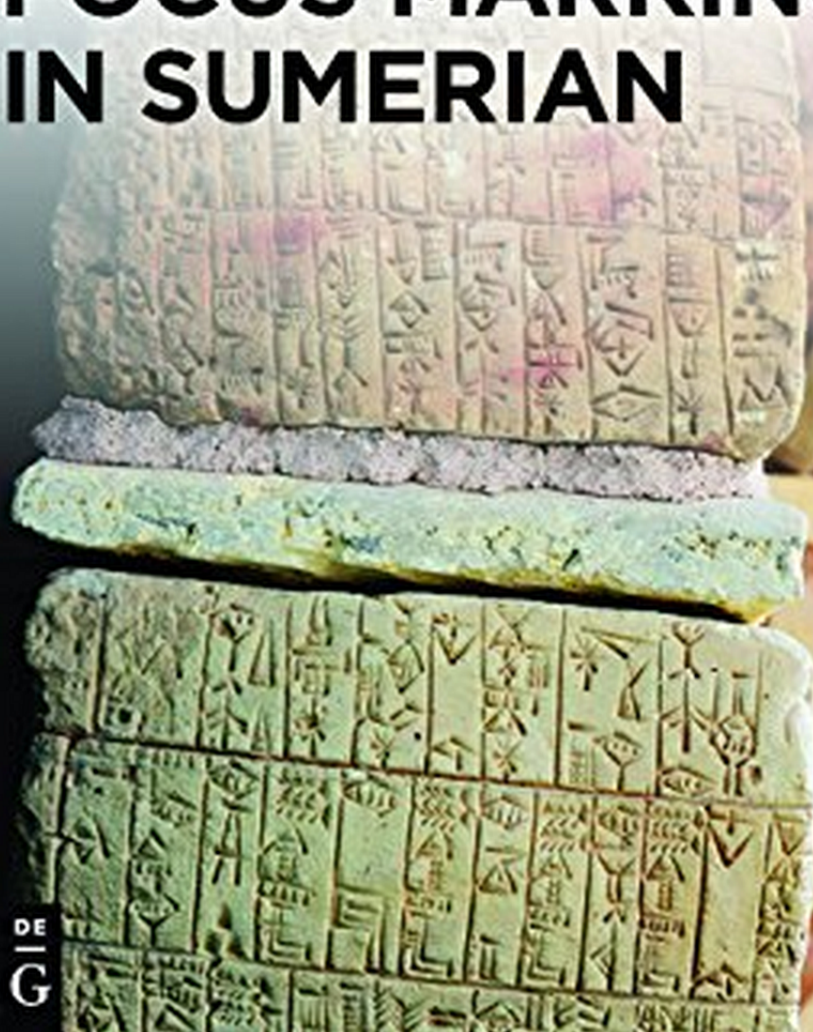


*Gábor Zólyomi*

# **COPULAR CLAUSES AND FOCUS MARKING IN SUMERIAN**



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Managing Editor: Katarzyna Grzegorek

Associate Editor: Anna Borowska

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Cover illustration: © Thinkstock, Clay bricks carrying the inscriptions of E-ana-tum, ruler of Lagash in the 24th c. BC.

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To Joachim Krecher, my teacher, colleague, and friend, who has taught me the value of disagreeing.



# Contents

## Introduction — 1

### 1 Sumerian in a Nutshell — 4

#### 1.1 Introduction — 4

#### 1.2 The Sumerian Nominal and Verbal Template — 7

### 2 Non-verbal Predicates in Sumerian — 17

#### 2.1 Introduction — 17

#### 2.2 Copular Clauses: the Most Important Characteristics — 17

#### 2.3 Copula Dropping: Non-verbal Predicates without a Copula — 22

### 3 A Typology of Sumerian Copular Clauses — 27

#### 3.1 Introduction — 27

#### 3.2 The Classification of Copular Clauses in Linguistics — 27

#### 3.3 Copular Clauses in Sumerian — 30

#### 3.4 The Typology of Copular Clauses in Practice — 52

#### 3.5 Summary and Conclusions — 54

### 4 Attributive Copular Biclausal Constructions — 56

#### 4.1 Introduction — 56

#### 4.2 Attributive CBCs and the Paratactic Relativization Strategy — 57

#### 4.3 Attributive CBCs and Appositions — 69

#### 4.4 Attributive CBCs in Which the CC Functions as Reason or Concessive Clause — 81

#### 4.5 Attributive CBCs Containing CCs with Left-dislocated Possessors — 88

#### 4.6 The Copula Functioning as Standard Marker — 94

### 5 Specificational Copular Biclausal Constructions — 101

#### 5.1 Introduction — 101

#### 5.2 The Origin of the Sumerian Cleft Construction — 102

#### 5.3 Copula or Focus Marker? — 112

### 6 Subordinate Clauses Followed by a Copula — 152

#### 6.1 Introduction — 152

#### 6.2 Thetic Sentences in Sumerian — 154

#### 6.3 Sentences with Polarity Focus — 169

#### 6.4 Summary and Conclusions — 181

### 7 Summary and Outlook — 182



**References — 186**

**Index of Quoted Texts — 193**

**Index of Subjects — 198**

## Abbreviations in the morphological glossings

~PL	reduplication expressing verbal plurality
~PF	reduplication expressing present-future tense
1SG	first person singular
2SG	second person singular
3NH	third person non-human
3PL	third person plural human
3SG	third person singular human
A	agent (subject of a transitive verb)
ABL	ablative case-marker or prefix
ABS	absolutive case-marker
ACC	accusative case-marker
ADV	adverbial
ANC	anchor
ANT	prefix of anteriority
APP	appositive
COM	comitative case-marker or prefix
COORD	coordinator prefix
COP	copula
CVN	compound verb nominal element
DAT	dative case-marker or prefix
DEM	demonstrative pronoun
DN	divine name
ERG	ergative case-marker
FIN	finite-marker prefix
GEN	genitive case-marker
GN	geographical name
H	human
L1	locative1 case-marker or prefix
L2	locative2 case-marker or prefix
L3	locative3 case-marker or prefix
L4	the archaic locative enclitic <i>-/ne/</i>
M	masculine
MID	middle prefix
MOD	modal prefix
NEG	negative prefix
NH	non-human
NOM	nominative
P	patient (object of a transitive verb)
PF	present-future, or the marker of the present-future
PL	plural

PR	pronoun
PN	personal name
POSS	possessive enclitic
PT	preterit, or the marker of the preterit
RDP	reduplication
S	subject (subject of an intransitive verb)
SUB	subordinator suffix
STM	standard marker
SYN	syncopated form of a verbal prefix
TL	tenseless
TERM	terminative case-marker or prefix
TN	temple name
VEN	ventive prefix

## Other abbreviations

AAICAB 1/2	Grégoire (1996-200)
Aleppo	Touzalin (1982)
AO	Museum siglum of the Louvre, Paris ( <i>Antiquités orientales</i> )
AOAT	<i>Alter Orient und Altest Testament</i> (series)
AoF	<i>Altorientalische Forschungen</i> (journal)
ARET	<i>Archivi reali di Ebla. Testi</i> (series)
Ashm.	Museum siglum of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford
ASJ	<i>Acta Sumerologica</i> (journal)
AuOr	<i>Aula Orientalis</i> (journal)
BM	Museum siglum of the British Museum, London
BPOA	<i>Biblioteca del Proximo Oriente Antiguo</i> (series)
CBS	Museum siglum of the University Museum, Philadelphia ( <i>Catalogue of the Babylonian Section</i> )
CC	copular clause
CDLI	Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative ( <a href="http://cdli.ucla.edu">http://cdli.ucla.edu</a> )
COP	copula
CT	<i>Cuneiform Texts from Babylonian Tablets in the British Museum</i> (series)
CTNMC	Jacobsen (1939)
CUSAS	<i>Cornell University Studies in Assyriology and Sumerology</i> (series)
Cyl.	<i>Cylinder</i>
DP	Allotte de la Fuÿe (1908-1920)
ETCSL	<i>Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature</i> ( <a href="http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk">http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk</a> )
ETCSRI	<i>Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Royal Inscriptions</i> ( <a href="http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/etcsri">http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/etcsri</a> )

FaoS	Freiburger altorientalische Studien (series)
Fs. Kienast	Selz (2003)
Fs. Owen	Kleinerman & Sasson (2010)
Fs. Pettinato	Waetzoldt (2004)
Fs. Sigrist	Michalowski (2008)
HS	Tablet siglum of the Hilprecht Collection, Jena
IP	interrogative pronoun
ISet 1	Çiğ & Kızılyay & Kramer (1969)
JNES	Journal of Near Eastern Studies (journal)
LEM	Michalowski (1993)
MSL	Materialien zum sumerischen Lexikon / Materials for the Sumerian Lexicon (series)
MVN	Materiali per il vocabolario neosumerico (series)
NATN	Owen (1982)
NBGT	Neo-Babylonian Grammatical Texts
NG	Falkeinstein (1956b)
Ni	Museum siglum of the Archaeological Museum, Istanbul (Nippur)
NRVN 1	Çiğ & Kızılyay (1965)
OB	Old Babylonian
Ontario 2	Sigrist (1995)
OSP 2	Westenholz (1987)
PC	predicate complement
RIME 1	Frayne (2007)
RIME 2	Frayne (1993)
RIME 3/1	Edzard (1997)
RIME 3/2	Frayne (1997)
RTC	Thureau-Dangin (1903)
SAT	Sumerian Archival Texts (series)
SNAT	Gomi & Sato (1990)
SRU	Edzard (1968)
TCS 1	Sollberger (1966)
TRU	Legrain (1912)
UET	Ur Excavations, Texts (series)
VS	Vorderasiatische Schriftdenkmäler der (Königlichen) Museen zu Berlin (series)
ZA	Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und Vorderasiatische Archäologie (journal)

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The study of copular clauses in Sumerian royal inscriptions, an essential corpus for any work on Sumerian grammar, was part of the Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Royals Inscriptions project. This project was funded by the Hungarian Scientific Research Fund (OTKA) between 2008.10.01–2013.06.30 (project no. K75104).

The last chapters of this work were finished while I was the holder of a senior fellowship at the Central European University's Institute of Advanced Studies between October 2012 and June 2013.

The reader will notice that my work takes issue with Bram Jagersma's recent description of Sumerian (2010) on a number of points. This happens because Jagersma's work is the only modern descriptive grammar of Sumerian that discusses the copular clauses of Sumerian in depth. I am most grateful to Bram as his grammar provides a solid basis from which any question of Sumerian grammar can now be discussed in a serious way, and it has also taken the burden off me to explain everything about copular clauses from scratch. Knowing him, I am sure that he will not mind my disagreements.

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# Introduction

This work has grown out of my interest in understanding certain Sumerian sentences in which the copula appeared to function as a focus marker (see Chapter 5 below). The phenomenon of a focus marker being cognate with a copula is cross-linguistically well-attested, and the source of such markers is frequently a cleft-like construction.<sup>1</sup> It seemed therefore an interesting question as to whether a similar development could also be reconstructed for Sumerian.

My initial research focused on two areas of Sumerian grammar, neither of which had previously been the subject of systematic investigation: the typology of copular clauses in terms of their semantic types and information structure (see now Chapter 3 below); and the function of certain copular clauses which occurred as parts of biclausal constructions (see Chapters 4 and 5 below).

After a while it became clear that my research on copular clauses may lead much further than anticipated: the analysis of copular clauses together with that of biclausal constructions can provide a key to understanding how identificational focus was marked in Sumerian.

Almost nothing was previously known about this area of Sumerian grammar.<sup>2</sup> One would look in vain for a section on information structure in Sumerian in the existing grammars of the language (e.g., Thomsen 1984; Edzard 2003). The only exception is Jagersma's grammar, which offers a short subsection on "The copula in highlighting constructions" (2010, pp. 712–714).<sup>3</sup> The ignorance of pragmatic functions in descriptions of Sumerian is not without good reason, though. In many languages the primary grammatical device for marking information structure is prosodic prominence, and in the case of Sumerian we have no access to this level of the language.

Copular clauses proved to be a good starting point to study the role information packaging plays in Sumerian grammar. Their morphology and structure are namely much simpler than the morphology and structure of clauses with a finite non-copular verb, and there exists a more transparent connection between their pragmatic characteristics and their structure. After the pragmatic function of the structural varieties of copular clauses became clear, everything fell into place, and it became possible to reconstruct the whole system of focus marking in Sumerian.

The main findings of this work can be summarized as follows. In Sumerian, identificational focus could be marked by two grammatical devices. The primary device

---

1 See, for example, Harris and Campbell (1995, pp. 151–162).

2 Christian Huber's paper (2000) is a ground-breaking study, but he did not involve copular clauses in his investigation, so many of his remarkable insights could not be proved based on the linguistic evidence he used.

3 Jagersma's description does not recognize that the copular clauses involved in these "highlighting" constructions are specificational copular clauses, which in turn resulted in conclusions different from the ones offered by this work.

was to place a constituent in immediate preverbal position. Identificational focus was thus initially associated with a particular structural position. This syntactic focus marking was almost certainly accompanied by prosodic prominence on the focal constituent as well. The other way of expressing identificational focus was different but was ultimately also based on the syntactic device: identificational focus could be expressed by a biclausal construction, a kind of cleft construction, in which the first clause was a specificational copular clause. In this copular clause the subject occupied a position immediately before the copula instead of its more usual clause initial position and functioned as an identificational focus. The biclausal construction with the initial specificational copular clause was the morphosyntactic context in which the copula underwent a semantic shift and was reinterpreted as a marker of identificational focus. The reinterpretation of the copula as a focus marker had the consequence that the original biclausal, cleft-like character of the construction blurred, and the inherently syntactic focus marking evolved into a morphological one. As a kind of morphological reinforcement, the copula functioning as a focus marker was also occasionally attached to constituents whose focality was already marked by their position.

The grammaticalization of the copula into a focus marker was probably influenced and facilitated by the other important language spoken in the area, Semitic Akkadian, in which identificational focus was marked morphologically by an enclitic.

The Sumerian development is another example of how resourceful languages are, or rather their speakers, in finding new ways to express old content. When the Sumerian language as a vernacular left the scene at the beginning of the 2nd millennium, it had a mixed system in which both syntactic and morphological focus marking played a role.

In addition to identificational focus, the copula was also involved in marking sentence focus and verum or polarity focus in Sumerian.

This work is structured as follows. Chapter 1 gives a short introduction to the grammar of Sumerian, describing its nominal and verbal template, and its case system. It also describes the text corpus used as linguistic evidence. The outline of Sumerian grammar is followed by a chapter on non-verbal predicates in Sumerian. It describes the most important characteristics of non-verbal predicates both with and without a copula.

Chapter 3 gives a typology of Sumerian copular clauses with an emphasis on their information structure. It starts with an overview of the linguistic literature on copular clauses, which introduces the semantic types of copular clauses that serve as the basis of the subsequent description of Sumerian copular clauses. The main part of the chapter describes the Sumerian copular clauses in terms of their semantic type and information structure.

Chapter 4 discusses the first of the two types of biclausal constructions that are treated in this work. The initial clause of the *attributive* copular biclausal constructions is a copular clause whose topic is coreferential with one of the participants in

the second clause of the construction. The analysis of these constructions will show that the attributive copular biclausal constructions are the manifestation of a rare relativization strategy labelled as paratactic by Kuteva and Comrie (2005). Chapter 4 concludes with a section on constructions in which the enclitic copula is shown to be grammaticalized into a standard marker of similitive constructions.

The subject matter of Chapter 5 is the *specificational* copular biclausal construction. In these constructions the copular clause is specificational, and it is its focal participant that is coreferential with one of the participants in the other clause of the construction. It will be argued that these constructions functioned as the source construction for the copula's grammaticalization into a focus marker. The chapter collects, discusses and evaluates the evidence relevant to the question as to whether the copula may be considered a "true" focus marker in these constructions.

The last chapter of the work, Chapter 6, investigates constructions in which the copula is attached to a subordinate clause. It will be argued that these constructions have two main functions. They may either function as "presentational",thetic sentences, or as an exponent of verum or polarity focus.



# 1 Sumerian in a Nutshell

## 1.1 Introduction

Sumerian was spoken in the southern part of ancient Mesopotamia, an area that roughly corresponds to today's Iraq. Sumerian is not genetically related to any known language. It is a mainly agglutinative language, characterized by ergativity with a split according to the semantic nature of the NP<sup>4</sup> and to the tense and modality of the finite verb. It has a system of grammatical gender based on the distinction between human and non-human referents. It is a verb final language,<sup>5</sup> and the order of words preceding the verb is determined by the information structure of the sentence. It is an extinct language. It can be studied today solely from written sources which were recorded using cuneiform writing, a mixed logographic-phonographic writing system.<sup>6</sup> The first Sumerian texts that use enough phonographic signs to facilitate linguistic analysis date from around the middle of the 3rd millennium BC.

Contact between Sumerian and dialects of East Semitic is thought to have begun at least as early as the turn of the 4th to the 3rd millennium BC. The presumably widespread bilingualism resulted in similarities between the two languages on the level of phonology, morphology, syntax, and lexicon. From about the 24th century onwards one of the dialects of East Semitic, Akkadian, became the dominant language in the area with the consequence of asymmetrical bilingualism in which knowledge of Akkadian may have proved practical in more and more contexts. Akkadian as a vernacular replaced Sumerian during the first part of the second millennium BC. After around 1600 BC Sumerian remained to be taught and learnt only for the purposes of the cultic, literary and scholarly tradition. Sumerian texts were continued to be written until the 1st c. AD.

