uses of the copula

(135) Shu-Suen 1 4:44-46 (RIME 3/2.1.4.1) (P227137)

iriki₂-šu₂-su₂n, diŋir-ba₂-em
PC’S POSS[iriki=be=ak] S[šusuen=ø] PC[dinjir=be=ø]=am-ø

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

In literary contexts, see exx. (136) and (137) below, and in personal names of the 3rd millennium BCE, see ex. (138) below, the copula may use yet another stem, the stem /\(\text{na}\)nam/. This stem may derive from a modal form of the copula: \(\text{na-me}=\text{ø}\) (= MOD-COP-3.SG.S), which became /\(\text{nam}\)/ after the loss of the stem final -/\(\text{e}\)/, and was expanded again pleonastically with the affirmative epistemic modal prefix /\(\text{na}\)/-. The form may, at least originally, have expressed epistemic certainty, see Lesson 16, section 16.2 below.

(136) Lugalbanda in the mountain cave 59 (ETCSL 1.8.2.1) (P227137)

ud=be₂-a 7 ḫe₂-na-me-eš
ud=be=ʾa PC[7=ø] S1ḫa-S12i-S12nam-S14eš
day=DEM=1.1 PC[7=ABS] MOD-FIN-COP-3.PL.S

“At that time there were seven of them.”

(137) 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 ansigariʾa=ø]
PC’S POSS[minister lord GN= GEN=GEN] S[minister PN=ABS]
mu-ne₂ ḫe₂-en-na-nam
PC[mu=ane=ø] S1ḫa-S12i-S12nanam-S14ø
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.”

(138) BIN 8, 345 obv. 7:6 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P221476)

dba₂-na-nam
PC[bau=ak]=nanam-ø
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. (132) above; ii) solely by the pronominal suffix on the copula, see, e.g., ex. (133) above; or iii) both as an independent pronoun and by a pronominal suffix on the copula, see, e.g., ex. (144) below.
As a rule, the predicate complement is in the absolutive case. Less frequently it may be in the genitive, as in exx. (139), (140); ablative (expressing an instrumental meaning), as in ex. (141); or equative, as in ex. (142) below:

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

\[
\begin{array}{l}
an-ta-su-ra \hspace{1cm} ŋa₂-kam \\
\text{PC}[\text{antasura}=\emptyset]=\text{am}-\emptyset \\
\text{PC}[\text{GN}=\text{ABS}]=\text{COP-3.SG.S}
\end{array}
\]

"The Antasura is mine!"

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

\[
\begin{array}{l}
gu₂-na-kam \\
\text{PC}[\text{gu}=\text{ane}=\text{ak}]=\text{am}-\emptyset \\
\text{PC}[\text{neck}=3.\text{SG.H.POSS}=\text{GEN}]=\text{COP-3.SG.S}
\end{array}
\]

"It is of his neck." = "It is his responsibility."

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

\[
\begin{array}{l}
inim \hspace{1cm} ur-niŋar₃₃ \hspace{1cm} nu-banda₃-ta-am₃ \\
\text{PC}[\text{inim }\text{urniŋar }\text{nubanda}=\text{ak}=\text{ta}]=\text{am}-\emptyset \\
\text{PC}[\text{word PN overseer}=\text{GEN}=\text{ABL}]=\text{COP-3.SG.S}
\end{array}
\]

"This was with the permission of Urnigar, the overseer."

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

\[
\begin{array}{l}
a₂ \hspace{1cm} tug₂ \hspace{1cm} gada-a \hspace{1cm} du-a, \\
\text{PC}[a \hspace{1cm} tug \hspace{1cm} gada=ʾa \hspace{1cm} du-\emptyset=\text{ak}=\emptyset] \\
\text{PC}[\text{wage cloth line}=\text{L2.NH go-TL}=\text{GEN}=\text{ABS}]
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{urim}^{kl}-\text{ma-gen}^{7-nam} \\
\text{PC}[\text{urim}=\text{ak}=\text{gen}]=\text{am}-\emptyset \\
\text{PC}[\text{GN}=\text{GEN}=\text{EQU}]=\text{COP-3.SG.S}
\end{array}
\]

"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. [143], while it is the coordinator prefix in S3 in ex. [144]); ii) in subordinate copula clauses, which may be a complement clause as in ex. (145), or a relative clause as in ex. (146). 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 original, i.e., the independent form was retained in subordinate contexts.
Non-verbal predication and other uses of the copula

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

din\-ir \ he\-2-me-en
PC[din\ir=\ø] S1\ha-S2\i-S12\me-S14\en
PC[\god=ABS] MOD-FIN-COP-2.SG.S
“if you are a god, ....”

(144) Shulgi C 9 (ETCSL 2.4.2.03)
ni\j\-erim2-ma usan3 bar-u\-š-be2
PC’s POSS[ni\jerim=ak] PC[usan baruš=be=\ø]
PC’s POSS [\evil=GEN] PC[scourge stick=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS]
\ne26 in-ga-me-en3
S[\ne=\ø] S2\i-S3\nga-S12\me-S14\en
S[1.SG.PR =ABS] FIN-COOR-COP-1.SG.S
“As for all evil, their scourge and stick are also me.”

(145) NG 212 obv. 2:4 (Umma, 21st c.) (P142272)
arad d\šara2 i3-m-e-a
PC[arad šara=ak=\ø] S2\i-S12\me-S14\o-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”.

(146) ASJ 4, p. 141, no. 6 obv. 2 (Drehem, 21st c.) (P102167)
ud tur5-ra i3-m-e-a
ud PC[tur-’a=\ø] S2\i-S12\me-S14\o-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. (147) 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/-; see also exx. (507) and (508) below in Lesson 16, exercise 16.3.

(147) 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
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 (*₂i₃ nga-₁₂ me-₄ ø : FIN-COOR-COP-3.SG.S). The difference in the way the two clauses are negated in ex. (147) 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 ŋal₂ “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. (148) and (149) below. If the S is not an overt lexical noun, then the copula is present, as shown by ex. (150) below.

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

ama-ŋeštin

₁₂ [ama=ø]₂₃ [ŋeštin=ø]

₁₂ [mother=ABS]₂₃ [wine=ABS]

“The-mother-is-wine”
Non-verbal predication and other uses of the copula

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

nin-he₂-du₇
S[nin=Ø] PC[he₂=Ø]
S[lady=ABS] PC[ornament=ABS]
"The-lady-is-an-ornament"

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

dutu-kam
PC[utu=ak]=am-Ø
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. (151) below.

(151) Shulgi 86 (RIME 3/2.1.2.86) (unknown, 21st c.) (P226941)

ba-qar₃-tum, dumu-munus lugal, ḗšul-gi-is-li₂, arad-zu
baqartum dumumunus lugal=ak=Ø S[šulgiili=Ø] PC[arad=zu=Ø]
PN₁ daughter king=GEN=ABS S[PN₂=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. (152) 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. [152] the sentence-initial interrogative pronoun is accompanied by a copula. The structure and function of forms like this is discussed in Lesson 5 above.)

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

a-ba-am₃ mu-zu,
aba=ø=am-Ø PC[mu=zu=Ø]
who=ABS=COP-3.SG.S PC[name=2.SG.POSS=ABS]
nam-zid-tar-ra mu-ŋu₁₀-um
S[namzidtara=Ø] PC[mu=ŋu₁₀=Ø]=am-Ø
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."

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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. (153) 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. (153) 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.

(153) Gudea Cyl. A 8:10 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)
liŋeš u₂ sikil kur-ra-kam
S[li=ø] PC[u sikil kur=ak=ø]=am-ø
izi-a bi₂-si-si
iziʾa S5b-S10n-S11n-S12n-S13n-S14n
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 -ʾa/, as in ex. (154) below.

(154) Gudea Cyl. A 7:11–12 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)
inim ʾnanše-e mu-na-dug4 ga-aš,
p1[inim] p2[nanše=e S4mu-S6n-S7a-S11n-S12dug=a-S14n-a-S15n=a] p5še
Non-verbal predication and other uses of the copula

saŋ sig ba-ši-ŋar
saŋ sig-ø=ø S5ba-S9ši-S12n-S13ŋar-S14ø
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. (155) 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.

(155) NG 137 obv. 7 (Umma, 21st c.) (P131782)
ab₂ ša-bar-tur mu-be₂ i₃-me-a
P1ab P2[S[Sšabartur=ø] PC[mu=be=ø] S3i-S12me-S14ø-S14ʾa]=P5ø
“the cow whose name is Shabar-tur”

Subordinate copular relative clauses like ex. (155) 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. (153) 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. (153) 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. Because of this rule, appositional constructions with a pronominal head, e.g., “I, the shepherd”, do not exist in Sumerian: ex. (156) below would be ungrammatical in Sumerian, a copular biclausal construction is used instead, see ex. (157) below.

(156)
*ŋe₂₆-e sipad-e e₂ mu-du₃
ŋe sipad=e e=ø S₄mu-S₁₁š-S₁₂du-S₁₄ø
1.SG.PR shepherd=ERG house=ABS VEN-1.SG.A-build-3.SG.P
I, the shepherd, have built the temple.”
LESSON 8

(157) Gudea Cyl. B 2:5 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

sipad-me \( e_2 \) mu-du₃
\( PC[\text{sipad}=\emptyset]=me-en \) \( e=\emptyset \) \( S_4mu-S_11S_12du-S_14\emptyset \)
\( PC[\text{shepherd}=\text{ABS}]=COP-1.SG.S \) house=ABS \( \text{VEN-1.SG.A-build-3.SG.P} \)

“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 \(=/am-\emptyset/ \) lends itself easily to a translation with the preposition “like”:

(158) Iddin-Dagan A 172 (ETCSL 2.5.3.1)

lugal diŋir-am₃ šag₄-be₂-a mu-un-da-an-til₃
lugal=\emptyset diŋir=\emptyset=am-\emptyset šag=be=ʾa \( S_4mu-S_6S_7da-S_{10}S_{12}n-S_{14}\emptyset \)
king=ABS god=ABS=COP-3.SG.S heart=3.SG.NH.POSS=\L_1 \( \text{VEN-3.SG.COM-3.SG.SYN-live-3.SG.S} \)

“Lit. “The king is a god; he lives with her in it.” = “The king, (who is) a god, 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 similitative 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. (158) above, which in essence is a similitative construction, the predicate complement with the copula appears to be interpreted as the standard with its marker.

Ex. (158) may be considered a copular biclausal construction (see the second translation given to it above). There exists, however, examples which may be not be construed as consisting of a copular and a non-copular clause.

In ex. (159) below the constituent \( šag \) \( \text{enlil}=\text{ak} \) “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. In other words, the original enclitic copula changed its function and became
grammaticalized as a standard marker. Ex. (158) 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.

(159) Gudea Cyl. A 1:9 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{šag₄} & \text{en-lil₂-la₂-ke₄} & \text{idigm₃}\text{idigna-am₃} \\
\text{šag} & \text{enlil=ak=e} & \text{idigna=am} \\
\text{heart} & \text{DN=GEN=ERG} & \text{WN=STM} \\
\text{a} & \text{dug₃-ga} & \text{nam-de₆} \\
\text{a} & \text{dug-ø=ø} & \text{s₂na₄-m₅₅-b₅₆de₅₇ø} \\
\text{water} & \text{swept-PT=ABS} & \text{MOD-VEN-3.SG.NH.A-bring-3.SG.P}
\end{array}
\]

“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 simulative 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. (160) below.

(160) Gudea Cyl. A 3:6 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{ama} & \text{nu-tuku-me} \\
\text{PC[ama]} & \text{nu-tuku-ø=me-en} \\
\text{PC[mother]} & \text{NEG-have-TL=COP-1.SG.S} \\
\text{ama-ŋu₁₀} & \text{ze₂-me} \\
\text{PC[ama-ŋu=ø]} & \text{s[z=ø]=me-en} \\
\text{PC[mother=1.SG.POSS=ABS]} & \text{s[2.SG.PR=ABS]=COP-2.SG.S}
\end{array}
\]

“I am someone who has no mother, my mother is you (and no one else).”

Copular clauses with an inverted word order do not predicate a property about a referential S. Such clauses do something fundamentally different; they exhaustively identify the referent of a description by naming it. So, in ex. (160) 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. (160) are called specificational in linguistics.

Ex. (161) below is a copular biclausal construction in which the initial copular clause is specificational. The shared participant is “I”, which is referred to by a pronominal suffix in S14 of the finite verb in the second clause.

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. (161) and (162), or a subconstituent of the constituent next to the copula, see ex. (163) below, functions as the identificational focus of the clause.

(161) Hoe and Plough 147 (ETCSL 5.3.1)

ŋe₂₆-e-me-en musar=ʾa a bi₂-ib₂-sig₁₀-sig₁₀-ge-en
S[ŋe=ø]=me-en musar=ʾa a=ø S₅b-S₁₀i-S₁₁b-S₁₂sig-S₁₄en
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.”

(162) 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-ŋar-ŋar
šu=ʾa S₄mu-S₁₀ni-S₁₁n-S₁₂ŋar~ŋar-S₁₄ø
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. (163) below the constituent next to the copula is the noun phrase udu=ŋu=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 /=ŋu/ “my”, as Turam-ili intends to defend himself against accusations that he has given someone else’s sheep to Sulalum.

(163) NG 138 rev. 7 (Umma, 21st c.) (P200731)

udu-ŋu₁₀-um šu₂-la-lum-ra in-na-šum₂
S[udu=ŋu=ø]=am-ø šulalum=ra S₂₁-S₆n-S₇a-S₁₁i-S₁₂šum-S₁₄ø
“(Turam-ili declared:) ‘I gave MY sheep to Sulalum.’”

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Further readings

For a detailed description of all uses of the copula in Sumerian see now Zólyomi 2014c.
For simulative 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) iri₃₃-ba, ṃšu₄-suen, diŋir-be₂-em
b) da-du maškim-be₂-em
c) (S = “you”) 
nin-lil₂-la₂ ḫi-li šag₄-ga-na-me-en
d) (S = “you”) 
en za-e-me-en lugal za-e-me-en
e) (A = “he”) 
me₃-ra-ga-ši-ir, dumu nibru₃₃-kam, ur-sag₉-ga, ḫa-mu-na-šum₂-mu
f) (A of the finite clause = “I”) 
sipad-me e₂ mu-du₃
g) (A of the finite clause = “it” [= the Eninnu temple]) 
dutu-am₃ an-ṣag₉-ge im-si
h) (A of the finite clause = “he” [= king Shulgi]) 
me₃₃ me₃₃ zid-dam kurun₃₃ kug mu-un-il₂
i) (A of the finite clause = “I”) 
ab-ba-kal-la ur-me₃₃-ra ṃe₂₃-e-me ḫa-na-šum₂
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 citizen of Ur either.
m) Of his temple, Ningirsu is its god.
n) Like a donkey, he carried gold.

8.5 Analyse 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.

(164) Enmerkar and En-suhgir-ana 276–280 (ETCSL 1.8.2.4)
za-e-me-en en ki aŋ₂
S[ze=ø]=me-en PC[en ki=ø aj-ø
dinana-me-en
inanak=ak=ø=me-en
dili-zu-ne₂ mah-me-en
dili=zu=ne PC[mah-ø=ø]=me-en
dinana-ke₄ ur₂ kug-ga-ne₂-še₃ zid-de₂-eš
inanak=e ur kug=ane=še zid-ø=eš
mu-un-pad₃-de₂-en ki 'aŋ₂-ŋa₂'-ne₂-me-en
S₄mu-₄₄n₃₄pad₃en PC[ki=ø aŋ-ø=ane=ø]=me-en
sig-ta igi-nim-še₃ en gal-be₂ za-e-me-en
sig=ta iginim=še PC[en gal=be=ø] S[ze=ø]=me-en
ŋe²₆-e us₂-sa-zu-me-en,
S[ŋe=ø] PC[us-ʾa=zu=ø]=me-en
Non-verbal predication and other uses of the copula

a ru-a-ta gaba-ri-zu nu-me-en
a=ø ru-ʾa=ta pC[gabari=zu=ø] s₁₁nu-s₂₁-s₁₂me-s₁₄en

šeš gal za-e-me-en
pC[šeš gal=ø=ø] s[ze=ø]=me=en

ŋe₂₆-e nu-mu-da-sa₂-e-en ud da-ri₂še₃
s[ŋe=ø] s₁₁nu-s₄mu-s₆e-s₈da-s₁₂sa-s₁₄en ud dari=še
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 S1, 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 either or both 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. (165) and (166) the same verb šum₂ “to give” is in preterite and present-future, respectively. In (165) the A is expressed with a pronominal prefix in S11, while in (166) it is expressed by a pronominal suffix in S14. Both the preterite and the present-future verbal forms use the same simple stem šum₂.

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

\[
\begin{array}{llll}
gu-ti-um^k_i & d\text{-en-lil}^3\text{-le} & ma-an-\text{šum}_2 \\
gutium^\emptyset & enlil^e & S_4m-S_5a-S_11n-S_12\text{šum}-S_14^\emptyset \\
\text{GN}^\text{ABS} & \text{DN}^\text{ERG} & \text{VEN-DAT-3.SG.H.A-}g\text{i}ve-3.SG.P
\end{array}
\]

“The god Enlil has given Gutium to me.”
(166) Gudea Statue B 7:21-23 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)

\[\text{gu}_3\text{de}-\text{a, alan-e, inim im-ma-\text{\text{	extgreek{um}}}_2-mu} \]
\[\text{gudea=e alan=e inim=ø \text{\textgreek{S}}_2\text{\textgreek{m}}-\text{\textgreek{S}}_5b-\text{\textgreek{S}}_6a-\text{\textgreek{S}}_12\text{\textgreek{um}}-\text{\textgreek{S}}_{14}e} \]
\[\text{PN=ERG statue=DAT.NH word=ABS \text{FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-DAT-give-3.SG.A}} \]

"Gudea entrusted the statue with the (following) message: ‘…’.”

Exx. (167)–(169) use the same verb gi₄ “to return”. Exx. (167) and (168) 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. (168) both the agreement pattern and the use of the reduplicated stem signals the present-future tense.

(167) En-metena 4 4:3 (RIME 1.9.5.4) (Lagash, 25th c.) (Q001117)

\[\text{dumu ama i₃-ni-gi₄} \]
\[\text{dumu=ø ama=ra \text{\textgreek{S}}_2\text{\textgreek{m}}n-\text{\textgreek{S}}_{10}\text{\textgreek{i}}-\text{\textgreek{S}}_{11}\text{\textgreek{n}}-\text{\textgreek{S}}_{12}\text{\textgreek{gi}}-\text{\textgreek{S}}_{14}ø} \]

“He let the child return to (his) mother.”

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

\[\text{ensi}_{2}, \text{inim bi}_{2}-ib_{2}-gi₄-gi₄-a} \]
\[\text{ensis inim=ø \text{\textgreek{S}}_5b-\text{\textgreek{S}}_{10}i-\text{\textgreek{S}}_{11}b-\text{\textgreek{S}}_{12}gi~gi-\text{\textgreek{S}}_{14}e-\text{\textgreek{S}}_{15}'a} \]
\[\text{ruler word=ABS 3.SG.NH-L3-3.SG.NH.P-return~PF-3.SG.A-SUB} \]

“The ruler, who revokes these (offerings), …”

Ex. (169), 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.

(169) Gudea Statue B 8:19–20 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)

\[\text{niʒ₂-ba-ŋa₂ ba-a-gi₄-gi₄-da} \]
\[\text{niʒba=ŋu=ʾa \text{\textgreek{S}}_5ba-\text{\textgreek{S}}_{10}e-\text{\textgreek{S}}_{12}gi~gi-\text{\textgreek{S}}_{15}ed-\text{\textgreek{S}}_{14}e-\text{\textgreek{S}}_{15}'a} \]
\[\text{gift=1.SG.POSS=L2.NH MID-L2-return~PF-PF-3.SG.S-SUB} \]

“… who revokes my gifts, …”

Exx. (170), which is a finite relative clause, and ex. (171) 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. (171) both the agreement pattern and the use of the suppletive stem signals the present-future tense.

(170) Iri-kagina 1 8:10–12 (RIME 1.9.9.1) (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222607)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{inim} & \quad \text{lugal-ne₂,} & \quad \text{d} & \text{nin-ŋir₂-su-ke₄} \\
\text{P₁[inim]} & \quad \text{P₂[lugal=ane}} & \quad \text{ningirsuk=é} \\
\text{P₁[word]} & \quad \text{P₂[king=3.SG.H.POSS}} & \quad \text{DN=ERG} \\
\text{e-na-dug₄-ga} & \quad \text{S₂i-S₆nn-S₇a-S₁1n-S₁2dug-S₁₄θ-S₁₅ʾa]-P₅θ} \\
\text{FIN=3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H.A-speak-3.SG.P-SUB]\text{=}P₅ABS
\end{align*}
\]

“the commands, Ningirsu, his master, gave him, ....”

(171) Nam-mahne 6 2:6 (RIME 3/1.1.12.6) (Lagash, 21st c.) (P234969)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{sizkur-ŋu₁₀} & \quad \text{ḥe₂-na-be₂} \\
\text{sizkur-ŋu=ø} & \quad \text{S₁h-S₂i-S₆nn-S₇a-S₁₁b-S₁₂e-S₁₄e} \\
\text{pray=1.SG.POSS=ABS} & \quad \text{MOD-FIN-3.SG.H.-DAT-3.SG.NH.P-speak.PF-3.SG.A}
\end{align*}
\]

“May it (= this statue) pray to her on my behalf (lit. ‘tell my pray’)!”

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 /ê/. The exact form of the 1st ps. sg. FPP is uncertain, but its existence can be inferred from the form of the preceding prefixes.

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 discontinuous 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. (172) 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.

(172) NG 99 rev. 1:3–4 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P111162)

```
is-bi-la  du-du-ke₄-ne, ka-ga-ne-ne-a  ba-ni-gi-in-eš
ibila  dudu=ak=ene=e  kag=anē=ʾa  sSba-S₁₀ni-S₁₁n-S₁₂gin-S₁₄eš
```

"The heirs of Dudu confirmed this in their account (lit. ‘in their mouths’)."

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SLOT 11</th>
<th>SLOT 14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FPP</td>
<td>SET A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sg. 1</td>
<td>/'/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sg. 2</td>
<td>/e/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sg. 3 H</td>
<td>/n/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sg. 3 NH</td>
<td>/b/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pl. 1</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pl. 2</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pl. 3</td>
<td>/nnē/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The discontinuous construction used to cross-reference a plural A in Sumerian transitive preterite finite verbs may seem odd for us, but a similar construction is also attested in Akkadian, the other main language of the area. The 3rd ps. pl. subject of the Akkadian finite verb is cross-referenced both by a prefix and a suffix, cf., e.g., i-škun-ū (3-place,PT-PL,MASC) “they placed”. In these forms the prefix indicates the person, while the suffix indicates the number and the gender of the subject.

Note that the 3rd ps. pl. FPP /nnē/ is not used for cross-referencing A in transitive preterite verbal forms. In addition to the discontinuous 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 as in ex. (173) below; see also ex. (449) in Lesson 15 below.

(173) NG 190 obv. 1:6  (Lagash, 21st c.) (P111354)

\begin{verbatim}
nam-erim₂ ib₂-kud namerim=ø S2i-S11b-S12kud-S14ø oath=ABS FIN-3.SG.NH.A-cut-3.SG.P
\end{verbatim}

“(Two persons) took an affirmatory oath.”

The agreement pattern of the preterite forms is summarized in Table 9.2 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>S11</th>
<th>S12</th>
<th>S14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>INTRANSITIVE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TRANSITIVE (SG A)</strong></td>
<td>A (with a sg. IPP)</td>
<td>stem\textsubscript{PT}</td>
<td>P (with set B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TRANSITIVE (PL A)</strong></td>
<td>A (with a sg. IPP)</td>
<td>stem\textsubscript{PT}</td>
<td>A (with a pl. suffix of set B)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 /\textit{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. (174) below. For cross-referencing a 3rd ps. pl. P, /nnē/ is supplanted by the 3rd ps. sg. non-human prefix /b/ in S11.

(174) FaoS 19, Gir32 rev. 7 (Lagash, 23rd c.) (P213570)

ḫa-mu-ra-ne-šum₂-mu
S₁ḫa-S₄mu-S₆r-S₇a-S₁₁nnē-S₁₂šum-S₁₄e
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. (175) 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.

(175) Gudea Cyl. A 1:11 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

e₂-ninnu me-be₂ an ki-a
eninnu=ak me=be=e an ki=ʾa
TN=GEN essence=3.SG.NH.POSS=L3.NH sky earth=L1
pa e₃ mu-ak-ke₄
pa=ø e=ø=ø S₄mu-S₁₀n-S₁₂ak-S₁₄en
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 16 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>S11</th>
<th>S12</th>
<th>S13</th>
<th>S14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTRANSITIVE</td>
<td>stem&lt;sub&gt;Pr&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>-/ed/-</td>
<td>S (with set B)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRANSITIVE</td>
<td>P (with an IPP)</td>
<td>stem&lt;sub&gt;Pr&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>A (with set A)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9.3: The present-future agreement pattern
Verbal tense

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 great 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.: \( \text{ŋar \_PF}/\text{ŋar}/: \text{ŋa₂-ŋa₂ \_PF}/\text{ŋa-ŋa}/ “to put”, \( \text{naŋ \_PF}/\text{naŋ}/: \text{nas-nas \_PF}/\text{na-na}/ “to drink”, \( \text{kur₉ \_PF}/\text{kur}/: \text{ku₄-ku₄ \_PF}/\text{ku~ku}/ “to enter”; or it is preserved only in the first syllable: \( \text{ḥal \_PF}/\text{ḥal}/: \text{ḥal-ḥa \_PF}/\text{ḥal-ḥa}/ “to distribute”, \( \text{te-en \_PF}/\text{ten}/: \text{te-en-te \_PF}/\text{ten-te}/ “to cool off”. If the monosyllabic stem ends with a vowel, then the whole stem is reduplicated, e.g.: \( \text{gi₄ \_PF}/\text{gi}/: \text{gi₄-gi₄ \_PF}/\text{gi~gi}/ “to return”; \( \text{mu₂ \_PF}/\text{mu}/: \text{mu₂-mu₂ \_PF}/\text{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: \( \text{tuku \_PF}/\text{tuku}/: \text{du₁₂-du₁₂ \_PF}/\text{du~du}/ “to have”; \( \text{taka₄ \_PF}/\text{taka}/: \text{da₁₃-da₁₃ \_PF}/\text{da~da}/ “to leave”.

iii) Verbs belonging to the EXTENDING CLASS use a stem extended with a consonant in the present-future: \( \text{es \_PF}/\text{e}/: \text{ed₂ \_PF}/\text{ed}/ “to go out”, \( \text{te \_PF}/\text{te}/ or \( \text{ti \_PF}/\text{ti}/: \text{ten₃ \_PF}/\text{ten}/ or \( \text{ti₃ \_PF}/\text{ti₃}/ “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.: \( \text{dug₄ \_PF}/\text{dug}/ (sg.), \( \text{e \_PF}/\text{e}/ (pl.): \text{e \_PF}/\text{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 out-number present-future forms greatly. Only the preterite may be used with stative verbs, and this is the most often used tense in texts narrating past events.

In ex. (176) 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. (168) and (169) above.
(176) Gudea Cyl. A 12:1–2 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

e₂ ud-de₃ ma-ra-du₃-e,
e=ø ud=e S4mu-S6r-S7a-S12du-S14e
house=ABS day=ERG VEN-2.SG-DAT-build-3.SG.A
ŋi₆-e ma-ra-ab-mu₂-mu₂
ŋi=eS4mu-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. (177) below the present-future is used to express an action that is simultaneous with another action.

(177) Lugal-zagesi 1 2:26–32 (RIME 1.14.20.1) (Uruk, 24th c.) (Q001379)

day=DEM=L1 GN=ERG joy=L1 day=ABS VEN-3.SG,H-COM-L1.SYN-pass=PL-3.SG.A
urim₅ki-ma, nam-lugal, mu-ak-ke₄
“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. (178) below the present-future is used to express actions that are simultaneous with each other.

(178) Lugal-kigine-dudu 1 6–14 (Uruk, 24th c.) (Q001368)
nam-en, nam-lugal-da, e-na-da-tab-ba-a,

day=L1 GN=ABS VEN-3.SG,H-COM-L1.SYN-act-3.SG.A
urims₅ki-ma, nam-lugal, mu-ak-ke₄
“(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. (179) below the verb of address introducing direct speech uses the present-future tense. Here the act of addressing is simultaneous with the speech, see also ex. (166) above.
In ex. (180) the present-future is used with the modal prefix /ḫa/- to express a wish, see also Lesson 16, section 16.2 below.

(180) Gudea Cyl. B 2:6 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

bar-ŋu₁₀-a šud₃ ḫe₂-mi-sa₄-za
bar=ŋu=ʾa šud=ø S₁ḫa-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. (181) below the present-future is used to express a habitual action.

(181) En-metena 7 15–16 (RIME 1.9.5.7) (Lagash, 25th c.) (P222539)

gur₄-gur₄ kug luḥ-ḥa i₃ itud¹-da
p₁[gurgur kug luḥ-ʾa=ak] p₂[i itud=ak=ø
p₂[vessel silver clean-PT=GEN] p₂[oil month=GEN=ABS
²nin-nir₂-su₂-ke₄ ab-ta-gu₇-a,
ninğiniṣuk=e S₉a-S₅b-S₉tₐ-S₁₂gu-S₁₄e=ₛ₁₅ʾa]=p₃ø
mu-na-dim₂
S₄₉mu-S₆n₈n-S₇a-S₁₁n-S₁₂dim-S₁₄ø
“(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. (184) and the first verbal form in ex. (185) 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. (183) and (184), /u/ vs. /i/, may easily be explained if one assumes that the grapheme NI represents /nNi/ in the former, but /ni/ in the latter.

