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Hittite

Syntax – Part 1: The noun phrase

Roadmap

- Marking of dependencies
- Agreement
- Possessive noun phrases
- Order within the NP

Marking of dependencies

Hittite is a **dependent marking** language:

| Constituent | Head | Dependent |
|---------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Noun phrase | noun | adjective |
| | | noun |
| Adpositional phrase | adposition | complement of adposition |
| Clause | predicative/verb | arguments |
| | auxiliary verb | lexical/main verb |
| Sentence | main-clause predicate | subordinate clause |

Marking of dependencies

- Noun phrase and adpositional phrase:

(1) *parkuin išnan tamain GEŠTIN-an*
pure.ACC.C dough(c).ACC another.ACC.C wine(c).ACC
'pure dough' 'a different wine'

(2) ^{URU}*Nešaš* LUGAL-*uš*
N.GEN king.NOM
'the king of Nesa'

(3) *kašti piran akkiš*
hunger.DAT for die.PST.3SG
's/he did of hunger'

Marking of dependencies

- Clause

(1) *apedašš=a tamain GEŠTIN-an pier*
DEM.DAT.PL=CONJ another.ACC wine.ACC give.PST.3PL
'And to them (they) gave a different wine.' (KBo 3.34 ii 3-4)

- Auxiliary verb: finite / lexical main verb: non-finite

(2) *pān ēšta*
go.PTCP.NOM.N be.PST.3SG
'(the population) had gone'

- Subordinate clauses → marked as such by subordinative conjunctions

Agreement

- Adjectives → gender, number and case of the head noun

| | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| <i>tamain</i> | GEŠTIN- <i>an</i> | <i>tarpalliuš</i> | <i>waššanduš</i> |
| another.ACC.C | wine(c).ACC | substitute(c).ACC.PL | wear.PTCP.ACC.C.PL |
| ‘a different wine’ | | ‘clothed substitutes’ | |

| | |
|---------------------|------------------|
| <i>araḫzenanteš</i> | <i>utnēanteš</i> |
| neighboring.ERG.PL | land(N).ERG.PL |
| ‘neighboring lands’ | |

Agreement

- The verb agrees in number and person with its subject

(1) MUNUS.LUGAL ^{URU}*Kaniš* 30 DUMU^{MEŠ} 1^{EN} MU-*anti* *ḫāšta*
queen K. 30 son(PL) 1 year.DAT bear.PST.3SG
'The queen of Kanes gave birth to 30 sons in one year.' (KBo 22.2 obv. 1)

(2) DUMU.NITA^{MEŠ} *appa* ^{URU}*Nēša* *iyanzi*
son(PL) back N.ALL go.PRS.3PL
'The sons go back to the city of Nesa.' (KBo 22.2 obv. 7)

Agreement mismatches - Gender

- Gender resolution:

^dIM=*wa* LÚ^{MEŠ} LÚKÚR KUR.KUR^{MEŠ} LÚKÚR *tuk=pat* ANA LUGAL
 stormgod=QUOT man(C.PL) enemy land(N.PL) enemy 2SG.DAT=FOC to king
 ŠAPAL GÌR^{MEŠ} *zikkezzi* *nu=war=uš* *arḫa* *dannaruš*
 under foot(PL) put.PLUR.PRS.3SG CONN=QUOT=3PL.ACC.C away empty.ACC.PL
 DUG.KAM^{Hl.A} *maḫḫan* *duwarniškeši*
 vessel(PL) as break.PLUR.PRS.2SG

‘The Stormgod puts the enemy men (com.) and the enemy lands (neut.) under your feet, O king, and you smash them (com.) like empty vessels.’ (KBo 15.52 v 14–17)

Agreement mismatches - Number

- Neuter plural subjects take singular verbs with few exceptions

^mĀskali=ma uddār arāiš

A.DAT=CONN word(N).NOM.PL rise.PST.3SG

‘Accusations arose against Askali.’ (KBo 3.34 ii 18)

Agreement mismatches - Number

maḥḥan=ma ke *ḥuitār* *šarazziyaz* ^É*kašgaštipaz* *KÁ.GAL-az*
when=CONN DEM.NOM.PL.N animal(N.).NOM.PL upper.ABL main_gate.ABL palace.ABL

katta ari

set_out.PRS.3SG

‘When these animals set out from the upper gate of the palace’ (KBo 10.24+ i 11-13)

- The verb *katta ar-* is understood as a compound verb (cf. Singer, 1984: 126); consequently, no separate gloss is given for *katta*.
- There are few exceptions to this rule; one is found in the same text (KBo 10.23 iii 9) where *ḥuitār* is the subject of *šameyanzi*, ‘they parade’. Elsewhere the same word normally occurs with singular verb forms, as in example (1).