The mixed logographic-phonographic writing system that was used for recording Sumerian does an inexact job of representing its phonology and morphology. It reflects the morphophonological structure of Sumerian to varying extents in different periods (syllable final consonants, for example, are not written consistently until the beginning of the 2nd mill. BC). The morphophonological structure of Sumerian words must therefore be reconstructed by the interpretation of the graphemic sequence that

---

4 See Woods (2000, pp. 316–319).

5 A different word order in which the verb is followed by one of the nominal constituents of the clause is attested only in literary texts; see, for example, ex. (106i) below.

6 For the writing system see Civil (1973), Krebernik and Nissen (1994) or Cooper (1996).

includes setting up correspondences between sequences of graphemes and sequences 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.

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

A particular feature of the writing system, often misunderstood by non-specialists, is the use of the sequence of C(onsonant)V(owel) and VC graphemes for writing a closed syllable /cvc/. As the number of phonographic signs with a CVC reading was limited, the ancient scribes started to use VC signs for writing the last consonant of closed syllables. So, for example, the syllable /men/ was written as **me-en**<sub>3</sub> or **me-en** from about the end of the 3rd millennium BC. The vowel of the first and the second sign was the same, and the writing stood not for /me'en/ but for the closed syllable /men/; the second sign was used only for its consonant, as there was no C sign in the writing system.

The linguistic evidence used in this work consists solely of ancient written documents. The number of Sumerian texts is estimated to be more than 100.000.<sup>7</sup> Unfortunately only a very small portion of this relatively vast corpus may be used for the purpose of linguistic description. Probably around 90 % of these texts are administrative documents whose main purpose was not to record linguistic utterances but a set of organized data. Accordingly, administrative documents are used in this work only sporadically.

The linguistic description of this work relies mainly on four broad categories of texts: literary texts, royal inscriptions, legal documents, and administrative letters. In the following short survey I will evaluate these categories from the point of view of their usefulness to grammatical research on information structure in Sumerian.

A substantial part of the linguistic evidence comes from literary texts dated to the first part of the 2nd millennium BC. These texts written on clay tablets were used to teach apprentice scribes to speak and write Sumerian in scribal schools and training workshops at an advanced stage of their curriculum (Tinney, 1999; Veldhuis, 1997).

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<sup>7</sup> For a recent estimation of the size of the cuneiform corpus, see Streck (2010). The Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative project (CDLI, <http://cdli.ucla.edu>) provides a comprehensive catalogue of all cuneiform texts; their catalogue numbers, the P-numbers, are also referred to in this work, in the heading of the examples.

Most of the literary texts we have are their discarded exercises. They typically have more than one manuscript. Literary texts are, as a rule, quoted after their edition by the Electronic Texts Corpus of Sumerian Literary Texts project (<http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk>); the heading of each literary example contains the catalogue number of the project. The text editions of ETCSL are based on composite texts which conceal a host of *ad hoc* decisions made by the editors. The composite texts are compiled from individual manuscripts, which exhibit a great deal of variation, especially at the morphological level.<sup>8</sup> Consequently, whenever an example from a literary text showed a variant that may have influenced my argument, I quoted the text of the individual manuscript instead of the composite text.

The most frequently quoted literary text in this work, however, is not the product of the scribal schools of the 2nd millennium BC. It was written earlier, during the 22nd century of the 3rd millennium BC. This text, referred to as the *Cylinders of Gudea*, was inscribed on two clay cylinders excavated in Lagash. It is the longest Sumerian literary composition (1363 lines long), known only in one copy. It relates how Gudea, ruler of the city state Lagash, rebuilds the temple of Ningirsu, the tutelary deity of Lagash. It comes from a period in which Sumerian is thought to have still been a spoken language in the Southern parts of Mesopotamia.

The literary texts use a formal, aesthetically and rhetorically stylised register far from the vernacular. This is, however, the most diverse category which contains both hymnic and narrative texts. Importantly for the research on information structure in Sumerian, these texts occasionally contain dialogues.

Another often cited group of texts is the corpus of so called royal inscriptions. These are votive or commemorative texts recording events (e.g. building or ritual activities, military conflicts, etc.) considered important by members of the political elite. They range from simple one sentence dedicatory inscriptions to complex accounts of military conflicts between neighboring city-states or states. They were as a rule written on objects that were meant to be placed in a sacred space (e.g. before a deity) or to be part of a religious building (bricks, vessels, mace-heads, clay cones, stelae, statues etc.).<sup>9</sup> The royal inscriptions also use a formal register. Longer narrative texts occasionally include quotations of direct speech.

Both literary texts and royal inscriptions assume the existence of a narrator whose point of view has an impact on the way the text is formulated, which in turn may prove useful for an investigation that aims to reconstruct the information structure of Sumerian sentences.

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<sup>8</sup> See Delnero (2012, pp. 1-4) on composite texts of Sumerian literary compositions from the 2nd millennium BC. For a selection of translations from the ETCSL corpus with introductions, see Black et al. (2004).

<sup>9</sup> Most of the Sumerian royal inscriptions are now available online in transliteration and in English and Hungarian translations, morphologically and grammatically analyzed on the website of the Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Royal Inscriptions project: <http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/etcsl>.

Legal texts are another important group of texts relied on in this work. The legal texts utilized here are typically trial records made for the central administration; they date to the end of the 3rd millennium BC. These texts often contain direct or indirect quotations from the litigants, which may reflect vernacular usage.<sup>10</sup>

The letters used here usually concern no personal matters, but issues arising from the management of the administration. Nevertheless, these texts are written communication for an addressee, consequently, their text is manipulated to express the sender’s intentions and points of view.

1.2 The Sumerian Nominal and Verbal Template<sup>11</sup>

The Sumerian noun phrase consists of five structural positions (see Table 1.1 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.<sup>12</sup>

Tab. 1.1: The Sumerian nominal template

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
Head	Modifier	Possessor	Plural-Marker	Case-Marker

This apparently simple structure may produce very complex constructions, primarily due to the range of structural units that may occur in P3. This position, that of the possessor, may be occupied by two kinds of elements: by an enclitic possessive pronoun (as in ex. [1]), or by a NP in the genitive case (as in ex. [2]).

(1) Amar-Suena 3 3 (RIME 3/2.1.3.3) (Nippur, 21st c.) (P226441)<sup>13</sup>

lugal-ni-ir

<sub>P1</sub>lugal=<sub>P3</sub>ani=<sub>P5</sub>ra  
<sub>P1</sub>king=<sub>P3</sub>POSS.3SG=<sub>P5</sub>DAT.H  
“for his master”

10 The most important work that edits and discusses this group of texts is still Falkenstein (1956a, 1956b).

11 This description is an updated and abridged version of Zólyomi (2007). Other recent grammatical descriptions of Sumerian are Edzard (2003), Michalowski (2004), Rubio (2007) and Jagersma (2010).

12 On clitics in Sumerian, see Zólyomi (1996, esp. pp. 34-36).

13 P-numbers refer to the catalogue-numbers of the Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative Project (<http://www.cdli.ucla.edu>).

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

dumu an-na-ra

<sub>P1</sub>dumu <sub>P3</sub>[<sub>P1</sub>an=<sub>P5</sub>ak]=<sub>P5</sub>ra

<sub>P1</sub>child <sub>P3</sub>[<sub>P1</sub>DN=<sub>P5</sub>GEN]=<sub>P5</sub>DAT.H

“for the child of the god An”

The NP 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 NP as in ex. (3):

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

nam-til<sub>3</sub> šeš-a-ne-ne

<sub>P1</sub>namtil <sub>P3</sub>[<sub>P1</sub>šeš=<sub>P3</sub>ani=<sub>P4</sub>ene=<sub>P5</sub>ak]=<sub>P5</sub>∅

life <sub>P3</sub>[<sub>P1</sub>brother=<sub>P3</sub>3SG.POSS=<sub>P4</sub>PL=<sub>P5</sub>GEN]=<sub>P5</sub>ABS

“the well-being of his brothers”

In exx. (4) and (5) below, the NP occupying P3 contains yet another NP in its P3. In ex. (5) the embedded NP is an appositional construction.

(4) Iri-kagina 1 3:18 (RIME1.9.9.1) (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222607)

sipad udu siki-ka-ke-ne

<sub>P1</sub>sipad <sub>P3</sub>[<sub>P1</sub>udu <sub>P3</sub>[<sub>P1</sub>siki=<sub>P5</sub>ak]=<sub>P5</sub>ak]=<sub>P4</sub>ene=<sub>P5</sub>e

<sub>P1</sub>shepherd <sub>P3</sub>[<sub>P1</sub>sheep <sub>P3</sub>[<sub>P1</sub>wool=<sub>P5</sub>GEN]=<sub>P5</sub>GEN]=<sub>P4</sub>PL=<sub>P5</sub>ERG

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

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

nam-til<sub>3</sub> dšul-gi diñir kalam-ma-na-ka-še<sub>3</sub>

<sub>P1</sub>namtil <sub>P3</sub>[<sub>P1</sub>dšulgir <sub>P1</sub>diñir <sub>P3</sub>[<sub>P1</sub>kalam=<sub>P3</sub>ani=<sub>P5</sub>ak]=<sub>P5</sub>ak]=<sub>P5</sub>še

<sub>P1</sub>life <sub>P3</sub>[<sub>P1</sub>RN <sub>P1</sub>god <sub>P3</sub>[<sub>P1</sub>land=<sub>P3</sub>3SG.POSS=<sub>P5</sub>GEN]=<sub>P5</sub>GEN]=<sub>P5</sub>TERM

“for the well-being of Shulgi, the protective god of his land”

As the elements in P4, P5, and the possessive pronoun in P3 are enclitics attaching to the final word-level constituent of the NP, all these elements cumulate at the right end of the phrase in simple and double genitive constructions like (3), (4) and (5).

The nominal slot P5 of the Sumerian noun phrase accommodates the case-markers. Ten enclitic case-markers can be distinguished in Sumerian: =/∅/, =/e/, =/(‘)a/<sup>14</sup>, =/ra/, =/ta/, =/da/, =/še/, =/ak/, =/gin/, and =/eš/. The case-markers are enclitics that function to distinguish cases. In Sumerian cases are distinguished, however, not

<sup>14</sup> The glottal stop at the beginning of this case-marker was gradually lost during the second half of the 3rd millennium BC; see Jagersma (2010, pp. 28-41).

solely by nominal case-markers, the verbal affixes also play an essential role in the identification of cases.<sup>15</sup> Three of the nominal case-markers (=/**ra**/, =/**(ʾ)**a/, and =/**e**/), and one of the verbal affixes (/i/ in S10) are used as markers of more than one case. On the basis of correspondences between nominal case-markers and verbal affixes, 12 cases can be distinguished in Sumerian:

**Tab. 1.2:** The Sumerian case-system

case	nominal case-marker		verbal affix
	human	non-human	
ergative	=/e/	=/e/	final pronominal prefix (S11) <sup>16</sup> and pronominal suffix (S14)
absolutive	=/ø/	=/ø/	final pronominal prefix (S11) and pronominal suffix (S14)
<b>dimensional cases</b>			
dative	=/ra/	=/e/	/a/ (S7)
comitative	=/da/	=/da/	/da/ (S8)
ablative	—	=/ta/	/ta/ (S9)
terminative	=/še/	=/še/	/ši/ (S9)
locative1	—	=/ʾ)a/	/ni/ (S10)
locative2	=/ra/	=/ʾ)a/	/i/ (S10)
locative3	=/ra/	=/e/	/i/ (S10)
<b>other cases</b>			
genitive	=/ak/	=/ak/	—
equative	=/gin/	=/gin/	—
adverbialive <sup>17</sup>	=/eš/	=/eš/	—

The twelve cases can be classified into three groups: i) ergative and absolutive, encoders of A(gent), S(ubject) and P(atient), the primary syntactic functions; ii) dimensional cases; iii) cases that relate to no corresponding verbal affixes.

<sup>15</sup> In the most widely used grammars of Sumerian (e.g., Thomsen [1984], Edzard [2003]) cases are identified according to their nominal case-markers. The system used in this work identifies the cases on the basis both of their nominal and verbal marking, which results in a considerably different system. For a description of the Sumerian cases in these terms, see Zólyomi (2010).

<sup>16</sup> Verbal structural positions will be referred to as “slots” (= S) throughout this work to distinguish them from the structural positions of the noun phrase, referred to as “positions” (= P).

<sup>17</sup> For this case, which is not recognized by older grammars, see Attinger (1993, p. 253), Jagersma (2010, pp. 189-191) and Meyer-Laurin (2012).

Table 1.3 below summarizes the local meanings of the Sumerian dimensional cases except for the dative:

**Tab. 1.3:** The local meanings of the dimensional cases of S7-10

		location “at”	destination “to”	source “from”
always with contact (S10)	interior		locative1	—
	exterior	horizontal (“above”)	locative2	—
		non-horizontal (“beside”)	locative3	—
neutral to contact (S7-9)	adjacent	comitative	terminative	ablative

Finite verbal forms in Sumerian are distinguished by the large number of affixes which can be attached to a verbal stem. The morphological segmentation and glossing of the Sumerian examples in this work are based on the assumption that the Sumerian finite verbal form exhibits a template morphology, and the affixes and the verbal stem can be arranged into fifteen structural positions or slots. Table 1.4 below summarizes the analysis that underlies the glossing of the examples.<sup>18</sup>

**Tab. 1.4:** Sumerian verbal template of finite verbs

Slot 1	Modal prefixes, prefix of anteriority
Slot 2	Finite-marker prefix
Slot 3	Coordinator prefix
Slot 4	Ventive (cislocative) prefix
Slot 5	Middle prefix or 3NH pronominal prefix (specifying the person, gender and number of the first in the sequence of dimensional prefixes)
Slot 6	Initial pronominal prefix (specifying the person, gender and number of the first in the sequence of dimensional prefixes)
Slot 7	Dimensional I: dative prefix
Slot 8	Dimensional II: comitative prefix
Slot 9	Dimensional III: ablative or terminative prefix
Slot 10	Dimensional IV: locative1, locative2, or locative3 prefix
Slot 11	Final pronominal prefix (referring to A or P, depending on the tense)
Slot 12	Stem
Slot 13	present-future marker ( <i>in intransitive verbs</i> )
Slot 14	pronominal suffix (referring to A, S, or P depending on the tense)
Slot 15	Subordinator

<sup>18</sup> Template morphology is understood as a system “in which inflectional affixes are apparently organized into a number of *position classes* such that the members of any given class are mutually exclusive but occupy the same sequential position, or *slot*, relative to members of other classes within a given word form” (Stump, 2001, p. 33).

Unlike in German or English, where among the participants of a verb 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.

The Agent, the Subject and the Patient are cross-referenced with pronominal affixes in S11 and S14. The syntactic function of their referents is indicated mainly by their position, so, e.g., in the present-future conjugation the pronominal suffix in S13 cross-references A and S, while the final pronominal prefix in S11 cross-references P.

The affixes of S5-10 are involved in the verbal cross-referencing of participants other than the Agent, Subject and Patient. These participants may be cross-referenced either by a composite or by a simple dimensional prefix.

A composite dimensional prefix is composed of i) a pronominal prefix and ii) a dimensional prefix. The former specifies the person, gender, and number, while the latter identifies the syntactic function of the prefix's referent. In ex. (6) below, the indirect object of the verb "to give" is in the dative case. In the verbal prefix-chain this participant is referred to 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).

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

en-me-er-kara<sub>2</sub>-ra    <sup>d</sup>en-ki-ke<sub>4</sub>    neštug<sub>2</sub>    mu-na-an-šum<sub>2</sub>  
 enmerkara=**ra**    enkik=e    neštug=∅    <sub>S4</sub>mu-<sub>S6</sub>**nn-**<sub>S7</sub>**a-**<sub>S11</sub>n-<sub>S12</sub>šum-<sub>S14</sub>∅  
 PN=**DAT.H**    DN=ERG    ear=ABS    VEN-**3SG-DAT-3SG.A-GIVE-3NH.P**

"The god Enki gave wisdom to Enmerkara."

A simple dimensional verbal prefix consists only of a dimensional prefix without a pronominal prefix. The occurrence of simple dimensional prefixes follows from the structure of the verbal prefix-chain: there is only one pronominal slot, S6, before the dimensional prefixes<sup>19</sup> (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 dimensional prefix following the dative prefix must occur as a simple dimensional prefix, i.e., without a pronominal prefix. In ex. (7) below, for example, the locative2 prefix in S10 (in bold) occurs as a simple prefix, because it is preceded by a composite dative prefix.

(7) MVN 8, 221 5 (Drehem, 21st c.) (P115611)

ma<sub>2</sub>-a    ba-na-a-ṇa<sub>2</sub>-ar  
 ma='a    <sub>S5</sub>ba-<sub>S6</sub>nn-<sub>S7</sub>a-<sub>S10</sub>**y-**<sub>S12</sub>ṇar-<sub>S14</sub>∅  
 boat=L2.NH    MID-**3SG-DAT-L2-PUT-3NH.S**

"(Various animals) were put on the boat for him."

<sup>19</sup> This rule, which has fundamental importance for the proper analysis of the verbal prefix-chain, has been explicitly formulated by Joachim Krecher (1985, p. 133, note 1) for the first time; see also Attinger (1993, p. 206, §134 R1).