(182) Iri-kagina 3 2:16–18’ (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222610)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{lu₂} & \quad \text{dam} & \quad \text{u₃-taka₄}, \\
\text{lu}= & \quad \text{dam}= & \quad \text{ø} \\
\text{man}= & \quad \text{ERG} & \quad \text{wife}= & \quad \text{ABS} & \quad \text{ANT}, & \quad \text{3.G.S.H.A}, & \quad \text{leave}= & \quad \text{3.G.P} & \quad \text{silver} & \quad \text{unit} & \quad \text{5}= & \quad \text{ABS}= & \quad \text{COP}, & \quad \text{3.G.S} \\
\text{ensi}= & \quad \text{ke₄}, & \quad \text{ba}= & \quad \text{de₆} \\
\text{ruler}= & \quad \text{ERG} & \quad \text{MID}, & \quad \text{3.G.S.H.A}, & \quad \text{bring}= & \quad \text{3.G.P} \\
\end{align*}
\]

“If a man divorced (his) wife, the ruler received 5 shekels of silver for himself.”

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

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ nin}= & \quad \text{ni}= \quad \text{2-su}= & \quad \text{ke₄}, & \quad \text{sa}= \quad \text{šuš}= & \quad \text{gal}= & \quad \text{ne₂}, & \quad \text{u₃}= & \quad \text{ni}= & \quad \text{šuš} \\
\text{nin}= & \quad \text{EN }, & \quad \text{battle.net}= & \quad \text{3.G.H.POSS}= & \quad \text{ABS} & \quad \text{ANT}, & \quad \text{3.G.H.L2}, & \quad \text{3.G.H.A}, & \quad \text{cover}= & \quad \text{3.G.P} \\
\end{align*}
\]

“After Ningirsu had thrown his battle-net on him (= the Ummaite), ....”

(184) Iri-kagina 1 7:17–21 (RIME 1.9.9.1) (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222607)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{RU}= & \quad \text{lugal}= & \quad \text{ke₄}, & \quad \text{sa}= \quad \text{ašag}= & \quad \text{ga-na}= & \quad \text{ka}, & \quad \text{pu₂}= \quad \text{ni}= & \quad \text{du₃}, \\
\text{RU}= & \quad \text{lugal}= & \quad \text{en}, & \quad \text{ašag}= & \quad \text{an}= & \quad \text{ak}= & \quad \text{ʾa} & \quad \text{pu}= & \quad \text{ø} \\
\text{attendant}= & \quad \text{ERG} & \quad \text{head} & \quad \text{field}= & \quad \text{3.G.H.POSS}= & \quad \text{GEN}, & \quad \text{L1}, & \quad \text{well}= & \quad \text{ABS} & \quad \text{ANT}, & \quad \text{L1}, & \quad \text{3.G.H.A}, & \quad \text{build}= & \quad \text{3.G.P} \\
\end{align*}
\]

“After an attendant had built his well in the front part of his field (…)”

(185) Amar-Suena 9 32–33 (RIME 3/2.1.3.9) (Ur, 21st c.) (Q000984)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{lu₂} & \quad \text{e₂} & \quad \text{a}= & \quad \text{ba}= & \quad \text{sumun}, & \quad \text{u₃}= & \quad \text{un}= & \quad \text{du₃} \\
\text{lu}= & \quad \text{e}= & \quad \text{ø} & \quad \text{S₁}= & \quad \text{u₃}= & \quad \text{ba}- & \quad \text{S₁}= & \quad \text{sumun}= & \quad \text{S₁}= & \quad \text{u₃}= & \quad \text{S₁}= & \quad \text{du}= & \quad \text{S₁}= & \quad \text{ø} \\
\text{man}= & \quad \text{house}= & \quad \text{ABS} & \quad \text{ANT-MID}= & \quad \text{old}, & \quad \text{3.G.S} & \quad \text{ANT}, & \quad \text{3.G.H.A}, & \quad \text{build}= & \quad \text{3.G.P} \\
\end{align*}
\]

“The man, who, after the temple has become dilapidated, rebuilds it, ....”
Further readings


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 reanalysed 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 must produce only the morphemic segmentation and glossing (2nd and 3rd line of the examples).
LESSON 9

a) mu-ak-ke₄
   \[s⁴mu−s₁₀ni−s₁₂ak−s₁₄e\]
   VEN-1.SYN-act-3.SG.A

b) ma-ra-ab-mu₂-mu₂
   \[s⁴mu−s₆r−a−s₁₁b−s₁₂mu−s₁₄e\]
   VEN-2.SG-DAT-3.SG.NH.P-grow~PF-3.SG.A

c) i₃-ni-gi₄
   \[s₂i−s₉nn−s₁₀i−s₁₁n−s₁₂gi−s₁₄ø\]

d) ma-ra-du₃-e
   \[s⁴mu−s₆r−a−s₁₂du−s₁₄e\]
   VEN-2.SG-DAT-build-3.SG.A

e) ma-an-šum₂
   \[s₄m−s₇a−s₁₁n−s₁₂šum−s₁₄ø\]

g) ba-ni-gi-in-eš
   \[s₅ba−s₁₀ni−s₁₁n−s₁₂gin−s₁₄eš\]

h) be₂-ŋar-re₂-eš
   \[s₅b−s₁₀i−s₁₁n−s₁₂ŋar−s₁₄eš\]

i) gu₂ ma-si-si-ne
   \[gu=ø s⁴m−s₇a−s₁₁si−s₁₄enē\]
   neck=ABS VEN-DAT-fill~PF-3.PL.A

j) mu-na-dim₂
   \[s⁴mu−s₆nn−s₇a−s₁₁n−s₁₂dim−s₁₄ø\]

k) sizkur₂ mu-na-be₂
   \[sizkur=ø s⁴mu−s₆nn−s₆a−s₁₁b−s₁₂e−s₁₄e\]
   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-lil₂
2. lugal kur-kur-ke₄
3. lugal-ki-ŋen-ne₂-du₇-du₇-ra
4. ud den-lil₂-le
5. gu₃ zid e-na-de₂-a
6. nam-en
7. nam-lugal-da
8. e-na-da-tab-ba-a
9. unug₃-ki-ga
10. nam-en
11. mu-ak-ke₄
12. urim₂-ki-šuba₃
13. nam-lugal
14. mu-ak-ke₄
15. lugal-ki-ŋen-ne₂-du₇-du₇-de₃
16. nam gal ḫul₂-la-da
17. ḏen-lil₂ lugal ki ḏu₇-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. [186], and [364]), or the subject, distributive meaning, i.e., more than one subject or object is involved in the verbal action simultaneously or successively (see, e.g., exx. [187]–[190] 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.

(186) Shulgi A 91  (ETCSL 2.4.2.01)

kur $\underline{ḥu-mu-gam-gam}$
kur=$\underline{=}\ S_1ḥa^{-}S_4mu^{-}S_{11}^{-}S_{12}gam^{-}gam^{-}S_{14}=\underline{=}$
foreign.land=ABS MOD-VEN-1.SG.A-subdue~PL-3.SG.P

kalam $\underline{ḥu-mu-ge-en-ge-en}$
kalam=$\underline{=}\ S_1ḥa^{-}S_4mu^{-}S_{11}^{-}S_{12}gen^{-}gen^{-}S_{14}=\underline{=}$
land=ABS MOD-VEN-1.SG.A-firm~PL-3.SG.P

“I subdued the foreign lands completely, I secured the land fully.”
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:

Table 10.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>SINGULAR</th>
<th>PLURAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“to go”</td>
<td>/ęen/a</td>
<td>/du/b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“to stand, to put”</td>
<td>/gub/e</td>
<td>/sug/or /sug/f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“to sit, to seat”</td>
<td>/tuš/d</td>
<td>/durun/o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“to live”</td>
<td>h: /til/i</td>
<td>s: /lug/k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“to die, to kill”</td>
<td>/uš/m</td>
<td>/ug/p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“to bring”</td>
<td>countables: /tum/o</td>
<td>countables: /lah/r</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mass nouns: /de/o</td>
<td>mass nouns: /tum/o</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most often used writings of the stems of Table 10.1 are: a) ęen; b) du; c) e-re; d) sus/sub; e) gub; f) sus/sug, šu; g) tus; h) dur; i) durun, durunx(KU.KU); j) ti/tiš; k) lu/lug, lug₄(LUL); l) se₁2/sig₇, se₁₁, zez; m) uš; n) ug₇, ugs, ugₓ(UŠ₂,UŠ₂); o) tum₂; p) des, dis(TI) (in Garshana); q) tum₃; r) laḫ₄, laḫ₃, la-(he/a).

As exx. (191)–(194) 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. (191) and (193) 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. (192) and (194). 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.

(191) NWHCM 2009.174 obv. 9–10 (Umma, 23th c.) (P480080)

> ummaₜ₃ ki=š₂₃ GN=3.L₂.NH place=1.SG.POSS=L₂.NH FIN-3.SG.NH-L₂.SYN-sit.PL-3.PL.S
> is-durunx(KU.KU)-ne₂-fᵉš₂³
> “They are staying with me (lit. ‘at my place’) in Umma.”
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:

(194) Gudea Cyl. A 23:7 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

"He had each of them (= stone basins) stand in the temple."
Verbal plurality

(195) VS 14, 179 rev. 5:3 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P020190)
mu-na-kur₆(DU)-re₅-na-am₆
₄₅₆₇₈₉₁₀₁₁₁₂₃₄₅₆₇₈₉₀ OSP a=am⁻=am⁻
“These [= various animals] are (gifts) brought in for (Baragnamtara).”

(196) UET 3, 1410 3–4 (Ur, 21st c.) (P137735)
a-wi-li₃ nu-banda₄ ba-niⁿ⁻in-kur₉-re-en₃
₄₅₆₇₈₉₁₀₁₁₁₂₃₄₅₆₇₈₉₀
“Awili, the overseer brought them (= 8 troops) in.”

(197) The Death of Gilgamesh, Me Turan Version Segment F 168 (ETCSL 1.8.1.3)
e₂ nin⁻a⁻ta nin⁹ me⁻ši⁻du⁻un
e nin=ak⁺ta nin=∅ ₄₅₆₇₈₉₁₀₁₁₁₂₃₄₅₆₇₈₉₀
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 remained 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 (= de₆) but with the TI (= di₃). 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 forms 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: *tum₂* “to lead” (“geleiten”) and *de₆ / tum₃* “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 */laḫ/* 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 Tanzania (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 must produce only the morphemic segmentation and glossing (2nd and 3rd line of the examples).
a) kug ḫŋa₂-tum₃-dug₃-ra mu-na-ŋen,
kug ŋatumdug=ra  s₄mu₄-nn₃-s₅a₃-s₁₂ŋen₃-s₁₄ø
holy DN=DAT.H VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-go-3.SG.S
“He went to holy Gatumdug.”

b) ṭumma²ki-²a³, ki-ŋa₂ i₃-durunₓ(KU.KU)-ne₂-²eš₂¹
umma=ʾa ki=ŋu=ʾa  s₂i₃-s₁₀(b=⁻)œ₃₅durun₃-s₁₄eš
GN=L₂.NH place=1.SG.POSS=L₂.NH FIN-3.SG.NH-1.SYN-sit.PL-3.PL.S
“They are staying with me (lit. ‘at my place’) in Umma.”

c) ensi₂-be₂, mu-uš₂
ensik=be=œ  s₄mu₃-s₁₁n₃-uš₃-s₁₄ø
ruler=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS VEN-3.SG.HA-die-3.SG.P
“He killed its ruler.”

d) gud-be₂ nu-mu-da-tum²
gud=be=œ  s₁nin₃-s₄mu₃-n₃s₈da₃-s₁₁n₃-s₁₂-tum₃-s₁₄ø
“He was not able to bring that ox.”

e) lugal-keš₃-da, e-da-se₁₂
lugalkeš=da  s₂i₃-s₆n₃-s₈da₃-s₁₂eš₃-s₁₄eš
PN=COM FIN-3.SG.H.COM-live.PL-3.PL.S
“They live by Lugal-Keš.”

f) nag-su²š-e₃ ḫa-za-nu₂m²-e, mu-na-an-laḥ₅
nagsu=še hazanum=œ  s₄mu₃-nn₃-s₆a₃-s₁₁n₃-s₁₂laḥ₃-s₁₄ø
“The mayor took them (= the sheep) for him to Nagsu.”

g) inim-ba ḫa-mu-da-sag
inim=be=ʾa  s₁ha₃-s₄mu₃-š₅a₃-s₁₀n₃-s₁₂sag₃-s₁₄ø
word=DEM=¹L1 MOD-VEN-1.SG.COM-L1.SYN-stand-3.SG.S
“May she stand with me in this matter!”

h) nam-šiṭa sago₂-ga gu₁-de₂-a-da
namšita sago₂ a gudea=ak-da
entreaty good-PT PN=GEN=COM
en ḫnin-gir₂-su-ra mu-na-da-šu⁴-ge-eš₂
en ninjirsuk-ra  s₄mu₃-nn₃-s₇a₃-s₈da₃-s₁₂šu⁴-s₁₄eš
“(Bau’s septuplets) stepped forward to lord Ninjirsu one by one with friendly
entreaties on behalf of Gudea.”
LESSON 10

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.

10.7 Add morphemic segmentation and glossing to the following text, and translate it with the help of Volk’s (2012) or Foxvog’s glossary (2016b). Westenholz (2014: 131) assumes that eš₃-maḥ in obv. l. 6 means “prison”.

CUSAS 26, 156 (Umma?, cca. 23rd c.) (P214949)

obv.
1. mdnin-mug-an-dul₂
2. arad₂ mug-ge-[si]
3. mṭur₃-nin-mug
4. ‘dumu’ mug-ge-si
5. eš₃-maḥ-a e-ṣe₁₂-am₃
6. nin-tur ama mug-ge-si-ke₄
7. ba-laḥ₅-ḥe
8. ur₃-nin-tu sagi-maḥ

rev.
1. maškim-be₂
This lesson describes the function of the morphemes that may occupy S2–6 of the finite verbal from. 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 /ḫa/-, 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. (203) below; b) /a/- in all other environments, see, e.g., ex. (206) 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 S3–11 the occurrence of the finite-marker prefix is constrained by a rule which is clearly phonological by nature: it occurs only in verbal forms that would start with a consonant cluster without the finite-marker prefix. In ex. (198) below, for example, the verbal form would start with a geminated consonant, /mm/, without the finite-marker. The verbal form in ex. (199) has no finite-marker, and its starts with a single consonant.
In ex. (200) 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. (201) has no finite marker either.

(200) MVN 3 36 obv. 3:2-7 (Isin, ca. 25-24th c.) (P222204)

1/2 kug ma-na, maḫir, dumu ama-r-šuba₃(MUŠ₃.KUR.ZA)-ra,
1/2 kug mana=ø maḫir dumu ama-šub=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=še₃ S₂₁-S₆₆-N₁₀-S₁₁-N₀₂-GU-S₁₄ø
“Apa-e, the fuller, made Mahir, the son of Amar-šuba, receive (lit. ‘eat’) half a mana of silver as the price.”

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

kar ninjin=kl-na-ke₄ ma₂ bi₂-us₂
kar ninjin=ak=e ma=ø S₂₁-S₁₁-N₁₀-S₁₂-us=S₁₄ø
“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. (202) 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.

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

gu₃-de₂ a i₃-zig
gudea=ø S₂₁-S₁₂-zig=S₁₄ø
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 S3–11, 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. (203) and (204), a state resulting from a previous action, see ex. (205), or present-future verbal forms expressing an action, see exx. (206), (207) below, were prefixed with /a(l)/-.

(203) CUSAS 26, 45 rev. 1:3 (unknown, 23rd c.) (P427623)

\[ \text{inim-be}_2 \text{ al-til} \]
\[ \text{inim}=\text{be}=\emptyset \text{ S2a-S12til-S14}\emptyset \]
\[ \text{word}=\text{DEM}=\text{ABS} \text{ FIN-complete-3.SG.S} \]
“This case is finished.”

(204) E-ana-tum 1 obv. 4:20–22 (RIME 1.9.3.1) (Lagash, 25th c. BCE) (P222399)

\[ \text{e2-an-na}, \text{ inanaks, eb-gal-ka-ka a-tum}_2 \]
\[ \text{eana inanak ebgal=ak=ak=ʾa S2a-S5b-S10(i>)=0 S12tum-S14}\emptyset \]
\[ \text{TN}_1 \text{ DN} \text{ TN2=GEN=GEN=L2.NH} \text{ FIN-3.SG.NH=L2-worthy-3.SG.S} \]
“He is worthy of the E-ana of Inana of the Ebgal”

(205) En-ana-tum I 18 2:3–7 (RIME 1.9.4.18) (Lagash, 25th c.) (Q001086)

\[ \text{šu-ni-al-dugud, kindagal, nam-nu-banda}_3 \text{ e2-šag}_1\text{-ga,} \]
\[ \text{p1šunialdugud kindagal namnubanda ešag=ak=0} \]
\[ \text{p1PN chief.barber overseership inner.room= GEN=ABS} \]
\[ \text{an-na-taḫ-ḫa, KIB mu-dim}_2\text{-dim}_2 \]
\[ \text{S2a-S6n-S7a-S12taḫ-S14}\emptyset-S15, a=e \text{ KIB}=\emptyset \]
\[ \text{S4mu-S11n-S12dim~dim-S14}\emptyset \]
\[ \text{FIN-3SG.H-DAT-add-3.SG.S-SUB=ERG} \text{ nail=ABS} \text{ VEN-3.SG.H.A-create~PL-3.SG.P} \]

“Shuni-aldugud, the chief barber, who has been assigned to the office of the personal quarters’ overseer, fashioned numerous inscribed clay nails.”

(206) Rimush 18 20–22 (RIME 2.1.2.18) (Agade, 23rd c.) (Q000842)

\[ \text{lu}_2, \text{ im-sa-rā-e, ab-ha-lam-me-a} \]
\[ \text{lu imsara=e=0 S2a-S11b-S12halam-S14e-S15, a=0} \]
\[ \text{person inscription=DEM=ABS FIN-3.SG.NH.P-obliterate-3.SG.A-SUB=ABS} \]

“Whoever obliterates this inscription, ....”
(207) En-metena 7 15–16 (RIME 1.9.5.7) (Lagash, 25th c.) (P222539)

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 the prefix /i/- replaced the prefix /a(l)/- in almost all verbal forms, except for the imperative, see ex. (208), and ex. (392) in Lesson 14, section 14.3, exx. (481) and (482) in Lesson 16, section 16.2 below.

(208) NG 208 obv. 1:17 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P135750)

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. (209) below, corresponding to verbal forms with the middle prefix /ba/- in Sumerian in the South, see section 11.3 below.

(209) OSP 2, 58 3–4 (Nippur, 23rd c.) (P216212)

In 16 shekels of silver, (which is) the value of the corvée obligation, were paid to Enlile-maba.
Exx. (210) and (211) below show that passive forms expressed with the middle marker /\textit{ba}/- in Ur, may be expressed with the finite-marker /\textit{a(l)}/- in Nippur.

(210) MS 4096 rev. 6 (Ur, 21st c.) (P253193)
igi-\textit{be}_2-še₃ mu lugal ba-pad₃
gi=be=še mu lugal=ak=ø Sba-S12Pad-S14ø
face=3.SG.NH.POSS=TERM name king=GEN=ABS MID-call-3.SG.S
“The promissory oath was sworn before them.”

(211) MVN 3, 330 obv. 9 (Nippur, 21st c.) (P113890)
mu lugal-be₂ al-pad₃
mu lugal=ak=be=ø al-pad-ø
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 /\textit{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 تحكم = \textit{alākum}, “to go”, the present-future Akkadian verbal forms are translated with present-future Sumerian verbal forms containing the finite-marker /\textit{a(l)}/-:

(212) OBGT VII 31–33 (= A 24189) (Nippur)
31. al-du  \textit{i-\textit{il}l}_2-lak
32. al-du-un \textit{a-al-lak}
33. al-du-un \textit{tal}_2-lak

11.2 The coordinator prefix (Slot 3)

The prefix /\textit{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.
LESSON 11

(213) Shulgi C 9 (ETCSL 2.4.2.03)

\[
\begin{align*}
niŋ₂-erim₂-ma & \ \text{usan}_3 \ \text{bar-uš-be}_2 \\
niŋerim=ak & \ \text{usan} \ \text{baruš=be=ø} \\
evil=\text{GEN} & \ \text{scourge} \ \text{stick=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS} \\
 sebagai & \ \text{in-ga-me-en}_3 \\
\text{še} & \ \text{S2i-S3nga-S12me-S14en} \\
1\text{S.G.PR} & \ \text{FIN-COOR-COP-1.SG.S} \\
\end{align*}
\]

"As for all evil, their scourge and stick are also me."

(214) Sargon 1 38–41 (RIME 2.1.1.1) (Agade, 24th c., in Old Babylonian copies)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{⸢iri⸣-ne₂, e-ḫul !} & \\
\text{iri=ane=ø} & \ \text{S2i-S11n-S12ḫul-S14ø} \\
\text{city=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS} & \ \text{FIN-3.SG.H.A-raid-3.SG.P} \\
\text{bad₃-be₂, e-ga-⸢sig₁₀⸣} & \\
\text{bad=be=ø} & \ \text{S2i-S3nga-S11n-S12sig-S14ø} \\
\text{wall=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS} & \ \text{FIN-COOR-3.SG.H.A-demolish-3.SG.P} \\
\end{align*}
\]

"He raided his city and also demolished its city-walls."

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

\[
\begin{align*}
alan-e, & \ \text{u₃} \ \text{kug} \ \text{nu} \\
alan=e=ø & \ \text{u} \ \text{kug=ø} \ \text{nu} \\
\text{statue=DEM=ABS} & \ \text{and} \ \text{silver=ABS} \ \text{NEG} \\
\text{za-gin₃} & \ \text{nu-nga-am₃} \\
zagin=ø & \ \text{S1nu-S2i-S3nga-S12me-S14ø} \\
\text{lapis.lazuli=ABS} & \ \text{NEG-FIN-COOR-COP-3.SG.S} \\
\end{align*}
\]

"This statue is of neither of silver nor lapis lazuli"

The conjunction of noun phrases is expressed most often with the conjunction particle \textit{us}, which is a loan from Early Semitic *\textit{wa}.

(216) Shu-Suen 12 7–8 (Ur, 21st c.) (Q000996)

\[
\begin{align*}
nam-sipad & \ \text{kalam-ma,} \ \ u₃ \ \ \text{an-ub-da} \ \text{limmu₂-ba-še}_3 \\
namsipad & \ \text{kalam=ak} \ \text{u} \ \ \text{anubda} \ \text{limmu=be=ak=še} \\
\text{shepherdship land=GEN} & \ \text{and} \ \text{quarter} \ \text{four=3.SG.NH.POSS=GEN=TERM} \\
\end{align*}
\]

"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.13

In practice these functions are not always easily separated as both uses 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. (217) below. When the ventive functions “only” as a 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. (218) below, for example, the 2nd ps. sg. initial pronominal prefix in S6 separates the ventive and the dative prefix.

(217) Gudea Cyl. A 10:28–29 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

dinjir  gal-gal  lagaški-a-ke₄-ne,
dinjir  gal-ø    lagaš=ak=enē=e
god     big~PL-TL  GN=GEN=PL=ERG

γ2 ma-si-si-ne

γu=ø  s₄m-s₇a-s₁₂si-s₁₄enē
neck=ABS  VEN-DAT-fill~PF-3.PLA

“(In the E-bagara, my dining place,) the great gods of Lagash gather around me.”

(218) Gudea Cyl. A 11:8 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

an-ta  ḫe₂-ŋal₂  ḫa-mu-ra-ta-ŋen
an-ta  ḫenal=ø  s₁h₄sa₄mu₆s₇aₛ₉aₛ₁₀ta-s₁₂ŋen-s₁₄ø

sky=ABL abundance=ABS MOD-VEN-2.SG-DAT-ABL-go-3.SG.S

“Abundance comes down to you from heaven.”

13 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.
The prefix has two basic allomorphs:

i) /m/ before a vowel, see ex. (217) above, or before /b/, see ex. (225), or immediately next to the verbal base, see ex. (219) below. The /b/ assimilates to the /m/, see ex. (225), and the resulting sequence /mm/ is reduced to /m/ if followed by another consonant, see ex. (229);

ii) /mu/- in other environments, see, e.g., ex. (224), 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 ungeminated consonant, see exx. (226) and (227), but not if the syllable starts with a geminated consonant, see ex. (228) 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. (219) below.

(219) Nisaba 15, 873 obv. 10–12 (Irisagrig, 21st c.) (P387957)

2 sila₃ tu₇ 2 ku₆, ṣa-lu-um lu₂kiŋ₂-gi₄-a lugal,
2 sila tu 2 ku=ø šalum kiŋgia lugal=ak=ø
2 unit soup 2 fish=ABS PN₂ messenger king=GEN=ABS
ud udu ur₄-de₃ im-ŋen-na-a
ud udu=ø ur-ed=e S₂i-S₄m-S₁₂ŋen-S₁₄θ-S₁₅ʾa-ʾa
day sheep=ABS pluck=PF=DAT.NH FIN-VEN-go-3.SG.S-SUB-L1
“2 liters of soup, 2 fishes: 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. (220) below contains the middle prefix /ba/- in its separative function, see below in section 11.4.

(220) Nisaba 15, 873 obv. 7–9 (Irisagrig, 21st c.) (P387957)

1 sila₃ tu₇ 1 ku₆, nu-hi-AN lu₂kiŋ₂-gi₄-a lugal,
1 sila tu 1 ku=ø nuhillum kiŋgia lugal=ak=ø
1 unit soup 1 fish=ABS PN₁ messenger king=GEN=ABS
ud BAD₃.AN ki₃-še₃ ba-ŋen-na-a
ud dēr=še S₅ba-S₁₂ŋen-S₁₄θ-S₁₅ʾa-ʾa
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. (221)
One should not assume that the scribe and the wife of the ruler stay at the same location, rather it is a kind of subjective alignment between the two that is expressed using 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. (223) below.

(223) BPOA 1, 382 obv. 7–rev. 2 (Umma, 21st c.) (P339042)

"Dayaga, 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. (224) and (225) 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.