Agreement mismatches - Case

- Attributive adjectives with nouns in the ergative:

(1) *araḥzenanteš* *utnēanteš* *ḥūmanteš*
neighboring.ERG.PL land(N).ERG.PL all.NOM.PL
'all neighboring lands' (KUB 24.3+ ii 49)

cf. copy

(2) *araḥzenēš* *utnēanteš* *ḥūmanteš*
neighboring.NOM.PL land(N).ERG.PL all.NOM.PL
'all neighboring lands' (KUB 24.4 rev. 7)

Possessive noun phrases

- Partial exception to dependent marking:

| | | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| <i>labarnaš</i> | LUGAL- <i>aš</i> | NINDA= <i>šan</i> | <i>adueni</i> |
| labarna.GEN | king.GEN | bread(c)=3SG.POSS.ACC.C | eat.PRS.1PL |
| <i>watar=šet=a</i> | | <i>akueni</i> | |
| water(N).ACC=3SG.POSS.ACC.N=CONJ | | drink.PRS.1PL | |

‘Let us eat the bread of the Labarna, the king, and let us drink his water!’ (KUB 36.110 rev. 5-6)

Possessive NPs - Diachrony

takku **LÚ.ULÙ^{LU}-aš** *ELLAM-aš* *KIR₁₄=šet* *kuiški* *waki*
if man.GEN free.GEN nose(N)=3SG.POSS.ACC.N INDF.NOM bite.PRS.3SG
LÚ.ULÙ^{LU}-an *ELLAM*
man.ACC free

'If someone bites the nose of a free man' (KBo 6.2 i 24, OS / KBo 6.3 i 33,NS)

Possessive NPs – Case attraction

nu=kan GAL-in arunan ^dKumarbiyaza É-irza [...] uwater
CONN=PTC big.ACC sea.ACC Kumarbi.ABL house.ABL bring.PST.3PL

‘They brought the big sea out of Kumarbi's house’ (KUB 43.65 i 16-19)

From possessive adjective to external possessor

- (1) *n=e=an* *kiššari=šmi* *dāi*
CONN=3PL.ACC.N=PTC hand.DAT.SG=3PL.POSS.DAT.SG put.PRS.3SG
'And he places them in their hand.' (KBo 17.1 i 20, OS)

- (2) ^{LÚ}KÚR^{MEŠ}=*mu=kan* ^{LÚ.MEŠ}*aršanatalluš* ^dIŠ^{TAR} GAŠAN=YA ŠU-*i* *daiš*
enemy(PL)=1SG.DAT=PTC envious.ACC.PL I. lady=my hand.DAT put.PST.3SG
'Istar my Lady put my enemies and those envious of me in my hand .' (KUB 1.1 i 58-59, NS)

Order within the NP

- Left branching:
- AN: (1) *parkuin išnan*
pure.ACC dough.ACC
'pure dough'
→ exception: postposed *ḫumant-*, *dapiant-* 'all', cf. *utnē ḫūman* 'the entire land'
- GN: (2) ^{URU}*Nešaš* LUGAL-*uš*
N.GEN king.NOM
'the king of Nesa'

Order within the NP

- Left branching:
- DN: (1) *kāš* *tuppianza*
DEM.NOM tablet(N).ERG
'this tablet'
- DGN: (2) *kāš* *tandukešnaš* DUMU-*aš*
DEM.NOM mortality.GEN son.NOM
'this mortal (lit. this child of mortality)' KUB 7.5 i 8

Discontinuous NPs

tuel=ma=an=kan *maḥḥan maniyaḥḥanteš* *IŠTU ZÍD.DA arḥa dayer*
2SG.GEN=CONN=3SG.ACC=PTC how agent.NOM.PL with flour away take.PST.3PL
'How your agents stole her away together with the flour.' (HKM 36 obv. 44–46)