In contrast, the locative2 prefix occurs as a composite dimensional prefix in ex. (8) below. It consists of an initial pronominal prefix /**nn**/ in S6 and a locative prefix /**i**/ in S10 (both in bold). In this example the locative2 prefix in S10 is the first dimensional prefix: it is not preceded by any other dimensional 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.

(8) En-metena 1 6:21-23 (RIME 1.9.5.1) (Lagash, 24th c.)

<sup>d</sup>nin-<sub>nir</sub><sub>2</sub>-su-ke<sub>4</sub>,      sa-šuš-gal-ni,      u<sub>3</sub>-ni-šuš  
 nin<sub>nir</sub>suk=e      sašušgal=ani=∅      s<sub>1</sub>u<sup>-</sup><sub>S6</sub>**nn**<sup>-</sup><sub>S10</sub>**i**<sup>-</sup><sub>S11</sub>n<sup>-</sup><sub>S12</sub>šuš<sup>-</sup><sub>S14</sub>∅  
 DN=ERG      battle.net=3SG.POSS=ABS      ANT-**3SG-L2**-3SG.A-COVER-3NH.P  
 “After Ningirsu cast on him his great battle-net, ....”

It follows from the above description that the dative prefix always occurs as a composite prefix, as its slot (S7) is the nearest to the slot of the initial pronominal prefix (S6). Other dimensional prefixes may have either a composite or simple form. Simple dimensional prefixes always refer to a 3rd ps. non-human participant.<sup>20</sup>

The pronominal prefix of a composite dimensional prefix is as a rule a morpheme in S6. There exist, however, two exceptions to this rule: i) 3rd ps. non-human pronouns are expressed by an allomorph of the middle prefix in S5, as in exx. (9) and (12) below;<sup>21</sup> ii) with some of the cases expressing motion towards an entity (dative, locative2), the 1st ps. sg. pronoun is expressed by an allomorph of the ventive (cislocative) prefix in S4.

(9) Gudea Statue B 4:7-9 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P232275)

e<sub>2</sub>      <sup>d</sup>nin-<sub>nir</sub><sub>2</sub>-su-ka,      eridug<sup>ki</sup>-gin<sub>7</sub>,  
 e      nin<sub>nir</sub>suk=ak=∅      eridug=gin  
 house      DN=GEN=ABS      GN=EQU  
 ki      sikil-la      b<sub>2</sub>-du<sub>3</sub>  
 ki      sikil='a      s<sub>5</sub>b<sup>-</sup><sub>S10</sub>i<sup>-</sup><sub>S11</sub>n<sup>-</sup><sub>S12</sub>du<sup>-</sup><sub>S14</sub>∅  
 place      pure=L2.NH      3NH-L2-3SG.A-build-3NH.P  
 “He built the temple of Ningirsu in a place as pure as the city of Eridug.”

<sup>20</sup> This statement was also part of Krecher's original observation about the structure of the verbal prefix-chain.

<sup>21</sup> This morpheme will be glossed as 3NH and not as MID when it functions as a 3rd person non-human pronoun.

In ex. (10) below, the ventive prefix in S4 precedes the dative prefix in S6, and the two morphemes form a composite dimensional prefix with a 1st ps. sg. referent; see also ex. (18) below.

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

gu-ti-um<sup>ki</sup>      <sup>d</sup>en-lil<sub>2</sub>-le      ma-an-šum<sub>2</sub>  
 gutium=∅      enlil=e      <sub>S4</sub>m-<sub>S7</sub>a-<sub>S11</sub>n-<sub>S12</sub>šum-<sub>S14</sub>∅  
 GN=ABS      DN=ERG      VEN-DAT-3SG.A-give-3NH.P  
 “The god Enlil has given Gutium to me.”

In ex. (11) below, the ventive prefix in S4 precedes the locative2 prefix in S10, and the two morphemes form a composite dimensional prefix with a 1st ps. sg. referent.<sup>22</sup>

(11) Lugal-zage-si 1 3:32-33 (Nippur, 23th c.)

nam      sag<sub>9</sub>-ga,      mu-tar-re-eš-a  
 nam      sag-’a      <sub>S4</sub>mu-<sub>S10</sub>y-<sub>S11</sub>n-<sub>S12</sub>tar-<sub>S14</sub>eš-<sub>S15</sub>a=’a  
 fate      good-PT      VEN-L2-3SG.A-CUT-3PL-SUB-L1  
 “(May they not alter) the good fate that they have determined for me.”

The locative1 prefix /ni/ of S10 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. If S11 contains no morpheme and consequently the locative1 prefix forms an open, unstressed syllable, then the vowel of /ni/ becomes syncopated, and the prefix is reduced to /n/; see, for example, ex. (31) and (196) below.

The pronominal affixes of S11 and S14, and the composite and simple dimensional prefixes are not agreement markers, as they may occur either alone or may be accompanied by a coreferential noun phrase in the clause. Syntactically they must be considered anaphoric pronouns.<sup>23</sup> They may also exceptionally occur with free pronouns, but only to express a contrast.

In the indicative mood, Sumerian finite verbal forms distinguish two verbal tenses: present-future and preterit. Sumerian has a relative tense system: the verbal form called the present-future here denotes actions that are not anterior, but simultaneous or posterior, relative to a given reference point. The verbal form called the preterit denotes actions that are anterior, relative to a given reference point.<sup>24</sup> The opposition between the present-future and the preterit is neutralized in verbal forms

<sup>22</sup> See Mithun (1996) for the pronominal use of morphemes with a cislocative meaning in other languages.

<sup>23</sup> See Corbett (2003, pp. 164-192) or (2006, pp. 99-112) for a summary of the discussion on verbal prefixes which may occur either alone or may be accompanied by a coreferential noun phrase.

<sup>24</sup> See Streck (1998).

denoting states, as verbs used in a stative meaning always use the preterit tense. The terms present-future and preterit 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 by a combination of i) with one of the following grammatical devices: ii) the form of the verbal stem in S12, and iii) the suffix *-ed/*, a marker of present-future, in S13.<sup>25</sup>

In exx. (10) and (12) the same verb **šum** “to give” occurs in the preterit and present-future, respectively. In (10) the Agent is expressed with a pronominal prefix in S11, while in (12) it is expressed by a pronominal suffix in S14. Both the preterit and the present-future verbal forms use the same simple stem **šum**.

(12) Gudea Statue B 8:21-23 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P232275)

gu <sub>3</sub> -de <sub>2</sub> -a,	alan-e,	inim	im-ma-šum <sub>2</sub> -mu
gudea=e	alan=e	inim=∅	<sub>S2</sub> i- <sub>S4</sub> m- <sub>S5</sub> b- <sub>S6</sub> a- <sub>S12</sub> šum- <sub>S14</sub> e
RN=ERG	statue=DAT.NH	word=ABS	FIN-VEN-3NH-DAT-give-3SG.A

“Gudea entrusted the statue with the (following) message:”

Exx. (13)-(15) use the same verb **zig** “to rise, to raise”. Exx. (13) and (14) contain transitive verbal forms, which differ both in their agreement pattern (in the former the Agent 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 **zig**, and the latter the partly reduplicated stem **zizi**). In ex. (14) both the agreement pattern and the use of the partly reduplicated stem signal the present-future tense.

(13) Lugal-zage-si 1 2:46-3:2 (Nippur, 23rd c.)

ki-an <sup>ki</sup> -ke <sub>4</sub> ,	gu <sub>2</sub>	an-še <sub>3</sub> ,	mu-dab <sub>6</sub> - <sup>r</sup> zig <sub>3</sub> <sup>1</sup>
kianak=e	gu=∅	an=še	<sub>S4</sub> mu- <sub>S6</sub> nn- <sub>S8</sub> da- <sub>S11</sub> b- <sub>S12</sub> zig- <sub>S14</sub> ∅
GN=ERG	neck=ABS	sky=TERM	VEN-3SG-COM-3NH.A-rise-3NH.P

“The city of Kiana flourished (lit. raised the neck high) under his rule”.

(14) Gudea Cyl. A 11:13 (Lagash, 21st c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232300)

eg <sub>2</sub>	pa <sub>4</sub> -e	gu <sub>2</sub> -bi	ma-ra-ab-zi-zi
eg	pa=e	gu=bi=∅	<sub>S4</sub> mu- <sub>S6</sub> r- <sub>S7</sub> a- <sub>S11</sub> b- <sub>S12</sub> zizi- <sub>S14</sub> e
levee	ditch=ERG	neck=3NH.POSS=ABS	VEN-2SG-DAT-3NH.P-rise~PF-3NH.A

“The levees and ditches will be full to the brim for you (lit. will raise their neck for you).”

<sup>25</sup> See Zólyomi (2007, pp. 25-28) for more details.

Ex. (15) contains an intransitive, passive verbal form in the present-future. Its tense is marked both by its agreement pattern (the Subject is expressed with a pronominal suffix in S14) and by the presence of the /**ed**/ suffix in S13.

(15) Nam-mahni 7 12 (Lagas 21st c.)

lugal- $\eta u_{10}$                       ba-zig<sub>3</sub>-ge  
 lugal= $\eta u$ = $\emptyset$                       <sub>S5</sub>ba-<sub>S12</sub>zig-<sub>S13</sub>ed-<sub>S14</sub> $\emptyset$   
 king=1SG.POSS=ABS      MID-rise-PF-3SG.S  
 “My master will be raised.”

Exx. (16), which is a finite relative clause, and (17) contain the verb “to speak” in the preterit and present-future, respectively. They differ both in their agreement pattern (in the former the Agent 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. (17) both the agreement pattern and the use of the suppletive stem signals the present-future tense.

(16) Iri-kagina 1 8:10-12 (RIME1.9.9.1) (Lagash, 24th c.)

inim              lugal-ni,                      <sup>d</sup>nin- $\eta ir_2$ -su-ke<sub>4</sub>  
<sub>P1</sub>[inim]      <sub>P2</sub>[lugal=ani              nin $\eta$ irsuk=e  
<sub>P1</sub>[word]      <sub>P2</sub>[king=3SG.POSS      DN=ERG  
 e-na-dug<sub>4</sub>-ga  
<sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S6</sub>nn-<sub>S7</sub>a-<sub>S11</sub>n-<sub>S12</sub>dug-<sub>S14</sub> $\emptyset$ -<sub>S15</sub>'a]-<sub>P5</sub> $\emptyset$   
 FIN-3SG-DAT-3SG.A-speak-3NH.P-SUB]=<sub>P5</sub>ABS  
 “the commands, Ningirsu, his master, gave him, ...”

(17) Nam-mahni 6 2:6 (RIME 3/1.1.12.6) (Lagash, 21st c.) (P234696)

sizkur- $\eta u_{10}$                       he<sub>2</sub>-na-be<sub>2</sub>  
 sizkur= $\eta u$ = $\emptyset$                       <sub>S1</sub>ha-<sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S6</sub>nn-<sub>S7</sub>a-<sub>S11</sub>b-<sub>S12</sub>e-<sub>S14</sub>e  
 pray=1SG.POSS=ABS      MOD-FIN-3SG-DAT-3NH.P-speak.PF-3NH.A  
 “May it (= this statue) pray to her on my behalf (lit. tell my pray)!”

In the indicative mood finite verbs are negated with the prefix /**nu**/- in S1. Modality of the verbal form is marked with modal prefixes whose position is also S1. Some of the modal prefixes, including the most frequent, /ha/-, may express both epistemic and deontic modality; their meaning is partly a function of verbal form’s tense. Their use is summarized in Table 1.5 below (the signs + and – stand for positive and negative modality respectively).

Tab. 1.5: Sumerian modal prefixes

epistemic			deontic		
+		–	+		–
weak		strong	weak		strong
/ha/-	/na(n)/-	/bara/-	/ga/-, /ha/-	/na(n)/-	/bara/-
/nuš/-					
/na/-					
/ša/-					

In the imperative form of the verbs, the verbal stem occurs in S1 instead of in its usual position, S12, as in ex. (18) below, with the consequence that all verbal prefixes are positioned after a preterit stem in imperative verbal forms; see also exx. (205) and (289) below.

(18) CUSAS 17, 13 2:1 (? , cca. 23th c.) (P251599)

e<sub>2</sub>-ηu<sub>10</sub>du<sub>3</sub>-ma

e=ηu=∅<sub>S1</sub>du<sub>S4</sub>-m<sub>S7</sub>-a<sub>S11</sub>b

house=1SG.POSS=ABSbuild-VEN-DAT-3NH.P

“Build up my temple for me!”

The morphology and function of non-finite verbal forms will be discussed in detail in section 4.2 below.

## 2 Non-verbal Predicates in Sumerian

### 2.1 Introduction

In Sumerian there exist two kinds of non-verbal predicates. In the more common type, the predicate contains a verbal copula. Non-verbal predicates of this type will be referred to as copular clauses throughout this work. The next section gives a descriptive overview of the copular clauses.

If the subject 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 type of non-verbal predicate will be discussed in the last section of this chapter.

### 2.2 Copular Clauses: the Most Important Characteristics

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

The Sumerian COP is formed from the verb **me** “to be”. It has two forms: the independent and the enclitic COP. The independent COP is a finite verb with at least one verbal prefix, while the enclitic COP is attached to the last word of the clause, without any prefix. As a rule, the PC is situated next to the COP; if the COP is enclitic, it cliticizes to the PC. Ex. (19) contains a 3rd ps. sg. enclitic COP cliticized to the last unit of the PC:

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

ud-ba	du-du,	saŋŋa	<sup>d</sup> nin-ŋir <sub>2</sub> -su <sub>2</sub> -ka-kam
ud=bi=’a	<sub>s</sub> [dudu=∅]	<sub>pc</sub> [saŋŋa	ninŋirsuk=ak=∅]=am-∅
day=DEM=L1	<sub>s</sub> [PN=ABS]	<sub>pc</sub> [official	DN=GEN=ABS]=COP-3SG.S

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

Like other stative verbs in Sumerian, the COP has only a preterit and no present-future form. Both the independent and the enclitic COPs are suffixed with the set of pronominal suffixes that are coreferential with the participant in the absolutive case in preterit tense verbal forms. In the 3rd ps. sg., the enclitic COP uses a special stem,

/am/ instead of /me/.<sup>26</sup> The final /e/ of the COP and the initial /e/ of the pronominal suffixes contracted to a single vowel, which may have been long.

Tab. 2.1: Forms of the copula

	singular			plural		
	1st	2nd	3rd	1st	2nd	3rd
independent	-me-en	-me-en	-me-ø	-me-enden	-me-enzen	-me-eš
enclitic	=me-en	=me-en	=am-ø	=me-enden	=me-enzen	=me-eš

The S of a CC is in the absolutive case. The COP agrees in person and number with the S. In some rare cases, when the relation between a possessor and the S is inalienable, then the COP may agree with the possessor of the S instead.<sup>27</sup> In ex. (20) below the COP agrees with the 2nd ps. sg. possessor of the S in both clauses.<sup>28</sup>

(20) Iddin-Dagan D 30 (ETCSL 2.5.3.4)

igi-zu                      huš-me-en  
igi=zu=ø                      <sub>PC</sub>[huš-ø=ø]=me-en  
face=2SG.POSS=ABS                      <sub>PC</sub>[awesome-TL=ABS]=COP-2SG.S  
za-pa-<sup>1</sup>an<sub>2</sub>-zu<sup>1</sup>                      <sup>1</sup>mah'-me-en<sup>1</sup>  
zapaη=zu=ø                      <sub>PC</sub>[mah-ø=ø]=me-en  
cry=2SG.POSS=ABS                      <sub>PC</sub>[majestic-TL=ABS]=COP-2SG.S  
“Your face is awesome, your cry is majestic.”

The S of a CC may be expressed in three ways: i) both as an overt lexical NP and by an unaccented pronominal suffix on the COP; ii) solely by the unaccented pronominal suffix on the COP; or iii) both as an independent pronoun and by an unaccented pronominal suffix on the COP.

The PC is as a rule in the absolutive case. Less frequently it may be in the genitive, as in exx. (21), (22) and (23); ablative (expressing an instrumental meaning), as in ex. (24); or equative, as in ex. (25) below:

<sup>26</sup> See Edzard (2003, p. 83) and Jagersma (2010, p. 682) on the origin of the stem /am/.

<sup>27</sup> For the phenomenon of external possession in Sumerian, see Zólyomi (2005).

<sup>28</sup> See Zólyomi (2005, p. 184, n. 20), and for a different analysis, see Jagersma (2010, p. 710).

(21) En-ana-tum I 2 8:5 (RIME1.9.4.2) (Lagash, 24th c.)

an-ta-sur-ra      ḡa<sub>2</sub>-kam  
<sub>S</sub>[antasura=∅]      <sub>PC</sub>[ḡe=ak]=am-∅  
<sub>S</sub>[GN=ABS]      <sub>PC</sub>[1SG.PR=GEN]=COP-3NH.S  
 “The Antasura is mine!”

(22) TCS 1, 177 rev. 2 (?, 21st c.) (P145700)

gu<sub>2</sub>-na-kam  
 gu=ani=ak=am-∅  
<sub>PC</sub>[neck=3SG.POSS=GEN]=COP-3NH.S  
 “It is of his neck.” = “It is his responsibility.”