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

```
gu₃-de₂-a iri-ne₂ ŋir₂-su₃-š₂3 gu₂ mu-na-si-si
PN=DAT.H city=3.SG.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.”

(225) 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-si
kur~kur=e gu=ø s₂i~s₄m~s₅b~s₇₂₅a~s₁₂s₁~s₁₄e
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.
The prefix of Slots 2–6

(226) Gudea Cyl. A 12:1–2 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

\[ e₂ ud-de₃ ma-ra-du₃-e, \]
\[ e=₀ ud=e s₄₅ rₗ rₗ₁ s₁₁₂ d₄ s₁₄ e \]
\[ house=ABS day=ERG VEN-2.SG-DAT-build-3.SG.A \]
\[ ŋi₆-e ma-ra-ab-mu₂-mu₂ \]
\[ ŋi=e s₄₅ rₗ rₗ₁ b₁₂ s₁₂ mu₄ s₁₄ e \]

“The day will build the temple for you and the night will make it rise for you.”

(227) Gudea Cyl. A 23:7 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

\[ e₂-a mi-ni-šu₄-šu₄ \]
\[ e=ʾa s₄₅ μ₅₁ ni₃₁ n₃₁₂ šug šug s₁₄ ø \]
\[ temple=L¹ VEN-L¹-3.SG.H.A-stand.PL~PL-3.SG.P \]

“He had each of them (= stone basins) stand in the temple.”

(228) Gudea Cyl. B 19:20–21 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

\[ de₃-lil₂-ra, d₅nin-mah μ₅-nu₃₂ \]
\[ enlil=ra ninmah=ø s₄₅ μ₆₅ n₁₀ i₁₁₂ n₁₂₁₂ us s₁₄ ø \]

“He (= Gudea) seated Ninmah next to Enlil.”

(229) Gudea Cyl. B 20:14 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

\[ e₂-⸢da⸣ lugal ⸢im⸣-da-⸢hul₂⸣ \]
\[ e=da lugal=ø s₂₁ i₄₅ b₁₂ s₁₂ hul₁₄ ø \]
\[ house=COM owner=ABS FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-COM-rejoice-3.SG.S \]

“The owner rejoiced over the temple.

The exact determining factors affecting the emphatetic 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. (230) below comes from.\(^ {14}\) 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.

\(^ {14}\) For an online transliteration and translation of the text, see http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/etscri/Q001133.
LESSON 11

(230) 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=ø S₅ba₉ta₃¹n₃₁₂keš₇₁₄ø
alan-be₂, i₃-gul-gul
alan=be=ø S₁₁i₃₁₂gul~gul₇₁₄ø

“(He set fire on the temple of the goddess Gatumudg,) collected all its precious metal and lapis lazuli from it for himself, and destroyed all its statues.”

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. (231)–(232) and (234)–(235). Ex. (233) demonstrates that when the verb uš₂ is used in the meaning “to kill”, then the /ba/- prefix does not occur.

(231) NG 80 13–14 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P111313)

mu lu₂-gi-gun₄-na šeš gus-li gudu₄ ba-uš₂,
mu lugigunak šeš guli gudu₄=ak=ø S₁₂ba₅₂uš₇₁₄ø
name PN₁ brother PN₂ priest=GEN=ABS MID-die-3.SG.S
i₃-bi-la nu-u₃-tuku-₃-SH-še₃
ibila=ø S₁₁nu-s₂₁₄tuku-₃-SH-še₃=ak=SH-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, ....”
(232) NG 138 obv. 5 (Umma, 21st c.) (P200731)
na-ba ba-uš₂
naba=ø S₃ba-S₁₂uš-S₁₄ø
PN=abs MID-die-3.SG.S
“Naba died.”

(233) E-ana-tum 6 4:18–19 (RIME 1.9.3.6) (Lagash, 25th c.) (Q001058)
ensii₂-be₂, mu-uš₂
ensik=be=ø S₄mu-S₁₁n-S₁₂uš-S₁₄ø
ruler=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS VEN-3.SG.H.A-die-3.SG.P
“He killed its ruler”

(234) Amar-Suena 9 32–33 (RIME 3/2.1.3.9) (Ur, 21st c.) (Q000984)
lu₂ e₂ a-ba-sumun, u₃-un-du₃
lu e=ø S₁u-S₅ba-S₁₂sumun-S₁₄ø S₁u-S₁₁n-S₁₂du-S₁₄ø
“The man, who, after the temple has become dilapidated, rebuilds it, ...”

(235) Gilgamesh and Huwawa A 113 (ETCSL 1.8.1.5)
ud ŋešma₂ ma₂-gan₂ki ba-su-a-ja
ud ma magan=ø S₅ba-S₁₂u-S₁₄ø S₁₀a=be=a
day boat GN=ABS MID-sink-3.SG.S-SUB=3.SG.NH.POSS=L₁
“When the Magan boat sank, ...”

(236) OIP 115, 126 rev. 5 (Drehem, 21st c.) (P123715)
iti-ta ud 8 ba-ra-zal
itid=ta ud 8=ø S₅ta-S₁₂zal-S₁₄ø
month=ABL day 8=ABS MID-ABL-pass-3.SG.S
“8 days elapsed from the month.”

Verbs of grooming, exx. (237), (238), and (239b), and verbs of motion without a change in the location, ex. (239a), (240), and (241), also belong to the inherently middle verbs.

(237) Gilgamesh, Enkidu and the Netherworld 206 (ETCSL 1.8.1.4)
tug₂ dan₂-dan₂-na-ne₂ im-ma-an-mu₄
tug dan₂-dan₂-a=ane=ø S₂i-S₄m-S₅ba-S₁₁n-S₁₂mu-S₁₄ø
“He put on his cleanest garments.”
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. (242) and (243) below. Here the participant in question functions both as A and as recipient.

(242) Gudea Cyl. A 2:21–22 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

 lugal=ane=e sizkur ra2-zu-ne2 gu3-de2-a-aš2, lugal=ane=e sizkur arazu=ane=ø gudea=še

 king=3.SG.H.POSS=ERG prayer supplication=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS PN=TERM

 en d nin-njīr2-su-ke1 šu ba-ši-ti
 en ninjirsuk=e šu=ø s5ba-S6n-S8ši-S11n-S12ti-S14ø


“His master, Lord Ningirsu, accepted from Gudea his prayer and supplication.”
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 eventual location of the 3rd ps. subject are the same.

“When Il claimed the rulership of Umma for himself.”

“He left on his own for Kardahi.”

“When Ur-Ishkur, the ruler of Hamazi, left with his daughter-in-law.”

“When Ur-Idiskur, the ruler of Hamazi, left with his daughter-in-law.”

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.
(248) Gudea Cyl. A 2:24 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

ensiz-ke₄ ḫaq₂-tum₃-dug₄-še₃ ki-nu₂-a-ne₂ ba-gub
ensik=e ƙatumdug=še kinu=ane=ø S5ba-S11n-S12gub-S14ø

“The ruler set up his bed for himself near to Gatumdug.”

(249) Iri-kagina 3 2:16‘–18’ (RIME 1.9.9.3) (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222610)

lu₂ dam us₄-taka₄, kug giŋ₄ 5-am₆,
lu=e dam=ø S₁u-S₁₁n-S₁₂taka~S₁₄ø kug giŋ 5=ø=am-ø
ensiz-ke₄, ba-de₆
ensik=e S₁₁ba-S₁₁n-S₁₂de-S₁₄ø
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.

(250) Gudea Statue E 9:9–12 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232278)

ki-gub-ba-be₂, lu₂ nu-zi-zè,
kiguba=be=ø lu=e S₁₁nu-S₂₁zi~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=ø lu=e S₁₁nu-S₁₁ba-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 several 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. (251) and (252) show the active and passive, i.e., middle, version of the same year name. In the middle version, the A is left unmentioned.
(251) BPOA 7, 1948 rev. 3 (Umma, 21st c.) (P291162)
mu ḍamar-ḍsuenn lugal-e ur-bizi-lum mu-ḥul
mu amarsuenak lugal= e urbilum=∅  s₄mu-S₁₁n-S₁₂ḥul-S₁₄∅
year PN king= ERG GN=ABS VEN-3.SG.H.A-raid-3.SG.P
“The year: Amar-Suena, the king, raided Urbilum”

(252) BPOA 6, 1287 rev. 1 (Umma, 21st c.) (P292490)
mu ur-bi₂-ɪ₃-lum ki ba-ḥul
mu urbilum=∅ s₅ba-S₁₂ḥul-S₁₄∅
year GN=ABS MID-raid-3.SG.P
“The year: Urbilum was raided.”

(253) 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.”

(254) Shulgi D 219 (ETCSL 2.4.2.04)
niŋ₂ ki-en-gi-ra ba-a-gu-la
niŋ kengir=ʾa S₅ba-S₁₂e-S₁₂gul-S₁₄∅ 'a=∅
thing homeland=L₂.NH MID-L₂-destroy-3.SG.S-SUB=ABS
kur-ra ga-am₃-mi-ib-gu-ul
kur=ʾa 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!”

(255) NG 41 obv. 5–8 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P110926)
mu gu₅-li ba-gaz-še₃, eŋir-a-ne₂ u₃ dam
mu guli=∅ S₅ba-S₁₂gaz-S₁₄∅ 'a=ak=še eŋir=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-ŋu₁₀-ke₄-ne, ba-ne-šum₂-ma
dumu=ane=∅ dumu babagu=ak=enē=ra S₂ba-S₆ne-S₇a-S₁₂šum-S₁₄∅ 'a=ak
“(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. (256) below it is Gudea who is affected by what he has seen,
namely, he likes it. In contrast, in exx. (257) and (258) the divine approval affects the participant in the terminative.

(256) Gudea Cyl. A 13:18 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)
ka-al-be-še₁  igi  zid  ba-ši-bar
kalak=be=še  igi  zid-ø=ø  s₃₂ši₃₁n-₃₁₂bar-₃₁₄ø

"He (= Gudea) looked at the clay pit with satisfaction.

(257) Gudea Cyl. A 1:3 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)
ed-lil₂-e en  den-ŋir₂-su₂-še₃
enlil=e en ninjirsuk=še
DN=ERG lord DN=TERM
igi  zid  mu-ši-bar
igi  zid-ø=ø  s₄mu₃₉ši₃₁n-₃₁₂bar-₃₁₄ø

"The god Enlil looked at lord Ningirsu with approval.

(258) Gudea Statue B 3:6–7 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)
ud  d₄nin-ŋir₂-su₂-ke₄,  iri-ne₂-še₃
ud  ninjirsuk=e  iri=ane=še
day DN=ERG city=₃SG.H.POSS=TERM
igi  zid  im-ši-bar-ra
igi  zid-ø=ø  s₂₁s₄m₃₂ši₃₁n-₃₁₂bar-₃₁₄ø⁻₁₃⁻"a

"When Ningirsu had looked favourably upon his city, ..."

S₅ also accommodates a pronominal prefix /b/ that functions as the 3rd ps. 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 3rd ps. 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 locative 2, and the locative 3 prefix an allomorph of the ventive prefix in S4 functions as the 1st ps. sg. pronominal prefix.

Table 11.1: The initial pronominal prefixes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SINGULAR</th>
<th>PLURAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>2nd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ʃ/</td>
<td>/r/ or /e/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 discontinuous construction ...-S6r-S7a/-S10i-...-stem-S14enzen (= ...-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.\footnote{See Attinger 1993: 231, 237.}

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.

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 must produce only the morphemic segmentation and glossing (2nd and 3rd line of the examples). Note that two verbal forms are impossible to form, i.e., the prefix /ba/-prefix and one of their prefixes are incompatible!

a) en-me-er-kara₂-ra ²en-ki-ke₁ ²neštug₂ ²mu-na-an-šum₂
   enmerkar=ra enkik=e geštug=ø s₄mu-₄n₄S₄a₃S₄₄n₄S₄₂₄n₄S₄₁₂₄šum-S₄₁₄ø

b) nam-lu₂-lu₇ ²šag₄ ²iri-na-ka, ²ha-ne₂-gaz-ze₄(AB₂.ŠA₃.GE)
   namlulu=ø ²šag ²iri=ane=ak₄=a ø₄ha-₄ni₄S₁₁n₄S₂₁₂gaz-S₄₁₄e
   people=ERG heart city=3.SG.H.POSS=GEN=L₁ MOD-L₁-3.SG.H.P-kill-3.SG.A

c) ²din-ŋir₂-su-ke₄, sa-šuš-gal-ne₂ ²u₄ni-šuš
   ninjirsuk=ø sašušgal=ane=ø ø₄u₄₁₅n₁₄S₁₁₁n₄S₂₁₂šuš-S₄₁₄ø
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 based on what you have learnt in this lesson.

11.5 Compare the verbal forms in exx. (224) and (225) above and explain the difference between them based on 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 based on 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 based on 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. (269) and (272) 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. (265) 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. (266) 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. (274) 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. (278) 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. (261) 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. (259) 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. (272) 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. (277) 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:

(259) FaoS 19, Gir23 obv. 7–rev. 1 (Lagash, 23rd c.) (P217056)

⸢lugal-ka⸣, ḫe₂-me-šum₂-mu
lugalka=e S1ḫa-S6mē-S7a-S12šum-S14e
PN=ERG MOD-1.PL-DAT-give-3.SG.A
“May Lugalka hand it over to us!”

(260) Iri-kagina 5 obv. 1:1–3 (RIME 1.9.9.5) (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222618)

lu₂ umma₃l₃r₄ke₁₃, ez₂-ki-surₓ(ERIN₂)-ra-ke₄, izi ba-šum₂
lumma=ak=e eki₄surak=e izi=ø b₅₃a₅₁n₅₁₂šum₅₁₄ø
“The Ummaite set fire (lit. ‘give fire’) to the Ekiṣura.”

(261) Gudea Cyl. A 11:24 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

kalam-e zi₃šag₄-ŋal₂ u₅-ma-šum₂
kalam=e zıša₅₁₈g₅₁₈m₅₁₂b₅₃a₅₁n₅₁₂šum₅₁₄ø
“This will give vigour to the Land, ....”

(262) Enmerkar and the lord of Aratta 420 (ETCSL 1.8.2.3)

en-me-er-kara₂-ra ḫen₃ki₄ke₁₄ ḫe₄štug₂ mu-na-an-šum₂
enmerkara(ra) enkik=e ḫeṣtug=ø S₄₅m₅₁₂n₅₁₂a₅₁n₅₁₂šum₅₁₄ø
“Enki gave wisdom to Enmerkara.”

With verbs of speaking the dative denotes the addressee of the verb:
(263) Gudea Cyl. A 2:26–27 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

kug ₃d-gaz-tum₃-dug₃-ra  mu-na-ţen,
kug  njatumdug-ra  S₄mu₅⁻₆nn₅⁻₇a₅⁻₁₁ţen₅⁻₁₂ţe₅⁻₁₄ţ
holy  DN=DAT.H  VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-go-3.SG.S

sizkur₂  mu-na-be₂
sizkur=Ø  S₄muₛ⁻₆nnₛ⁻₇aₛ⁻₁₁bₛ⁻₁₂eₛ⁻₁₄e

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.”

(264) Gudea Cyl. A 2:13 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

ur-saz ⸢ma⸣-a-dug₄
ursasz=Ø  S₄mₛ⁻₇aₛ⁻₁₁eₛ⁻₁₂dugₛ⁻₁₄ţ

hero=ABS  VEN-DAT-2.SG.A-speak-3.SG.P

“Hero, you have commanded me.”

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

e₂-a-ne₂  du₁-da  ma-an-dug₄
e=ane=Ø  du=ed=`a  S₄mₛ⁻₇aₛ⁻₁₁nₛ⁻₁₂dugₛ⁻₁₄ţ


“He ordered me to build his temple.”

(266) Gudea Cyl. A 5: 18 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

eš₃  ez-ninnu-na  du₁-ba
eš  eninnu=ane=ak  du=be=`a

shrine  TN=3.SG.H.POSS=GEN  build=3.SG.NH.POSS=L₂.NH

za-ra  ma-ra-an-dug₄
za=ra  S₄maₛ⁻₆rₛ⁻₇aₛ⁻₁₁nₛ⁻₁₂dugₛ⁻₁₄ţ


“He spoke to you about the building of his shrine, the E-ninnu.”

(267) 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=Ø  S₄muₛ⁻₆nₑ⁻₇aₛ⁻₁₁dₑₛ⁻₁₄e


“He addressed a speech to the citizens of his city: ‘...’”

(268) Inana’s descent to the netherworld 332 (ETCSL 1.4.1)

gals-la₂-ne  kug  dinana-ra  gu₃  mu-na-de₂-e
galla=enē=e  kug  inana=ra  gu=Ø  S₄muₛ⁻₆nₑ⁻₇aₛ⁻₁₁dₑₛ⁻₁₄e
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. (273) below:

(269) Gudea 2 1–8 (RIME 3/1.1.7.2) (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P431937)

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{dba}-u₂, \text{dumu} \text{ an-na,} \text{ nin-a-ne₂,} \text{ gu₃-de₂-a,} \text{ ensi₂} \\
&\text{bau dumu an=ak} \text{ nin=ane=ra} \text{ gudea ensik} \\
&\text{DN₁ child} \text{ DN₂=GEN} \text{ lady=3.SG.H.POSS=DAT.H} \text{ RN} \text{ ruler} \\
&\text{lagash₄-ke₄,} \text{ e₂ irikug-ga-ka-ne₂,} \text{ mu-na-du₃} \\
&\text{lagash=ak=e} \text{ irikug=ak=ane=ø} \text{ S₄mu-S₆nn-S₇a-S₁₁n-S₁₂du-S₁₄ø} \\
&\text{GN₁=GEN=ERG} \text{ house} \text{ GN₂=GEN=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS} \text{ VEN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.H-A-build-3.SG.P} \\
\end{align*}
\]

“For Bau, the child of An, his lady, Gudea, ruler of Lagash, built her temple in Iri-kug.”

(270) Gudea Statue A 2:1–2 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232274)

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{dub-šen kug-ga-ne₂,} \text{ mu-na-dim₂} \\
&\text{dubšen kug=ø=ane=ø} \text{ S₄mu-S₆nn-S₇a-S₁₁n-S₁₂dim-S₁₄ø} \\
\end{align*}
\]

“He (= Gudea) manufactured her holy treasury chest for her (= Inana).”

(271) Gudea Cyl. B 2:21 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{dnin-ŋir₂-su e₂-zu} \text{ mu-ra-du₃} \\
&\text{ninŋirsuk=ø} \text{ e=zu=ø} \text{ S₄mu-S₆r-S₇a-S₁₁n-S₁₂du-S₁₄ø} \\
&\text{DN=ABS} \text{ house=2.SG.POSS=ABS} \text{ VEN-2.SG-DAT-1.SG.A-build-3.SG.P} \\
\end{align*}
\]

“Ningirsu, I have built you your temple!”

(272) Gudea Statue I 3:4–6 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232282)

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{diŋir gal-gal} \text{ lagaš₄-ke₄-ne,} \\
&\text{diŋir gal-gal=ø} \text{ lagaš=ak=enē=ra} \\
&\text{god} \text{ great=PL=TL} \text{ GN=GEN=PL=DAT.H} \\
&\text{ez-ne-ne,} \text{ mu-ne-du₃} \\
&\text{e=anē=ø} \text{ S₄mu-S₆nē-S₇a-S₁₁n-S₁₂du-S₁₄ø} \\
\end{align*}
\]

“He built all the great gods of Lagash their temples.”

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

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{lu₂ inim-ma saŋ sa₁₀-a-šē₃} \text{ mu-ne-ra-e₃} \\
&\text{lu inim=ak} \text{ saŋ=ø} \text{ sa′-a=ak=šē} \text{ S₄mu-S₆nnē-S₇a-S₉a-S₁₂e-S₁₄ø} \\
&\text{man} \text{ word=GEN} \text{ head=ABS} \text{ buy-PT=TERM} \text{ VEN-3.PL-DAT-ABL-leave-3.SG.S} \\
\end{align*}
\]

“(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:
The dative and the comitative case

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

kug ḏŋa₂-tums-dug₃-ra mu-na-ŋen
kug ｇatumdug=ra $4\mu_5\nu_6\nu_7\alpha_8\nu_{12}\eta_{14}$

“He (= Gudea) went to holy Gatumdug.”

(275) Gudea Cyl. A 18:8 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

e₂-e im-ma-ŋen
e=e $5^2i_5\nu_4\mu_5\nu_7\alpha_8\nu_{12}\eta_{14}$
house=DAT,NH FIN-VEN-3.SG,NH-DAT-go-3.SG,S

“He went to the temple.”

(276) Gudea Cyl. A 15:6 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

elam elam-ta mu-na-ŋen
elam=Ø elam=ta $4\mu_5\nu_6\nu_7\alpha_8\nu_{12}\eta_{14}$

“The Elamites came to him (= Gudea) from Elam.”

The dative may denote the participant who is considered to be the cause of a situation:

(277) Iddin-Dagan B 56 (ETCSL 2.5.3.2)

kur-kur u₂-sal-la mu-e-re-nu₂
kur=kur=Ø usal=ʾa $4\mu_5\nu_6\nu_7\alpha_8\nu_{12}\eta_{14}$

“All the foreign lands rest on the meadows thanks to you.”

The dative may denote the participant that experiences a sensation or feeling:

(278) Iddin-Dagan B 53 (ETCSL 2.5.3.2)

nam-lugal-zu uŋ₃-e ba-sag₉
namlugal=zu=Ø uŋ=e $5\beta_5\nu_7\alpha_8\nu_{12}\nu_{14}$
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.”

(279) Enki and Ninhursaga 262 (ETCSL 1.1.1)

šeš=ŋu₁₀ a-na-zu a-ra-gig
šeš=ŋu=Ø ana=zu=Ø $3\alpha_5\nu_6\nu_7\alpha_8\nu_{12}$

“‘My brother, what part of you hurts?’ ‘My mouth hurts.’”
(280) Enmerkar and the lord of Aratta 30 (ETCSL 1.8.2.3)

en kul-aba₄ ki-a-gen₇ nu-mu-na-sag⁹
en kulaba=ak=gen S₁nu-S₄mu-S₆nn-S⁷a-S₁₂sag-S₁₄ø
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” — aŋ₂ “to measure” = “to love”, i.e., the verbal participant loved, is in the dative:

(281) Shulgi A 23 (ETCSL 2.4.2.01)

niŋ₂-si-sa₂-e ki ḫa-ba-aŋ₂-ŋa₂-am₃
niŋsisa=e ki=ø S₁ḫa-S₅b-S₆a-S₁₁ʾ-S₁₂aŋ-S₁₄ø-S₁₅ʾa=ø=am-ø

“I do like righteousness.”

(282) Iri-kagina 14p 1-2 (RIME 1.9.9.14p) (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222652)

ẖa-u₂ barag iri-kug-ga-ka tum₂-ʾa, ma,
bau barag irikug=ak=ʾa tum-ʾa=e
DN dais GN=GEN=L² worthy-PT=ERG
iri-⸢ka⸣-gi-na-ra ki mu-na-aŋ₂
irikaginak=ra ki=ø S₄mu-S₆nn-S⁷a-S₁₁n-S₁₂aŋ-S₁₄ø

“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 DI₃ (= TI), see, e.g., ex. (294) 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. (292) below. When followed by a prefix /b/ in S11, the closed syllable /dab/
is written with the grapheme DAB₆ (= URUDU) in the 3rd millennium, see, e.g., ex. (291) 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. (285) below. The simple prefix always cross-references a 3rd ps. sg. non-human participant. The 1st ps. sg. pronominal prefix is the IPP /ʾ/ in S6, see, e.g., exx. (287) and (310) below. The 2nd ps. sg. pronominal prefix is the IPP /e/, see, e.g., exx. (290) and (298) below. The 3rd ps. sg. human pronominal prefix is the IPP /n/ in S6, see, e.g., exx. (286) and (315) below. The 3rd ps. sg. non-human prefix is expressed with the prefix /b/ in S5, see, e.g., ex. (289) below.

The 1st ps. pl. pronominal prefix is the IPP /mē/ in S6, see, e.g., ex. (307) 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 -/S₆nē-S₈da/-, see, e.g., ex. (309) below.

The dative and the comitative case

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. (283); an object, see ex. (285); an abstract entity, see, e.g., ex. (288); or even an action expressed by a non-finite verbal noun, see ex. (289) below.

(283) 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=ø S2i-S6n-S8da-S11n-S12sur-S14ø
“(E-ana-tum) marked out the boundary together with Enakale, ruler of Umma.”

(284) Inana B 30 (ETCSL 4.07.2)

diškur-da šegₓ(KA×LI) mu-da-an-gi₄-gi₄-in
iškur=da šeg=ø S₄mu-S₆n-S₈da-S₁₀n-S₁₂gi₄-gi₄en
DN=COM noise=ABS VEN-3.SG.H-COM-L1.SYN-return~PF-2.SG.A
“He (E-ana-tum) thundered with the god Iškur.”
(285) Gudea Cyl. A 7:2 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

\[e₂-ninnu \text{ anzud}_m \text{ babbar}_ra \ u₃-mu-na-da-kur₉-re\]
\[eninnu \text{ anzud babbar}='a \ s₁u₄-mu₆-nn₇₈-da₅₁₀-n₃₁₂-kur₉₄en\]

“After you have entered the E-ninmu-the-white-Anzud-bird temple with it (= a drum) before him (= Ningirsu), ...”

(286) RTC 380 rev. 2 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P128533)

\[elam \ dabs-ba-da \ mu-da-ṇen-na-me\]
\[elam \ dab-'a-da \ s₄mu₆-n₈-da₅₁₂-ṇen₈-S₁₄=ø=me-eš\]

“They are the ones who came with the captured Elamite.”

(287) Gudea Cyl. A 1:25 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

\[inim-ba \ ḫa-mu-da-gub\]
\[inim=be='a \ s₁ḫa₆₃mu₆-š₈-da₅₁₀-n₃₁₂-gub₉₄ø\]

“They may she stand with me in this matter.”

(288) Gudea Cyl. B 11:13–14 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

\[nam-šita \ sa₃-ga \ gu₃-de₂-a-da,\]
\[namšita \ sa₃-'a \ gudea=ak=da\]

“(Bau’s septuplets) stepped forward to lord Ninḫirsu with friendly entreaties on behalf of Gudea.”

(289) Gudea Cyl. A 11:10–11 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

\[e₂-ŋa₂ \ uš \ ki \ ṃ-ra-be₂-da,\]
\[e=ŋu=ak \ uš \ ki=ø \ ṃ-ra-'a=be=da\]

“With laying the foundations of my temple abundance will come.”

In ex. (289) 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.

(290) Gudea Cyl. A 11:16 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

\[\text{ki-en-gi-ra}_2 \ i_3 \ \text{dirig} \ \text{mu-da-de}_2\]

\[\text{kiengir}=\text{'a} \ i \ \text{dirig-}0=\text{'o} \ \text{S}_4\text{mu-}S_6\text{e-}S_8\text{da-}S_{10}\text{n-}S_{12}\text{de-}S_{14}\text{o}\]

\[\text{GN}=\text{L}_1 \ \text{oil surplus-} \text{TL=ABS VEN-}2,\text{SG-COM-L}_1,\text{SYN-pour-}3,\text{SG.S}\]

“Under you more oil will be poured than ever in Sumer.”

(291) Lugal-zagesi 1 3:24–26 (RIME 1.14.20.1) (Uruk, 24th c.) (Q001379)

\[\text{nam-lu}_2\text{-ulu}_3, \ u_2\text{-šim-gen}_7,\]

\[\text{namlulu=}e \ \text{ušim-gen}\]

\[\text{mankind=ERG greenery=EQU}\]

\[\text{šu} \ \text{daŋal} \ \text{ḥa-mu-dab}_6\text{-dug}_4\]

\[\text{šu} \ \text{daŋal}=\text{'o} \ \text{S}_1\text{ḥa}=\text{S}_4\text{mu-}S_6\text{e-}S_8\text{da-}S_{11}\text{n-b}_8\text{da-}S_{14}\text{ø}\]

\[\text{hand wide=ABS MOD-VEN-2,SG-COM-3,SG.NH.A-do-3,SG.P}\]

“Under you the people do spread as abundantly as grass.”

(292) Ur-Ninurta D 33 (ETCSL 2.5.6.4)

\[\text{uŋ}_3 \ \text{u}_2\text{-sal-la} \ \text{hu-mu-un-de}_3\text{-nu}_2\]

\[\text{uŋ}=\text{'o} \ \text{usal-}'{a} \ \text{S}_2\text{hu}=\text{S}_4\text{mu}=\text{S}_8\text{da}=\text{S}_{10}\text{e-}S_{12}\text{nu-}S_{14}\text{ø}\]

\[\text{people=ABS meadow=}L_2,\text{NH MOD-VEN-}3,\text{SG.H-COM-L2-lie-}3,\text{SG.S}\]

“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:

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

\[\text{umma}_k_1\text{-da}, \ \text{dam-ḥa-ra}, \ \text{e-da-ak}\]

\[\text{umma}=\text{da} \ \text{damhara}=\text{'o} \ \text{S}_2\text{ḥa}=\text{S}_4\text{mu}=\text{S}_8\text{da}=\text{S}_{11}\text{n-}S_{12}\text{ak-}S_{14}\text{ø}\]

\[\text{GN=COM battle=ABS FIN-3,SG.NH-COM-3,SG.H.A-make-3,SG.P}\]

“(Ningirsu) made a battle with Umma.”

(294) Gudea Cyl. A 22:12–13 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

\[\text{d}_\text{en-ki-da} \ \text{e}_2\text{-an-gur-ra-ka}, \ \text{šag}_4 \ \text{mu-dis-ni-ib}_2\text{-kuš}_2\text{-u}_3\]

\[\text{enki}=\text{da} \ \text{eangurak}=\text{'a} \ \text{šag}=\text{'o} \ \text{S}_4\text{mu}=\text{S}_8\text{da}=\text{S}_{10}\text{n-}S_{11}\text{b-}S_{12}\text{kušu-}S_{14}\text{ė}\]

\[\text{DN=COM TN=}L_1 \ \text{heart=ABS VEN-3,SG.H-COM-L}_1,\text{3,SG.NH,P-be.tired-3,SG.A}\]

“(Its abzu foundation pegs, big mooring stakes, he drove into the ground so deep,) they could take counsel with the god Enki in the E-engurak.”
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(295) 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 Sₜₜ₁ₜ₈ₜ₆ₜ₈₌₈₅₈₈₉₂₅₆₈₇₈₅₁₈da₈₉₈₈₈₉₁₆de₈₉₁₄ø
```

“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.

(296) Gudea Cyl. A 19:8–9 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

```
sig₄ u₃-šub-ba mi-ni-ŋar-ra-ne₂,
sig=ø ušub=ʾa S₄mu-S₁₀ni-S₁₁n-S₁₄a=ane=da

d₄utu im-da-ḥul₂
utu=ø S₂i-S₄m-S₅b-S₈da-S₁₂ḫul-S₁₄ø
DN=ABS FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-COM-rejoice-3.SG.S
```

“The god Utu rejoiced over his (= Gudea) putting the brick into the mould.”

(297) Gudea Cyl. B 20:14 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

```
e₂-da’ lugal ‘im₁-da-’ḥul₂
e=da lugal=ø S₂i-S₄m-S₅b-S₈da-S₁₂ḥul-S₁₄ø
house=COM owner=ABS FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-COM-rejoice-3.SG.S
```

“The owner rejoiced over the temple.