(23) Nungal A 75 (ETCSL 4.28.1)

arḡuš      ṣag<sub>4</sub>-ne-ṣa<sub>4</sub>      ḡa<sub>2</sub>-a-kam  
<sub>S</sub>[arḡuš      ṣagneṣa=∅]      <sub>PC</sub>[ḡe=ak]=am-∅  
<sub>S</sub>[mercy      compassion=ABS]      <sub>PC</sub>[1SG.PR=GEN]=COP-3NH.S  
 “Mercy and compassion are mine.”

(24) NG 214 8 (Umma, 21st c.) (P131761)

inim      ur-niḡar<sup>ḡar</sup>      nu-banda<sub>3</sub>-ta-am<sub>3</sub>  
<sub>PC</sub>[inim      urniḡar      nubanda=ak=ta]=am-∅  
<sub>PC</sub>[word      PN      overseer=GEN=ABL]=COP-3NH.S  
 “This was with the permission of Urnigar, the overseer.”

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

a<sub>2</sub>      tug<sub>2</sub>      gada-a      du-a,  
<sub>S</sub>[a      tug      gada=’a      du-∅=ak=∅]  
<sub>S</sub>[wage      cloth      line=L2.NH      go-TL=GEN=ABS]  
 urim<sub>5</sub><sup>ki</sup>-ma-gin<sub>7</sub>-nam  
<sub>PC</sub>[urim=ak=gin]=am-∅  
<sub>PC</sub>[GN=GEN=EQU]=COP-3NH.S  
 “The wages for ‘walking’ on cloth and line are as those of Urim.”

The independent and the enclitic COP occur in complementary distribution. The independent form of the COP 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 the first verbal slot in ex. [26], while it is the coordinator prefix in the third verbal slot in ex. [27]); ii) in subordinate CCs, including complement clauses such as ex. (28) and relative clauses such as ex. (29). A special type of complement clause is represented by ex. (30), in which the subordinate CC functions as the PC of another CC; see section 6.2 below on this construction. In morphosyntactic environments other than i) and ii), the enclitic COP is used. The enclitic COP thus occurs in place of a non-subordinate



independent COP 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 is often the case, the older form was retained in subordinate contexts.<sup>29</sup>

(26) Lugalbanda 106 (ETCSL 1.8.2.2)

di<sub>1</sub>nir he<sub>2</sub>-me-en  
<sub>PC</sub>[di<sub>1</sub>nir=∅] <sub>S1</sub>ha-<sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S12</sub>me-<sub>S14</sub>en  
<sub>PC</sub>[god=ABS] MOD-FIN-COP-2SG.S  
 “if you are a god, ....”

(27) Shulgi C 9 (ETCSL 2.4.2.03)

ni<sub>2</sub>erim<sub>2</sub>-ma usan<sub>3</sub> bar-uš-bi  
<sub>PC</sub>'s POSS [ni<sub>2</sub>erim=ak] <sub>PC</sub>[usan baruš=bi=∅]  
<sub>PC</sub>'s POSS [evil=GEN] <sub>PC</sub>[scourge stick=3NH.POSS=ABS]  
 ηe<sub>26</sub> in-ga-me-en<sub>3</sub>  
<sub>S</sub>[ηe=∅] <sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S3</sub>nga-<sub>S12</sub>me-<sub>S14</sub>en  
<sub>S</sub>[1SG.PR=ABS] FIN-COOR-COP-1SG.S  
 “As for all evil, their scourge and stick are also me.”

(28) NG 212 17 (Umma, 21st c.) (P142272)

arad<sub>2</sub> šara<sub>2</sub> i<sub>3</sub>-me-a  
<sub>PC</sub>[arad šara=ak=∅] <sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S12</sub>me-<sub>S14</sub>∅-<sub>S15</sub>'a]=ak  
<sub>PC</sub>[slave GN=GEN=ABS] FIN-COP-3SG.S-SUB=GEN  
 “(Lugalazida is to take the assertory oath) that he (= Lugalitida) is a slave of the god Shara.”

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

ud tur<sub>5</sub>-ra i<sub>3</sub>-me-a  
<sub>PC</sub>[tur-'a=∅] <sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S12</sub>me-<sub>S14</sub>∅-<sub>S15</sub>'a='a  
 day <sub>PC</sub>[ill-PT=ABS] FIN-COP-3SG.S-SUB=L1  
 “When he was ill.”

(30) NG 70 9' (Lagash, 21st c.) (P111448)

lu<sub>2</sub>-li<sub>8</sub>-si<sub>4</sub> lu<sub>2</sub>-gi-<sup>r</sup>na<sup>1</sup>-ab-tum-bi i<sub>3</sub>-me-am<sub>3</sub>  
<sub>PC</sub>[lulisi=∅] <sub>PC</sub>[uginabtum=bi=∅] <sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S12</sub>me-<sub>S14</sub>∅-<sub>S15</sub>'a=∅]=am-∅  
<sub>PC</sub>[PN=ABS] <sub>PC</sub>[guarantor=POSS.3NH=ABS] FIN-COP-3SG.S-SUB=ABS]=COP-3NH.S  
 “It was (the case) that Lu-Lisi was its guarantor.”

<sup>29</sup> See Bybee et al. (1994, pp. 230-231) about the conservatism of subordinate forms. Cf. also Heine (2003, p. 586) who states: “Not uncommonly, lexical properties are lost in main clauses but may survive in subordinate clauses”.

Non-verbal predicates may be negated in two ways: i) A CC with a 3rd ps. sg. S and an enclitic COP is negated solely with the negative particle /**nu**/, and the negative clause contains no COP; ii) if the S is *not* in the 3rd ps. sg. and/or the COP is *not* enclitic, then the clause is negated with an independent COP prefixed with the negative prefix /**nu**/- (cf. ex. [65] and ex. [124] below). Non-verbal predicates negated with just the negative particle /**nu**/ will be discussed in the next subsection.<sup>30</sup>

Non-verbal predicates may be used to express a range of semantic relations. In English, for example, the same verb, **be**, is used to express identity, attribution, possession, benefaction and location (cf. Dixon, 2010, pp. 159-162). In Sumerian only the first four of the semantic relations listed by Dixon are expressed with the copular verb **me** “to be”,<sup>31</sup> with location being expressed through a different lexical item, the verb **ḡal** “to exist somewhere”.<sup>32</sup> In ex. (31), for example, the relative clause in P2, set in bold and italic in the translation, uses the verb **ḡal** for describing the location of the tablets.

(31) MVN 3, 363 rev. 4-5 (Drehem, 21st c.) (P113923)

dub	ur- <sup>d</sup> šul-pa <sup>l</sup> -e <sub>3</sub> -ka	bešeḡ	ur- <sup>d</sup> ba-u <sub>2</sub> -ka
<sub>P1</sub> [dub	uršulpaek=ak]	<sub>P2</sub> [bešeḡ	urbauk=ak='a
<sub>P1</sub> [tablet	PN <sub>1</sub> =GEN]	<sub>P2</sub> [basket	PN <sub>2</sub> =GEN=L1
i <sub>3</sub> -in-ḡal <sub>2</sub> -la-ta,		tur-re-dam	
s <sub>2</sub> <sup>i</sup> -s <sub>10</sub> n-s <sub>12</sub> ḡal-s <sub>14</sub> Ø-s <sub>15</sub> 'a]= <sup>l</sup> ta <sup>1</sup>		tur-ed=Ø=am-Ø	
FIN-L1.SYN-exist-3NH.S-SUB]=ABL small-PF=ABS=COP-3NH.S			

“These (various animals) are to be subtracted from the tablet of Ur-Shulpae that ***is in the basket of Ur-Bau.***”

The only apparent exception to this generalization I am aware of is ex. (32) below, which is usually translated as expressing location: “(The elders of the city declared) that the burial place of the city’s chief lamentation priest was in the garden”.<sup>33</sup> This interpretation, however, is not the only grammatically possible one. One may also take the word **kimah** “grave” alone as the S of the CC, in which case the CC may be interpreted as expressing possession. Given the generalization made in the previous paragraph, this second interpretation appears to be preferable.

<sup>30</sup> In texts from the 2nd millennium BC and later the negative particle /**nu**/ is sporadically attested as the verbal base of a finite verb, preceded by an /**i**/- finite marker; see Thomsen (1984, p. 192, §164).

<sup>31</sup> For a non-verbal predicate expressing benefaction cf. ex. (74) below.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. also Gragg (1968, p. 102), who concludes in his study on the Sumerian copula: “Thus, apart from some marginal and doubtful cases, *me* in Sumerian is limited to the function of simple predication, and does not, as opposed to ‘be’ in most Indo-European languages, extend over into the semantic field ‘exist’”.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Falkenstein (1956b, pp. 166-168), Jagersma (2010, p. 602, ex. 81).

(32) NG 101 13-14 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P111445)

<sup>ni5</sup>kiri<sub>6</sub>-a      ki-mah,      gala-mah      iri-ka      i<sub>3</sub>-me-a  
 kiri='a      s[kimah=∅]      pC[galamah      iri=ak=ak]      s<sub>3</sub>i-s<sub>12</sub>me-s<sub>14</sub>∅-s<sub>14</sub>'a='a  
 garden=L1      s[grave=ABS]      pC[priest      city=GEN=GEN]      FIN-COP-3NH.S-SUB=L2.NH  
 “(The elders of the city declared) that in the garden the burial place belonged to the  
 city’s chief lamentation priest.”

## 2.3 Copula Dropping: Non-verbal Predicates without a Copula

If the S is in the 3rd ps. sg., then the non-verbal predicate may occur without a COP in certain grammatical environments, a phenomenon called copula dropping in linguistics.<sup>34</sup> There exists four grammatical environments in which the non-verbal predicate is attested to omit the COP: i) CCs functioning as proper names (names of persons, statues etc.) in which the S is an overt lexical noun; ii) seal inscriptions; iii) negated counterparts of CCs in which the S is in the 3rd ps. sg. and the COP is enclitic; iv) interrogative clauses.

### 2.3.1 Copular Clauses Functioning as Proper Names

In proper names consisting of a non-verbal predicate, the COP may be omitted if the S of the clause is an overt lexical noun, as in exx. (33), (34), (35), and (36). If the S is not an overt lexical noun, then the COP is present, as shown by exx. (37), (38) and (39). In ex. (39) the presence of the COP is also triggered by the person of the S, as it is 2nd ps. sg.; i.e. different from 3rd ps. sg.

Exx. (33), (34), (37), (38) and (39) are personal names; ex. (35) is the name of a statue; and ex. (36) is the name of an unknown object that could not carry an inscription; its name was inscribed on a small clay olive that may have been attached to this object.

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

ama-*neš*tin  
 s[ama=∅] pC[*neš*tin=∅]  
 s[mother=ABS] pC[wine=ABS]  
 “The-mother-is-wine”

<sup>34</sup> See Jagersma (2010. pp. 715-718). Jagersma was the first to drawn attention to this type of non-verbal predicate in Sumerology. On the phenomenon of copula dropping see Pustet (2003, pp. 34-39).

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

nin-he<sub>2</sub>-du<sub>7</sub>  
<sub>s</sub>[nin=∅] <sub>pc</sub>[hedu=∅]  
<sub>s</sub>[lady=ABS] <sub>pc</sub>[ornament=ABS]  
 “The-lady-is-an-ornament”

(35) Amar-Suena 10 1:11 (RIME 3/2.1.3.10) (Ur?, 21st c.)

<sup>d</sup>amar-<sup>d</sup>suen-ki-aη<sub>2</sub>-urim<sub>5</sub><sup>ki</sup>-ma  
<sub>s</sub>[amarsuenak=∅] <sub>pc</sub>[ki=∅ aη-∅ urim=ak=∅]  
<sub>s</sub>[PN=ABS] <sub>pc</sub>[place=ABS measure-TL GN=GEN=ABS]  
 “(The name of this statue is) ‘Amar-Suena-is-the-beloved-of-Urim’.”

(36) Iri-kagina 14h (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222644)

<sup>d</sup>ba-u<sub>2</sub>-ama-iri-ka-gi-na-ka,  
<sub>s</sub>[bau=∅] <sub>pc</sub>[ama irikaginak=ak=∅]  
<sub>s</sub>[DN=ABS] <sub>pc</sub>[mother RN=GEN=ABS]  
 “(As for this object,) ‘Bau-is-the-mother-of-Iri-kagina’ (is its name).”

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

<sup>d</sup>utu-kam  
<sub>pc</sub>[utu=ak]=am-∅  
<sub>pc</sub>[DN=GEN]=COP-3SG.S  
 “He-is-Utu’s”

(38) Inana and Gudam Segment A 1 (ETCSL 1.3.4)

gud-dam  
<sub>pc</sub>[gud=∅]=am-∅  
<sub>pc</sub>[bull=ABS]=COP-3SG.S  
 “He-is-a-bull”

(39) VS 25, 69 10:13 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P020275)

ama-ηu<sub>10</sub>-me  
<sub>pc</sub>[ama=ηu=∅]=me-en  
<sub>pc</sub>[mother=1SG.POSS=ABS]=COP-2SG.S  
 “You-are-my-mother”

### 2.3.2 Seal Inscriptions

In seal inscriptions ending with the “your slave” formula that functions as the predicate, the COP never occurs, as in ex. (40) below.

(40) Shulgi 86 (RIME 3/2.1.2.86) (?, 21st c.) (P226941)

ba-qar <sub>3</sub> -tum,	dumu-munus	lugal,	<sup>d</sup> šul-gi-i <sub>3</sub> -li <sub>2</sub> ,	arad <sub>2</sub> -zu
baqartum	dumumunus	lugal=ak=∅	<sub>s</sub> [šulgiili=∅]	<sub>pc</sub> [arad=zu=∅]
PN <sub>1</sub>	daughter	king=GEN=ABS	<sub>s</sub> [PN <sub>2</sub> =ABS]	<sub>pc</sub> [slave=2SG.POSS=ABS]

“Baqartum, the king’s daughter: Shulgi-ili is your servant!”

### 2.3.3 Negated Copular Clauses

A CC with a 3rd ps. sg. S and an enclitic COP is negated solely with the negative particle /**nu**/, and the negative clause contains no COP.<sup>35</sup> An instructive example is (41) below. In this example the first clause is negated with the particle /**nu**/, while the second is negated with an independent COP prefixed with the negative prefix /**nu**/.

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

alan-e,	u <sub>3</sub>	kug	nu
<sub>s</sub> [alan=e=∅]	u	<sub>pc</sub> [kug=∅]	nu
<sub>s</sub> [statue=DEM=ABS]	and	<sub>pc</sub> [silver=ABS]	NEG
za-gin <sub>3</sub>	nu-ga-am <sub>3</sub>		
<sub>pc</sub> [zagin=∅]	<sub>s1</sub> nu- <sub>s2</sub> i- <sub>s3</sub> nga- <sub>s12</sub> me= <sub>s14</sub> ∅		
<sub>pc</sub> [lapis.lazuli=ABS]	NEG-FIN-COOR-COP=3NH.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 COP (\***kug=∅=am-∅** : silver=ABS=COP-3NH.S), while the affirmative equivalent of the second clause would contain an independent COP because of the presence of a coordinator prefix in S3 (\***i-nga-me-∅** : FIN-COOR=COP-3NH.S). The difference in the way the two clauses are negated in ex. (41) is conditioned thus by the form of the COP in the corresponding affirmative clauses. Exx. (42), (43) and (44) below are further examples of negated non-verbal predicates without a COP.

(42) E-ana-tum 1 rev. 10:23-25 (RIME1.9.3.1) (Lagash, 24th. c.)

na-ru <sub>2</sub> -a,	mu-bi,	lu <sub>2</sub> -a	nu
<sub>s's</sub> POSS[narua=ak]	<sub>s</sub> [mu=bi=∅]	<sub>pc</sub> [lu=ak]	nu
<sub>s's</sub> POSS[stele=GEN]	<sub>s</sub> [name=3NH.POSS=ABS]	<sub>pc</sub> [person=GEN]	NEG

“The stele’s name is not that of man.”

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Attinger (1993, p. 312, §206): “La contrepartie négative de -am<sub>3</sub> est -nu.” Note that this statement is not quite accurate. The morpheme /**nu**/ is not a negative copula. It is the morpheme that expresses negation in a clause without a COP.

(43) Shulgi B 55 (= 80 = 117 = 153) (ETCSL 2.4.2.02)

a-na-ηu <sub>10</sub>	nin <sub>2</sub>	ka-ge	dib-ba	nu
<sub>S</sub> [ana=ηu=∅]	<sub>PC</sub> [nin	kag=e	dib-'a=∅]	nu
<sub>S</sub> [what=1SG.POSS=ABS]	<sub>PC</sub> [thing	mouth=L3.NH	surpass-PT=ABS]	NEG

“Are my achievements not things that surpass all description?”

(44) The Lament for Urim and Sumer A95 (ETCSL 2.2.3)

dam-ηu <sub>10</sub>	nu
<sub>PC</sub> [dam=ηu=∅]	nu
<sub>PC</sub> [wife=1SG.POSS=ABS]	NEG

“(The father turned away from his wife saying:) ‘She is not my wife!’”

### 2.3.4 Interrogative Clauses

If the S of an interrogative clause is in the 3rd ps. sg., then the COP may be dropped. In exx. (45)-(47) the sentence initial interrogative pronoun is accompanied with a COP. The structure and function of these forms will be discussed in details in subsection 5.3.5 below.

In ex. (45) the first clause is interrogative, while the second one is declarative; the S of both clauses is in 3rd ps. sg. In the first clause of (45) the COP after the PC is omitted, while in the second one the PC is followed by the COP. The absence of the COP in the first clause of ex. (45) is thus conditioned by the clause type.

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

a-ba-am <sub>3</sub>	mu-zu,
aba=∅=am-∅	<sub>PC</sub> [mu=zu=∅]
who=ABS=COP-3SG.S	<sub>PC</sub> [name=2SG.POSS=ABS]
nam-zid-tar-ra	mu-gu <sub>10</sub> -um
<sub>S</sub> [namzid tara=∅]	<sub>PC</sub> [mu=ηu=∅]=am-∅
<sub>S</sub> [PN=ABS]	<sub>PC</sub> [name=1SG.POSS=ABS]=COP-3NH.S

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

Exx. (46) and (47) are both interrogative clauses. In ex. (46) the S of the clause is in the 3rd ps. sg., while in ex. (47) it is in the 2nd ps. sg. In ex. (46) no COP occurs after the S, while in ex. (47) the S is followed by a COP. The presence of the COP in these examples is conditioned by the person and number of the S.

(46) Enki and Ninhursaga 201 (ETCSL 1.1.1)

a-na-am <sub>3</sub>	ne-e
ana=∅=am-∅	<sub>S</sub> [ne=∅]
what=ABS=COP-3NH.S	<sub>S</sub> [this=ABS]

“What is this?”

(47) Enlil and Nam-zid-tara 10-11 (ETCSL 5.7.1)

a-ba-am <sub>3</sub>	za-e-me-en
aba=∅=am-∅	<sub>s</sub> [ze=∅]=me-en
who=ABS=COP-3SG.S	<sub>s</sub> [2SG.PR=ABS]=COP-2SG.S

“Who are you?”

The condition on copula dropping may be overruled by prosodic factors. In ex. (48) below the S is in 3rd ps. sg., yet the COP is not dropped. The presence of the COP is the consequence of the prosodic prominence that the interrogative pronoun next to the COP carries. For a justification of this description, see subsection 5.3.5 below.

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

amar-e	a-ba-kam
<sub>s</sub> [amar=e=∅]	<sub>pc</sub> [aba=ak=am-∅]
<sub>s</sub> [calf=DEM=ABS]	<sub>pc</sub> [who=GEN=COP-3SG.S]

“Whom does this calf belong to?”

## 3 A Typology of Sumerian Copular Clauses<sup>36</sup>

### 3.1 Introduction

CCs may be classified according to a number of characteristics. Jagersma (2010, pp. 687-705) gives a detailed description of Sumerian CCs arranged according to the types of constituents that may function as S or PC. Jagersma's description is the most detailed one ever written about CCs in Sumerian, and particularly, the parts on clauses with a non-finite verbal form as the PC are extremely insightful. Linguistic studies on CCs, however, discuss the kind of constituents in CCs only in connection with another kind of classification which appears to be more relevant to the description of CCs. This classification is based on the semantic properties of CCs, which in turn have a profound influence on their grammatical and pragmatic properties.

In this chapter I will give a description of CCs based mainly on the work of Renaat Declerck (1988) (which itself owes much to Higgins [1979]), and Mikkelsen (2005). My description will also take into account the information structure of CCs. Information structure is understood as “a phenomenon of information packaging that responds to the immediate communicative needs of interlocutors” (Krifka, 2007, p. 13).

CCs appear to be ideal for studying the role information packaging plays in Sumerian grammar. Their morphology and structure are much simpler than the morphology and structure of clauses with a non-copular finite verb, and there is a more transparent connection between their pragmatic characteristics and their structure.

### 3.2 The Classification of Copular Clauses in Linguistics

CCs can be divided into three main types on the basis of their meaning: predicational, specificational, and equative. First, I will describe the properties of the predicational and specificational clauses, as they are often discussed together, contrasting their features. Equatives, a minor type, will be discussed at the end of this subsection.

In predicational CCs, the PC predicates a property about a referential S. This property can be a characteristic, a role or a class membership. Typically the S of predicational clauses is a definite, referential NP, while its complement is an adjective or a non-referential NP:

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<sup>36</sup> An abbreviated version of this chapter was published as Zólyomi (2012).



(49) Susan is nice.

(50) John is a teacher.

A specificational clause does not predicate a property of the S. It does something fundamentally different; it identifies the referent of a description by naming it. In more technical language, it specifies the value of a variable. The specificational clause in (51) below specifies the value “John Thomas” for the variable “the X who is the bank robber”, i.e., it tells us that the referent characterized here as “the bank robber” is nobody else but “John Thomas”.

(51) The bank robber is John Thomas.

Specificational clauses may also be thought of as lists (an idea of Higgins [1979]): the S functions as the heading of the list, while the predicate specifies what makes up the list. Stefan Huber’s (2000) less metaphoric reformulation of this characterization is paraphrased by Katalin É. Kiss as follows:

“... in specificational sentences the subject denotes a set, which the predicate characterizes through another set, by listing the individuals that make it up. A specificational predicate implies that its specification of the individuals that make up the set denoted by the subject is exhaustive, that is, other alternatives are excluded. The subject of predication is associated with an existential presupposition – because only the content of an existing set can be listed.” (É. Kiss, 2006, p. 181)

The S of English specificational clauses is characterized variously as “weakly” referential (Declerck, 1983, pp. 217-218), attributive (Donnellan, 1975), or non-referential (Mikkelsen, É. Kiss, etc.).

Mikkelsen’s characterization is based on the idea that definite NPs may have different interpretations depending on the properties of the clause in which they are used (2005, pp. 53-54). A definite NP may be interpreted as referential, then it denotes an individual; or it may be interpreted as predicative, then it denotes a set of individuals. The difference between these interpretations can be demonstrated with sentence-pairs like (52) and (53) below. In (52) the NP “the tallest girl in the class” refers to an individual. In (53), however, the same NP is interpreted as a property, namely the set of individuals that have the property of being “the tallest girl in the class”. Her main argument comes from pronominalization. In particular, she argues that in (52) and (53) “the use of *it* indicates that the subject is not referential, but rather denotes a property, whereas the use of *she* indicates that the subject is referential” (Mikkelsen, 2005, p. 64).

(52) The tallest girl in the class is Swedish, isn’t {*she* / \**it*}? (predicational)

- (53) The tallest girl in the class is Molly, isn't {it / \*she }? (specificational)

If the subject NP of English specificational clauses denotes properties, i.e. has a predicative interpretation, then it is plausible to assume that specificational clauses are a kind of predicate inversion in which the subject NP denotes a property (cf. Mikkelsen, 2005, pp. 133-161). By contrast, it is the PC that denotes a property in predicational clauses. There exist languages in which this assumption is supported by the agreement pattern in specificational sentences. As the sentence pair (54) and (55) show, the predicate and the S are inverted in Italian specificational clauses, but the copula does not agree with the preposed predicate but with the now postcopular S (examples adapted from Moro, 1997, p. 28, ex. 33). A similar pattern characterizes specificational clauses in Russian (Geist, 2003, pp. 95-99), and, anticipating the results of the next subsection, in Sumerian.

- (54) The pictures of the wall {\*was / were} the cause of the riot. (predicational)  
 Le foto del muro {\*fu/ furono} la causa della rivolta. (predicational)
- (55) The cause of the riot {was / \*were} the pictures of the wall. (specificational)  
 La cause della rivolta {\*fu / furono} le foto del muro. (specificational)

There is an important difference between predicational and specificational CCs in terms of information structure which is highly relevant for the description of Sumerian CCs. Specificational clauses have a fixed information structure: the value NP always functions as the identificational focus of the clause, while the variable part is its presupposition.

In this work the term focus will always be understood as identificational focus,<sup>37</sup> unless otherwise qualified:

“An identificational focus represents a subset of the set of contextually or situationally given elements for which the predicate phrase can potentially hold; it is identified as the exhaustive subset of this set for which the predicate phrase actually holds” (É. Kiss, 1998, p. 245)

Or, in other words, “[i]t indicates that the focus denotation is the only one that leads to a true proposition” (Krifka, 2007, p. 33).

As a corollary of their fixed information structure, specificational clauses may always be paraphrased as *it*-clefts in English:

- (56) It is John Thomas who is the bank robber.

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<sup>37</sup> Other terms in use are narrow focus, argument focus (Lambrecht, 1994) and exhaustive focus (Krifka, 2007).

In predicational clauses, however, either the S or the predicate may be the focus (pitch accent is marked here with small capitals), or neither of them (cf. ex. [50] above).

(57) John is a TEACHER (, and not a butcher).

(58) JOHN is a teacher (, and not Mark).

The third type of CCs is the equative. An equative CC asserts that two NPs have the same referent. Both NPs refer to an individual. Equative clauses do not have fixed information structure either.

(59) She is Laura.

(60) Mark Twain is Samuel Clemens.

### 3.3 Copular Clauses in Sumerian

Languages of the world may use syntactic (e.g., word order), morphological or prosodic means, or some combination of these, to mark the information structure of clauses. In the case of a dead language without native speakers, preserved only in written sources, one has limited opportunities to recover and reconstruct its information structure. The following discussion relies solely on features that are observable in our written texts, aided with the findings of linguistic research.<sup>38</sup>

A basic assumption of this work is that Sumerian is a language in which word order is determined by information structure. Sumerian is a verb-final language, and the order of the other constituents shows a great degree of variation with some frequent patterns. Since word order is a feature that is clear and unambiguous in most of our texts, it will be the most important characteristic of CCs used for the reconstruction of their information structure.

A common syntactic device that involves a variation in word order is left-dislocation of possessors in Sumerian.<sup>39</sup> In this construction the possessor of a genitive construction is left-dislocated. The left-dislocated possessor occupies a position at the beginning of the clause and is as a rule in the genitive case; a resumptive enclitic

<sup>38</sup> See also Christian Huber's (2000, pp. 96-100) remarks about the problems involved in recovering the information structure of Sumerian. His results are in agreement with the findings of the present work.

<sup>39</sup> See Zólyomi (2005) for a description of left-dislocated possessors in Sumerian. Left-dislocation of the possessor is referred to as the "anticipatory genitive" in Assyriology.

possessive pronoun is attached to the possessum which agrees in gender, person, and number with the possessor. The left-dislocated possessor functions as (one of) the topic(s) of the clause.

Another easily observable feature is the way the S of the CC is expressed. It may be expressed in three different ways, and it will be demonstrated that the three options are intimately connected with the information status of the S.

Two main groups of Sumerian CCs can be distinguished in terms of the order of their constituents. In clauses belonging to the first group the constituent next to the COP is the PC, while in clauses belonging to the second group, the constituent next to the COP is the S. Within the first group, three types can be distinguished:

- **Type (A):** The topic of the clause is S.
- **Type (B):** The topic or one of the topics of the clause is a constituent other than S.
- **Type (C):** Clauses with no topic.

Clauses belonging to the second group will be referred to as type (D) clauses:

- **Type (D):** Clauses in which the order of S and PC is inverted.

A fifth type of structure will also be distinguished. It consists of biclausal constructions that are used to express exhaustive identification, corresponding to English it-clefts.

- **Type (E):** Sumerian cleft constructions.

### 3.3.1 Copular Clauses Whose Subject Functions as Topic

In clauses of type (A), the word order is S PC COP, which is the basic word order; this is also the word order found in subordinate clauses. In terms of information structure, the word order in (A) corresponds to a configuration in which S functions as the topic, while the PC and the COP constitute the comment:

**Type (A):** TOPIC = S

TOPIC	COMMENT	
S, (S), S <sub>PRON</sub>	PC	COP

The notion of topic will be understood as follows:

“A referent is interpreted as the topic of a proposition if IN A GIVEN DISCOURSE the proposition is construed as being about this referent, i.e. as expressing information which is relevant to and which increases the addressee’s knowledge of this referent.” (Lambrecht, 1994, p. 127)

The topic is thus the entity that the predication is pragmatically about<sup>40</sup>, and the remaining part of the sentence is the comment. Clauses of type (A) have three varieties in terms of the way the S is expressed:

- (Ai) S is expressed both as an overt lexical NP and by an unaccented pronominal suffix on the COP.
- (Aii) S is expressed solely by the unaccented pronominal suffix on the COP, referred to as (S) in the diagram above.
- (Aiii) S is expressed both as an independent pronoun and by an unaccented pronominal suffix on the COP, referred to as S<sub>PRON</sub> in the diagram above.

Clauses belonging to type (Ai) are very difficult to find as they occur scarcely in our corpus. One of the rare examples is (61) below:

(61) ARET 5 20 i 5 (Ebla, 25th c. BC)

an	nu-gal	uru-ga-kam <sub>4</sub>
s[an=∅]	pc[lugal	uruk=ak=∅]=am-∅
s[DN=ABS]	pc[king	GN=GEN=ABS]=COP=3SG.S

“The god An is the king of the city Uruk.”

Type (Ai) clauses most often occur in biclausal constructions. In Sumerian biclausal constructions, the initial clause is always a CC. The verb of the second clause is typically a finite, non-copular verb, but occasionally the second clause may also be copular. The defining characteristic of copular biclausal constructions is that one of the participants of the CC and one of the participants of the other clause are coreferential. The shared participant may occur as an overt NP only in the initial CC, being present only in the form of a pronominal affix on the (verbal) predicate in the second clause.

A typical example of this construction is ex. (62), in which the topical S of the CC functions as the patient in the matrix clause. The shared participant, **li** “juniper”, is referred to by a pronominal suffix in S14 of the finite verb in the matrix clause. The two component clauses of this construction could be used independently without any modification as simple sentences.

(62) Gudea Cyl. A 8:10 = 13:26 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232300)

**COPULAR CLAUSE**

li <sup>n15</sup>	u <sub>2</sub>	sikil	kur-ra-kam
s[li=∅]	pc[u	sikil	kur=ak=∅]=am-∅
s[juniper=ABS]	pc[plant	pure	mountain=GEN=ABS]=COP-3NH.S

<sup>40</sup> See Gyuris (2009, pp. 12-34) for an informative introduction to the concept of topic in linguistics.

**MATRIX CLAUSE**izi-a                bi<sub>2</sub>-si-siizi='a                <sub>s5</sub>b-<sub>s10</sub>i-<sub>s11</sub>n-<sub>s12</sub>sisi-<sub>s14</sub>∅

fire=L2.NH        3NH-L2-3SG.A-fill~PL-3NH.P

Literally: “The juniper<sub>i</sub> is the pure plant of the mountains. He (= Gudea) put it<sub>i</sub> onto the fire.” = “He put juniper, (which) is the pure plant of the mountains, onto the fire.”

In copular biclausal constructions like ex. (62), the predicate of the CC appears to function as an attributive relative clause whose head is the topical S of the CC. The form of the S is a sign of the conceptually (but not structurally) subordinate status of the CC in these constructions: S occurs as a lexical NP in ex. (62) because in the matrix clause it is not topical but part of the comment. Copular biclausal constructions are the subject of Chapters 4 and 5 below.

The majority of the clauses belonging to type (A) are type (Aii) clauses, in which the topical S is expressed solely by an unaccented pronominal suffix, which is the preferred mode of expression for an active topical participant. In ex. (63) the PC is a non-finite verbal form that carries an adjective-like meaning; in exx. (64) and (65) it is a definite NP describing a status. In ex. (66) the PC is in the genitive case, and the CC expresses a relation of possession. In ex. (67) the PC is a present-future non-finite verbal form. See also ex. (26) above, in which the PC is a non-referential noun.

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

lu<sub>5</sub>-am<sub>3</sub><sub>PC</sub>[lu-∅=∅]=am-∅<sub>PC</sub>[false-TL=ABS]=COP-3NH.S

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

(64) BM 106540 obv. 3 (Fs. Sigrist, p. 135, no. 7) (Umma, 21st c.) (P200724)

nin<sub>9</sub>-ηu<sub>10</sub>-um<sub>PC</sub>[nin=ηu=∅]=am-∅<sub>PC</sub>[sister=1SG.POSS=ABS]=COP-3SG.S

“She is my sister.”

(65) NG 32 3 (Lagash, 21st c.), P110613)

arad<sub>2</sub>                ur-<sup>d</sup>kuš-<sup>d</sup>ba-u<sub>2</sub>-ka                nu-u<sub>3</sub>-me-en<sub>3</sub><sub>PC</sub>[arad        urkušbauk=ak=∅]                <sub>s1</sub>nu-<sub>s2</sub>i-<sub>s12</sub>me-<sub>s14</sub>en<sub>PC</sub>[slave        PN=GEN=ABS]                NEG-FIN-COP-1SG.S

“I am not a slave of Ur-Kuš-Bau”

(66) Gudea 52 2:7 (RIME 3/1.1.752) (Lagash, 22nd c.)

$\eta i\bar{s}_1$ ig-kam

$_{PC}$ [ig=ak]=am- $\emptyset$

$_{PC}$ [door=GEN]=COP-3NH.S

“This (inscription) belongs to the door.”