(298) Ishme-Dagan J 17–18 (ETCSL 2.5.4.10)

```
nu-u₈-gig amaš-a kur₉-ra-zu-ne,
nugig=ø amaš=ʾa kur=ʾa=zu=ne
mistress=ABS sheepfold=L₁ enter-PT=2.SG.POSS=LOC4

d₄inana amaš ša-mu-us-da-hul₂-le
inanak=ø amaš=ø S₂ša-S₄mu-S₅e-S₈da-S₁₂hul-S₁₄ed-S₁₄ø
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.”

(299) E-ana-tum 8 5:9–6:4 (RIME 1.9.3.8) (Lagash, 25th c.) (P222411)

```
e₂-an-na-tum₂, mu pad₃-da, ḏnin-ḥir₂-su-da
eanatum μu=ø pad₂-a ninji₃suk=ak=da
PN name=ABS call-PT DN=GEN=COM
```

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kur-kur-re₂ saŋ e-dab₆-sig₃
kur-kur=e saŋ=ø S₂i-S₆n-S₈da-S₁₁b-S₁₂sig-S₁₄ø
“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:

(300) Gudea Cyl. A 22:20 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)
ŋeššar₂-ur₃-be₂ uru₃ gal-gen₇ lagaš ki-da
šarur=be=ø uru gal-ø=gen lagaš=da
weapon=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS standard big-TL=EQU GN=COM
im-da-sig₉
S₂i- S₅m-S₅b-S₈da-S₁₁n-S₁₂sig-S₁₄ø
“He embedded its Shar-ur weapon beside Lagash like a big standard.”

(301) DP 117 obv. 6:4–5 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P220767)
lugal-keš₃ki-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.”

(302) DP 117 obv. 6:7–8 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P220767)
lugal-e₂-ni-še₃, e-da-se₁₂
lugaleniše=da S₂i-S₅e-S₅b-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”.

(303) Nik 1, 297 2:2–4 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222066)
sag₉-sag₉-da, ŋišgal-si, e-da-tuku
sagsag=da ŋišgalsi=e S₂i-S₅e-S₅b-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.”

(304) 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
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ud-be₂-ta, i₃-da-tuku-am₃
ud=be=ta S₂i-S₆n-S₈da-S₁₁n-S₁₂tuku-S₁₄ʾa=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 earlier.”

(305) TSU 12 obv. 1–4 (Nippur, 21st c.) (P135183)
11 udu bar-ŋal₂, ur-ŋešgigir-da,
11 udu barŋal=ø urgigir=da
11 sheep hairy=ABS PN₁=COM
arad₂-e, i₃-da-tuku-am₃
arad=e S₂i-S₆n-S₈da-S₁₁n-S₁₂tuku-S₁₄ʾa=ø=am-ø
“It was the case that Urgigir owed 11 hairy sheep to Arad.”

(306) NATN 571 obv. 7 (Nippur, 21st c.) (P121269)
kug nu-mu-da-a-tuku
kug=ø S₁nu-S₄mu-S₆ʾ-S₈da-S₁₁n-S₁₂tuku-S₁₄ʾa=ø=am-ø
silver=ABS NEG-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.”

(307) NATN 626 obv. 6’ (Nippur, 21st c.) (P121324)
me-da-tuku-a
S₆mē-S₈da-S₁₁n-S₁₂tuku-S₁₄ʾa=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. (308) below the locative2 case-marker of the debtor (Nagamu) probably reflects the influence of the corresponding Akkadian idiom išu “to have”, which construes the debtor with the preposition eli “on, over”. Note that the verbal form retained the original comitative prefix.

(308) 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-tuku
urnusuk=e nagamu=ra S₂a-S₆n-S₈da-S₁₁n-S₁₂tuku-S₁₄ʾa=ø
“Nagamu owes 64 sheaf of reed for burning to Ur-Nusku.”

With the verb ŋal₂ “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”.

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The dative and the comitative case

(309) UET 3, 744 rev. 5’ (Urim, 21st c.) (P137068)
simug-ne in-neda(PI)-ŋal₂  
simug=enē-da ₃₂⁻⁻₅⁻⁻₆⁻⁻₈⁻⁻₁₂ŋal⁻⁻₁₄ø  
simug=PL=COM FIN-3.PL-COM-exist-3.SG.S  
“The smiths have it.; lit. “This is with the smiths.”

(310) MVN 11, 168 rev. 8 (Umma, 21st c.) (P116181)
še e₂-a nu-mu-da-ŋal₂  
še=ø e=ʾaS₁nu-S₄mu-S₆n-S₈da-S₁₀n-S₁₂ŋal-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”

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:

(311) NG 132 rev. 1 (Umma, 21st. c.) (P101690)
gud-be₂ nu-mu-da-tum₂  
gud=be=ø S₁nu-S₄mu-S₆n-S₈da-S₁₀n-S₁₂tum-S₁₄ø  
“He was not able to bring that ox.”

(312) Nebraska 19 rev. 22 (Umma, 21st. c.) (P121704)
kišib₃ lu₂ nu-ub-da-su-su-da-ne  
kišib lu S₁nu-S₂⁻⁺⁻⁻⁻₅⁻⁻⁻⁻b-S₈da-S₁₀n-S₁₂su-su-S₁₃ed-S₁₄ø-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.”

(313) En-metena 1 2:27 (RIME 1.9.5.1) (Lagash, 25th c.) (Q001103)
bar še-be₂ nu-da-su⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻砬
bar še=be=ø S₁₁nu-S₄mu-S₆⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻⁻INCREMENT=-1 SUB=GEN=ABS  
outside grain=DEM=ABS NEG-FIN-3.SG.NH-COM-repay~PF-PF-3.SG.S-SUB=PL=GEN=L₂.NH  
“As this (amount of) barley cannot not be repaid, ....”

With the compound verb a₂ “arm” — aŋ₂ “to measure” = “to instruct” the comitative denotes the participant who is instructed.

(314) Gudea Cyl. A 15:11 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)
³nin-zag-ga-da a₂ mu-da-aŋ₂  
ninzaga=da a=ø S₄mu-S₆n-S₈da-S₁₀n-S₁₂aŋ-S₁₄ø  
“He commanded Ninzaga.”
With the verb *zaḥ₃* “to be away, to run away” the comitative denotes the participant from whom someone runs away.

(315) ECTJ 50 1–4 (Nippur, 23rd c.) (P020464)

\[ \text{PN₁ servant}\ 
\text{PN₂=GEN=ABS ruler=COM FIN -3.SG.H-COM-flee-3.SG.S} \]

“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. (301) and (302) 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.) (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. (321) and (326) 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. (316) and (322) 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. (321) 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. (322) 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. (330) 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. (318) 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.

(316) SACT 1, 154 obv. 6 (Drehem, 21st c.) (P128909)
ud umma₃₄-ta ḫi₃-ḥen-na-a
ud umma=ta s₂₁-s₄₃m₃₁₂ḥen-s₁₄₀-s₁₅ʾa=ʾa
day GN=ABL FIN-VEN-go-3.SG,S-SUB=L₁
“When she came from Umma.”

(317) Gudea Statue B 8:6–7 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)
luz₂ e₂-ninnu-ta im-ta-ab-E₃,E₃-a
lu eninnu=ta s₂₁-s₄₃m₃₅₂b₃₉t₃₁₁b₃₁₂ed-s₁₄₁e₃-s₁₅ʾa
“The one who takes it (= the statue) out of the Eninnu.”

(318) Gudea Cyl. A 19:13 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)
bis₃₄ e₃₄-ta nk₃₄-ba-ta sig₄ ba-ta-il₂
bis₃₄ us₃₄=tak=ta sig=ṭ₃₅ b₃₉t₃₁₁n₃₁₂ill₃₁₄⁰
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.”

(319) En-metena 1 2:1–3 (RIME 1.9.5.1) (Lagash, 25th c.) (Q001103)
et₂-be₂ id₂-nun-ta, gu₂-eden-na-še₃, ib₂-ta-ni-e₃
et=BE=ṭ₃₅ idnun=ta guedenak=še₃ s₂₁-s₄₃b₃₉t₃₁₀ni₃₁₁n₃₁₂e₃-s₁₄₀
“He made the dike lead from the Id-nun until the Gu-edena.”

(320) Gudea Statue A 3:6–4:1 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232274)
kur ma₂-gan ki-ta, na₄esi im-ta-e₁₁
kur magan=ta esi=ṭ₃₅ s₂₁-s₄₃b₃₉t₃₁₁n₃₁₂e₃-s₁₄₀
“He brought down diorite from the mountain of Magan.”

(321) NG 51 rev. 3 (Umma, 21st c. BCE) (P131780)
luz₂ inim₃₄-ma ṣ₃₄-a-š₃₄e₃ mu-ne-ra-e₃
lu inim=ak ṣ₃₄-a-ak=š₃₄e₃ s₄₅m₃₈n₃₉t₃₁₂e₃-s₁₄₀
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.”
(322) AUCT 1, 942 rev. 5–6 (Drehem, 21st c.) (P103787)

ki puzur₄-er₃-ra-ta, ba-zig₃
ki puzurera=ak=ta S₅ba-S₁₂zig-S₁₄ø
place PN=GEN=ABL MID-raise-3.SG.S

“This were deducted from Puzur-Era.”

(323) DP 339, rev. 2:3–3:1 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P220989)

iri-ka-gi-na, lugal, lagaš₃-ke₄, e₂-gal-ta e-ta-ed₂-de₃
irišgačina 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.”

(324) DP 512 rev. 2:1–4 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P221162)

šul-me, agrig-ge, e₂-gal-ta, e-ta-ŋar
šulme agrig=e egal=ta S₂i-S₅b-S₉ta-S₁₁n-S₁₂ŋar-S₁₄ø
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. (325) Gudea is selected out of a group of people. In ex. (326) the month (iti) is considered as a set of days. In ex. (327) the word ab₂ “cow” refers to a group of cows.

(325) 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=ø
heart man 216.000=GEN=ABL hand=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS

ba-ta-an-dab₅-ba-a
S₅ba-S₉ta-S₁₁n-S₁₂dab-S₁₄ø-S₁₅ʾa=ʾa
MID-ABL=3.SG.H.A-seize-3.SG.P-SUB=L₁

“(When) he selected him out of 216.000 people, ....”

(326) 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=AABL day 8=ABS MID-ABL-pass-3.SG.S

“8 days elapsed from the month.”

(327) SAT 1, 189 rev. 2 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P131298)

ab₂-ta niŋin₂-na
ab=ta niŋin=ʾa
cow=ABL encircle-PT

“(these animals are) separated from the cows”
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. (328)–(330) below.

(328) JCS 10, 28 no. 5 obv. 6 (Drehem, 21st c.) (P111899)
1 udu niga lugal-e ŋiri₂-ta in-gaz
1 udu niga=ø lugal=e ŋiri=ta S₂ˡ-S₁₁n-S₁₂qaz⁻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.”

(329) En-metena 1 1:8–12 (RIME 1.9.5.1) (Lagash, 25th c.) (Q001103)
me-salim, lugal kiš ki-ke₄, inim dištaran-na-ta,
mesalim lugal kiš=ak=e inim ištaran=ak=ta
RN king GN=GEN=ERG word DN=GEN=ABL
eš₂-gana₂ be₂-ra,
ešgana=ø S₅b-S₁₀i-S₁₁n-S₁₂ra-S₁₄ø
ki-ba na bi₂-du₃
ki-be-ʾa na=ø S₅b-S₁₀i-S₁₁n-S₁₂du-S₁₄ø
“By the order of the god Ishtaran, Mesalim, king of Kish, laid the measuring line on it, and set up a stela on that place.”

(330) E-ana-tum 1 obv. 16:17 (RIME 1.9.3.1) (Lagash, 25th c. BCE) (P222399)
nam e-na-ta-kud
nam=ø S₂ˡ⁻S₅b⁻S₉₈⁻S₉₈₅n-S₁₁₀n-S₁₂kud⁻S₁₄ø
“(E-ana-tum gave the great battle-net of Enlil to the Ummaite, and) let him swear a promissory oath by it.”

In ex. (331) below the adverbial ablative is used in the meaning “apart from, in addition”.

(331) E-ana-tum 5 6:2–5 (RIME 1.9.3.5) (Lagash, 25th c.) (P222400)
nam-ensi₂, lagašᵏⁱ-ta, ḫnamʰ⁻lugal kišᵏⁱ,
namensik lagaš=ak=ta namlugal kiš=ak=ø
rulership GN=GEN=ABL kingship GN=GEN=ABS

On the causative interpretation of this example, see Lesson 15, section 15.4 below.
mu-na-ta-šum₂
S₄mu-S₆nn-S₇a-S₉a-S₁₁n-S₁₂šum-S₁₄ø
“In addition to the rulership of Lagash, she also gave him the kingship of Kish.”

The ablative may also be used in a temporal sense: noun phrases in the ablative answer the question “since when?” as in exx. (332) and (333) below.

(332) TCS 1, 148 obv. 6 (Umma, 21st c.) (P141927)
mu dšu-dšuen lugal-ta
mu šusuen lugal=ta
year RN king=ABL
“Since the year: Šu-Suen (became) king”

(333) Nik 1, 156 rev. 1:4 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P221925)
eŋir₄ gurum₂-ma-ta
eŋir gurum=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 to another noun, i.e., it functions as its modifier. The most common function of the adnominal ablative is to denote the origin or 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. (334), 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. (334), the noun phrase kug-babbar 8 giŋ₄-ta functions as the modifier of ḫar, and is followed by a case-marker in P5. In ex. (347), it occupies P2 of a noun phrase that itself functions as the possessor of another noun phrase. The analysis of exx. (335) and (336) is corroborated by the verbal form in ex. (335). Here the finite verb is in the 3rd ps. pl., which indicates that Dudu with his wife and child(ren) function together as the subject of the verb.

ii) the noun phrase in the ablative is outside the noun phrase whose head it modifies. In exx. (337)–(340) 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. (337), (338), and (340), and in the locative2 in ex. (339).
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. (343) 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, signalled by the ergative case-marker, while the latter functions as the patient of the verb signalled by the absolutive. In ex. (342) each of the ten 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.

(334) Gudea Cyl. A 2:2–3 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{dnanše} & \text{nin₉ diŋir sirara₆-ta-ŋu₁₀,} \\
p₁\text{nanše} & \quad p₁\text{nин} \quad p₁\text{diŋir} \quad p₂\text{[sirara=ta]}=p₃\text{ŋu}=p₅\text{e} \\
p₁\text{DN} & \quad p₁\text{sister} \quad p₁\text{god} \quad p₂\text{[GN=ABL]}=p₃\text{1.SG.POSS}=p₅\text{ERG} \\
šag₄ \text{be₂} & \quad ū\text{-ma-pads-de₃} \\
šag=\text{be=ø} & \quad S₁\text{ḥa-S₄m-S₈a-S₁₂pad-S₁₄e} \\
\text{heart}=\text{3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS} & \text{MOD-VEN-DAT-find-3.SG.A} \\
\text{“May my Nanshe, the sister, the goddess from Sirara, reveal its meaning to me!”}
\end{align*}
\]

(335) DP 224 obv. 6:5–9 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P220874)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{du-du}, & \quad \text{saŋŋa}, \quad \text{dam dumu-ne₂-ta}, \\
p₁\text{dudu} & \quad p₁\text{šaŋŋa} \quad p₂\text{[dam dumu=ane=ta]}=e \\
p₁\text{PN} & \quad p₁\text{official} \quad p₂\text{[wife child=3.SG.H.POSS=ABL]}=\text{ERG} \\
\text{e₂ ki-sal₄-la-ka}, & \quad \text{i₃-gu₇-ne} \\
\text{house GN=GEN=1.1} & \text{FIN-L1.SYN-eat-3.PL.A} \\
\text{“Dudu, the temple administrator, together with his wife and child(ren), will consume them in the temple of Kisal.”}
\end{align*}
\]

(336) VS 27, 47 rev. 1:1 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P020363)

\[
\begin{align*}
[\text{šu}-]\text{niŋin₂} & \quad 119 \quad \text{u₈ sila₄-be₂-ta} \\
\text{šuṅin₂} & \quad 119 \quad p₁\text{u} \quad p₂\text{[sila=be=ta]}=p₅\text{ø} \\
\text{total} & \quad 119 \quad p₁\text{ewe} \quad p₂\text{[lamb=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABL]}=p₅\text{ABS} \\
\text{ud₅} & \quad 1\text{maš₃-be₂-ta} \\
p₁\text{ud} & \quad p₂\text{[maš=be=ta]}=p₅\text{ø} \\
p₁\text{goat} & \quad p₂\text{[kid=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABL]}=p₅\text{ABS} \\
\text{“Total: 119 ewes together with their lambs, and goats with their kids”}
\end{align*}
\]
(337) Gudea Statue H 3:1–5 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232281)

nin dumu ki an  an kug-ga-ke₄,
p₁nin ṑ₁dumu ṑ₂[k_i=ø  an=ø] ṑ₃[an  kug=ak]=ₚₑ
p₁lady p₁child p₂[place=ABS measure-TL] p₃[DN₁ holy=GEN]=ₑₚ₅ERG
ama dba-uz₂, e₂-tar-sir₂-sir₂-ta,
p₂ama p₁bau=ₑₚ₅e p₁etarsirsir=ₑₚ₅ta
p₁mother p₁DNₑₚ₅ERG p₁TNₑₚ₅ABL

gudea ra namtil=ø mu-na-šum₂
gudea=ra namtil=ø s₄mu-S₆nn-S₈₆n-S₁₁n-S₁₂šum-S₁₄ø
“…, to whom Gatumdug, his lady from Lagash, her beloved city, gave
Gudea life.”

(338) Gudea Statue F 1:12–2:1 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232279)
d₃ₙ₄-a-ni-n₃ₙ₃-dug₃, ain-a-ne₂,
p₁甄₅-n₅-matar₅-dug ṑ₁nin=ₑₚ₅ane=ₑₚ₅e
p₁DN ṑ₁lady=ₑₚ₅3.SG.H.POSS=ₑₚ₅ERG
lagaš ki aₙ₄₂-n₄-a-ne₂-ta
p₁lagaš p₁iri ṑ₂[k_i=ø  an=ø]=ₑₚ₅ane=ₑₚ₅ta
p₁GN ṑ₁city p₂[place=ABS measure-TL]=ₑₚ₅3.SG.H.POSS=ₑₚ₅ABL
unu₆ šuba₃-ta, mu-ni-tud-da-a
unu šuba=ʾa s₄mu-S₁₀n-S₁₁n-S₁₄tud-S₁₄ø-S₁₅ʾa=ʾa
dwelling shining=₁ L₁ VEN-L₁-3.SG.HA-bear-3.SG.P-SUB=L₁
“…, to whom Gatumdug, his lady from Lagash, her beloved city, gave birth in the
shining sanctuary.”

(339) Gudea Statue B 1:17–19 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)
s₄₂-dug₄-na, ain-
inim ḫe₂-eb₂-gi₄
inim=ø s₁₄ha-S₂i-S₅₂b-S₁₀(i)>ø=₀-S₁₂gi-S₁₄ø
word=ABS MOD-FIN-3.SG.NH-L₂.SYN-return-3.SG.S
“May his regular offering in the temple of Ningirsu be withdrawn!”

(340) Gudea Cyl. A 16:15–16 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)
hur-saŋ uruda-ke₄ ki-maš-ta,
p₁hursaŋ p₃[uruda=ak]=ₑₚ₅e p₁kimaš=ₑₚ₅ta
p₁mountain p₃[copper=GEN]=ₑₚ₅ERG p₁GNₑₚ₅ABL
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. (341)–(344) below. In ex. (341) each package is characterized by containing 15 bundles; in ex. (342) each bull of a group of 10 bulls is to be replaced with two cows; and in ex. (343) each woman is said to have married two men. In ex. (344) each of the persons mentioned received 2 rings, and each ring is of 8 shekels of silver.

(341) SA 149 1–2 (Umma, 21st c.) (P128727)
720 sa gi, gu-kilib-ba 15 sa-ta
720 sa gi=ak p1gukilib=p5ʾa 15 p1sa=p5ta
“720 bundles of reed, in each packages (there are) 15 bundles.”

(342) AUCT 1, 181 1–2 (Drehem, 21st. c.) (P103027)
10 gud niga, ab2 2-ta ki-ba ʾna=ʾna
10 gud niga p2[ab] p2=ʾa ki=be=ʾa ʾna=ʾna-ed=p5θ
“Ten fattened bulls: to be replaced with 2 cows each”

(343) Iri-kagina 3 3:20’–22’ (RIME 1.9.9.3) (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222610)
munus ud-be2-ta-ke4-ne, nita 2-ta,
p1munus p3[ud=be=ta=ak]=p4enē=p5e  p1nita p2=ʾa ʾna=p5θ
p1woman p3[day=DEM=ABL=GEN]=p4PL=p5ERG  p1man p2=ʾa ʾna-p5ABL=p5ABS
i3-tuku-am
s2ʾa=s51ʾa=tuku=s14ʾa=am=ǝ
FIN-3.SG.H.A-have-3.SG.P-SUB=ABS=CO-3.SG.S
“The women of old days married two men each.”

(344) AUCT 1, 942 obv. 5–8 (Drehem, 21st c.) (P103787)
2 ḫar kug-babbar 8 giŋ-ta-ta,
2 p1ḥar p2[kugbabbar 8 giŋ=ta]=p5ta
2 p1ring p2[silver 8 unit=ABL]=p5ABL
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 S₄μu-₅₉ni₅₁₊₅₁₂kur₅₁₄eₛ₅₁₅ʾa-ʾa
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. (356) 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. (358) 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. (348) and (375) 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. (356) below. The simple prefix always cross-references a 3rd ps. sg. non-human participant.

The 1st ps. sg. pronominal prefix is the IPP /ʾ/ in S₆, see, e.g., ex. (373) below. The 2nd ps. sg. pronominal prefix is the IPP /e/ in S₆, see, e.g., ex. (372) 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. (377) below.
The 3rd ps. pl. human pronominal prefix is the IPP /nnē/ in S6, see, ex. (351) below.

The basic function of the terminative is to denote the destination or goal of the verbal event.

(345) En-ana-tum I 2 rev. 4:10–5:2 (RIME 1.9.4.2) (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222496)

eg₂ ki-sur-ra, ₄nin-pjir-r-su¹-ka-še₃, mu-gaz ₄mu-S₁₁-n-S₁₂-gaz-S₁₄-ø
dyke border DN=GEN=TERM VEN-3.SG.H.A-kill-3.SG.P

“(En-ana-tum) drove (Urluma, ruler of Umma) back until the border canal of Ningirsu.”

(346) Gudea Cyl. A 2:5 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

iri-ne₂ niŋin₆ ki-še₃ id₂-niŋin₆ ki-du-a irdniŋindua=ʾa
city=3.SG.H.POSS GN=TERM WN=L1

ma₂ mu-ni-ri ₄mu-S₁₀-ni-S₁₁-n-S₁₂-i-S₁₄-ø

“He directed the boat on the canal Id-Niŋin-dua towards her city Nijin.

(347) Gudea Cyl. A 4:5 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

ensi₂-ke₄ kisal diŋir sirara₆-ta-ka ensik=eP1kisal P3[P1diŋir P2=Sirara=ta]=P5ʾa
ruler=ERG P1courtyard p₁[p₂=gn=ABL]=p₅=ʾa

saŋ an-še₃ mi-ni-il₂  saŋ=ø an=šeS₄mu-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.”

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

gu₃-de₂-a iri-ne₂ ŋir₂-su ki-še₃ gu₂ mu-na-si-si

“(Magan and Meluhha) gathered for Gudea at his city Girsu.”

(349) Gudea Cyl. B 5:4–5 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

ur-saŋ e₂-a-na ku₄-ku₄-da-ne₃, ursaŋ=ø e=ane=ʾa ku=ku-ed-ʾa=ane=e
hero=ABS house=3.SG.H.POSS=ʾL1 enter=PF-PF-SUB-3.SG.H.POSS=ʾL3.NH
ud me₃-še₃ gu₃ ṅar-₃-₃  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.”

(350) NG 120b rev. 9–10 (Umma, 21st c.) (P131776)
nag-su₃ ki-še₃  ha-ra-num₂-e,  mu-na-an-laḥ₅
nagsu=še hazanum=e s₄mu₃ S₆nn=S₇a-S₁₁n-S₁₂laḥ=S₁₄ø
“The mayor took them (= the sheep) for him to Nagsu.”

(351) SNAT 125 obv. 4–7 (unknown, 21st c.) (P129886)
ur-d₅nin-tur₅-ke₄, ur-d₅suen u₁, 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
S₅i₃ S₆nē-S₉i₃-S₁₁n=S₁₂S₆-S₁₄ø
“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 ).”

(352) HSS 3, 42 rev. 2:1 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P221351)
ŋeš-z₂-zi e₂-muhaldim-še₂,  ŋal₂-la
ŋešzi emuhaldim=še ŋal=’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. (353)–(355), purpose, see exx. (357)–(362), or the reason of the verbal event,
see exx. (363)–(366).

Abstract destination = result

(353) DP 307 obv. 2:1–6 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P220957)
ku₆ hab-še₃ ak-de₃, amar-girid₅ ki muḥaldimra,
ku=ø hab=še ak-ed=e amargirid muḥaldim=ra
fish=ABS fish.oil=TERM make-PF=DAT.NH PN₁ cook=DAT.H
en-ig-gal, nu-banda₂, e-na-šum₂
en-ig-gal nubanda=e S₅i₃ S₆nē-S₇a-S₁₁n-S₁₂šum-S₁₄ø
“En-iggal, the overseer, has given the fish to Amar-Girid, the cook, so that he (= A.)
makes them into fish-oil (?).”
(354) Gudea Statue A 3:2–3 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232274)

alan-na-ne₂-šes₃, mu-tud
alan=ane=še S₄mu-S₁₁n-S₁₂tud-S₁₄ø
“He made it (= block of diorite) into his own statue.”

(355) Gudea Statue B 5:45–47 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)

ŋešeren-be₂, ig gal-še₃, mu-dim₂
eren=be=ø ig gal-ø=še S₄mu-S₁₁n-S₁₂dim-S₁₄ø
“He manufactured the cedar-beams into big doors.”

(356) Aya-Ane-pada 6 1–5 (RIME 1.13.6.6) (Ur, 24th c.) (P222841)

d⸢nin⸣-a-zu₅, lu₂-dug₃-[ga], nam-tils, aya₂-an-ne₂-pad₃-da-šes₃,
ninazu=ra luduga=e namtil ayaanepad₃=ak=še
DN=DAT.H PN₁=ERG life PN₂=GEN=TERM
a mu-na-šes₃-ru
a=ø S₄mu-S₆nn-S₇a-S₉ši-S₁₁n-S₁₂ru-S₁₄ø
“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:

(357) Anonymous Nippur 6 1–7 (Nippur, 24th c.) (P222761)

d₄nin₁-lil₂, d₄en-lil₃(E₂)-la₂, dumu ad-da-ke₄,
ninlil=ra enlilak dumu adda=ak=ₑ
DN=DAT.H PN₁ child PN₂=GEN=ERG
ga-til₃-la-šes₃, nam-til₃, dam dumu-na-šes₃,
gatila=še namtil dam dumu=ane=ak=še
offering=TERM life wife child=3.SG.H.POSS=GEN=TERM
a mu-na-ru
a=ø S₄mu-S₆nn-S₇a-S₉ši-S₁₁n-S₁₂ru-S₁₄ø
“To Ninlil, Enlila, child of Adda, dedicated this (vessel) as a votive offering for the well-being of his spouse and child.”
(358) E-ana-tum 1 obv. 4:20–23 (RIME 1.9.3.1) (Lagash, 25th c.) (P222399)
e₂-an-na, dinana, eb-gal-ka-ka a-tum₂,
eana inanak ebgal=ak=ak=ʾa S₂a₅S₅b₅S₁₀(i>)₀S₁₂tum₅S₁₄₀
TN₁ DN TN₂=GEN=GEN=l₂.NH FIN=3.SG.NH-L2.SYN-worthy.of-3.SG.S
mu mu-ne₂-še₂₁
mu=še S₄mu₅nn₅S₁₀l₅S₁₁n₅S₁₂šₑ₅S₁₄₀
“Inana named (lit. ‘called as name’) him (= E-ana-tum) ‘He is worthy of the E-
anana of Inana of the Ebgal’.”

(359) 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-saŋ kalag-ga-ne₂, maškim-še₃,
ursaŋ kalag=ane=ø maškim=še
hero strong=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS deputy=TERM
mu-ni-in-tuku-a
S₄mu₅S₁₁n₅S₁₀l₅S₁₁n₅S₁₂šₑ₅S₁₄₀
VEN-3.SG.H-L3-3.SG.H.A-have-3.SG.P-SUB=l₁
“When the god Enlil appointed Ninurta, his powerful warrior, as commissioner
to Ishme-Dagan, king of Sumer and Akkad.”

(360) Iri-kagina 14q 1–2 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222653)
iri-ka-gi-na, nam-sipad-še₃ mu-tud
irikaginak=ø namsipad=še₃ S₄mu₅nn₅S₁₀l₅S₁₁n₅S₁₂šₑ₅S₁₄₀
PN=ABS shepherdship=TERM VEN-3.SG.H.A-bear-3.SG.P
“(Bau) gave birth to Iri-kagina so that he becomes a shepherd.”

(361) En-ana-tum I 3 15–16 (RIME 1.9.4.3) (Lagash, 24th c.) (P431100)
ur ḫa-lu-ub₂, i₃-du₈-še₃ mu-na-durunₓ(TUŠ.TUŠ)-na
ur ḫalub idu=še S₄mu₅S₁₁n₅S₁₀l₅S₁₁n₅S₁₂durun₅S₁₄₀a=ʾa
“… on the halub-tree lions which he seated for him as doorkeepers.”

(362) AUCT 1, 328 obv. 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

(363) Gudea Cyl. A 4:16 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

a-ne saŋ-ŋa₂-ne₂-še₃ diŋir-ra-am₃
ane=ø saŋ=ane=še diŋir=ø=am-ø
3.SG.PR=ABS head=3.SG.H.POSS=TERM god=ABS=COP-3.SG.S

“He, because of his head, was a god.”

(364) 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=ø tuku-tuku-ø=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:

(365) Gudea Cyl. A 2:21–22 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

lugal-a-ne₂ sizkur₂ ra₂-zu-ne₂ gu₃-de₂-a-aš₂,
lugal=ane=e sizkur arazu=ane=ø gudea=še
king=3.SG.H.POSS=ERG prayer supplication=3. SG.H.POSS=ABS PN=TERM
en dņin-njir₂-su-ke₄ šu ba-ši-ti
en ninjirsuk=e šu=e s₁şba-s₈₀n₅₉ši₇₁₁n₇₁₂t₁₄ši₇₁₄ø

“His master, Lord Ningirsu, accepted from Gudea his prayer and supplication.”

The terminative is used in the construction mu “name”/bar “outside” NP=ak/possessive pronoun=še, which means “because of” (see also ex. [81] in Lesson 5, section 5.3. above):

(366) LEM 178 7 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P112521)

bar-ʒu₁₀-še₃ šu ḫe-bar-re
bar=ʒu=še šu=ø s₁h₅₂i₇₁₀(→)ø -s₁₂bar-s₁₄e
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!”
The ablative and the terminative case

(367) OIP 121, 470 11 (Drehem, 21st c.) (P124200)

mu šagina nišbun₆(KI.BI) tuš-ša-ne-še₃
mu šagina nišbun=ø 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”:

(368) TCS 1, 56 rev. 5 (Umma, 21st. c.) (P145646)

ud-te-ta ni₆-ba-še₃
udten=ta ni₆ba=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”:

(369) Sargon 11 36–37 (RIME 2.1.1.11) (Agade, 23rd c.) (Q001403)

igi-ne₂-še₃, ninda i₃-gu₇-e
igi=ane=še ninda=ø S₂₁-S₁₁ b₂-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:

(370) Gudea Cyl. A 1:3 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

d'en-lil₂-e en d'nin-ŋir₂-su₂-še₃
enlil=e en ningirsuk=še
DN=ERG lord DN=TERM
igi zid mu-ši-bar
igi zid=ø=ø S₄ mu-S₆ n-S₉ ſi-S₁₁ n-S₁₂ bar-S₁₄ ø
“When Enlil looked at lord Ningirsu with approval.”

(371) Gudea Statue B 3:6–7 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)

ud d'nin-ŋir₂-su₂-ke₄, iri-ne₂-še₃
ud ningirsuk=e iri=ane=še
day DN=ERG city=3.SG.H.POSS=TERM
igi zid im-ši-bar-ra
igi zid=ø=ø S₂₁-S₄ m-S₅ b₉-S₉ ſi-S₁₁ n-S₁₂ bar-S₁₄ ø-S₁₅ a
“When Ningirsu had looked favourably upon his city, ...”
(372) Shulgi R 2 (ETCSL 2.4.2.18)

[a]-⸜a’² en-lil₂-le igi zid mu₃-si-bar
aja enlil-e igi zid-ø=ø S₄mu₃-S₉ši-S₁₁n-S₁₂bar-S₁₄ø
“Father Enlil looked at you with approval.”

(373) Ishme-Dagan A Segment A 103 (ETCSL 2.5.4.01)

igi nam-til₂-la-ka-ne₂ ḫu-mu-ši-in-bar
igi namtil=ak=ane=ø S₁ḫa-S₄mu₃-S⁶ʾši-S₁₁n-S₁₂bar-S₁₄ø
“She indeed looked at me with her life-giving look.”

(374) Gudea Cyl. A 19:24 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

ab₂ amar-be₂-še₃ igi ŋal₂-la-gen₇
ab amar=be=še igi=ø ŋal-la=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:

(375) En-ana-tum I 3 11 (RIME 1.9.4.3) (Lagash, 24th c.) (P431100)

e₂-še₃ mu-na-si-si-ga
e=še S₄mu₃-S₇a-S₁₁n-S₁₂sig=SIG'S₁₄ø-S₁₅ʾ
“(when ...) he set them (= cedar trees) up around the temple.”

(376) Gudea Cyl. A 2:24 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

ensi₂-ke₄ ḫa₂-tum₃-dug₃-še₃ ki-nu₂-a-ne₂ ba-gub
ensik=e natumdug=še kinu=ane=ø S₅ba₃-S₁₁n-S₁₂gub-S₁₄ø
“The ruler set up his bed for himself near to Gatumdug.”

(377) Gudea Cyl. A 13:16 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

pisaŋ u₃-šub-ba-še₃ maš₂ ba-ši-nu₂
pisaŋ ušub=ak=še maš=ø S₅ba₃-Sši-S₁₁n-S₁₂nu-S₁₄ø
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. (338) 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 69 (Umma, 21st c.) (P101688) (a handcopy of the text can be found at http://cdli.ucla.edu/P101688) 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 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 either 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/
umref.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 based on i) whether the prefixes have a simple or a composite form and ii) whether S11 is empty.

There may be several reasons why S11 is empty: i) the verbal form is intransitive, see, e.g., ex. (403) below; ii) in a transitive present-future verbal form no prefix cross-references the non-human P, see, e.g., ex. (416) below; iii) in verbal forms containing the modal-prefix /ga/- no prefix cross-references the non-human P, see, e.g. ex. (423) below; or iv) in imperative forms no prefix cross-references the non-human P, see, e.g., ex. (413) 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.
Table 14.1: The verbal marking of the locative cases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.1</th>
<th>COMPOSITE FORM</th>
<th>SIMPLE FORM</th>
<th>FPP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S11 filled</td>
<td>S11 empty</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S11 filled</td>
<td>S11 empty</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.2</th>
<th>$s_{10}/\text{ni}/^{(a)}$ (L1)</th>
<th>$s_{10}/\text{n}/^{(b)}$ (L1.SYN)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$s_{4}/\mu/-s_{10}/\text{e}/^{(a)}$ (VEN-L2)</td>
<td>$s_{4}/\mu/-s_{10}/\text{e}/^{(a)}$ (VEN-L2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$s_{6}/\tau/-s_{10}/\text{i}/^{(h)}$ (2.SG-L2)</td>
<td>$s_{6}/\tau/-s_{10}/\text{i}/^{(h)}$ (2.SG-L2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$s_{6}/\text{nn}/-s_{10}/\text{i}/^{(o)}$ (3.SG.H-L2)</td>
<td>$s_{6}/\text{nn}/-s_{10}/\text{i}/^{(o)}$ (3.SG.H-L2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$s_{5}/b/-s_{10}/\text{i}/^{(g)}$ (3.SG.NH-L2)</td>
<td>$s_{5}/b/-s_{10}/\text{i}/^{(g)}$ (3.SG.NH-L2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$s_{6}/\text{nn}\bar{e}/-s_{10}/\text{e}/^{(p)}$ (3.PL-L2)</td>
<td>$s_{6}/\text{nn}\bar{e}/-s_{10}/\text{e}/^{(p)}$ (3.PL-L2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.3</th>
<th>$s_{11}/\text{f}/^{(a)}$ (1.SG)</th>
<th>$s_{11}/\text{f}/^{(a)}$ (1.SG)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$s_{4}/\mu/-s_{10}/\text{e}/^{(a)}$ (VEN-L3)</td>
<td>$s_{4}/\mu/-s_{10}/\text{e}/^{(a)}$ (VEN-L3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$s_{6}/\tau/-s_{10}/\text{i}/^{(o)}$ (2.SG-L3)</td>
<td>$s_{6}/\tau/-s_{10}/\text{i}/^{(o)}$ (2.SG-L3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$s_{6}/\text{nn}/-s_{10}/\text{i}/^{(o)}$ (3.SG.H-L3)</td>
<td>$s_{6}/\text{nn}/-s_{10}/\text{i}/^{(o)}$ (3.SG.H-L3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$s_{5}/b/-s_{10}/\text{i}/^{(g)}$ (3.SG.NH-L3)</td>
<td>$s_{5}/b/-s_{10}/\text{i}/^{(g)}$ (3.SG.NH-L3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$s_{6}/\text{nn}\bar{e}/-s_{10}/\text{e}/^{(p)}$ (3.PL-L3)</td>
<td>$s_{6}/\text{nn}\bar{e}/-s_{10}/\text{e}/^{(p)}$ (3.PL-L3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[a] exx. (378), (380), (381); (382), (383a), (384), (439); [b] exx. (379), (383b), (385); [c] ex. (405), (410); [d] ex. (392); [e] exx. (167), (389), (393), (395), (401), (408), (411b); [f] exx. (168), (386), (390), (402), (404), (409), (412), (424); [g] ex. (396); [h] exx. (394), (413); [i] ex. (407); [j] ex. (388), (417), (418); [k] exx. (391), (397), (411a), (415), (420); [l] ex. (416); [m] exx. (169), (398a), (399), (400), (403), (414), (419), (422), (423); [n] (433); [o] ex. (406), (440); [p] exx. (426), (434), (441); [q] exx. (427), (430), (435), (442), (445), (446); [r] ex. (443); [s] ex. (425); [t] ex. (438); [u] exx. (429), (432), (436), (437), (439), (444)]
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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CASE</th>
<th>FUNCTION</th>
<th>NOMINAL MARKERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LOCATIVE1</td>
<td>inessive</td>
<td>human</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOCATIVE2</td>
<td>superessive</td>
<td>non-human</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOCATIVE3</td>
<td>adessive</td>
<td>human</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 14.2: The meaning of the locative cases

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 =/ʼa/.

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. (383) 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. (379) 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 ne₂-.

In its basic function the locative1 indicates a location inside something, see, e.g., ex. (335) above, exx. (378) and (379) below; or a movement inside something, see exx. (380)–(382) below. The location may also be within an abstract entity like a “statement”, as in ex. (383) below.

(378) En-metena 1 6:28–29 (RIME 1.9.5.1) (Lagash, 25th c.) (Q001103)
šag₄ iiri-na-ka, ḫa-ne₂-gaz-ze(x) (AB₂.ŠA₃.GE)
šag iiri=ane=ak=a S₁ḫa-S₁₀ni-S₁₁ni-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!”

(379) MVN 3, 363 rev. 3–5 (Drehem, 21st c.) (P113923)
kišib₃ ur-dšul-pa-es-ka, bešeŋ ur-šba-u₂-ka
kišib uršulpæk=ak bešeŋ urbauk=a
seal PN₁=GEN basket PN₂=1.L₁
i₃-in-ŋal₂-la-ta, tur-re-dam
S₂₁i-S₁₀ni-S₁₁ŋar-S₁₄ø=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 Ur-Shulpae that is in the basket of Ur-Bau.”

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. (380) and (381) below: both forms are transitive and must contain a locative prefix, ex. (381) differs only in the presence of a ventive prefix.

Verbal forms like the one in ex. (380) were earlier transliterated as i₃-ŋar (S₂₁i-S₁₀ni-S₁₁ŋar-S₁₄ø = FIN-3.SG,H,A-place-3.SG,P). Verbal forms like the one in ex. (382), however, suggest that the form should start with a prefix /ni/: because of the vowel harmony, a form like S₂₁i-S₁₀ni-S₁₁ŋar-S₁₄ø would be written as e-ŋar around the middle of 3rd millennium BCE. In the context of ex. (382) the graphemes NI GAR may therefore only be transliterated as ne₂-ŋar (S₁₀ni-S₁₁ni-S₁₂ŋar-S₁₄ø = L₁-3.SG,H,A-put-3.SG,P), but not as i₃-ŋar.

(380) Gudea Cyl. A 18:24 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)
gu₃-de₂-a im u₃-šub-ba ni-ŋar
“Gudea put clay into the mould.”
The locative cases

(381) Gudea Cyl. A 19:8–9 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

sig₄ u₃-šub-ba mi-ni-ŋar-ra-ne₂,

du₄ utu=ø

The god Utu rejoiced over his (= Gudea) putting the brick into the mould.”

(382) DP 601 obv. 1:3–2:1 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P221251)

a₂-ne₂-kur-ra, saŋ apin-ke₄, numun ne₂-ŋar

Anekura, the chief ploughman sowed it with seeds”; lit. “put the seeds in (the earth)”

(383) NG 99 rev. 1:3–5 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P111162)

ibila dudu=ak=enē=e kag=anenē=ʾa

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:

(384) En-metena 1 5:12–13 (RIME 1.9.5.1) (Lagash, 25th c.) (Q001103)

na₄-a mu-na-ni-du₃


“He built the fundamentals of the Namnunda-kigara-canal from stone for him.”

(385) Gudea Cyl. A 16:25 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

sipad-de₃ e₂ kug-ga mu-du₃-e

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 =/ʾa/.

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. (405) below. The 2nd ps. sg. pronominal prefix is the IPP /r/ in S6, see, e.g., ex. (406) 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. (389) 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. (395) 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. (402) below. However, around the middle of the 3rd millennium BCE the vowel of the composite locative2 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, e.g., ex. (404) below.

The 3rd ps. pl. human pronominal prefix is the IPP /nnē/ in S6, see, e.g., ex. (396) 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 is reduced to /n/, see ex. (388) below.
The 3rd ps. sg. non-human composite prefix is reduced to /b/, see, e.g., exx. (391) and (397) 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. (407) 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. (397) below. Compare this example with ex. (429) below. In ex. (429) 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. (403) below, whereas in texts from the 2nd millennium BCE the contraction results in an /ē/, see exx. (399) and (400) 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. (386) and (387). Both sentences are about the building of a temple on a ritually clean place, and contain a transitive preterite verbal form. Ex. (387) 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. (387), do not change to *mu-ne-du₃ (s₄muₕs₆nn-s₇a-S₁₀e-s₁₁n-S₁₂du-S₁₄ø = 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:

(386) Gudea Statue B 4:7–9 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)

\[
\begin{align*}
e&\quad \text{e₂} \quad \text{qin-gir₂-su-ka,} \quad \text{eridug}^{ki}\text{-gen₇,} \\
e & \quad \text{e} \quad \text{ningirsuk}^{ak}=\emptyset \quad \text{eridug=}\text{gen} \\
\text{house} & \quad \text{DN=}\text{GEN=}\text{ABS} \quad \text{GN=}\text{EQU} \\
\text{ki} & \quad \text{sikil-la} \quad \text{bi₂-du₃} \\
\text{ki} & \quad \text{sikil=}\text{∅}^{=a} \quad s₅b⁻S₁₀⁺s₁₁n⁻s₁₂du⁻s₁₄ø \\
\text{place} & \quad \text{pure=}\text{TL=}L₂\text{-NH} \quad 3\text{.SG.NH-L₂-3.SG.H.A-build-3.SG.P} \\
\text{“He (= Gudea) has built the temple of Ningirsu in a place as pure as Eridu.”}
\end{align*}
\]
(387) Gudea Statue F 3:6–7 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232279)

iri-kug-ga ki dadag-ga-a,
iri-kug-ʾa ki dadag-ʾa-ʾa

GN=L1 place bright-PT=L2.NH

e₂ mu-na-du₃

e=ø s₄mu-S₆nn-S₇a-S₁₁n-S₁₂du-S₁₄ø

“He built the temple for her in a purified place in Irikug.”

(388) Amar-Suen 9 45–46 (RIME 3/2.1.3.9) (Ur, 21st c.) (Q000984)

muš ʾa nanna, ḫe₂-en-ŋar

muš nanna=ak=ø S₁ha-S₂i-S₆n-S₁₀(i)=Ø-S₁₂jar-S₁₄ø

snake DN=GEN=ABS MOD-FIN-3.SG.H-L2-place-3.SG.S

“May the snake of Nanna fall upon him!”

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

ninŋirsuk=e sašušgal=ane=ø S₂u-S₆nn-S₁₀i-S₁₁n-S₁₂šuš-S₁₄ø


“After Ningirsu had thrown his battle-net on him (= the Ummaite), ….”

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

inim ʾa en-lil₂-laz₂-ta, sa-šuš-gal

inim enlil=ak=ta sašušgal=ø S₅b-S₁₀i-S₁₁n-S₁₂šuš-S₁₄ø


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

(391) E-an-tum 1 obv. 18:21–22 (RIME 1.9.3.1) (Lagash, 25th c.) (P222399)

ummaki-ʾa, an-ta ḫe₂-šuš

ummaki=ʾa an=ta S₁ha-S₂i-S₃b-S₁₀(i)=Ø-S₁₂šuš-S₁₄ø

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!”

(392) Ninurta G 66–68 (ETCSL 4.27.07)

kug ama ʾa-nanse dugi-ga-na-ab,
holy mother DN speak-FIN-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.P

kug ama nanše S₁dug-S₂a-S₆nn-S₇a-S₁₁b

dutu-gen: a₂ bad ḫu-mu-ri-in-gub


“Ask the holy mother Nanshe to cast her protecting arms over you as if she were the god Utu!”
Like the Anzud bird, Ningirsu has placed his outstretched arms over Iri-kagina.”

“Gatumdug, my lady, may (your hand) fall on me!”

“(En-iggal, the overseer) has entered it as his debt (lit. ‘put him on his neck’)”. 

“Shubur, the overseer, has entered it (= a given amount of silver) as their (= 3 fishermen) debt (lit. ‘put them on their neck’)

“They are on the account (lit. ‘on the skull’) of Ur-gigira.”

17 The composite L2 prefix agrees in person and number with the possessor of the “neck”, a case of external possession, see Lesson 15 below.

18 The composite L2 prefix agrees in person and number with the possessor of the “neck”, a case of external possession, see Lesson 15 below.
(398) Shulgi D 219 (ETCSL 2.4.2.04)

\[
\begin{array}{l}
ni₃\text{ŋ₂} & \text{ki-en-gi-ra} & \text{ba-a-gu-la} \\
ni₃ & \text{kengir='}a & S_{5}\text{ba}\cdot S_{10}\text{e}\cdot S_{12}\text{gul}\cdot S_{14}\theta \cdot S_{15} 'a=\emptyset \\
\text{thing} & \text{homeland=}\text{L2.NH} & \text{MID-}\text{L2-destroy-}\text{3.SG.S-SUB=ABS} \\
kur-ra & \text{ga-am₃-mi-ib-gu-ul} & \\
kur=\emptyset 'a & S_{2}\text{ga}\cdot S_{4}\text{m} \cdot S_{5}\text{b}\cdot S_{10}\text{i}\cdot S_{11} 'b \cdot S_{12}\text{gul} & \text{foreign.land=}\text{L2.NH} & \text{MOD-VEN-}\text{3.SG.NH-L2-3.SG.NH.P-destroy} \\
\end{array}
\]

"Whatever has been destroyed in the homeland, I shall destroy in the foreign lands!"

(399) Iddin-Dagan B 56 (ETCSL 2.5.3.2)

\[
\begin{array}{l}
kur-kur & \text{usal-}'a & \\
kur=\emptyset & \text{usal=}'a & S_{4}\text{mu}\cdot S_{6}\text{r}\cdot S_{7} 'a \cdot S_{10}\text{e}\cdot S_{12}\text{nu}\cdot S_{14}\theta \\
\text{land=PL=ABS} & \text{meadow=}\text{L2.NH} & \text{VEN-2.SG-DAT-}\text{L2-3.SG.S} \\
\end{array}
\]

"All the foreign lands rest on the meadows thanks to you."

(400) Ur-Ninurta D 33 (ETCSL 2.5.6.4)

\[
\begin{array}{l}
u₃\text{ŋ₃} & \text{usal-la} & \text{hu-mu-un-de₃-nu₂} \\
u₃=\emptyset & \text{usal-}'a & S_{2}\text{hu}\cdot S_{4}\text{mu} \cdot S_{6}\text{n}\cdot S_{8} 'a \cdot S_{10}\text{e}\cdot S_{12}\text{nu}\cdot S_{14}\theta \\
\text{people=ABS} & \text{meadow=}\text{L2.NH} & \text{MOD-VEN-}\text{3.SG.H-COM-}\text{L2-3.SG.S} \\
\end{array}
\]

"May the people rest on the meadows under his rule!"

(401) NG 205 obv. 1:2–4 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P111164)

\[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{migi-sage-ga} & \text{urd}u₂ & \text{maš-gu-la-ra}, & \text{i₃-bi₃-la} & \text{maš-gu-la-ke₃-ne}, \\
\text{igisaga} & \text{urd}u & \text{mašgula=}\text{ak=ra} & \text{ibila} & \text{mašgula=ak=enē=e} \\
P_{N₁} & \text{slave} & \text{PN₂=GEN=}\text{L2.H} & \text{heir} & \text{PN₂=GEN=PL=ERG} \\
\text{inim} & \text{in-ni-} 'n₃ₕ₃ 'n₅ar₅-e₃š \\
\text{inim=}\emptyset & S_{2} 'i₃-n₃ₕ₃-n₆₃-S_{10} 'i₃-S_{11} 'n₃₅ar₅-e₃š \\
\text{word=ABS} & \text{FIN-3.SG.H-L2-3.SG.H.A-place-3.PL} \\
\end{array}
\]

"The heirs of Mash-gula raised a claim for (lit. 'put a word on') Igi-saga, the slave of Mash-gula"

(402) NG 194 31' (Lagash, 21st c.) (P110833)

\[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{luz-ge-na} & \text{ab₃-ba} & \text{inim} & \text{bi₃-ŋar} \\
\text{lugena=} & \text{ab}=\text{be=}'a & \text{inim=} & S_{5} 'b \cdot S_{10} 'i₃-S_{11} 'h₃-S_{12} 'ŋar₅-e₃š \\
\text{PN=ERG} & \text{cow=DEM=}\text{L2.NH} & \text{word=ABS} & \text{3.SG.NH-L2-3.SG.H.A-place-3.SG.P} \\
\end{array}
\]

"(Ur-Ninmarki has bought a cow from Abakala.) Lugena raised a claim for (lit. 'put a word on') this cow."

210
With the compound verb nam “fate” — tar “to cut” = “to determine the fate”, the locative2 denotes the participant for whom a fate was determined:

(405) 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-ʾa=øS₄mu-S₁₀e-S₁₁n-S₁₂tar-S₁₄eš-ʾa=a
“The good fate they have determined for me ....”

(406) Shulgi D 384 (ETCSL 2.4.2.04)

nam dug₃ gu₂-mu-ri₂-ib₂-tar
nam dug-₀=₀S₂⁴mu-S₁₀e-S₁₁n-S₁₂tar-S₁₄eš-ʾa=ʾa
fate good-TL=ABS MOD-VEN-2.SG-L₂-3.SG.H,P-cut
“I will determine a good fate for you!”

(407) Gudea Cyl. B 20:18 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

d₄nin-ŋir₂-su-ke₄, gu₃-de₂-a-ar, lu₂ e₂ du₃-a-ra,
ninjirsuk=e gudea=ra lu e=₀ du-₀=ak=ra
DN=ERG PN=L₂,H man house=ABS build-TL=GEN=L₂,H
nam dug₃ mu-ni-tar
nam dug-₀=₀S₄mu-S₁₀n-S₁₁n-S₁₂tar-S₁₄eš-ʾa=ʾa
“Ningirsu, has determined a good fate for Gudea, the temple-builder.”
LESSON 14

(409) Shulgi F 30 (ETCSL 2.4.2.6)
ud-ba an-ne₂ ki-en-gi-ra nam biz-in-tarar
ud=be=ʾa an=e kiengir=ʾa nam=ø S5b-S10i-S11n-S12tar-S14ø
“On that day An determined a fate for Sumer.”

With the compound verb mu “name” — še₂₁ “to call” = “to name”, the locative2 denotes the participant who is given a name:

(410) Gudea Cyl. A 10:12–14 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)
an lugal diŋir-re-ne-ke₄, dnin-ŋir₂-su lugal išib an-na,
an lugal diŋir=enē=ak=e ninŋirsuk lugal=ø išib an=ak=ø
DN₁ king god= PL=GEN=ERG DN₂ king=ABS priest DN₁= GEN=ABS
mu-še₃ mu-še₂₁
mu=še S4mu-S10e-S11n-S12še-S14ø
name=TERM VEN- L2-3.SG.H.A-call-3.SG.P
“An, king of the gods, called me ‘Ningirsu, the king, is the ishib priest of An’.”

(411) E-ana-tum 1 obv. 4:20–23 (RIME 1.9.3.1) (Lagash, 25th. c.) (P222399)
e₂-an-na, dinana, eb-gal-ka-ka a-tum₂,
eana inanak ebgal=ak=ak=ʾa S2a-S5b-S10(l)>S12tum-S14ø