(67) NG 120a 10-11 (Umma, 21st c.) (P110463)

ha-za-num<sub>2</sub>      nag-su<sup>ki</sup>      u<sub>3</sub>      aga<sub>3</sub>-us<sub>2</sub>      lugal-ke<sub>4</sub>,

$_{PC}$ [hazanum      nagsu=ak      u      agaus      lugal=ak=e

$_{PC}$ [mayor      GN=GEN      and      soldier      king=GEN=ERG

nibru<sup>ki</sup>-še<sub>3</sub>      la-he-dam

nibru=še      lah-ed= $\emptyset$ ]=am- $\emptyset$

GN=TERM      bring.PL-PF=ABS]=COP-3NH.S

“They (= the sheep) are to be taken to Nippur by the mayor of Nagsu and the king’s soldier.”

CCs belonging to type (Ai) or (Aii) are as a rule predicational. In clauses of type (Aiii), the use of an independent pronoun may have more than one motivation. First, as in (68), it may indicate that the CC is equative. Without the independent pronoun, the form **enlil= $\emptyset$ =me-en** could be taken to mean “I, Enlil, ...”, and could be interpreted as the constituent of the following clause (see section 4.3 below on the appositional interpretation of type (Aii) CCs).

(68) Enlil and Nam-zid-tara 10-11 (ETCSL 5.7.1)

$\eta e_{26}$ -e      <sup>d</sup>en-lil<sub>2</sub>-me-en

$_s$ [ $\eta e=\emptyset$ ]       $_{PC}$ [enlil= $\emptyset$ ]=me-en

$_s$ [1SG.PR=ABS]       $_{PC}$ [DN=ABS]=COP-1SG.S

“(Who are you who asks me questions?) I am Enlil.”

Type (Aiii) is, however, most frequently attested when the S functions as contrastive topic. Clauses with a contrastive topic introduce a covert contrast between the denotation of the contrastive topic constituent and other semantic objects of the same type in the universe of the discourse.<sup>41</sup> Ex. (69) below is an example of a contrastive topic in Hungarian. In this sentence type, the constituent in the topic position is pronounced with a rising intonation (marked as / here) (TC = contrastive topic, F = Focus).

(69)

[<sub>TC</sub> /János], [<sub>F</sub> Marit]      szereti.

John.NOM      Mary.ACC      loves

“John, he loves MARY.”

<sup>41</sup> See Gyuris (2009, pp. 11-55) for further literature on contrastive topics.

In addition to asserting that John loves only Mary, ex. (69) also implicitly contrasts John with other relevant individuals about whom the question of loving Mary could also be raised, and the answer to this question is supposed to be negative. Pronouncing the sentence initial constituent with a falling intonation results in a different interpretation of the same sentence; ex. (70) below is a sentence with a normal topic and an identificational focus.

(70)

[<sub>TOP</sub> V]ános] [<sub>F</sub> Marit] szereti  
 John.NOM Mary.ACC loves  
 “John loves MARY.”

Ex. (70) also asserts that John loves only Mary, but it does not indicate any alternative topic denotations.

In the second clause of ex. (71) below, the use of the independent form of the 1st ps. sg. pronoun indicates that it is a contrastive topic. One could paraphrase it as: “As for me, I am inferior to you (in contrast to you who are not inferior to anyone as you are the lord of the universe).”

(71) Enmerkar and En-suhgir-ana 278-280 (ETCSL 1.8.2.4)

sig-ta	igi-nim-še <sub>3</sub>	en	gal-bi	za-e-me-en
sig=ta	iginim=še	<sub>PC</sub> [en	gal=bi=∅]	<sub>S</sub> [ze=∅]=me-en
low=ABL	upper=TERM	<sub>PC</sub> [lord	big=3NH.POSS=ABS]	<sub>S</sub> [2SG.PR=ABS]=COP-2SG.S
ηe <sub>26</sub> -e	us <sub>2</sub> -sa-zu-me-en,			
<sub>S</sub> [ηe=∅]	<sub>PC</sub> [us-’a=zu=∅]=me-en			
<sub>S</sub> [1SG.PR=ABS]	<sub>PC</sub> [follow-PT=2SG.POSS=ABS]=COP-1SG.S			

“(For the people) from the south to the highlands, their great lord is you. As for me, I am only second to you.”

In ex. (72) below the use of the independent pronoun again indicates a contrastive topichood. It could be paraphrased as: “As for you, you are an august god, (in contrast to other gods, who are not august and are therefore inferior to you).” The use of a contrastive topic in this composition relates to the subject of the poem: it is a hymn extolling a deity, which inadvertently involves a tacit comparison with other deities thought to be less worthy in this context.

(72) Shul-pa-e A 12 (ETCSL 4.31.1)

lugal-ηu <sub>10</sub>	za-e	dim <sub>3</sub> -me-er	mah-me-en
lugal=ηu=∅	<sub>S</sub> [ze=∅]	<sub>PC</sub> [dimmer	mah-∅=∅]=me-en
king=1SG.POSS=ABS	<sub>S</sub> [2SG.PR=ABS]	<sub>PC</sub> [god	august-TL=ABS]=COP-2SG.S

“My king, as regards you, you are (indeed) an august god.”



In ex. (73) below there are two parallel CCs with similar meanings, a common poetic device in Sumerian poetry. The subject and topic of the first CC is an independent pronoun. The second CC contains the expression **dili-zu-ne**, which corresponds roughly to “alone” in English. It seems plausible to assume that the first CC expresses a similar meaning, suggesting that the 2nd ps. sg. independent pronoun should be interpreted as a contrastive topic.

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

<sup>r</sup> za-e <sup>1</sup>	mah-me-en
<sub>s</sub> [ze=∅]	<sub>pc</sub> [mah-∅=∅]=me-en
<sub>s</sub> [2SG.PR=ABS]	<sub>pc</sub> [august-TL=ABS]=COP-2SG.S
dili-zu-ne <sub>2</sub>	mah-me-en
dili=zu=ne	<sub>pc</sub> [mah-∅=∅]=me-en
single=2SG.POSS=L4	<sub>pc</sub> [august-TL=ABS]=COP-2SG.S

“As for you, you are (indeed) august; you alone are august!”

Ex. (74) below is a type (Bii) CC in which the topic is the possessor of the PC.<sup>42</sup> This type will be discussed below in detail; but as this example uses an independent personal pronoun indicating contrastive topic, I will discuss it here to demonstrate another characteristic of CCs with a contrastive topic.

(74) Iddin-Dagan B 43 (ETCSL 2.5.3.2)

e <sub>2</sub> -kur-še <sub>3</sub>	za-e	lu <sub>2</sub> -bi	he <sub>2</sub> -me-en
<sub>PC'S POSS</sub> [ekur=še]	<sub>s</sub> [ze=∅]	<sub>PC</sub> [lu=bi=∅]	<sub>s1</sub> ha- <sub>s2</sub> i- <sub>s12</sub> me- <sub>s14</sub> en
<sub>PC'S POSS</sub> [TN=TERM]	<sub>s</sub> [2SG.PR=ABS]	<sub>PC</sub> [man=3NH.POSS=ABS]	MOD-FIN-COP-2SG.S

“The Ekur, as for you, you are indeed a man for it.”

It has been observed in the linguistic literature that contrastive topics as a rule are followed by a focus material.<sup>43</sup> This may be an identificational focus as in the Hungarian example (69) above. Contrastive topics, however, may also be associated with verum or polarity focus.<sup>44</sup> Polarity focus is used to emphasize the speaker's belief in the truth or factualness of the proposition expressed by the clause, contrasting it with its implicit negation.

<sup>42</sup> The left-dislocated possessor is in the terminative case, not the genitive. In Old Babylonian (= first part of the 2nd mill. BC) literary texts there is a tendency to mark the left-dislocated possessor either with =/še/ (terminative, cf. example [101] below), =/ra/ (human dative, cf. ex. [87] below), or =/e/ (non-human dative, cf. ex. [86] below) when the possessor may be interpreted as a beneficiary. The use of these case-markers clearly reflects the influence of Akkadian. In particular, all these cases may correspond to the Akkadian allative preposition **ana**.

<sup>43</sup> See Gyuris (2009, pp. 38-41) for more cited literature.

<sup>44</sup> For the term, see Höhle (1992).

Cross-linguistically, polarity focus is expressed in many different ways. In the German example (75) below, which may be a reaction to the statement “I wonder whether Carl has finished his book”, the stress on the auxiliary indicates verum focus. In English, polarity focus is expressed by do insertion.<sup>45</sup>

(75) Karl HAT sein Buch beendet.

(76) Carl did finish his book.

In the Hungarian ex. (77) below, the falling pitch accent on the verb after “János”, which functions as contrastive topic, indicates polarity focus expressing that “the denotation of the verb is implicitly contrasted to its negation, and thus the whole sentence is implicitly contrasted to propositions which state about other individuals that I did not see them” (Gyuris, 2009, p. 43).

(77)

[<sub>TC</sub>/János] LÁTTAM.

John.ACC saw.1SG

“As for John, I did see him.”

In Sumerian, polarity focus may be expressed by the modal prefix **/ha/-**.<sup>46</sup> In Akkadian a similar meaning is expressed by the particle **lū**.<sup>47</sup> In Assyriology this use of Sumerian **/ha/-** and Akkadian **lū** is usually referred to as affirmative or asseverative.<sup>48</sup> In example (74) above, the prefix **/ha/-** expresses polarity focus. Example (74) may be paraphrased as: “As for you, you indeed are a man who is for the temple Ekur (in contrast to other rulers about whom this may not be stated).”

As mentioned above, contrastive topics are associated with foci. It seems therefore plausible to assume that in examples (72)-(73) too, there is polarity focus present, likely indicated with some sort of prosodic prominence on the PC. A translation like “My king, as regards you, you are *indeed* an august god” would suit its context very well. Clauses with polarity focus marked with prosodic prominence on the PC and

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Gutzmann & Castroviejo Miró (2011, pp. 143-144).

<sup>46</sup> See section 6.2 below for the description of another grammatical device that expresses verum focus in Sumerian involving the use of the COP, and for its relationship with structure involving the modal prefix **/ha/-**.

<sup>47</sup> Sumerian **/ha/-** and Akkadian **lū** share a number of grammatical meanings suggesting mutual influence between the two languages, cf. Zólyomi (2011).

<sup>48</sup> See, however, Cohen (2005, pp. 17-68; 2009), who describes the Akkadian asseverative forms as expressing verum focus, which he calls nexus focussing.

clauses with polarity focus marked with the modal prefix **/ha/-** would then be variant constructions expressing the same meanings.<sup>49</sup>

Note that in clauses belonging to type (Aiii), the use of the independent pronoun may indicate prosodic prominence. We may observe the presence of a contrastive topic only because pronominal subjects may be expressed in more than one way. The prosodic prominence of overt lexical NPs that function both as S and contrastive topic remains hidden for us; there must therefore be a number of clauses in our texts whose real meaning escapes us because of this.

3.3.2 Copular Clauses in Which (One of) the Topic(s) Is Different from the Subject

In type (A) CCs, the S and the (contrastive) topic are the same participant, as shown above. In type (B) CCs, the topic or one of the topics of the clause is a constituent other than S.

In type (Bi) clauses, the topic of the clause is the possessor of the PC:

Type (Bi): TOPIC = PC’S POSS

TOPIC	COMMENT		
PC’S POSS, (PC’S POSS)	S	PC	COP

The possessor’s position is the result of left-dislocation. It is in the genitive case, and there is a resumptive enclitic possessive pronoun attached to the possessum that agrees in gender, person, and number with the possessor. In ex. (78) below, the enclitic possessive pronoun **=/bi/** attached to the word **mu** “name” agrees in gender, person, and, number with the left-dislocated possessor. This construction is used commonly for declaring the name of votive objects (e.g. statues, bowls, etc.) in Sumerian royal inscriptions. Ex. (78) is construed as being about a certain votive gift, asserting that its name is “May my lady raise him for me!”; its topic is the votive gift, and its comment is the rest of the clause. In this construction, therefore, topic and S are different.

(78) Ur-Ningirsu I 4:12-14 (RIME 3/1.1.1.4) (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P2318013)

maš-da-ri-a-ba,

PC’s POSS[mašdaria=bi=ak]

PC’s POSS[votive.gift=DEM=GEN]

<sup>49</sup> I would venture to assume that the latter construction might reflect an influence of Akkadian. The clause in which it occurs displays another akkadism as well; it marks the left-dislocated possessor with the terminative case-marker.

nin- $\eta$ u<sub>10</sub>-he<sub>2</sub>-ma-zi-zi,

<sub>S</sub>[nin= $\eta$ u=e<sub>S1</sub> ha<sub>S2</sub> i<sub>S4</sub> m<sub>S5</sub> ba<sub>S10</sub> n<sub>S12</sub> zizi<sub>S14</sub> e= $\emptyset$ ]

<sub>S</sub>[lady=1SG.POSS=ERG MOD-FIN-VEN-MID-3SG.P-raise~PF-3SG.A=ABS]

mu-bi

<sub>PC</sub>[mu=bi= $\emptyset$ ]=am- $\emptyset$

<sub>PC</sub>[name=3NH.POSS=ABS]=COP-3NH.S

“As for this votive gift, ‘May-my-lady-raise-him!’ is its name.”

Another example of this construction is (79), which asserts about a levee that its name is “Who-is-like-the-god-Nanna?”.

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

eg<sub>2</sub>-ba

a-ba-<sup>d</sup>nanna-gin<sub>7</sub>,

<sub>PC</sub>'s POSS<sub>L</sub>[eg=bi=ak]

<sub>S</sub>[aba= $\emptyset$  nanna=gin= $\emptyset$ ]

<sub>PC</sub>'s POSS<sub>L</sub>[levee=DEM=GEN]

<sub>S</sub>[who=ABS DN=EQU=ABS]

mu-bi

<sub>PC</sub>[mu=bi= $\emptyset$ ]=am- $\emptyset$

<sub>PC</sub>[name=3NH.POSS=ABS]=COP-3NH.S

“As for this levee ‘Who-is-like-the-god-Nanna?’ is its name.”

The same construction is used in ex. (80), which asserts about a certain city that king Šu-Suen is its protective god.

(80) Šu-Suen 1 4:44-46 (RIME 3/2.1.4.1)

iri<sup>ki</sup>-ba,

<sup>d</sup>Šu-<sup>d</sup>suen,

dinir-bi-im

<sub>PC</sub>'s POSS<sub>L</sub>[iri=bi=ak]

<sub>S</sub>[šusuen= $\emptyset$ ]

<sub>PC</sub>[dinir=bi= $\emptyset$ ]=am- $\emptyset$

<sub>PC</sub>'s POSS<sub>L</sub>[city=3NH.POSS=GEN]

<sub>S</sub>[PN=ABS]

<sub>PC</sub>[god=3NH.POSS=ABS]=COP-3SG.S

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

When describing the information structure of some CCs in Sumerian, it may be useful to make a distinction between “an expression and what it stands for, its denotatum” (Krifka, 2007, p. 16). Accordingly, one may make a distinction between a “topic denotation” or “topic referent” and a “topic expression” or “topic constituent”.<sup>50</sup> In ex. (81) below, the topic denotation is the object to which the small clay olive that carried the inscription was attached. The sentence in ex. (81) is about this object. Since the topic denotation is clear from the extra-linguistic context, the element that refers to it in the sentence, i.e. the topic expression, is not a overt NP (as, for example, in ex. [78] above), but a pronoun (the 3rd. ps. sg. non-human pronominal enclitic =/bi/), which is in the comment part of the clause.

<sup>50</sup> For this distinction see Krifka (2007, pp. 17-18).

(81) Iri-kagina 14h (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222644)

<sup>d</sup>ba-u<sub>2</sub> ama iri-ka-gi-na-ka,                      mu-bi  
<sub>S</sub>[bau=∅ ama irikaginak=ak=∅]                      <sub>PC</sub>[mu=bi=∅]=am-∅  
<sub>S</sub>[DN=ABS mother PN=GEN=ABS]                      <sub>PC</sub>[name=3NH.POSS=ABS]=COP-3NH.S  
 “(As for this object,) ‘Bau is the mother of Irikagina’ is its name”.

Ex. (82) is similar to ex. (81) in having an enclitic pronominal topic expression attached to a constituent in the comment. The 3rd ps. non-human enclitic possessive pronoun attached to the PC refers back to the legal case recorded on the tablet. The clause in ex. (82) is construed as being about this legal case; it asserts that its commissioner was a person named Dadu. Consequently its topic denotation is the legal case, but not Dadu, the S of the clause.

(82) BPOA 1, 972 rev. 7 (Umma, 21st. c.) (P209369)

da-du                      maškim-bi-im  
<sub>S</sub>[dadu=∅]                      <sub>PC</sub>[maškim=bi=∅]=am-∅  
<sub>S</sub>[PN=ABS]                      <sub>PC</sub>[commissioner=3NH.POSS=ABS]=COP-3NH.S  
 “(As for the legal case), Dadu was its commissioner.”