TN₁ DN TN₂=GEN=GEN=L2.NH FIN-3.SG.NH-L2.SYN-worthy.of-3.SG.S
mu mu-ne₂-še₂₁
mu=še S4mu-S6nn-S10i-S11n-S12še-S14ø
“(Inana) named him ‘He is worthy of the E-ana of Inana of the Ebgal’.”

(412) Sargon 16 12–13 (Ur, 24th c.) (Q000835)
barag banšur an-na, mu-še₃ be₂-še₂₁
barag=ø banšur an=ak=ø mu=še S5b-S10i-S11n-S12še-S14ø
“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:

(413) Dumuzi-Inana D 19 (ETCSL 4.08.04)
šu ba-mu-us₈
šu=ø S₁ba-S₅mu-S₁₀e
hand=ABS open-VEN-L2
“(My sister,) release me!”
With the verb \texttt{du₃} “to hold on, to detain” the locative2 denotes the participant detained:

(418) TCS 1, 48 obv. 3–rev. 2 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P145641)

ur⁻⁴nantšu dumu-dab₅ lu₂⁻⁴na-ru₂-a-ka-ra,

urnantšu dumudab lu₂-ru₂-a-ka-ra,

PN₁ worker PN₂=GEN=L₂,H

eš₂-giri₇-eš₂, na-ba-du₃
ešgiri=eš²nanšu dumudab lunaruak=ak=ra,


“He should not detain Ur-Nanshe, the worker of Lu-Narua by (lit. ‘in the manner of’) a nose-rope.”
(419) TCS 1, 229 rev. 3–4 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P145730)
a-šag₄ in-dab₅-ba-na, na-ba-a-du₃
ašag ₄₋₁₁₋₁₂₋₁₄₋₁₅ a=ane=ʾa ₄₋₁₀₋₁₃₋₁₄
field FIN-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:

(420) Gudea Statue B 1:17–19 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)
sa₂-dug₄-na, e₂ dnin-ŋirsu-ka-ta,
sadug=ane=ʾa e ninŋirsuk=ak=ta
offering=3.SG.NH.POSS=L2.NH house DN=GEN=ABL
inim ḫe₂-eb₂-gi₄
inim=ø ₄₋₁₁₋₁₂₋₁₄
word=ABS MOD -FIN-3.SG.NH-L2.NH-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 which someone speaks, see also exx. (265) and (266) above:

(421) BM 24108 obv. 3–rev. 1 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P145596)
maš-gu-la-ra, ₁(geš₂) še gur,
mašgula=ra ₆₀ še gur=ø
PN₁=DAT.H ₆₀ barley unit=ABS
šum₂-mu₁-da, ḫe₂-na-dug₄
šum-ed-ʾa ₄₋₁₁₋₁₂₋₁₄
“I did tell him to give 60 gurs of barley to Mash-gula!”

(422) 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=ʾa
house=GEN building=3.SG.NH.POSS=GEN star holy=3.SG.NH.POSS=L2.NH
gu₁ ma-ra-a-de₂
gu=ø ₆₋₁₀₋₁₄
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.”
The locative cases

(423) Gudea Cyl. A 9:10 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)
ŋarza-ŋa₂ mul an kug-ba
ŋarza=ŋu=ak mul an kug-ø=be=ʾa
regulation=1.SG.POSS=GEN star sky holy—TL=3.SG.NH.POSS=L2.NH
gu₃ ga-mu-ra-a-de₂
gu=øS₂ga-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!”

(424) NRVN 1, 115 rev. 3–4 (Nippur, 21st c.) (P122331)
i₃-la₂ nu-la₂, 3 giŋ₄ kug-babbar
S₂i-S₁₁n-S₁₂la-S₁₄Ø S₁nu-S₂i-S₁₁n-S₁₂la-S₁₄Ø 3 giŋ kugbabbar=ø
la₂-da bi₂-dug₄
la-ed=ʾa S₅b-S₁₀i-S₁₁n-S₁₂dug-S₁₄Ø
“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. (443) 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. (433) 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. (440) 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. (426) and (441) 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. (434) 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. (430) 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. (446) below.

The 3rd ps. pl. human pronominal prefix is the IPP /nnē/ in S6, see, e.g., ex. (443) 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 ([427] vs. [428] and [430] vs. [431] 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” is construed always with the locative3, see exx. (425)–(430) below.

(425) Gudea Cyl. A 3:11 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)¹⁹
zan-ju₁₀ mu-us₂
zag=ŋu=e S₄mu-S₁₁ʾ-S₁₂us-S₁₄ø
side=1.SG.POSS=L₃.NH VEN-1.SG.L₃-be.next-3.SG.S
“It attaches to my side.”

¹⁹ The L₃ prefix agrees in person and number with the possessor of the “side”, a case of external possession, see Lesson 15 below.
The locative cases

(426) Gudea Cyl. B 19:20–21 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

d-en-lil₂-ra, d-nin-mah mu-ni-us₂
enlil-ra ninmah=ø ᵈ₄ᵐᵘ⁻ˢ₆ⁿ⁻ˢ₁₀ⁱ⁻ˢ₁₁ⁿ⁻ˢ₁₂ᵘˢ⁻ˢ₁₄θ
“He (= Gudea) seated Ninmah next to Enlil.”

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

kar ninji₅-na-ke₄ ma₂ bi₂-us₂
kar ninjin=ak=e ma=ø ᵈ₅ᵇ⁻ˢ₁₀ⁱ⁻ˢ₁₁ⁿ⁻ˢ₁₂ᵘˢ⁻ˢ₁₄θ
“He (= Gudea) moored the boat at the quay of Nigin.”

(428) Ur-Ningirsu II 3 2:6–7 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (Q000929)

abul-inim-si-sa₄-a-ke₄, e₂ dnanše mu-na-us₂
abulinimsisak=e e nanše=ak=ø ᵈ₄ᵐᵘ⁻ˢ₆ⁿ⁻ˢ₇ᵃ⁻ˢ₁₁ⁿ⁻ˢ₁₂ᵘˢ⁻ˢ₁₄θ
“He made the temple of Nanshe adjacent to the Inimsisa-gate for him.”

(429) Gudea Statue G 2:9–10 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232280)

din-ni₅-šₐ₁-si₅-sa₅-sa₅-a-ke₄ ib₂-us₂
ninje₅šzida=ø eger=be=e ᵈₛⁱ⁻ˢ₁₁ᵇ⁻ˢ₁₂ᵘˢ⁻ˢ₁₄θ
DN=ABS back=3.SG.NH.POSS=L₃.NH FIN-3.SG.NH.L₃-be.next-3.SG.S
“Nin-geshzida followed them.”

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

na-r₄₅-a, me-salim-ma, ki-be₂ bi₂-gi₄
naru’a mesalim=ak=ø ki=be=e ᵈ₅ᵇ⁻ˢ₁₀ⁱ⁻ˢ₁₁ⁿ⁻ˢ₁₂ᵍⁱ⁻ˢ₁₄θ
“He restored the stele of Mesalim (lit. ‘returned it to its place’).”

(431) Gudea Statue B 5:17 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)

ki-be₂ mu-na-gi₄
ki=be=e ᵈ₄ᵐᵘ⁻ˢ₆ⁿ⁻ˢ₇ᵃ⁻ˢ₁₁ⁿ⁻ˢ₁₂ᵍⁱ⁻ˢ₁₄θ
“He restored it for him (lit. ‘returned it to its place’).”

(432) TUT 105 obv. 2:5' (Lagash, 21st c.) (P135678)

2 sila₃ nešig lugal-ke₄ ba-ab-ak
2 sila=ø ig lugal=ak=ᵉ ᵈₛᵇ⁻ˢ₁₁ᵇ⁻ˢ₁₂ᵃᵏ⁻ˢ₁₄θ
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.”
(433) NG 202 rev. 9 (Umma, 21st c.) (P131781)

kas-li-am₃  igi-še₃  gešba₂⁻ba  mu-ra
kali=ø-am=ø  igi=še  gešba=ø  S₄mu⁻S₁₀⁻S₁₁⁻S₁₂⁻ra⁻S₁₄=ø


“(Durgarni killed Kali. Durgarni was questioned, and he said:) ‘It was Kali who first punched me’.”

(434) E-ana-tum 1 obv. 9:2–3 (RIME 1.9.3.1) (Lagash, 25th c.) (P222399)

e₂-an-na-tum₂-ra  lu₂  ti  mu-ne₂-ra
eanatum=ra  lu=e  ti=ø  S₄mu⁻S₆⁻nn⁻S₁₀⁻S₁₁⁻S₁₂⁻ra⁻S₁₄=ø


“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:

(435) Gudea Statue R 1:6-7 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232290)

lu₂  bi₃-lu₅-da  diŋir-re-ne-ke₄,
lu  biluda  diŋir=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⁻S₁₄=ø⁻S₁₅’a=e

“(Gudea,) the man who performed the rites of the gods properly”

(436) Lugal-zagesi 1 3:27–28 (RIME 1.14.20.1) (Uruk, 24th c.) (Q001379)

ubur  an-na-ke₄,  si  ḫa-mu-dab₆-sa₂
ubur  an=ak=e  si=ø  S₁ḥa⁻S₄⁻mu⁻S₆⁻d⁻S₈⁻da⁻S₁₁⁻b⁻S₁₂⁻sa⁻S₁₄=ø
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:

(437) Gudea Cyl. A 7:16 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

ŋeš-e  mi₂  im-e
ŋeš=e  mi=ø  S₂⁻i⁻S₄⁻m⁻S₁₁⁻b⁻S₁₂⁻e⁻S₁₄=e
wood=ABS  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.”
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. (439) below the prefix /b/ in S11 cross-references the non-human participant, “the boat”, in the 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. (439) thus contains the markers of more than one locative cases.

(439) Shulgi D 360 (ETCSL 2.4.2.04)

an-gen₇ mul-a še-er-ka-an mi-ni-ib₂-dug₄
an=gen mul=ʾa šerkan=ø S⁴mu-S₁₀ni-S₁₁b-S₁₂dug-S₁₄ø
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. (432), (436), and (439) above, in which the verbal marker of locative3 in S11 is preceded either by another adverbial prefix (comitative in ex. [436], locative1 in ex. [439]) or by a middle prefix (in ex. [432]), 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/- (S₅b-S₁₀i= 3.SG.NH-l₃-).

An important secondary function of the locative3 is to denote the causee in causative constructions of transitive verbs. The verb gu₇ “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. (444) below.

(440) Lipit-Eshtar D 6 (ETCSL 2.5.5.4)

gá namšul-la mi-ri-in-gu₇
gá namšul=ak=ø S⁴mu-S₆r-S₁₀n-S₁₁n-S₁₂gu-S₁₄ø
“She (= the goddess Nintur) has fed you with the milk of vigour.”; lit. “She made you consume the milk of vigour.”
LESSON 14

(441) MVN 3, 36 obv. 3:2–7 (Isin, ca. 25–24th) (P222204)
1/2 kug ma-na, ma-ḫir, dumu amar-šuba₃(MUŠ₃.KUR.ZA)-ra,
1/2 kug mana=ø maḫir 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=ø sam=še s₂$i-S₅n-S₁₀i-S₁₁n-S₁₂gu-S₁₄ø
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-shuba, receive (lit. ‘eat’) half mana of silver as the price.”

(442) Shulgi H Segment D 19 (= Ni 2275 iv 19) (ETCSL 2.4.2.08)
uŋ₃-e u₂ nir-ŋal₂ ḫa-bi₂-ib₂-gu₇-e
uŋ=e u nirŋal=ø S₁ḫa-S₅b-S₁₀i-S₁₁b-S₁₂gu-S₁₄e
people=L3.NH food fine=ABS MOD-3.SG.NH-L3-3.SG.NH.P-eat-3.SG.A
a dug₃ ḫa-bi₂-na₈-na₈
a dug=ø S₁ḫa-S₅b-S₁₀i-S₁₁b-S₁₂na-na-S₁₄e
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!”

(443) MVN 3, 1 obv. 3:4 (Isin, 24th c.) (P215676)
in-ne-gu₇
s₂$i-S₅nē-S₁₀e-S₁₁n-S₁₂gu-S₁₄ø
“He made them receive (lit. ‘eat’) (a certain amount of silver).”

(444) OIP 121, 54 obv. 3 (Drehem, 21st c.) (P123784)
ad₆-be₂ ur-gir₁₅-re ba-ab-gu₇
ad=be=ø urgir=e s₅ba-S₁₁b-S₁₂gu-S₁₄ø
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 to 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:

(445) Gudea Cyl. A 15:22 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)
ŋešeren-be₂ tun₃ gal-e im-mi-kud
eren=be=ø tun gal=ø e s₂$i-S₅m-S₁₀i-S₁₁n-S₁₂kud-S₁₄ø
“He cut down its cedars with great axes.”; lit. “He made the great axes cut its cedars”.

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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.
LESSON 14

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

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 meaning of the compound verbs often requires another verbal participant which is affected by the verbal action. This participant functions then as a kind of “semantic object” in addition to the grammatical object. In the case of external possession, a noun phrase is syntactically encoded as a verbal participant but semantically understood as the possessor of another participant of the same verb. The semantic possessor is expressed as a separate constituent outside the noun phrase whose head is the possessum. It therefore represents an additional verbal participant compared to possessive constructions in which both the possessor and the possessum are within the same noun phrase. In the case of dative promotion, two of the participants of a finite verb should be cross-referenced by incompatible prefixes in the verbal prefix-chain. One of these participants will therefore 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:

**Table 15.1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTRANSITIVE</th>
<th>CAUSATIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ex. (447) below is a hypothetical intransitive clause that may form the basis of the actual ex. (448). In ex. (447) the person “I” is the verbal participant who steps on a bed. In ex. (448) the same person does the actual stepping, but the clause has an additional verbal participant, the goddess Inana, who causes “me” to step on the bed. The causer functions as the A of ex. (448) and is marked accordingly in S11 with a 3rd ps. sg. human FPP. The S of ex. (447) functions as the P in ex. (448). Since in the preterite the pronominal suffix in S14 cross-references the participant in the absolutive, both the S in ex. (447) and the P in ex. (448) is cross-referenced with the same morpheme. In other words, 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.

(447) *peš₂ nu₂ girin-na ḥe₂-ib₂-gub-en
nu girin-ø=ʾa ḥa₂-s₂-b₅-s₁₀(i>)ø-s₁₂gub-s₁₄en
bed flowery-$TL=₂L₂.NH$ $MOD-FIN=3.SG.NH$-$L₂.SYN$-$stand=1.SG.S$
“I indeed stepped onto the flowery bed.”

(448) Ishme-Dagan A 105 (ETCSL 2.5.4.01)

peš₂ nu₂ girin-na ḥe₂-bi₂-in-gub-en
nu girin-ø=ʾa ḥa₂-s₅-b₅-s₁₀-i$S₁₁$ni-s₁₂gub-s₁₄en
“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:

**Table 15.2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRANSITIVE</th>
<th>CAUSATIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>L₃</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In ex. (449) 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. (450) 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. (449) and (450) 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 original case in the causative form: the “eater”, the causee, i.e., the underlying A, will become an adverbial participant in the locative³.

(449) CUSAS 3, 385 obv. 6 (Garshana, 21st c.) (P323799)

5 sila₃ ninda ugula lu₂-ḫuŋ-ŋa₂-e-ne ib₂-gu₇
5 sila ninda=ø ugula luḥuŋa=enē=ø S₂i₁S₁₁b₁₁₂g₁₁₄ø
5 measure bread=ABS overseer hireling=PL=ERG FIN-3.SG.NH.A-eat-3.SG.P

“Five liters of bread: the overseers of the hirelings consumed it.”

(450) Shulgi H Segment D 19 (ETCSL 2.4.2.08)

uŋ₃-e u₂ nir-ŋal₂ ḫa-bi₂-ib₂-gu₇-e
uŋ=e u nirŋal-ø=ø S₁ḥa-S₅b-S₁₀i₁₁b₁₁₂g₁₁₄e
people=L3.NH food fine-TL=ABS MOD-3.SG.NH-L3-3.SG.NH.P-eat-3.SG.A

a dug₃ ḫa-bi₂-na₈-na₈
a dug-ø=ø S₁ḥa-S₅b-S₁₀i₁₁b₁₁₂na~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!”

The causer may be missing from the clause, and then verbal form is the passive form of a causative, as in ex. (451) 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. (452), in which the A is also unspecified, but here the missing participant must be interpreted as the “eater”.

In other words, both exx. (451) and (452) are passive verbal forms (signalled by the presence of the middle prefix), but the former is the passive of a causative (similar to ex. [450]), signalled by the presence of the /b/ in S11; while the latter is the passive of a transitive form (similar to ex. [449]), signalled by the emptiness of S11.
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”. Here the word igi “eye” does not refer to an existing entity; rather, it modifies the meaning of the verb. 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” — ŋar “to place” = “to claim”) are the cases most often attested in this use, but there are compound verbs also with the dative (ki “place” — aŋ₂ “to measure (?)” = “to love”), the terminative (igi “eye” — bar “to direct” = “to look at”), and the comitative (a₂ “arm” — aŋ₂ “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.

(453) Enmerkar and the lord of Aratta 554 (ETCSL 1.8.2.3)

en aratta ki-ke₄ gig-e igi biz-in-du₈
en aratta=ak=e gig=e igi=ø S5b-S₁₀l₁-S₁₁n₁-S₁₂du₁-S₁₄ø

“The lord of Aratta looked at the wheat.”

(454) Utu-hegal 1 6–8 (RIME 2.13.6.1) (Uruk, 22nd c.) (Q000876)

ki-sur-ra lagaš ki-ka, lu₂ urim₅-ka-ke₄,
ki-sur-ra lagaš=ak=ʾa lu urim=ak=e

territory GN=GEN=L2.NH person GN=GEN=ERG

inim bi₂-ŋar
inim=ø S₅b-S₁₀l₁-S₁₁n₁-S₁₂ŋar-ø

“The man from Urim raised a claim on the territory of Lagash.”

(455) Iri-kagina 14p 1–2 (RIME 1.9.9.14p) (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222652)

dba-u₂ barag iri-kug-ga-ka tum₂-ma
bau barag irikug=ak=ʾa tum-ʾa=e

DN seat GN=GEN=L2.NH be.suitable-PT=ERG

iri-ka-gi-na-ra ki mu-na-anj₂
iri-kaginak=ra ki=ø S₄mu₅-n₆m₇-a₁-S₁₁n₁-S₁₂anj₁-S₁₄ø

“The goddess Bau, who is worthy of the seat of the city Irikug, loves Irikagina.”

(456) Gudea Cyl. A 1:3 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

den-lil₂-e en d nin-jir₂-su₂-šē₃
enlil=e en ninjspuk=šē
dN=ERG lord DN=TERM

igi zid mu-ši-bar
igi zid-ø=ø S₄mu₅-n₆š₇i₅-S₁₁n₁-S₁₂bar-₁-S₁₄ø


“The god Enlil looked at lord Ningirsu with approval (lit. ‘with true eyes’).”

(457) Shulgi G 8 (ETCSL 2.4.2.07)

den-lil₂-da a-ba a₂ mu-da-an-anj₂
enlil=da aba=ø S₄mu₅-n₆da₁-S₁₁n₁-S₁₂anj₁-S₁₄ø

“Whoever instructed divine Enlil?”
15.3 The external possession construction

External possession is a phenomenon where a noun phrase is syntactically encoded as a verbal participant but semantically understood as the possessor of another participant of the same verb. In other words, there is a semantic possessor-possessum relation between two noun phrases within a clause but the possessor is expressed as a separate constituent outside the noun phrase whose head is the possessum. External possession constructions are typically permitted only when the possessor is human and the possessum is inalienable. Cross-linguistically body-part expressions are the most common type of possessum that may occur in external possession constructions.

In Sumerian, external possession may be observed in clauses in which a body-part expression and its semantic 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. (458) below; in the latter, the possessor is in the dative, whereas the body-part is in the locative1, see ex. (461) below.

In ex. (458) below the semantic possessor of the word šu “hand” is the god Ningirsu. The word d nin-ŋir₂-su, however, occurs 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 semantic possessor (=ane : 3.SG.H.POSS). Both the semantic possessor (d nin-ŋir₂-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 semantic possessor instead of the inalienable possessum signals that the predicate affects the possessor, not the possessum.

(458) E-ana-tum 4 2:3–6 (Lagash, 25th c.) (P222460)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{d nin-ŋir₂-su-ra,} & \quad \text{a-ašag₂ ki} \quad \text{aŋ₂-ne₂,} \\
\text{ninjirsuk=ra} & \quad \text{ašag} \quad \text{ki=ø} \quad \text{aŋ-ø=ane} \\
\text{DN=L2.H field place=ABS measure-TL=3.SG.H.POSS} & \\
\text{gu₂-eden-na,} & \quad \text{šu-na} \quad \text{mu-ni-gi₄} \\
\text{guedenak=ø} & \quad \text{šu=ane=ʾa} \quad \text{s₄mu-S6nn-S₁₀i-S₁₁n-S₁₂gi-S₁₄ø} \\
\end{align*}
\]

“He returned (Ningirsu’s) beloved field, the Gu-edena, under Ningirsu’s control.”

\* = lit. “He returned, his beloved field, the Gu-edena, to Ningirsu, to his hand.”
In ex. (459) below the possessor is present in the sentence only as a 3rd ps. sg. human possessive enclitic attached to the word njiris, not as a separate constituent. The composite locative2 prefix of the verbal form shows agreement not with the grammatically non-human inalienable possessum (= njiris “foot”), but with its human possessor.

(459) Lugal-zagesi 1 1:44–45 (RIME 1.14.20.1) (Uruk, 24th c.) (Q001379)
kur-kur njiri₃-na, e-ne₂-seg₁₀-ga-a
kur~kur=ø njiri=ane=ʾa
land~PL=ABS foot~3.SG.H.POSS=L2,NH
“(when) he (= Enlil) made all the countries serve him (= Lugalzagesi) (lit. ‘threw all the countries to his feet’).”

In ex. (460) below the copula shows agreement with the 2nd ps. sg. possessor, 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.

(460) Iddin-Dagan D 30 (ETCSL 2.5.3.4)
igi-zu huš-me-en
igi=zu=ø huš-ø=ø=me-en
“Your face is awesome.”

In ex. (461) below the inalienable possessum (= kag “mouth”) is in the locative1 case. On analogy with the constructions in exx. (458) and (459) above, its human possessor should be cross-referenced with a 1st ps. sg. locative1 prefix in the verbal form. The locative1 prefix, however, may only cross-reference a 3rd ps. non-human verbal participant, there exist no 1st ps. sg. composite locative1 prefix. Consequently, the 1st ps. sg. possessor of kag “mouth” cannot but be cross-referenced with a different prefix, namely with a dative prefix in the verbal form. The use of the dative is probably due to its function to denote the participant affected by the verbal activity.

(461) Ishme-Dagan A 90 (ETCSL 2.5.4.01)
dutu niŋ₂-si-sa₂ inim gi-na,
unu=e niŋsisa inim gin-ʾa=ø
DN=ERG justice word firm-PT=ABS
ka-ŋa₂ ḫa-ma-ni-in-ŋar
kag=ŋu=ʾa
“The god Utu put justice and reliable words in my mouth.”
“Utu legte mir Gerechtigkeit und zuverlässige Worte in den Mund”.

Constructions involving an “extra” verbal participant
The German translation of ex. (461) 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

The structure and functioning of the verbal prefix-chain impose restrictions on the co-occurrence of adverbial prefixes. The restriction on the co-occurrence of the composite 3rd ps. sg. human dative prefix and the simple locative2 or locative3 prefix in transitive preterite verbal forms was discussed in Lesson 14, sections 14.3 and 14.4 above. Because of this co-occurrence restriction, there is no simple locative2 or locative3 prefix in transitive preterite verbal forms containing a 3rd ps. sg. human dative prefix; see, e.g., ex. (387) or ex. (428) in Lesson 14 above.

This section discusses co-occurrence restrictions which are solved differently by the language, namely by changing one of the incompatible adverbial prefixes into a dative prefix. This change will be labelled with the term “dative promotion”. The use of the dative is probably due to its function to denote the participant affected by the verbal activity.

Two types of co-occurrence restriction bypassed with dative promotion are attested in our texts. The more common type occurs when the construction of a clause would require the presence of both a locative1 and a locative2 or locative3 prefix in the finite verbal form. In transitive preterite verbal forms all these prefixes should occur in S10, but only one of them may “use” this slot. This restriction can be circumvented by promoting the participant in the locative2 or locative3 to the status of indirect object and marking it with a dative prefix in the verbal prefix chain, as in exx. (463) and (465) below.

The compound verb nam “fate” — tar “to cut” = “to determine a fate” case-marks the participant whose fate is determined with the locative2, see ex. (462) below. The same participant is in the dative in ex. (463), where a participant in the locative1 is also cross-referenced in the verbal form.

(462) Ninazu A 26 (ETCSL 4.17.1)