A variation of (Bi) is a common pattern to topicalize complement clauses. In ex. (83) below, the PC is a present-future non-finite verbal form together with its agent and patient. The S of the CC is a “dummy” S without any semantic content; it is present only as an unaccented pronominal suffix on the COP. The topic of the clause is the topicalized complement clause. This subordinate clause is formally a left-dislocated possessor whose possessum is the object of the non-finite verbal form that functions as the predicate complement.<sup>51</sup>

(83) SNAT 360 rev. 7-9 (Umma, 21st c.) (P130120)

ur-niṇar <sup>nar</sup> -ke <sub>4</sub>	sam <sub>χ</sub> (NINDA×ŠE.A)	geme <sub>2</sub> ,
urniṇarak=e	sam	geme=ak=∅
PN <sub>1</sub> =ERG	price	maiden=GEN=ABS
ki	lu <sub>2</sub> - <sup>d</sup> šara <sub>2</sub> -ta	šu
ki	lusara=ak=ta	šu=e
place	PN <sub>2</sub> =GEN=ABL	hand=L3.NH
		la-ba-an-ti-a,
		<sub>S1</sub> nu- <sub>S5</sub> ba- <sub>S11</sub> n- <sub>S12</sub> ti- <sub>S14</sub> ∅- <sub>S15</sub> 'a=ak
		NEG-MID-3SG.A-approach-3NH.P-SUB=GEN

<sup>51</sup> For a different analysis, see Jagersma (2010, p. 701), who seems to suggest that in constructions similar to ex. (83) the subordinate clause functions as the S of the CC.

ur-ni<sub>nar</sub><sup>nar</sup>-ke<sub>4</sub>      nam-erim<sub>2</sub>-bi      kud-dam  
 PC<sub>L</sub>[urninarak=e      namerim=bi=∅      kud-ed=∅]=am-∅  
 PC<sub>L</sub>[PN<sub>1</sub>=ERG      oath=3NH.POSS=ABS      cut-PF=ABS]=COP-3NH.S

“That Ur-nigar did not receive the price of the female servant from Lu-Shara, Ur-nigar is to take an assertory oath about it.”

**Type (Bii):** TOPIC = PC’S POSS AND S

TOPIC <sub>1</sub>	TOPIC <sub>2</sub>	COMMENT	
(s)	PC’S POSS	PC	COP

Type (Bii) clauses have two topics. In clauses with multiple topics, the proposition is construed as being about more than one participant of the clause. In type (Bii) clauses the S is an established topic, which is expressed only as an unaccented pronominal suffix on the COP. The other topic is the left-dislocated possessor of the PC.

In ex. (84) the PC is a double genitive construction \***hili šag Ninlil=ak=ak** “the delight of Ninlil’s heart”. “Ninlil” is left-dislocated and becomes one of the topics of the clause. The other topic is king Ur-Ninurta, addressed here in the 2nd person. Exx. (85)-(87) are very similar to ex. (84), the only difference being that the god and the ruler, respectively, addressed in the 2nd person, are also called by name.

(84) Ur-Ninurta C 34 (ETCSL 2.5.6.3)

<sup>d</sup>nin-lil<sub>2</sub>-la<sub>2</sub>      hi-li      šag<sub>4</sub>-ga-na-me-en  
 PC’S POSS[ninlil=ak]      PC[hili      šag=ani=ak=∅]=me-en  
 PC’S POSS[DN=GEN]      PC[delight      heart=3SG.POSS=GEN=ABS]=COP-2SG.S  
 “As for Ninlil, you (= Ur-Ninurta) are the delight of her heart.”

(85) A shir-gida to Nuska 14 (ETCSL 4.29.2)

<sup>d</sup>nuska      <sup>d</sup>en-lil<sub>2</sub>-la<sub>2</sub>      lu<sub>2</sub>      šag<sub>4</sub>-ga-na-me-en  
 nuska=∅      PC’S POSS[enlil=ak]      PC[lu      šag=ani=ak=∅]=me-en  
 DN<sub>1</sub>=ABS      PC’S POSS[DN<sub>2</sub>=GEN]      PC[man      heart=3SG.POSS=GEN=ABS]=COP-2SG.S  
 “As for Enlil, Nuska, you are the man of his heart.”

(86) Ishbi-Erra C 32 (ETCSL 2.5.1.3)

u<sub>n</sub><sub>3</sub>-e      <sup>d</sup>iš-bi-er<sub>3</sub>-ra      lugal      sipad-bi-me-en  
 PC’S POSS[u<sub>n</sub>=e]      išbierra=∅      PC[lugal      sipad=bi=∅]=me-en  
 PC’S POSS[people=DAT.NH]      PN=ABS      PC[king      shepherd=3NH.POSS=ABS]=COP-2SG.S  
 “For the people, Ishbi-Erra, you are their king and shepherd.”

(87) Lipit-Eshtar B 49 (ETCSL 2.5.5.2)

ki unug<sup>ki</sup>-ga kug <sup>d</sup>inana-ra  
ki unug='a <sub>PC'S POSS</sub> [kug inana=ra]  
place GN=L1 <sub>PC'S POSS</sub> [holy DN=DAT.H]  
<sup>d</sup>li-pi<sub>2</sub>-it-eš<sub>4</sub>-tar<sub>2</sub> hi-li šag<sub>4</sub>-ga-na-me-en  
lipiteštar=∅ <sub>PC</sub> [hili šag=ani=ak=∅]=me-en  
PN=ABS <sub>PC</sub> [delighth heart=3SG.POSS=GEN=ABS]=COP-2SG.S  
“In the place of Unug, you, Lipit-Eshtar, are the delight of holy Inana’s heart.”

Type (Biii): TOPIC = POSS OF S

TOPIC	COMMENT		
POSS OF S	S	PC	COP

In ex. (88) the topic of the CC is the possessor of the S.

(88) Gilgamesh and Huwawa A 11 (ETCSL 1.8.1.5)

kur-ra dim<sub>2</sub>-ma-bi <sup>d</sup>utu-kam  
<sub>S'S POSS</sub> [kur=ak] <sub>S</sub> [dima=bi=∅] <sub>PC</sub> [utu=ak]=am-∅  
<sub>S'S POSS</sub> [mountain=GEN] <sub>S</sub> [thought=3NH.POSS=ABS] <sub>PC</sub> [DN=GEN]=COP-3NH.S  
“As regards the mountains, a plan that concerns them is Utu’s business.”

Type (Biv): TOPIC = POSS OF S’S POSS

CONTRASTIVE TOPIC	COMMENT		
PRONOMINAL POSS	S	PC	COP

Ex. (89) below represents a unique construction, in which a left-dislocated pronominal possessor functions as the contrastive topic of the clause. As described above, the S of a CC may be expressed in three different ways. By contrast, the possessor of a genitive construction may be expressed in four different ways. Table 3.1 below lists the four types of Sumerian genitive constructions:

In construction a) the possessum and the possessor constitute a single constituent. In construction b) the possessor is topicalized, and in construction c) the enclitic possessive pronoun may refer to a topic denotation. A fourth, rare type of genitive construction, construction d), occurs in example (89) below. Here the left-dislocated possessor is not a lexical NP as in construction b), but an independent pronoun, probably in the absolutive case:<sup>52</sup> the 1st ps. sg. independent pronoun at

<sup>52</sup> See Zólyomi (1996, p. 39, note 19) for similar constructions.

Tab. 3.1: Genitive constructions of Sumerian

a)	The possessor is an overt lexical NP in the genitive case following the possessum.	lugal iri=ak king city=GEN “king of the city”
b)	The possessor is expressed both as a left-dislocated overt lexical NP in the genitive case and as a resumptive enclitic possessive pronoun attached to the possessum agreeing in gender, person, and number with the left-dislocated possessor.	iri=ak lugal=bi city=GEN king=3NH.POSS “of the city, its king”
c)	The possessor is expressed as an enclitic possessive pronoun attached to the possessum.	lugal=bi king=3NH.POSS “its king”
d)	The possessor is expressed both as a left-dislocated independent pronoun and as a resumptive enclitic possessive pronoun attached to the possessum agreeing in gender, person, and number with the left-dislocated possessor.	ŋe=ø iri=ŋu 1SG.PR=ABS city=1SG.POSS “as for me, my city”

the beginning of the clause agrees in number and person with the enclitic possessive pronoun attached to the word **iri** “city”, which itself is the left-dislocated possessor of the word **gizi** “reed”. The left-dislocated pronoun expresses contrastive topic (indicated with small capitals in the translation).<sup>53</sup> The clause could be paraphrased as: “In MY city (in contrast to the cities of other rulers) the **gizi** reed is truly sweet.” The adverbial “truly” in the translation attempts to give back the polarity focus in the Sumerian clause.

<sup>53</sup> See C. Huber (2000, pp. 96-97): “... if the referent corresponding to the clitic or agreement marker were to be highlighted — focused or otherwise, it has to appear as a full nominal phrase or pronoun.” Note that there is a certain parallel between the various subtypes of type (A) CCs and the type b)-d) genitive constructions in terms of the expression of the S and the possessor, respectively. The type b) genitive construction in Tab. 3.1 above shows a similarity with type (Ai) CCs: in the type b) genitive construction the possessor is expressed both as a (left-dislocated) overt lexical NP and as a resumptive enclitic possessive pronoun attached to the possessum, and in type (Ai) CCs the S is expressed both as an overt lexical NP and as a pronominal suffix on the COP. The type c) genitive construction shows a similarity with type (Aii) CCs: in the type c) genitive construction the possessor is expressed as an enclitic pronoun attached to the possessum, and in type (Aii) CCs the S is expressed as a pronominal suffix on the COP. And finally, the type d) genitive construction shows a similarity with type (Aiii) CCs: in the type d) genitive construction the possessor is expressed both as a (left-dislocated) independent pronoun and as a resumptive enclitic possessive pronoun attached to the possessum, and in type (Aiii) CCs the S is expressed both as an independent pronoun and as a pronominal suffix on the COP. In both type d) genitive constructions and type (Aiii) CCs the independent pronoun expresses contrast.



(89) Ur-Namma D 28 (ETCSL 2.4.1.4)

ηe <sub>26</sub> -e	iri-ηa <sub>2</sub>
ηe=∅	iri=ηu=ak
1SG.PR=ABS	city=1SG.POSS=GEN
gi-zi-bi	lal <sub>3</sub> -am <sub>3</sub>
<sub>s</sub> [gizi=bi=∅]	<sub>pc</sub> [lal-∅=∅]=am-∅
<sub>s</sub> [reed=3NH.POSS=ABS]	<sub>pc</sub> [sweet-TL=ABS]=COP-3NH.S

“In MY city, the *gizi* reed is truly sweet.

Ex. (90) is a very similar example from a literary text with a finite, non-copular verb. Here the 2nd ps. sg. independent pronoun at the beginning of the clause agrees in number and person with the enclitic possessive pronoun attached to the word **namdinjir** “divinity”. The clause could be paraphrased as: “YOUR divinity (in contrast to the divinity of other gods) cannot be matched.”

(90) Inana C 256 (ETCSL 4.07.3)

za-e	nam-dinjir-zu	a-ba	e-da-sa <sub>2</sub>
ze=∅	namdinjir=zu=da	aba=∅	<sub>s2</sub> i- <sub>s6</sub> e- <sub>s8</sub> da- <sub>s12</sub> sa- <sub>s14</sub> ∅ <sup>54</sup>
2SG.PR=ABS	divinity=2SG.POSS=COM	who=ABS	FIN-2SG-COM-equal-3SG.S

“Who rivals YOU in divinity?”

Type (Bv): TOPIC = NP=’a

TOPIC		COMMENT	
NP=’a	S	PC	COP

In ex. (91) the topic expression is an NP in the locative1 case functioning as a time adverbial. The clause is construed as being about a given point in time. It asserts that this was a period in which Dudu was the temple administrator of the god Ningirsu. Ex. (91) is not a proposition about Dudu, the S of the clause; it asserts something about a given period of time.

(91) En-metena 7 21-22 (RIME 1.9.5.7) (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222539)

ud-ba	du-du,	saηηa	<sup>d</sup> nin-ηir <sub>2</sub> -su <sub>2</sub> -ka-kam
ud=bi=’a	<sub>s</sub> [dudu=∅]	<sub>pc</sub> [saηηa	ninηirsuk=ak=∅]=am-∅
day=DEM=L1	<sub>s</sub> [PN=ABS]	<sub>pc</sub> [official	DN=GEN=ABS]=COP-3SG.S

“As for the time, that was when Dudu was the temple administrator of Ningirsu.”

<sup>54</sup> Here the pronoun in S6 agrees with the possessor of the constituent in the comitative, an example of external possession in Sumerian.

### 3.3.3 Copular Clauses without Any Topic

Type (C): 𒊕𒀭𒊕

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COMMENT

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S	PC	COP
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CCs without a topic characteristically occur in a special construction in Sumerian. In this construction the CC is subordinate and functions as the PC of another CC. In ex. (92) below the CC “Lala-gula, child of Ela, the *gudu*-priest, was a widow” is followed by an enclitic COP.

(92) NG 6 1-2 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P111358)

<sup>m</sup> la <sub>3</sub> -la-gu-la	dumu	e-la	gudu <sub>4</sub>
<sub>S</sub> [lalagula	dumu	ela	gudu=ak=∅]
<sub>S</sub> [PN <sub>1</sub> child	PN <sub>2</sub>	priest=GEN=ABS]	
nu-mu-su <sub>2</sub>	i <sub>3</sub> -me-am <sub>3</sub>		
<sub>PC</sub> [numusu=∅]	i- <sub>S12</sub> me- <sub>S14</sub> ∅- <sub>S15</sub> 'a=am-∅		
<sub>PC</sub> [widow=ABS]	FIN-COP-3SG.S-SUB=COP-3NH.S		

“It was (the case) that Lala-gula, child of Ela, the *gudu*-priest, was a widow. (Ur-Igalima, child of Lugal-igihush, the *gudu*-priest, married her.”

The subordinate CC functions as the PC of the matrix CC, whose S is a “dummy” S without any semantic content. In type (C) clauses there is no topic about which the predication is pragmatically about, they are “presentational” clauses functioning to introduce new entities into the discourse. They typically occur at the beginning of administrative or legal texts, and all participants are expressed with an overt lexical NP. In these constructions the enclitic COP may be interpreted as a focus marker marking the whole sentence as focus.<sup>55</sup> See section 6.2 below for details about these constructions.

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<sup>55</sup> See, e.g., Lambrecht (1994, pp. 137-146, pp. 233-235) for a description on event-reporting or presentational constructions. In Lambrecht (2001, pp. 507-510) similar constructions are labelled as “sentence-focus clefts”.

3.3.4 Copular Clauses in Which the Order of S and PC Is Inverted

In all CCs discussed up to this point, the constituent adjacent to the COP was the PC. The most important feature of the next clause type, type (D), is that the participant adjacent to the COP is the S. In other words, the order of PC and S is inverted. Characteristically, the S of these configurations is either an independent pronoun or a proper name. The kinds of NPs that may function as S, and the inverse order of S and PC both suggest that these CCs are specificational. Consequently, the S of these CCs must function as identificational focus.

Two main varieties of specificational CCs are attested in Sumerian: in clause type (Di), the topic of the clause is the PC, while in clause type (Dii), the topic of the clause is the left-dislocated possessor of the PC. Of the two clause types, (Dii) is attested more frequently.

(Di) TOPIC= PC, S = FOCUS

TOPIC	COMMENT	
	FOC	
PC, (PC)	S	COP

Sumerian does not have definite articles. Nevertheless, it is plausible to assume that in ex. (93) the PCs **en** “lord” and **lugal** “king” are to be translated as “the lord” and “the king” due to the context of the clause. Ex. (93) then contains two specificational clauses that exhaustively identify the referents of the expressions “the king” and “the lord”, respectively.

(93) Enlil and Ninlil 143 (ETCSL 1.2.1)

en	za-e-me-en	lugal	za-e-me-en
<sub>PC</sub> [en=∅]	<sub>S</sub> [ze=∅]=me-en	<sub>PC</sub> [lugal=∅]	<sub>S</sub> [ze=∅]=me-en
<sub>PC</sub> [lord=ABS]	<sub>S</sub> [2SG.PR=ABS]=COP-2SG.S	<sub>PC</sub> [king=ABS]	<sub>S</sub> [2SG.PR=ABS]=COP-2SG.S
“The lord is you, the king is you.”			

Ex. (94) contains two CCs. The first one belongs to type (Aii), and its PC is the headless non-finite relative clause “he who has no mother”. The second one is a specificational clause asserting that “my mother” is nobody else but “you” (= the goddess Gatum-dug).

(94) Gudea Cyl. A 3:6 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232300)

ama	nu-tuku-me
<sub>PC</sub> [ama	nu-tuku-∅]=me-en
<sub>PC</sub> [mother	NEG-have-TL]=COP-1SG.S

ama- $\eta$ u <sub>10</sub>	ze <sub>2</sub> -me
<sub>PC</sub> [ama= $\eta$ u= $\emptyset$ ]	<sub>S</sub> [ze= $\emptyset$ ]=me-en
<sub>PC</sub> [mother=1SG.POSS=ABS]	<sub>S</sub> [2SG.PR=ABS]=COP-2SG.S

“I am someone who has no mother, my mother is you.”

The only example of a CC with inverted word order that seemingly challenges the specificational interpretation of type (Di) CCs is ex. (95) below. Here the god Dumuzi escaping from the demons turns to the sun god Utu for help hiding. The usual translation of this clause is predicational: “(O Utu,) I am your friend” (ETCSL), which interprets **guli=zu= $\emptyset$**  “your friend” as the PC and the 1st ps. sg. pronoun as the S, and ignores the word order.<sup>56</sup> This interpretation, however, makes no sense in this context. Saying “I am your friend” may indicate one’s willingness to help, but here it is Dumuzi who needs help from Utu.