```
[an]-ne₂ nam dug₃ mu-ri-in-tar
an=e nam dug-ø=ø S₄mu-S₆r-S₁₀l-S₁₁i-S₁₂n-S₁₄t₃ar-S₁₄ø
```

“The god An has determined a good destiny for you.”
Constructions involving an “extra” verbal participant

(463) Shulgi P Segment C 25 (ETCSL 2.4.2.16)

ubur₂ kug-ŋu₁₀-a nam ma-ra-ni-tar
ubur kug=ŋu=ʾa nam=ø s₄ma-S₆r-S₇a-S₁₀ni-S₁₁tar-S₁₄ø

“I have decided your fate with my holy bosom.”

The compound verb si “horn” — sa₂ “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. (464) below. The same participant is in the dative in the next example, ex. (465), where the location of the verbal action is specified with a place adverbial in the locative1.

(464) Gudea Statue R 1:6-7 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232290)

lu₂ bis-lu₅-da diŋir-re-ne-ke₄,
lu biluda diŋir=enē=ak=e
man rite god=PL=GEN=L₃.NH
si bi₂-sa₂-sa₂-a
si=ø S₅b-S₁₀i-S₁₁n-S₁₂sa~sa₄ø-S₁₅ʾa=e

“(Gudea,) the man who performed the rites of the gods properly”

(465) Gudea Statue D 2:13-3:2 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232277)

šag₄-ba nin₂-mi₂-us₂-sa₂, dba-u₂, nin-a-na-ke₄,
šag=be=ʾa niŋmussa 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=ø S₃b-S₇a-S₁₀ni-S₁₁n-S₁₂sa~sa₄ø

“Within it, he (= Gudea) prepared the bridal gifts of Bau, his lady.”

The other type of co-occurrence restriction is the consequence of Krecher’s rule (1985: 133¹) on the functioning of the adverbial prefixes, explained in Lesson 6, section 6.3 above. Krecher’s rule states that i) only the first of the adverbial
prefixes of a finite verb may be composite preceded by a pronominal prefix; and ii) every subsequent adverbial prefix is simple and refers to a 3rd ps. non-human verbal participant.

Consider ex. (466) below.²⁰ The second verbal form in this example is a transitive causative that would look like *nam=ø s₁i-S₆n-S₁₀i-S₁₁n-S₁₂kud-S₁₄ø (fate=ABS FIN-3.SG.H-L₃-3.SG.H.A-cut-3.SG.P) “he (= E-ana-tum) made him (= the

²⁰ See Zólyomi forthcoming for a discussion of the grammar of this example.
Ummaite) swear (a promissory oath)” without an ablative prefix. In this hypothetical verbal form a 3rd ps. sg. human composite locative3 prefix cross-references the causee; see section 15.1 above.

In ex. (466), however, the presence of the ablative prefix in S9 makes it impossible for a 3rd ps. sg. human composite locative3 prefix to occur: after the ablative, only a simple adverbial prefix with non-human reference may occur. The use of the 3rd ps. sg. human composite locative3 prefix is thus obstructed by the presence of the ablative prefix, and this obstruction may be circumvented by promoting the original causee to the dative.

(466) E-ana-tum 1 obv. 16:12–20 (RIME 1.9.3.1) (Lagash, 25th c. BCE) (P222399)

"E-ana-tum gave the great battle-net of Enlil to the Ummaite, and let him swear a promissory oath by it, (and) the Ummaite swore the (following) promissory oath for E-ana-tum:” (Here follows the actual swearing in the text.)

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 position of question words for the identification of compound verbs. He
gives a summary of his views in Attinger 2007: 24–26. 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

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, under the
label “four-participant verbal forms”. The co-occurrence restrictions among
adverbial prefixes are also discussed by Jagersma (2010: 442–444) in some detail.

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 must produce only the morphemic segmentation
and glossing (2nd and 3rd line of the examples).

(467) Ishme-Dagan 7 1–7 (RIME 4.1.4.7) (Isin, 20th c.) (Q001951)

diš-me-da-gan, lugal ki-en-gi ki-uri-ra, ud d’en-lil₂-le, ⁴nin-urta,
išmedagan lugal kengir kiuri=ak=ra ud enlil=e ninurta
PN king GN GN=GEN=L3.H day DN=ERG DN

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ur-sañ kalag-ga-ne₂, maškim-še₃,
ursañ kalag=ane=ø maškim=še
hero strong=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS deputy=TERM
mu-ni-in-tuku-a
s₄mu=S₆nn-S₁₀l-S₁₁n-S₁₂tuku-S₁₄₀-S₁₅ʾa=ʾa
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 Ishme-
Dagan, king of Sumer and Akkad, ....”

(468) Ur-Ninurta D 34 (ETCSL 2.5.6.4)
dur-dnin-urta-ke₄ uŋ₃ šar₂-re
urninurtak=e uŋ šar-ø=e
PN=ERG people numerous-TL=L₃.NH
us₂ zid ḥez₂-biz-ib-dab₅-be₂
us zid-ø=ø S₁ḥa=S₃b-S₁₀l-S₁₁b-S₁₂dab-S₁₄e
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.”

(469) Gudea Cyl. B 5:20 (ETCSL 2.1.7) (Lagash, 22nd c.)
gud i₃ udu i₃ e₂-e biz-dab₅
gud i udu i=ø e=e S₃b-S₁₀l-S₁₁n-S₁₂dab-S₁₄ø
“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 must produce only the morphemic segmentation and glossing (2nd
and 3rd line of the examples).

a) lu₂ inim-ma saŋ sa₁₀-a-še₃ mu-ne-ra-e₃
lu inim-ak saŋ sa-ʾa=ak=še₃ s₄mu=S₆nne=S₉a-S₁₂e-S₁₄ø
man word=GEN head buy-PT=GEN=TERM VEN-3.PL-DAT-ABL-leave-3.SG.S

b) ensi-ke₄ e₂ mu-du₃
enši=e e=ø s₄mu=S₁₁n-S₁₂du-S₁₄ø
ruler=ERG house VEN-3.SG.H.A.-build-3.SG.P

c) e₂-da lugal im-da-hul₂
e=da lugal=ø S₂₁-S₄m-S₃b-S₈a-S₁₂hul-S₁₄ø
house=COM owner=ABS FIN-VEN-3.SG.NH-COM-rejoice-3.SG.S
15.5 Explain the case-marking of the word $d$nin-hur-saŋ in the following example!
Which word is cross-referenced by the composite locative2 prefix, and why?

(470) E-ana-tum 1 obv. 4:24-26 (RIME 1.9.3.1) (Lagash, 25th c. BCE) (P222399)

$d$nin-hur-saŋ-ra, dub₃ zid-da-na,
ninhursaŋak=ra dub zid-a=ane=ʾa
DN=L2.H knee right- PT=3.SG.H.POSS=L2.NH
mu-ni-tuš
S₄mu-S₆nn-S₁₀l-S₁₁n-S₁₂tuš-S₁₃ø
“She (= Inana) has made him (= Eanatum) sit on the right knee of the goddess Ninhursaga.”

15.6 The first clause of example (471) below contains 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?

(471) 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-ku₅-ra₂,
ninki nam=ane=ø S₄m-S₅₇a-S₆nn=S₁₀l-S₁₁n-S₁₂kud-S₁₄ø-S₁₅ʾa=e
DN fate=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS VEN-3.SG.H-L3-1.SG.A-kud-3.SG.P-SUB=ERG
umma₃ ki-Ta giri₃-ba
umma₃ ak muš ki=ta=e giri=be=ʾa
GN=GEN snake earth=ABL=L3.NH foot=3.SG.NH.POSS=L2.NH
zu₂ ḫe₂-mi-du₃-du₃-e
zu=ø S₂ḫa-S₂₃b-S₄m-S₅₇b-S₁₀l-S₁₁b-S₁₂du-du-S₁₄e
tooth=ABS MOD-FIN-3.SG.NH-L2-3.SG.NH.L3-hold~PL-3.SG.A
“(If he violates this agreement), may the goddess Ninki, by whom I let him swear a promissory oath for me, have snakes from the ground bite Umma’s feet!”
LESSON 15

15.7 Transliterate the text of NG 205 obv. 1–15 (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 /ḫa/- and the other modal prefixes differ in respect of whether they may co-occur with the finite-marker prefix. The prefix /ḫa/- may be followed by a finite-marker, the other modal prefixes may not. Consequently, this textbook assumes that /ḫa/- occurs in S1, while all the other modal prefixes occupy S2 and are in complementary distribution with the finite-marker. 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. (474) 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. (472).

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, e.g., ex. (476) below; but the writing may not reflect this sound change, see ex. (475) below.

(472) BM 24108 rev. 2–3 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P145596)

a-na-aš-am₃, nu-u₃-na-šum₂
ana=še=am-ø S₁ nu-S₂₂n₃n-S₅₆a-S₁₁n-S₁₂šum-S₁₄ø
“Why did he not give it to him?”
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. (476) below.

(476) Gudea Statue E 9:9–12 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232278)

ki-gub-ba-be₂, lu₂ nu-zî-zî, 
ki=gub=be=ø lu=e S1nu-S2f-S12z-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 
sa₂-dug=be=ø lu=e S1nu-S2f-b-S12ni-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 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. (477) 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/-.
Constructions involving an “extra” verbal participant

(477) 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. (477) 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.
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. One could state that it is the verbal stem itself that is prefixed in imperative forms.

The imperative forms use the preterite stem but cross-reference the P with the FPP in S11. The 3rd ps. sg. non-human 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. (478) below, only the writing du₃-ma, but not du₃-ma-ab is expected in the 23rd c. BCE. See, however, ex. (479) below, in which the /b/ is clearly indicated by the orthography. The imperative is negated with the modal-prefix na(n)-, see ex. (503) below.

(478) CUSAS 17, 13 2:1 (RIME 1.14.add21.01) (unknown, cca. 23th c.) (P251599)

\[ e₂^{-تاح₁₀} du₃-ma \]
\[ e=تاح=∅ \]
\[ S₁du₄-m₇⁻₆₇⁻S₁₁b \]
\[ house=1SG.POSS=ABS \]
\[ build-VEN-DAT-3NHLP \]

“Build up my temple for me!”

Table 16.2 shows the correspondences between affirmative and negative forms:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EPISTEMIC</th>
<th>DEONTIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>/gorm/</th>
<th>/na(n)/</th>
<th>/bara/</th>
<th>/ga/-, imperative</th>
<th>/na(n)/</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/nuš/-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The imperative
Constructions involving an “extra” verbal participant

(479) NG 20 obv. 7 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P128442)
10 giŋ₄ kug-babbar-am₃ šum₂-ма-ab,
10 gig kug-babbar=ø=am-ø S₁šum-S₄m-S₇a-S₇b
10 unit silver=ABS=COP-3.SG.S give-VEN-DAT-3.SG.NH.P
“Give me ten shekels of silver!”

(480) Dumuzi’s Dream 19 (ETCSL 1.4.3)
nin₉-ŋu₁₀ tum₂-mu-un-ze₂-en
nin=ŋu=ø S₁tum-S₄mu-S₁₁n-S₁₄zen
sister=1.SG.POSS=ABS bring-VEN-3.SG.H.P-2.PL
“Bring (pl.) my sister!”

Singular S or A is not marked with any verbal pronominal affix; plural S or A is cross-referenced with the suffix -/(n)zen/ in S1₄, see ex. (480) above. 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. (481) and (482) below.

(481) TCS 1, 142 rev. 4 (Nippur, 21st c.) (P145683)
e₂-a-ne₂ gul-a
e=ane=ø S₁gul-S₂a
house=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS destroy-FIN
“Destroy his house!”

(482) NG 208 obv. 1:17 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P135750)
kišib-ŋu₁₀ zi-ra-ab
kišib=ŋu=ø 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 is in 1st ps. sg. or pl. verbal forms. 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 S1₁.²¹

²¹ For a rare exception that uses a present-future stem in a text from the first part of the 2nd millennium BCE, see ex. (50) above in Lesson, section 5.1.
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, see ex. (485) below. 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. (498) below.

(483) Gudea Cyl. A 3:14–15 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)
ŋissu-zu-še₃, ni₂ ga-ma-ši-ib₂-te
ŋissu=zu=še ni=ø s₂gā-s₄m-s₃ba-s₅ši-S₁₁b-S₁₂ten
shade=2.SG.POSS=TERM self=ABS MOD-VEN-MID-TERM-3.SG.NH,P-cool
“I will cool off in your shade!”

(484) NATN 571 obv. 12–rev. 1 (Nippur, 21st c.) (P121269)
2 ma-na kug-babbar-ราม₃ ga-la₂
2 mana kugbbar=ø=am-ø s₂gā-S₁₂la
2 unit silver=ABS=COP-3.SG.S MOD-weigh
“(He said to him:) I will pay two pounds of silver!”

(485) How grain came to Sumer 15 (ETCSL 1.7.6)
kur-še₃ ga-e-re₇-en-de₃-=en’
kur=še s₂gā-S₁₂ere-S₁₄enden
mountain=TERM MOD-go.PT.PL-1.PL
“Let us go to the mountain!”

(486) Shulgi D 219 (ETCSL 2.4.2.04)
nig₂ ki-en-gi-ra ba-a-gu-la
niŋ kengir=ʾa s₁⁵.ba-S₁₀e-S₁₂gul-S₁₄ ø-S₁₅ʾa=ø
thing homeland=L₂.NH MID-L₂-destroy-3.SG.S-SUB=ABS
kur-ra ga-am₃-mi-ib-gu-ul
kur=ʾa s₂gā-s₄m-s₅b-S₁₀d-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 /ha/- is used with the copula:
Constructions involving an “extra” verbal participant

The prefix /ḫa/-

The prefix /ḫa/-, 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 /ḫa/-, the prefix is followed by a finite-marker. The vowel of the prefix then contracts with the finite marker /i/-, the contracted form, /ḫē/-, is written as a rule with the grapheme HE₂. The prefix /ḫa/- may also assimilate to the vowel of a following syllable, see, exx. (490) and (497) below.

As an epistemic marker, /ḫa/- 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 /ḫa/- in its weak meaning is negated with the modal prefix /na(n)/-, see, exx. (489) below; in its strong meaning with the prefix /bara/-, see, e.g., ex. (502) below.

Clauses with a verbal form prefixed with /ḫa/- expressing epistemic possibility are often to be translated as conditionals, like in exx. (488) and (489) below. In ex. (489), 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.

(487) Lugal-zagesi 1 3:35–36 (RIME 1.14.20.1) (Uruk, 24th c.) (Q001379)

sipad saŋ-gu₄-ŋal₂ , da-ri₂ ḫe₂-me
sipad saŋguŋal=ø dari=še S1ḫa-S2i-S12me-S14en
shepherd foremost=ABS forever=TERM MOD-FIN-COP-1.SG.S
“May I be the foremost shepherd forever!”

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

diŋir ḫe₂-me-en
diŋir=ø S1ḫa-S2i-S12me-S14en
god=ABS MOD-FIN-COP-2.SG.S
“if you are a god, …”

(489) The Axe of Nergal 9–11 (ETCSL 5.7.3)

ḫe₂-sag₃-ge a₂-ne₂ na-an-kuš₂-u₃,
s₁ha-S₂i-S₁₂sag-S₁₄e a=ane=ø s₂nan-S₁₂kušu-S₁₄ed-S₁₄ø
MOD-FIN-hit-3.SG.A arm=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS MOD-be.tired-PF-3.SG.S
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 /ḫa/- expresses a realizable wish, a request, or an advice. Transitive action verbs prefixed with a deontic /ḫa/- use the present-future tense.

(490) FaoS 19, Gir23 obv. 7–rev. 1 (Lagash, 23rd c.) (P217056)


lugalka-e  ḫa-mu-na-šum₂-mu
PN=ERG  MOD-1.PL-DAT-give-3.SG.A

“May Lugalka hand it over to us!”

(491) TCS 1, 61 3–6 (Nippur, 21st c.) (P134662)


erragašir=ø  dumu nibru=ak=ø=am-ø
PN=ABS  child  GN=GEN=ABS=COP-3.SG.S

ur-saga-ga,  ḫa-mu-na-šum₂-mu
ursaga-ra  ḫa-mu-na-šum₂-mu
PN=DAT.H  MOD-1.PL-DAT-give-3.SG.A

“(Tell Ea-bani:) ‘He must hand over Erra-gashir, (who is) a citizen of Nippur, to Ursaga!’”

(492) Shulgi H Segment D 19 (ETCSL 2.4.2.08)


peoples=L3.NH  food  fine-TL=ABS  MOD-3.SG.NH-L3-3.SG.NH.P-eat-3.SG.A

a  dug₃  ḫa-bi₂-ib₂-gu₇-e
a  dug-ø=ø  ḫa-bi₂-ib₂-gu₇-e

“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, /ḫa/- can be contrasted with the prefix /nuš/- which expresses an unrealizable wish: in ex. (493) below, Inana mourns the dead king Ur-Namma, and she knows that her wish may not be fulfilled.
Constructions involving an “extra” verbal participant

(493) Ur-Namma A 213 (ETCSL 2.4.1.1)

sipad-ŋu₁₀ ḫi-li-a-ne₂ nu-uš-ma-an-ku₄-ku₄
sipad=ŋu=ø ḫili=ane=e S₂nuš-S₄ma-S₁₀ku₄-S₁₂ku₄S₁₃ed-S₁₄ø
shepherd=1.SG.POSS=ABS prime=3.SG.H.POSS=L3 MOD-VEN-DAT-L₁.SYN-enter~PF-PF-3.SG.S
ņe₂₆-e ba-ra-⸢ku₄-ku₄⸣-de₃-en
ņe=ø S₂bara-S₁₀in-S₁₂ku₄-S₁₃ed-S₁₄en
1.SG.PR=ABS MOD -L₁.SYN-enter~PF-PF-1.SG.S

“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 /ḫa/- is that intransitive and stative verbs always use the preterite tense in whatever function, epistemic or deontic, the prefix is used. Both ex. (494), an intransitive verb, and ex. (495), passive of a transitive, use the preterite form of verb, and they have deontic meaning.

(494) Gudea Statue C 4:1 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232276)

nam-til₃-la-ne₂ ḫe₂-sud
namtil=ane=ø S₁ḫa-S₂i-S₁₂sud-S₁₄ø
life=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS MOD-FIN-long-3.SG.S

“May his (= Gudea) life be long!”

(495) Gudea Statue B 9:6–7 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)

gu₄-gen₇, ud-ne-na ḫe₂-gaz
gu=gen ud=nēn=ʾa S₁ḫa-S₃i-S₁₂gaz-S₁₄ø
bull=EQU day=DEM=L₁ MOD-FIN-kill-3.SG.S

“May he be slaughtered like an ox 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. (496) and (497) 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.

(496) Letter from Kug-Nanna to the god Ninshubur Segment B 6 (ETCSL 3.3.39)

šag₄ ib₂-ba-zu ga-ab-ḫuŋ-e
šag ib⁻¹a=zu=ø S₂ga-S₁₁b-S₁₂ḫuŋ-S₁₄en²²
heart angry-PT-2.SG.POSS=ABS MOD-3.SG.NH,P-pacify-1.SG.A

²² See Attinger 1993: 292 ($§ 190C) for similar irregular forms attested starting from the Old Babylonian period.
Let me soothe your angry heart, so that your spirit will be assuaged.

Ask the holy mother Nanshe 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 modal prefix /bara/- is used as the negative counterpart of both deontic /ga/- and strong epistemic /ḫa/-.

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 /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/-.
Constructions involving an “extra” verbal participant

(499) E-ana-tum 1 obv. 20:2–21:1 (RIME1.9.3.1) (Lagash, 25th c.) (P222399)

eg₂ pa₅-be₂, šu-bala₂ ba-ra-ak-ke₄
eg pa=be=e šubala=ø₂₂bara₁⁻₁₃₁₂ak₁₄en
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”:

(500) TCTI 2, 3916 rev. 4–5 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P133112)

zi lugal diri-ga-še₃, ba-ra-a-su
zi lugal=ak dirigʾa=še S₂bara⁻S₁₁ʾ-S₁₂sug⁻S₁₄ø
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!”

(501) MVN 6, 1 obv. 4–5 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P217677)

ur-lum-ma-ra, lu₂ ba-ra-ba-du₃
urlummak=ra lu=ø S₂bara⁻S₅ba⁻S₆n⁻S₁₀(i>)ø-S₁₂du⁻S₁₄ø
“Definitely no one detained Ur-Lumma.”

One can assume that all three verbal forms express the same kind of modality in ex. (502) 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/-.

(502) Shulgi A 70–71 (ETCSL 2.4.2.01)

ni₂ ba-ra-ba-da-te su ba-ra-ba-da-zig₁
ni=ø S₂bara⁻S₅ba⁻S₆ʾ-S₈da⁻S₁₂ten⁻S₁₄ø su=ø S₂bara⁻S₅ba⁻S₆ʾ-S₈da⁻S₁₂-zig⁻S₁₄ø
“(I, the king, however,) could certainly not be scared, nor could I be terrified. I did rush forth like a fierce lion.”

The prefixe 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
as a rule with verbs in the present-future. The negative modal prefix /na(n)/- has two basic functions. Firstly, it is the negative counterpart of the imperative:

(503) The instructions of Shuruppak 154 (ETCSL 5.6.1)

[kar]-kid na-an-sa₁₀-sa₁₀-an
karkid=ø _s₂na₅₁₁nₛ₁₂-saₛ₁₄en
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 /ḫa/- when expressing deontic modality. One can assume that both verbal forms express the same kind of modality in ex. (504) below. The first verbal forms use the prefix /na(n)/-, while the second the prefix /ḫa/- in a deontic meaning. The co-occurrence of these forms reveal that /na(n)/- may be used as the negative counterpart of deontic /ḫa/-.

(504) Gudea Statue C 4:13-16 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232276)

ŋešgu-za gub-ba-na suhuš-be₂
guza gub-ʾa=ane=ak suhuš=be=ø
chair stand-PT-3.SG.H.POSS=GEN foundation=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS
na-an-gi-ne₂ numun-a-ne₂ ḫe₂-til
s₂nanₛ₁₂ginₛ₁₄e numun=ane=ø ḫaₛ₁₂iₛ₁₂tilₛ₁₄ø
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 /ši/-

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 /ši/- are difficult to determine. 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. (505) below.

(505) Gudea Statue B 6:77–7:4 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)

e₂ urs-gen₇ dim₂-ma, ensi₂ dili-e,
e ur=gen dim-ʾa=ø ensi dili=e
house DEM=EQU make-PT=ABS ruler single=ERG
"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 build it."

On 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 /ḫa/-. 

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 many 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. (506) use the negated form of an independent copula; and why do the other two examples use only the /nu/ particle without a copula?
(506) NG 32 obv. 3 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P110613)

arad  ur-di₃₄kuš-di₃₄ba-uz-ka  nu-u₃-me-en₃
arad  urkušbauk=ak=ø  S₁n₁-S₂i₄-S₁₂me-S₁₄en
slave  PN=GEN=ABS  NEG-FIN-COP-1.SG.S
“I am not a slave of Ur-Kuš-Bau.”

(507) 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=ø  lu=ak  nu
stele=GEN  name=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS  person=GEN.NEG
“The stele’s name is not that of man.”

(508) The Lament for Urim and Sumer A95 (ETCSL 2.2.3)

dam-ŋu₁₀  nu
dam=ŋu=ø  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!

(509) Gudea Statue B 4:10 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)

usan₃  la-ba-sag₃
usan=ø  S₁nu=S₁₂ba-S₁₂sag=ø
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!

(510) Gudea Statue B 1:17–19 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)

saz-dug₄-na,  e₂  din-njirsu-ka-ta,
sadug=ane’a  e  ninjirsuk=ak=ta
offering=3.SG.NH.POSS=L₂.NH  house  DN=GEN=ABL.
inim  ḫe₂-eb₂-gi₄
inim=ø  S₁ha-S₂i₃b-S₁₀(i>)ø-S₁₂gi-S₁₄ø
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  ḫe-na-zig₃
iri  nite=ane’a  šu=ø  S₁ha-S₂i₃S₆n₃-S₁₀n-S₁₂zig=ø
“May there be a revolt against him in his own city!”
Constructions involving an “extra” verbal participant

b) ṇarza-ṇa₂ mul an kug-ba
   ṇarza-ṇu=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=ø   s₂ga₄-mu₅-r₇a₈-s₁₀eₛ₁₂ de
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 ḫe₂-gaz
   gud=gen ud=nēn=’a  s₁ḥaₛ₂ǐ-s₁₂gazₛ₁₄ ø
ox=EQU day=DEM=L1 MOD-FIN-kill-3.SG.S
   “May he be slaughtered like an ox on the very day!”

d)  urim₅ki-e gil-sa-aš, ḫe₂-mi-ak
   urim=e gilsa=eš  s₁ḥaₛ₂ǐ-r₆mₛ₅bₛ₁₀iₛ₁₁nₛ₁₂akₛ₁₄ ø
   “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 ḫa-mu-da-gub
   inim=be=ʾa  s₁ḥaₛ₄mₛ₅ ’s₉daₛ₁₀nₛ₁₂gubₛ₁₄ ø
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 ḫe₂-ŋal₂ ḫa-mu-ra-ta-ŋen
   an=ta  ḫeŋal=ø  s₁ḥaₛ₄mₛ₅ ’s₉taₛ₁₂ŋenₛ₁₄ ø
sky=ABL abundance=ABS MOD-VEN-2.SG-DAT-ABL-go-3.SG.S
   “Abundance comes down to you from heaven.”

g)  niŋ₂  ki-en-gi-ra ba-a-gu-la
   niŋ kengir=’a  sₛ₅baₛ₁₀eₛ₁₂gulₛ₁₄ øₛ₁₅ ’a=ø
thing homeland=L2.NH MID-L2-destroy-3.SG.S-SUB=ABS

   kur-ra  ga-am₃-mi-ib-gu-ul
   kur=’a  s₂gaₛ₄mₛ₅bₛ₁₀iₛ₁₁bₛ₁₂gul
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 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 based on what you have
learnt in this lesson.
(511) Dumuzi's Dream 91 (ETCSL 1.4.3)
nin₉-ŋu₁₀ saŋ u₂-a ga-an-šub ki-ŋu₁₀ na-ab-pad₃-[de₃]
"My sister, I will duck down my head in the grass! Don’t reveal my whereabouts
to them!"

(512) Dumuzi’s Dream 144 (ETCSL 1.4.3)
gus₅-li-ŋu₁₀ saŋ u₂-a ḫe₂-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 Realexikon der Assyriologie (1987–
1990).

a) LEM 180 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P107192)

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<td>1. ḫa-bu₃-bu₃</td>
<td>1. ḫa-mu-na-ab-šum₂-mu</td>
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b) TCS 1, 269 (Umma, 21st c.) (P145756)

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<td>5. ḫa-na-ab-šum-mu</td>
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c) MVN 6, 429 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P114829)

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<td>1. na-mi-gur-re</td>
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<td>2. u₃-na-a-dug₄</td>
<td>2. a-ma-ru-kam</td>
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<td>3. 2(u) 2(аš) gu₂ gi-zi</td>
<td>3. a-ba šeš-ŋu₁₀-ге₂</td>
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<td>4. diŋir-sukkal-ra</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. ḫe₂-na-ab-šum₂-mu</td>
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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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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): ṣal₂, pad₃
b) {mi} (VEN-3NH-LOC2/3): gi₄, gur, tud
c) {ne} (LOC1–3): ṣal₂, tar
d) {i} (FIN): dim₂, tuš, gi₄, sig
3.2

a) arad₂ nin-a-na-ke₄
   arad nin=ane=ak=e
   servant lady=3.SG.H.POSS=GEN=ERG

b) iri-ne₂
   iri=ane=e
   city=3.SG.H.POSS=ERG

c) nin diŋir-re-e-ne
   nin diŋir=enē=ak=ø
   lady god=PL=GEN=ABS

d) lugal-ŋu₁₀
   lugal=ŋu=e
   king=1.SG.POSS=ERG

e) nam-ti₃ šeš-a-ne-ne
   namtil šeš=anenē=ak=ø
   life brother=3.PL.POSS=ABS

f) niŋ₂ šu-ŋa₂
   niŋ šu=ŋu=ak=ø
   thing hand=1.SG.POSS=GEN=ABS

g) arad₂-zu
   arad=zu=ø
   servant=2.SG.POSS=ABS

h) inim diŋir-re₂-ne
   inim diŋir=enē=ak=ø
   word god=PL=GEN=ABS

i) e₂ iri nam-lugal-ŋa₂-ka
   e iri namlugal=ŋu=ak=ak=ø
   house city kingship=1.SG.POSS=GEN=GEN=ABS

j) dumu ensi₂ lagaš₄⁻ka-ke₄
   dumu ensik lagaš=ak=ak=e
   child ruler GN=GEN=GEN=ERG

k) ama diŋir-re-ne-ke₄
   ama diŋir=enē=ak=e
   mother god=PL=GEN=ERG
l) 
lugal an-ub-da limmu₂-ba-ke₄
lugal anubda limmu=be=ak=e
king quarter 4=3.SG.NH.POSS=GEN=ERG

m) 
diŋir-ŋu₁₀-gen₇
diŋir=ŋu=gen
god=1.SG.POSS=EQU

n) 
šu maḫ-ne₂
šu maḫ-ø=ane=ø
hand mighty-TL=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS

o) 
mu-be₂
mu=be=ø
name=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS

p) 
dumu diŋir-ra-ne-ne-ne-ke₄-ne
dumu diŋir=anē=enē=ak=enē=e
child god=3.PL.POSS=PL=GEN=PL=ERG

q) 
e₂-ne-ne
e=enē=ø
house=3.PL.POSS=ABS

r) 
diŋir-re-ne
diŋir=enē=e
god=PL=ERG

s) 
bad₃ gal-be₂
bad gal-ø=be=ø
wall great=TL=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS

t) 
lugal-ne₂
lugal=ane=ra
king=3.SG.NH.POSS=DAT.H

3.3

a) 
p₁lugalazida p₁arad p₃[₃p₁, lugalkigal=p₅ak]=p₅ø
p₁PN₁ p₁slave p₃[₃p₁PN₂=p₅GEN]=p₅ABS
“Lugal-azida, the slave of Lugal-kigal”

b) 
p₁namlugal p₃[₃p₁, kiš=p₅ak]=p₅ø
p₁kingship p₃[₃p₁GN=p₅GEN]=p₅ABS
“the kingship of Kish”
c) \( p_1 \text{biluda} \quad p_3[p_1 \text{djinjir}=p_4 \text{enē}=p_5 \text{ak}]=p_5 \text{e} \)
   \( p_1 \text{rite} \quad p_3[p_1 \text{god}=p_4 \text{PL}=p_5 \text{GEN}]=p_5 \text{L3.NH} \)
   “the rites of the gods”

d) \( p_1 \text{djinjir} \quad p_2 \text{galgal-ø} \quad p_3[p_1 \text{lagaš}=p_5 \text{ak}]=p_4 \text{enē}=p_5 \text{e} \)
   \( p_1 \text{god} \quad p_2 \text{big}^{\text{PL-TL}} \quad p_3[p_1 \text{GN}=p_5 \text{GEN}]=p_4 \text{PL}=p_5 \text{ERG} \)
   “the great gods of Lagash”

e) \( p_1 \text{e}=p_3 \text{Ju}=p_5 \text{Ø} \)
   \( p_1 \text{e}=p_3 \text{1.SG.POSS}=p_5 \text{ABS} \)
   “my temple”

f) \( p_1 \text{namtil}=p_3 \text{ane}=p_5 \text{Ø} \)
   \( p_1 \text{life}=p_3 \text{3.SG.H.POSS}=p_5 \text{ABS} \)
   “his life”

g) \( p_1 \text{kisura} \quad p_3[p_1 \text{ninjirsuk}=p_5 \text{ak}]=p_5 \text{e} \)
   \( p_1 \text{border} \quad p_3[p_1 \text{DN}=p_5 \text{GEN}]=p_5 \text{L3.NH} \)
   “to Ningirsu’s border”

h) \( p_1 \text{en} \quad p_3[p_1 \text{aratta}=p_5 \text{ak}]=p_5 \text{e} \)
   \( p_1 \text{lord} \quad p_3[p_1 \text{GN}=p_5 \text{GEN}]=p_5 \text{ERG} \)
   “the lord of Aratta”

i) \( p_1 \text{zapag}=p_3 \text{zu}=p_5 \text{Ø} \)
   \( p_1 \text{cry}=p_3 \text{2.SG.POSS}=p_5 \text{ABS} \)
   “your cry”

j) \( p_1 \text{nu} \quad p_2 \text{girin-ø}=p_5 \text{’a} \)
   \( p_1 \text{bed} \quad p_2 \text{pure-TL}=p_5 \text{L2.NH} \)
   “onto the flowery bed”

k) \( p_1 \text{a} \quad p_2 \text{dug-ø}=p_5 \text{Ø} \)
   \( p_1 \text{water} \quad p_2 \text{sweet-TL}=p_5 \text{ABS} \)
   “sweet water”

l) \( p_1 \text{mesalim} \quad p_1 \text{lugal} \quad p_3 \text{kiš}=p_5 \text{ak}=p_5 \text{e} \)
   \( p_1 \text{PN} \quad p_1 \text{king} \quad p_3 \text{GN}=p_5 \text{GEN}=p_5 \text{ERG} \)
   “Mesalim, king of Kish”
### Solution Key to Selected Exercises

#### 3.4

a) 1. The doctor of his brothers  
   2. The doctors 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:  
   \[\text{P}_1\text{azu} \quad \text{P}_2\text{zid-ø} \quad \text{P}_3[\text{P}_1\text{lugal}]=\text{P}_4\text{enē}=\text{P}_5\phi\]

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:  
   \[\text{P}_1\text{geme} \quad \text{P}_2\text{libir-ø} \quad \text{P}_3[\text{P}_1\text{damgar}]=\text{P}_4\phi\]

#### 4.4

a)  
   \[\text{P}_1\text{dumu} \quad \text{P}_2\text{zid-ø} \quad \text{P}_3[\text{P}_1\text{lugal}]=\text{P}_4\text{enē}=\text{P}_5\phi\]
   \[\text{P}_1\text{child} \quad \text{P}_2\text{true-TL} \quad \text{P}_3[\text{P}_1\text{king}]=\text{P}_4\text{PL}=\text{P}_5\text{ABS}\]

b)  
   \[\text{P}_1\text{dumu} \quad \text{P}_2\text{zid-ø} \quad \text{P}_3[\text{P}_1\text{lugal}] \quad \text{P}_2\text{mah-ø}=\text{P}_5\phi\]
   \[\text{P}_1\text{child} \quad \text{P}_2\text{true-TL} \quad \text{P}_3[\text{P}_1\text{king}] \quad \text{P}_2\text{mighty-TL}=\text{P}_4\text{PL}=\text{P}_5\text{ABS}\]

c)  
   \[\text{P}_1\text{dumu} \quad \text{P}_2\text{zid-ø} \quad \text{P}_3[\text{P}_1\text{lugal}] \quad \text{P}_2\text{mah-ø}=\text{P}_5\phi\]
   \[\text{P}_1\text{child} \quad \text{P}_2\text{true-TL} \quad \text{P}_3[\text{P}_1\text{king}] \quad \text{P}_2\text{mighty}=\text{P}_4\text{PL}=\text{P}_5\text{ABS}\]

d)  
   \[\text{P}_1\text{dumu} \quad \text{P}_2\text{zid-ø} \quad \text{P}_3[\text{P}_1\text{lugal}] \quad \text{P}_2\text{mah-ø}=\text{P}_5\phi\]
   \[\text{P}_1\text{child} \quad \text{P}_2\text{true-TL} \quad \text{P}_3[\text{P}_1\text{king}] \quad \text{P}_2\text{mighty}=\text{P}_4\text{PL}=\text{P}_5\text{ABS}\]

e)  
   \[\text{P}_1\text{dumu} \quad \text{P}_2\text{zid-ø} \quad \text{P}_3[\text{P}_1\text{lugal}] \quad \text{P}_2\text{mah-ø}=\text{P}_5\phi\]
   \[\text{P}_1\text{child} \quad \text{P}_2\text{true-TL} \quad \text{P}_3[\text{P}_1\text{king}] \quad \text{P}_2\text{mighty}=\text{P}_4\text{PL}=\text{P}_5\text{ABS}\]

f)  
   \[\text{P}_1\text{dumu} \quad \text{P}_2\text{zid-ø} \quad \text{P}_3[\text{P}_1\text{lugal}] \quad \text{P}_2\text{mah-ø}=\text{P}_5\phi\]
   \[\text{P}_1\text{child} \quad \text{P}_2\text{true-TL} \quad \text{P}_3[\text{P}_1\text{king}] \quad \text{P}_2\text{mighty}=\text{P}_4\text{PL}=\text{P}_5\text{ABS}\]

g)  
   \[\text{P}_1\text{sipad} \quad \text{P}_3[\text{P}_1\text{anše}=\text{P}_3\text{ane}=\text{P}_5\phi]\]
   \[\text{P}_1\text{shepherd} \quad \text{P}_3[\text{P}_1\text{donkey}]=\text{P}_3\text{SG.H.POSS}=\text{P}_5\text{GEN}]=\text{P}_5\text{ABS}\]

h)  
   \[\text{P}_1\text{sipad} \quad \text{P}_3[\text{P}_1\text{anše}]=\text{P}_5\phi\]
   \[\text{P}_1\text{shepherd} \quad \text{P}_3[\text{P}_1\text{donkey}]=\text{P}_5\text{GEN}]=\text{P}_5\text{ABS}\]

i)  
   \[\text{P}_1\text{sipad} \quad \text{P}_3[\text{P}_1\text{anše}]=\text{P}_5\phi\]
   \[\text{P}_1\text{shepherd} \quad \text{P}_3[\text{P}_1\text{donkey}]=\text{P}_5\text{GEN}]=\text{P}_5\text{ABS}\]

j)  
   \[\text{P}_1\text{sipad} \quad \text{P}_3[\text{P}_1\text{anše}]=\text{P}_5\phi\]
   \[\text{P}_1\text{shepherd} \quad \text{P}_3[\text{P}_1\text{donkey}]=\text{P}_5\text{ABS}\]
SOLUTION KEY TO SELECTED EXERCISES

k) $p_1$ama $p_3[p_1$sipad $p_2[p_1$anše=$p_5$ak]=$p_3$ane=$p_5$ak]=$p_5$ø
$p_1$mother $p_3[p_1$shepherd $p_2[p_1$donkey=$p_5$GEN]=$p_3$3.SG.H.POSS=$p_5$GEN]=$p_5$ABS

l) $p_1$ama $p_3[p_1$sipad $p_2[p_1$anše=$p_5$ak] $p_2$zid-$ø=$p_3$ane=$p_5$ak]=$p_5$ø
$p_1$mother $p_3[p_1$shepherd $p_2[p_1$donkey=$p_5$GEN] $p_2$reliable-TL=$p_3$3.SG.H.POSS=$p_5$GEN]=$p_5$ABS

m) $p_1$ama $p_2$sag-$ʾa$ $p_3[p_1$sipad $p_2[p_1$anše=$p_5$ak] $p_2$zid-$ø=$p_3$ane=$p_5$ak]=$p_5$ø
$p_1$mother $p_2$kind-P I $p_3[p_1$shepherd $p_2[p_1$donkey=$p_5$GEN] $p_2$reliable-TL=$p_3$3.SG.H.POSS=$p_5$GEN]=$p_5$ABS

4.5

a) $p_1$dubsar $p_3[p_1$lugal=$p_5$ak]=$p_5$ø
$p_1$scribe $p_3[p_1$king=$p_5$GEN]=$p_5$ABS
$p_1$lugal=$p_5$ak $p_1$dubsar=$p_3$ane=$p_5$ø
$p_1$king=$p_5$GEN $p_1$scribe=$p_3$3.SG.H.POSS=$p_5$ABS

b) $p_1$dumu $p_3[p_1$dam=$p_3$ŋu=$p_5$ak]=$p_4$enē=$p_5$ø
$p_1$child $p_3[p_1$spouse=$p_3$1.S.G.POSS=$p_5$GEN]=$p_4$PL=$p_5$ABS
$p_1$dam=$p_3$ŋu=$p_5$ak $p_1$dumu=$p_3$ane=$p_4$enē=$p_5$ø
$p_1$spouse=$p_3$1.S.G.POSS=$p_5$GEN $p_1$child=$p_3$3.SG.H.POSS=$p_4$PL=$p_5$ABS

c) $p_1$arad $p_3[p_1$e $p_3[p_1$abba=$p_3$ŋu=$p_5$ak]=$p_5$ak]=$p_5$ø
$p_1$servant $p_3[p_1$house $p_3[p_1$father=$p_3$1.S.G.POSS=$p_5$GEN]=$p_5$GEN]=$p_5$ABS
$p_1$e $p_3[p_1$abba=$p_3$ŋu=$p_5$ak]=$p_5$ak $p_1$arad=$p_3$be=$p_5$ø
$p_1$house $p_3[p_1$father=$p_3$1.S.G.POSS=$p_5$GEN]=$p_5$GEN $p_1$servant=$p_3$3.SG.NH.POSS=$p_5$ABS

d) $p_1$arad $p_3[p_1$e $p_3[p_1$abba=$p_3$ŋu=$p_5$ak]=$p_5$ak]=$p_5$ø
$p_1$servant $p_3[p_1$house $p_3[p_1$father=$p_3$1.S.G.POSS=$p_5$GEN]=$p_5$GEN]=$p_5$ABS
$p_1$abba=$p_3$ŋu=$p_5$ak $p_1$arad $p_3[p_1$e=$p_3$ane=$p_5$ak]=$p_5$ø
$p_1$father=$p_3$1.S.G.POSS=$p_5$GEN $p_1$servant $p_3[p_1$house=$p_3$3.SG.H.POSS=$p_5$GEN]=$p_5$ABS

e) $p_1$kisal $p_3[p_1$lugal=$p_3$ŋu=$p_5$ak]=$p_5$ø
$p_1$courtyard $p_3[p_1$king=$p_3$1.S.G.POSS=$p_5$GEN]=$p_5$ABS
$p_1$lugal=$p_3$ŋu=$p_5$ak $p_1$kisal=$p_3$ane=$p_5$ø
$p_1$king=$p_3$1.S.G.POSS=$p_5$GEN $p_1$courtyard=$p_3$3.SG.H.POSS=$p_5$ABS

f) $p_1$lugal $p_3[p_1$kur-kur=$p_5$ak]=$p_5$ø
$p_1$king $p_3[p_1$land-PL=$p_5$GEN]=$p_5$ABS
$p_1$kur-kur=$p_5$ak $p_1$lugal=$p_3$be=$p_5$ø
$p_1$land-PL=$p_5$GEN $p_1$king=$p_3$3.SG.N.H.POSS=$p_5$ABS
The sentences b), e), i). Look for a noun phrase whose last case-marker is the genitive.

4.7

sipad udu siki-ka-ke₄-ne

4.8

sipad udu siki-ka-ke₄-ne
4.9 Some possible solutions:

a)  $p_1$lugal  $p_2$mah-ø=$p_4$enē=$p_5$e
   $p_1$king  $p_2$mighty-TL=$p_4$PL=$p_5$ERG

b)  $p_1$diŋir  $p_2$mah-ø  $p_3$[{$p_1$e=$p_3$nu=$p_5$ak}]=enē=$p_5$ak
   $p_1$god  $p_2$mighty-TL  $p_3$[{$p_1$temple=$p_3$1.SG.POSS=$p_5$GEN}]=PL=$p_5$GEN

c)  $p_1$ama  $p_3$[{$p_1$iri=$p_5$ak}]==$p_5$ø
   $p_1$mother  $p_3$[{$p_1$city=$p_5$GEN}]==$p_5$ABS

d)  $p_1$sipad  $p_2$[{$p_1$anše=$p_5$ak}]=nu=$p_5$ø
   $p_1$shepherd  $p_2$[{$p_1$donkey=$p_5$GEN}]=PL=$p_5$ABS

e) erroneous

f)  $p_1$e=$p_5$ak  $p_1$iri=$p_3$be=$p_5$ø
    $p_1$temple=$p_5$GEN  $p_1$city=$p_3$.SG.NH.POSS=$p_5$ABS

g)  $p_1$duμu=$p_4$enē=$p_5$ak  $p_1$lugal=$p_3$anēnē=$p_5$e
    $p_1$child=$p_4$PL=$p_5$GEN  $p_1$king=$p_3$.PL=$p_5$ERG

h)  $p_1$enlili=$p_5$ak  $p_1$lu$[p_3$šag=$p_3$anē=$p_5$ak}]==$p_5$ø
    $p_1$DN=$p_5$GEN  $p_1$man$[p_3$heart=$p_3$.PL.POSS=$p_5$GEN]==$p_5$ABS

5.3

a)  mu dumu-ne₂  3-am₃  ba-gub-ba-še₃
    mu $[dumu=ane=ø]$ PC$[3=ø]=am-ø  S$5$ba-S$12$gu₂b-S$14$ø-S$15$’a=ak=še

b)  a-ba-am₃  ṭe₂ma₂  bi₂-in-du₈
    aba=ø=am-ø  ma=e  S$5$b-S$10$i-S$11$n-S$12$du-S$14$ø

c)  za-gen₇  a-ba  an-ga-kalag
    za=gen  aba=ø  S$2$a-S$3$nga-S$12$kalag-S$14$ø
    2.SG.PR=EQU who=ABS FIN-COOR-strong=3.SG.S

a-ba  an-ga-an-da-sa₂
    aba=ø  S$2$a-S$3$nga-S$6$n-S$8$da-S$1₂$sa-S$14$ø
    who=ABS FIN-COOR-3.SG.H.COM-equal=3.SG.S

d)  amar-e  a-ba-am₃  ba-an-tum₂
    amar=ø  aba=ø=am-ø  S$5$ba-S$11$n-S$12$tum-S$14$ø
5.4

(a) 5 giŋ₄ kug-sig₁₇-am₃,
    5 giŋ kugsig=ø=am-ø
    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 or e₂-be₂
    e=e=ø e=be=ø
    house=DEM=ABS house=DEM=ABS

(d) eg₂-ba
    eg=be=ak
    canal=DEM=GEN

(e) šag₄ iri niz-te-ne-ne-ka,
    šag iri nite=anenē=ak=ʾa
    heart city self=3.PL.POSS=GEN=L1

(f) me-a
    me=ʾa
    wh=L1

(g) a-na-aš
    ana=še
    what=TERM

(h) kug-babbar na-me nu-mu-da-a-tuku
    kugbabbar name=ø nu-mu¹-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
    person=DEM=ABS
    lu=nē=ø
    who=ABS=COP-3.SG.S
SOLUTION KEY TO SELECTED EXERCISES

k) e₂ ama-na  ula-la-be₂
    e ama=ane=ak=ø  u₁-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=ʾa
    house 3-ORD=L1

6.3
a) S⁴VEN-S⁶IPP-S⁸COM-S¹²STEM-S¹⁴pronominal suffix (composite comitative)
b) S¹MOD-S²FIN-S⁵IPP-S⁷DAT-S¹¹FPP-S¹²STEM-S¹⁴pronominal suffix (composite dative)
c) S⁴VEN-S⁶IPP-S⁷DAT-S⁵⁹ABL-S¹²STEM-S¹⁴pronominal suffix (composite dative, simple ablative)
d) S²FIN-S⁶IPP-S⁸COM-S¹¹FPP-S¹²STEM-S¹⁴pronominal suffix (composite comitative)
e) S²FIN-S¹⁰L₁-S¹²STEM-S¹⁴pronominal suffix (simple locative1)
f) S⁵MID-S⁹TERM-S¹¹FPP-S¹²STEM-S¹⁴pronominal suffix (simple terminative)
g) S⁴VEN-S⁶IPP-S⁷DAT-S¹⁰L₁-S¹¹FPP-S¹²STEM-S¹⁴pronominal suffix (composite dative, simple locative1)
h) S²FIN-S⁶IPP-S⁷DAT-S¹²STEM-S¹⁴pronominal suffix (composite dative)
i) S¹MOD-S⁴VEN-S⁶IPP-S⁸COM-S¹¹FPP-S¹²STEM-S¹⁴pronominal suffix (composite comitative)
j) S⁴VEN-S¹⁰L₁-S¹¹FPP-S¹²STEM-S¹⁴pronominal suffix (simple locative1)
k) S⁴VEN-S⁶IPP-S⁹TERM-S¹¹FPP-S¹²STEM-S¹⁴pronominal suffix (composite terminative)

6.4
a) S²FIN-S⁴VEN-S³.SG.NH-S⁵DAT-S¹²give-S¹⁴3.SG.A
    “She will give it to it.”

b) S⁴VEN-S³.SG.H-S⁷DAT-S¹³.SG.NH.P-S¹¹speak.PF-S¹⁴3.SG.A
    “He says to him: ‘...’.”

c) S¹ANT-S⁴VEN-S³.SG.NH-S⁷DAT-S¹³.SG.NH.A-S¹²give-S¹⁴3.SG.P
    “After she had given to it, ...”

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d) S₂FIN-S₃.SG.NH-S₉ABL-S₁₁₃.SG.H.A-S₁₂STATE-S₁₄₃.SG.P
   “She supplied them from it.”

e) S₄VEN-S₆₃.SG.H-S₇DAT-S₁₀₁₃.SG.H.A-S₁₂STATE-S₁₄₃.SG.P
   “He built it in it for her.”

f) S₁ANTE-S₄VEN-S₆₃.SG.H-S₇DAT-S₈COM-S₁₀₁₃.SG.H.A-S₁₂STATE-S₁₄₂.SG.S
   “After you had entered into it with them.”

6.5
s₂na-S₁₁n-S₁₂STATE-S₁₄en
“Do not buy her!”

s₁ḫa-S₂i-S₁₂STATE-S₁₄Ø
“May it come to an end!”

s₁u-S₄mu-S₆₃.SG.NN-S₇a-S₈STATE-S₁₀n-S₁₂STATE-S₁₄en
“After you had entered to her into it with them, ....”

s₂a-S₅b-S₉STATE-S₁₁n-S₁₂STATE-S₁₄Ø-S₁₅’a
“From which he consumed it.”

s₁u-S₆₃.SG.NN-S₁₀l-S₁₁n-S₁₂STATE-S₁₄Ø
“After he had thrown it on him, ....”

s₂i-S₃nga-S₁₁n-S₁₂STATE-S₁₄Ø
“He also demolished it.”

s₂i-S₄nh₁-S₉SHI-S₁₁n-S₁₂STATE-S₁₄Ø
“He bought her from them (lit. ‘bartered for them’).”

s₄mu-S₆₃.SG.NN-S₇a-S₈STATE-S₁₂STATE-S₁₄øS
“They stepped forward to him with ....”

s₁u-S₁₃n-S₁₂STATE-S₁₄Ø
“After he left her, ....”

s₂nan-S₁₂kušu-S₁₃STATE-S₁₄Ø
“It cannot be tired.”

8.3
a) iriki-ba, dšu-dšuen, diŋir-bez-em
irī=be=ak šusuen=Ø diŋir=be=Ø=am=Ø
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=ø maškim=be=ø=am-ø
   PN=ABS commissioner=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS=COP-3.SG.S
   “Dadu was its commissioner.”

c) ḏnin-lil₂-la₂ ḫi-li šag₄-ga-na-me-en
   ninlil=ak hili šag=ane=ak=ø=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=ø ze=ø=me-en lugal=ø ze=ø=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) mər₃-ra-ga-ši-ir, dumu nibru⁴-kam,
   erragašir=ø dumu nibru=ak=ø=am-ø
   PN₁=ABS child GN=GEN=ABS=COP-3.SG.S
   ur-sag₉-ga, ḫa-mu-na-šum₂-mu
   ursga=ra ḫa-mu-nn-a-n-šum=e
   PN₂=DAT.H MOD-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=ø=me-en e=ø mu-ʾ-du-ø
   shepherd=ABS=COP-1.SG.S house=ABS VEN-1.SG.A-build-3.SG.P
   “I, the shepherd, have built the temple.”

g) ḏutu-am₃ an-šag₄-ge im-si
   utu=am anšag=e i-m-b-si-ø
   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) ı̄meš₃ zid-dam kurun₃ kug mu-un-il₂
   meš zid-ø=am kurun kug-ø=ø mu-n-il-ø
   “He bears holy fruits like a true mesh-tree.”

i) ab-ba-kal-la ur-meš₃-ra nę₂₆-e-me
   abbakala=ø urmeš=ra nę=ø=me-en
   PN₁=ABS PN₂=DAT.H 1.SG.PR=ABS=COP-1.SG.S
   ḫa-na-šum₂ ḫa-nn-a-¹-šum=ø
   MOD-3.SG.H-DAT-1.SG.A-give-3.SG.P
   “It is me who gave Abba-kala to Ur-mesh!”
8.4

a) ud=be\(^\prime\)a gudea=ø ensik lagaš=ak=ø=am-ø
day=DEM=L1 PN=ABS ruler GN=GEN=ABS=COP-3.SG.S

b) nin\(\bar{\text{i}}\)irsuk=ak ensik=ø lu šag=ane=ak=ø=am-ø
DN=GEN ruler=ABS person heart=3.SG.H.POSS=GEN=ABS=COP-3.SG.S

c) lugal=ø=me-en e gal-ø di\(\text{j}\)ir mah-ø=ŋu=enē=ak=ø
king=ABS=COP-1.SG.S house great-TL god mighty-TL=1.SG.POSS=PL=GEN=ABS
mu\(^{\prime}\)=du-ø
VEN-1.SG.A-build-3.SG.P

d) aba=ø=am-ø ze=ø-me-en
who=ABS=COP-3.SG.S 2.SG.PR=ABS=COP-2.SG.S

e) nin\(\bar{\text{i}}\)irsuk=ø di\(\text{j}\)ir mah-ø gudea ensik lagaš=ak=ak=ø=am-ø
DN=ABS god mighty-TL PN ruler GN=GEN=ABS=COP-3.SG.S

f) ensik lagaš=ak=ø ze=ø-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\(^{\prime}\)=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) dumu urim=ak=ø nu-i-nga-me-eš
child GN=GEN=ABS NEG-FIN-COOR=COP-3.PL.S

m) e=ane=ak ningirsuk=ø di\(\text{j}\)ir=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
SOLUTION KEY TO SELECTED EXERCISES

8.5

9.3

a) mu-ni-n-ak-ø

b) mu-r-a-n/b-mu-ø

c) i-nn-i-b-gi-gi-ø
FIN-3.SG,H-L2-3.SG,NH,P-return~PF-3.SG,A
or
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

e) m-a-b-šum-e
VEN-DAT-3.SG,NH,P-give-3.SG,A

f) ba-ni-b-gin-enē
MID-L1-3.SG,NH,P-confirm-3.PL,A
or
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
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

j) mu-nn-a-b-dim-e
VEN-3.SG,H-DAT-3.SG,NH,P-create-3.SG,A

k) sizkur=ø mu-nn-a-n-dug-ø
SOLUTION KEY TO SELECTED EXERCISES

10.5

a) kug ṃatumdug=ra mu-nn-a-ere-ē

b) umma=t’a kī=nu=t’a i-b-(i)ō-tuš-ō
   GN=L2.NH place=1.SG.POSS=L2.NH FIN-3.SG.NH-L2.SYN-sit-3.SG.S

c) ensik=be=enē=ō mu-n-ug-ō

d) gud=be=ō nu-mu-n-da-n-lah-ō

e) lugalkeš=da i-n-da-til-ō
   PN=COM FIN-3.SG.H-COM-live-3.SG.S

f) nagsu=še hazanum=ē mu-nn-a-n-tum-ō

g) inim=be=t’a ḫa-mu-ʾ-da-n-sug-eš
   word=DEM=L1 MOD-VEN-1.SG-COM-L1.SYN-stand.PL-3.PL.S

h) en ninjirsuk=ra mu-nn-a-da-gub-ō

10.7

mdnin-mug-an-dul₂, arad₂ mug-ge-[si], mUr-dnin-mug
ninmugandul arad mugesi=ak urninmugak
PN₁ servant PN₂= GEN PN₃

‘dumu’₁ mug-ge-si, ēš₃-maḥ-a e-se₁²-am₃
dumu mugesi=ak=ō ēšmaḥ=t’a s₁²-s₁₀n-s₁₂sₑ₄sₑₛ⁻s₁₄sₑₛ⁻s₁₅’=a=am-ō²³
child PN₂=GEN=ABS prison=L₁ FIN-L₁.SYN-live.PL=3.PL.S⁻SUB=ABS=COP-3.SG.S

nin-tur ama mug-ge-si-ke₄ ba-lahs-ḥe
nintur ama mugesi=ak=e s₃ba-s₁₂lah-s₁₄ₑ
PN₁ mother PN₂=GEN=ERG MID-bring.PL-3.SG.A

ur-dnin-tu sagi-maḥ, maškim-be₂
urninturak sagimah=ō maškim=be=ō=am-ō
PN₅ chief.cupbearer=ABS commissioner=3.SG.NH.POSS=ABS=COP-3.SG.S

²³ See Zólyomi 2014c: 154–169 (esp. ex. 349 on p. 157) for similar constructions, in which the
enclitic copula is attached to a subordinate clause.
SOLUTION KEY TO SELECTED EXERCISES

“It was (the case) that Ninmug-andul, the servant of Mugesi (and) Ur-Ninnuga, son of Mugesi, were detained (lit. ‘lived in a prison’). Nintur, the mother of Mugesi, will take them out. Ur-Nintura, the chief cupbearer was its (= the legal case’s) commissioner.24

11.3

a) enmerkar=ra ṇeššug=ø i-m-ba-n-a-šum-ø
   PN=DAT.H ear=ABS FIN-VEN-mid-3.SG.H-DAT-give-3.SG.S

b) šag iri=ane=ak=ʾa ḫa-ba-n-gaz-ø
   heart city=3.SG.H.POSS=GEN=L1 MOD-MID-L1.SYN-kill-3.SG.S

c) sašušgal=ane=ø u-ba-n-(i>)ø-šuš-ø

d) —

e) e=ø i-m-ba-r-a-du-ed-ø
   house=ABS FIN-VEN-MID-2.SG-DAT-build-PF-3.SG.S

f) e=ø i-m-ba-du-ø
   house FIN-VEN-MID-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.

24 Westenholz’s (2014: 131) commentary to this text is worth quoting: “I assume that Ninmug-andul and Ur-Nimmug had gone out on a binge, made some mischief, and were detained; and it took the venerable grandmother to take them out”.

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15.3

išmedagan lugal kengir kiuri=ak=e ud ninurta
PN king GN GN=GEN=ERG day DN
ursaŋ kalag=ane=ø maškim=še mu-n-tuku-S14š-S15ʾaʾa
hero strong=3.SG.H.POSS=ABS deputy=TERM VEN-3.SG.H.A-have-3.SG.P-SUB=L1
uŋ šar-ø=e
people numerous-TL=ERG
us zid-ø=ø ḫa-i-b-dab-e
path right-TL=ABS MOD-FIN-3.SG.NH.P-take-3.SG.A
gud i udu i=ø e=e i-b-dab-ø
ox fat sheep fat=ABS temple=ERG FIN-3.SG.NH.A-receive-3.SG.P

15.4

a) ninṯirsuk=e
DN=ERG
lu inim=ak saŋ saʾa=ak=še mu-nnē-a-ta-n-e-ø

b) ninṯirsuk=e ensik=ra e=ø mu-nn-i-n-du-ø

c) ninṯirsuk=e e=da lugal=ø S2i-m-b-da-n-ḫul-ø

d) ninṯirsuk=e e=e i-m-b-a-n-ŋen-ø

e) ninṯirsuk=e amarsuenak lugal=ra urbilum=ø mu-nn-i-n-ḫul-ø

f) ninṯirsuk=e ummaʾa kiʾnuʾa b-i-n-durun-ø

15.5

The example demonstrates the phenomenon called external possession. The word d₄nin-

hur-sag is in the human locative2. It is cross-referenced by a composite locative2 prefix
in the verbal prefix-chain. Ninhursag is the inalienable semantic possessor of the word
dub₃ “knee” in the clause. It is, however, not in P3 of the noun phrase whose head is
dub₃ “knee”. It is a separate constituent and occupies a sentence-initial position; P3 of
dub₃ “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 semantic possessor (d₄nin-hur-saŋ) and the inalienable possessum (dubs) are in the locative2 case. The composite locative2 prefix of the verbal form shows agreement with the human possessor, not with the possessum.

15.6
The dative prefix apparently precedes the 3rd ps. sg. IPP. The example may indicate that the pronominal use of the ventive developed progressively.

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 independent copula.

16.4
Before the syllable /ba/- the prefixed negative particle /nu/- changes to /la/-.

16.5
The modal prefix /ḫa/- 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 /ḫa/- 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=Ø šu=n-n=₃nin-₃₈n-₃₁₀n-₃₁₂zi-zi-₃₁₃ed-₃₁₄Ø
“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=Ø š₂bara-₃₄mu-₃₆n-₃₇ę₃₈e-₃₁₀e-₃₁₂de-₃₁₄en
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!”

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c) gud-gen₇, ud-ne-na na-an-gaz-e
   gud=gen ud=nēn=a S₂nan-S₁₂gaz-S₁₃ed-S₁₄ø
   ox=EQU day=DEM=L₁ MOD-kill-PF-3.SG.S
   “He should not be slaughtered like an ox on the very day!”

d) urim₅ki-e gil-sa-aš, ba-ra-mi-ak
   urim=e gilsa=eš S₂bara-S₄m-S₅b-S₁₀t-S₁₁n-S₁₂ak-S₁₄ø
   “He certainly did not donate (the drained swamp) to Urim for ever.”

e) inim-ba nam-mu-da-gub-be₂
   inim=be=ʾaS₂nan-S₄mu-S₆ʾ-S₈da-S₁₀n-S₁₂gub-S₁₃ed-S₁₄ø
   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 ḫe₂-ŋal₂ ba-ra-mu-ra-ta-jenis
   an=ta ḫeŋal=øS₂bara-S₄mu-S₆r-S₇a-S₉ta-S₁₂jenis-S₁₄ø
   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) niŋ₂ ki-en-gi-ra ba-a-gu-la
   niŋ kengir=a S₅ba-S₁₀e-S₁₂gul-S₁₄ø-S₁₅a=ø
   thing homeland=L₂.NH MID-L₂-destroy-3.SG.S-SUB=ABS
   kur-ra ba-ra-am-mi-ib-gu-ul-le-en
   kur=a S₂bara-S₄m-S₅b-S₁₀j-S₁₁b-S₁₂gul-S₁₄en
   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) ḫa-bu₃-bu₃, u₃-na-a-dug₄,
   ḫabubu=ra S₁u₃nn-S₅a-S₁₁e-S₁₂dug-S₁₄ø
   PN₁=DAT.H ANT-3.SG.H-DAT-2.SG.A-speak-3.SG.P
   1(ban₂) ziz₂, lu₂-diškur-ra, ḫa-mu-na-ab-šum₂-mu,
   1 ziz=ø luiškur=ra S₁ha-S₄mu-S₅n-S₅a-S₁₁b-S₁₂šum-S₁₄e
   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 S₂ga=S₅b=S₉ta=S₁₂tur
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) ur₃-dšara₂ u₃-na-a-dug₄, 1/2(diš) giŋ₄ kug-babbar
uršara=ra S₁u-S₆nn-S₇a-S₁₁e-S₁₂dug-S₁₄ø 1/2 giŋ kugbabbar=ø
PN=DAT.H ANT-3.SG.H-DAT-2.SG.A-speak-3.SG.P 1/2 unit silver=ABS

e₂-zid-ŋu₁₀, ḫa-na-ab-šum-mu
ezidŋu=ra S₁ḫa-S₂i-S₆nn-S₇a-S₁₁b-S₁₂šum-S₁₄e
PN₂=DAT.H MOD-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.NH.P-give-3.SG.A

“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-S₁₄ø 22 gu gizi=ø
PN₁=DAT.H ANT-3.SG.H-DAT-2.SG.A-speak-3.SG.P 22 unit reed=ABS
dinjir-sukkal-ra, ḫe₂-na-ab-šum₂-mu
dijirsukkal=ra S₁ḫa-S₂i-S₆nn-S₇a-S₁₁b-S₁₂šum-S₁₄e
PN₂=DAT.H MOD-3.SG.H-DAT-3.SG.NH.P-give-3.SG.A

“Please tell Lugal-gugal: ‘He should give 660 kilograms of fodder reed to Dingirsukkal! He should not bring this up again! It is urgent! Who is like my brother?’”

d) lu₂-dšara₂, u₃-na-a-dug₄,
lušarak=ra S₁u-S₆nn-S₇a-S₁₁e-S₁₂dug-S₁₄ø
PN₁=DAT.H ANT-3.SG.H-DAT-2.SG.A-speak-3.SG.P

“Please tell Uršarak: ‘He should give 660 kilograms of fodder reed to Lugal-gugal! He should not bring this up again! It is urgent! Who is like my brother?’”
“Please tell Lu-Shara: ‘No one should detain Ur-Lamma and Baza! It is you who should be their (lit. ‘his’) bailiff!’.”

“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!’”

“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!’”

“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!’”

“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!’”

“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!’”

“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!’”

“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!’”
“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!’”

| g | na-ne₂, u₃-na-a-dug₄, maš-gu-la-ra |
|   | nane=raS₁u-S₆nn-S₇a-S₁₁e-S₁₂dug-S₁₄ø mašgula=ra |
|    | PN₁=DAT.H ANT-3.SG.H-DAT-2.SG.A-speak-3.SG.P PN₂=DAT.H |
| 1(ge₂) še gur, ‘šum₂-mu¹-da, ḫe₂-na-dug₄ |
| 60 še gur=ø šum-ed=’a S₁ḥa-S₂l₁-S₆nn-S₇a-S₁₁’, S₁₂dug-S₁₄ø |
| 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 |
| ḫe₂-na-ab-šum₂-mu |
| S₁ḥa-S₂l₁-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=ø S₂nan-S₅b-S₁₁a-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 Mash-gula! Why did he not give it to him? He must give it to him! He should not bring up this issue again!”

| 16.9 |
| me-sag₂-e na-be₂-a, al-la-ŋu₁₀ |
| mesag=e S₂na-S₁₁b-S₁₂e-S₁₄e-S₁₅’a=ø allanu=ra |
| PN₁=ERG MOD-3.SG.NH.P-speak.PF-3.SG.A-SUB=ABS PN₂=DAT.H |
| u₃-na-dug₄, a-šag₄ 4(burs) gana₂ |
| S₁u-S₆nn-S₇a-S₁₁e-S₁₂dug-S₁₄ø ašag 4 gana=ø |
| ANT-3.SG.H-DAT-2.SG.A-speak-3.SG.P field 4 field=ABS |
| ḫa-ma-ab-šum₂-mu aradz-ŋu₁₀-ne |
| S₁ḥa-S₄m-S₇a-S₁₁b-S₁₂šum-S₁₄e arad=ŋu=enē=e |
| MOD-VEN-DAT-3.SG.NH.P-give-3.SG.A servant=1.SG.P.POSS=PL=ERG |

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25 Cf., e.g., BM 106482 (P200719) obv. 8.
"Please tell Allagu, this is what Mesag says: ‘He should give me a land with an area of 4 bur, so that my servants can plough it. I will lead its goat (i.e. the goat due because of renting the field) to him!’"

"Please tell Sheshsheshgu, this is what Ur-Utu says: ‘Agade is in control (of the land) (lit. “is the king”); he should not kill the people from Agade! He should send a messenger to Irgigi!’"

26 Probably the king of Agade himself.
This textbook provides an introduction to the grammar of Sumerian, one of the oldest documented languages in the world. It not only synthesizes the results of recent scholarship but introduces original insights on many important questions. The book is designed to appeal to readers of all backgrounds, including those with no prior background in Sumerian or cuneiform writing.

It is written for undergraduate students and structured for a semester long course: the order of the topics is determined by didactic considerations, with the focus on syntactic analysis and evidence. It explains the functioning of Sumerian grammar in 16 lessons, illustrated with more than 500 fully glossed examples. Each lesson ends with a series of tasks; a solution key to selected exercises can be found at the end of the volume. Above all, this is the first Sumerian textbook that introduces and utilizes the online assyriological resources available on the internet.

An Introduction to the Grammar of Sumerian has been written 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.