(95) Dumuzid and Geshtin-ana 23 (ETCSL 1.4.1.1)

<sup>d</sup> utu	gu <sub>5</sub> -li-zu	$\eta$ e <sub>26</sub> -e-me-en
utu= $\emptyset$	<sub>PC</sub> [guli=zu= $\emptyset$ ]	$\eta$ e= $\emptyset$ ]=me-en
DN=ABS	<sub>PC</sub> [friend=2SG.POSS=ABS	1SG.PR-ABS]=COP-1SG.S

“O Utu, I am your friend.”  
 “O Utu, your friend is me.”  
 “O Utu, it is me, your friend. (Can you recognize me, the youth?)”

It does not yield a satisfying translation either, if one takes into consideration the word order and translates ex. (95) as: “Your friend is me.” Why would the escaping Dumuzi utter this clause to a god from whom he expects help?

I would rather suggest taking the word **guli=zu= $\emptyset$**  “your friend” as part of the S in apposition to the 1st. ps. sg. pronoun and translate the clause as: “It is me, your friend.” Dumuzi wants Utu to recognize him. He assumes that if the god recognizes him, he will then help him. Ex. (95) suggests that in focal appositional constructions the apposition may precede the anchor, or the head of the construction. The same phenomenon may be observed in exx. (246) and (247) below.

A special subtype of type (Di) CCs, in which the topical PC has no overt expression, plays an important role in Sumerian cleft constructions; see subsections 3.3.5 and 5.2 below.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. also Jacobsen (1987, p. 228): “Sun god, I am your comrade, you are a gallant, you know me!”; Römer (1993, p. 489): “Utu, ich bin dein Gefährte, bin (noch) ein Jüngling, du weißt (es); Katz (2003, p. 292): “Utu, I am your friend, I am a young man you know, ...”.

(Dii) TOPIC = PC'S POSS, S = FOCUS

TOPIC	COMMENT		
		FOC	
PC'S POSS, (PC'S POSS)	PC	S	COP

Ex. (96) is a type (Dii) CC, in which the topic of the clause is the left-dislocated possessor of the PC. It is from a bilingual literary text. In this instance, the specificational interpretation is confirmed by the Akkadian translation, in which an enclitic **=/ma/** (in bold) follows the 2nd ps. sg. pronoun **atta**, marking it as the identificational focus of the clause.<sup>57</sup> Ex. (96) asserts about the universe that its lord is nobody else but “you” (= the god Nanna).

(96) Letter from X to the god Nanna 16 (ETCSL 3.3.22)

[an	ki]-bi-ta	lugal-bi
PC'S POSS[an	ki=bi=da=ak]	PC[lugal=bi=∅]
PC'S POSS[sky	earth=3NH.POSS=COM=GEN]	PC[king=3NH.POSS=ABS]
za-e-me-en	nam-bi	i <sub>3</sub> - <sup>r</sup> tar-re <sup>1</sup>
S[ze=∅]=me-en	nam=bi=∅	S <sub>2</sub> i <sub>-</sub> S <sub>12</sub> tar <sub>-</sub> S <sub>14</sub> en
S[2SG.PR=ABS]=COP-2SG.S	fate=3NH.POSS=ABS	FIN-cut-2SG.A
ša-me-e u <sub>3</sub> er-še-tam be-el-šu-nu at-ta- <b>ma</b> ši-ma-ti-šu-nu ta-ši-a-am		
“As for the universe, its lord is you. You decide its fate.”		

Clause type (Dii) occurs frequently in literary texts; exx. (97)-(101) below all come from this genre of texts (see also ex. [27] above).

(97) Ur-Namma C 62 (ETCSL 2.4.1.3)

[ki-en]- <sup>r</sup> gi <sup>1</sup> -ra	ud <sub>5</sub> -saη-bi	ηe <sub>26</sub> -e-me-en
PC'S POSS[kiengir=ak]	PC[udsasη=bi=∅]	S[ηe=∅]=me-en
PC'S POSS[Sumer=GEN]	PC[leader=3NH.POSS=ABS]	S[1SG.PR=ABS]=COP-1SG.S
“As for Sumer, its leader is me.”		

(98) Shulgi B 132 (ETCSL 2.4.2.02)

ηiri <sub>3</sub> -ηen-na	inim	uzu-ga-ka
PC'S POSS[ηiriηena]	inim	uzug=ak=ak]
PC'S POSS[list	word	entrails=GEN=GEN]

57 See Cohen (2000) and (2005, pp. 31-35) about the use of **=/ma/** as focus marker.

<sup>d</sup>nin-tur<sub>5</sub>-bi                      ne<sub>26</sub>-e-me-en  
<sub>PC</sub>[nintur=bi=∅]                      <sub>S</sub>[ne=∅]=me-en  
<sub>PC</sub>[DN=3NH.POSS=ABS]                      <sub>S</sub>[1SG.PR=ABS]=COP-1SG.S  
 “As for the collections of omens, their goddess Nintur (i.e., their creator) is me.”

(99) Letter from Inanaka to the goddess Nintinuga 8 (ETCSL 3.3.10)

til<sub>3</sub>-la                      ug<sub>5</sub>-ga                      en<sub>3</sub>                      tar-bi  
<sub>PC</sub>'s POSS<sub>L</sub>[til-'a]                      <sub>PC</sub>[en=∅]                      tar-∅=bi=∅]  
<sub>PC</sub>'s POSS<sub>L</sub>[live-PT]                      die-PT=GEN]                      <sub>PC</sub>[CVN=ABS]                      cut-TL=3NH.POSS=ABS]  
 za-e-me-en  
<sub>S</sub>[ze=∅]=me-en  
<sub>S</sub>[2SG.PR=ABS]=COP-2SG.S  
 “As for the living and the dead, their caretaker is you.”

(100) Asarluhi A 36 (ETCSL 4.01.1)

nam-šita<sub>4</sub>                      e<sub>2</sub>-abzu                      zu<sub>2</sub>                      keše<sub>2</sub>-bi  
<sub>PC</sub>'s POSS<sub>L</sub>[namšita]                      eabzu=ak=ak]                      <sub>PC</sub>[zu=∅]                      keše=bi=∅]  
<sub>PC</sub>'s POSS<sub>L</sub>[priest]                      TN=GEN=GEN]                      <sub>PC</sub>[tooth=ABS]                      bind=3NH.POSS=ABS]  
 za-e-me-en  
<sub>S</sub>[ze=∅]=me-en  
<sub>S</sub>[2SG.PR=ABS]=COP-2SG.S  
 “As for the purification priests in the E-abzu, their supervisor is you.”

(101) Lipit-Eštar B 42 (ETCSL 2.5.5.2)

e<sub>2</sub>-kur-re                      e<sub>2</sub>                      <sup>d</sup>en-lil<sub>2</sub>-la<sub>2</sub>-še<sub>3</sub>  
<sub>PC</sub>'s POSS<sub>L</sub>[ekur=e]                      e                      enlil=ak=še]  
<sub>PC</sub>'s POSS<sub>L</sub>[TN=DEM]                      house                      DN=GEN=TERM]  
<sup>d</sup>li-pi<sub>2</sub>-it-eš<sub>4</sub>-tar<sub>2</sub>                      saṇ-us<sub>2</sub>-bi                      za-e-me-en  
 lipiteštar=∅                      <sub>PC</sub>[saṇus=bi=∅]                      <sub>S</sub>[ze=∅]=me-en  
 PN=ABS                      <sub>PC</sub>[supporter=3NH.POSS=ABS]                      <sub>S</sub>[2SG.PR=ABS]=COP-2SG.S  
 “For the Ekur, Enlil’s temple, its steadfast supporter, is you, Lipit-Eštar.”

In all the exx. (93)-(101) above, the S preceding the COP functions as an identificational focus. So they could all be paraphrased as it-clefts in English. Ex. (97), for example, may be paraphrased as: “As for Sumer, it is me who is its leader.”

All examples of type (Dii) clauses so far have had 1st or 2nd ps. sg. S, which is what made the identification of the constituent next to the COP as S trouble-free. One can identify specificational clauses with 3rd ps. sg. Ss too. Ex. (102) below is a type (Dii) CC. The S, the constituent adjacent to the COP, is a divine name, a NP with an identifiable referent, while the PC is another NP. The topic of the clause is the left-dislocated possessor “Enmetena, the builder of the temple E-muš”, and the clause asserts about him that his personal god is nobody else but Šul-MUŠ×PA. As in other

languages, it is difficult to decide which constituent is the S, but I assume that this clause is a specificational clause with inverted word order.<sup>58</sup>

(102) En-metena 3 1:9-2:3 (RIME 1.9.5.3) (Lagash, 24th c.)

en-mete-na,	lu <sub>2</sub>	e <sub>2</sub> -muš <sub>3</sub>	du <sub>3</sub> -a,
PC's POSS [enmetena	lu	emuš=∅	du-'a=ak]
PC's POSS [PN	man	TN=ABS	build-PT=GEN]
dinir-ra-ni,	dšul-MUŠ×PA-am <sub>6</sub>		
PC [dinir=ani=∅]	s[šul-MUŠ×PA=∅]=am-∅		
PC [god=3SG.POSS=ABS]	s[DN=ABS]=COP-3SG.S		

“As for Enmetena, the builder of the temple E-muš, his personal god is Šul-MUŠ×PA.”<sup>59</sup>

In ex. (103) below, the topic is only expressed by the 1st ps. sg. possessive pronoun because of its context (for similar constructions, see exx. [81] and [82] above). The S, the constituent adjacent to the COP, is a divine name, a NP with an identifiable referent, while the PC is another NP. The topic denotation of the clause is “I”, the 1st ps. sg. narrator of the composition, and the clause asserts about him that his brother and friend is nobody else but the god Utu himself. I assume that this clause, too, is a specificational clause with inverted word order.

(103) Shulgi A 79 (ETCSL 2.4.2.01)

šeš	gu <sub>5</sub> -li-ηu <sub>10</sub>	šul	dutu-am <sub>3</sub>
PC [šeš	guli=ηu=∅]	s[šul	utu=∅]=am-∅
PC [brother	friend=1SG.POSS=ABS]	s[youth	DN=ABS]=COP-3SG.S

“(As for me) my brother and friend is the hero Utu himself.”

### 3.3.5 Sumerian Cleft Constructions

Type (E) sentences are biclausal constructions similar to ex. (62) above, consisting of two main clauses. They differ from biclausal constructions like ex. (62) in two respects: i) their first clause is not a type (Ai) predication CC, but a type (Di) specificational CC, with the S under focus; ii) their second clause is also a CC, not a clause with a finite non-copular verb. In the first clause of ex. (104) below, the 2nd ps. sg. pronominal S is in the focus position, the topic of the clause is the PC which is expressed here with no overt morpheme. Sumerian <sub>s</sub>[ze=∅]-me-en corresponds to “it is you” in English: the two clauses have the same information structure in both languages, the

<sup>58</sup> Note that in ex. (80) above, the S was the name of the city’s protective god, so it is plausible to assume that the name functions as the S here, too.

<sup>59</sup> The reading of this divine name is uncertain, earlier it was read as Šul-utul.

difference is in the correspondence between the syntactic and pragmatic functions, as shown in Table 3.2 below:

**Tab. 3.2:** The clause “it is you” in English and Sumerian

TOPIC		FOCUS	
<sub>PC</sub> [ $\emptyset$ ]		<sub>S</sub> [ze= $\emptyset$ ]	=me-en
<sub>S</sub> it	is	<sub>PC</sub> you	

Ex. (104) comes from the very end of the narrative poem Enmerkar and En-suhgir-ana (ETCSL 1.8.2.4). En-suhgir-ana, the lord of Aratta, concedes his defeat to Enmerkar, the ruler of Uruk, telling him (literally): “It is you. You are the lord beloved by the goddess Inana”. From the context it is clear that what he means is “(Between you and me) it is you who is the lord beloved by Inana”. The construction is used to express exhaustive identification, i.e. it is used to mark the referent of the 2nd ps. pronoun as focus.

(104) Enmerkar and En-suhgir-ana 276 (ETCSL 1.8.2.4)

za-e-me-en

<sub>S</sub>[ze= $\emptyset$ ]=me-en

<sub>S</sub>[2SG.PR=ABS]=COP-2SG.S

en            ki            an<sub>2</sub>            <sup>d</sup>inana-me-en

<sub>PC</sub>[en            ki= $\emptyset$             an- $\emptyset$             inanak=ak= $\emptyset$ ]=me-en

<sub>PC</sub>[lord            place=ABS            measure-TL            DN=GEN=ABS]=COP-2SG.S

“It is you who is the lord beloved by the goddess Inana.”

The construction used in ex. (104) is a cleft: the two CCs appear to form a single sentence, they “express a logically simple proposition, which can also be expressed in the form of a single clause without a change in truth conditions” (Lambrecht, 2001, p. 467). The Sumerian construction seemingly differs from the English it-cleft in that the clause that corresponds to the English relative clause is not a subordinate clause in Sumerian. In sections 4.2-4.3 below, however, it will be shown that type (Aii) predicational CCs such as the second clause of ex. (104) may be interpreted as headless relative clauses. An account of the origin of the Sumerian construction will be given in section 5.2 below.

A variant of the same construction, in which the second clause has a finite non-copular verb, is frequently attested in Sumerian. The problem of whether the COP in constructions like ex. (104) above and ex. (105) below has already been grammaticalized into a focus marker will be discussed in section 5.3 below, where copular biclausal constructions involving a specificational CC are treated.



(105) Gudea Cyl. A 13:2 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232300)

siki udu gan-na-kam  
<sub>s</sub>[siki udu gan=ak=∅]=am-∅  
<sub>s</sub>[wool sheep bearing=GEN=ABS]=COP-3NH.S  
 šu-a mi-ni-ṇar-ṇar  
 šu='a <sub>s4</sub>mu-<sub>s10</sub>ni-<sub>s11</sub>n-<sub>s12</sub>ṇarṇar-<sub>s14</sub>∅  
 hand=L1 VEN-L1-3SG.A-put~PL-3NH.P

“(He undid the tongue of the goad and the whip;) it was wool from lamb-bearing sheep that he placed instead in the hands. (Literally: “it was wool from lamb-bearing sheep. He placed that in the hands.”)

### 3.4 The Typology of Copular Clauses in Practice

A very instructive passage about the use of CCs comes from the very end of the narrative poem Enmerkar and En-suhgir-ana (ETCSL 1.8.2.4). Lines from this passage have already been quoted in the previous section. En-suhgir-ana, the lord of Aratta, concedes his defeat to Enmerkar, the ruler of Uruk. The passage consists of nine clauses; seven of them are copular. The passage opens with a cleft construction as discussed above (cf. ex. [104]) (= [106a]), followed by a type (Aii) CC containing the phrase **dili=zu=ne** “you alone/only you” (= [106b]).

After a non-copular clause (= [106c]), there is a type (Aii) CC with a pronominal, topical S (= [106d]). The next clause is a type (Dii) specificational CC (= [106e]); the subject is expressed by a 2nd ps. sg. pronoun in the focus position next to the COP. The topic is “(the people) from the south to the highlands”, which is coreferential with the possessive pronominal enclitic attached to the PC. In the fifth, type (Aiii) CC (= [106f]), the S is an independent pronoun that functions here as a contrastive topic. The sixth one is again a type (Aii) CC with a pronominal, topical S, expressed only as an unaccented pronominal suffix on the independent COP (= [106g]). The seventh clause is another type (Di) specificational CC; the subject, expressed by a 2nd ps. sg. independent pronoun, is the focus (= [106h]). The last clause is not copular, however, an independent pronoun is used as the S, indicating that it is a contrastive topic (= [106i]).

(106) Enmerkar and En-suhgir-ana 276-280 (ETCSL 1.8.2.4)

(a)-(b)

za-e-me-en	en	ki	aṇ <sub>2</sub>
<sub>s</sub> [ze=∅]=me-en	<sub>pc</sub> [en	ki=∅	aṇ-∅
<sub>s</sub> [2SG.PR=ABS]=COP-2SG.S	<sub>pc</sub> [lord	place=ABS	measure-TL

<sup>d</sup>inana-me-en  
 inanak=ak=∅]=me-en  
 DN=GEN=ABS]=COP-2SG.S

dili-zu-ne<sub>2</sub> mah-me-en  
 dili=zu=ne PC[mah-Ø=Ø]=me-en  
 single=2SG.POSS=L4 PC[august-TL=ABS]=COP-2SG.S  
 “It is you who is the lord beloved by the goddess Inana; you alone are exalted.”

## (c)-(d)

ḏinana-ke<sub>4</sub> ur<sub>2</sub> kug-ga-ni-še<sub>3</sub> zid-de<sub>3</sub>-eš  
 inanak=e ur kug=ani=še zid=eš  
 DN=ERG lap holy=3SG.POSS=TERM true=ADV  
 mu-un-pad<sub>3</sub>-de<sub>3</sub>-en ki ṛan<sub>2</sub>-ṛa<sub>2</sub><sup>1</sup>-ni-me-en  
 S<sub>4</sub>mu-S<sub>11</sub>n-S<sub>12</sub>pad-S<sub>14</sub>en PC[ki=Ø an<sub>2</sub>=ani=Ø]=me-en  
 VEN-3SG.A-choose-2SG.P PC[place=ABS measure=3SG.POSS=ABS]=COP-2SG.S  
 “Inana has truly chosen you for her holy lap, you are her beloved.”

## (e)-(f)

sig-ta igi-nim-še<sub>3</sub> en gal-bi za-e-me-en  
 sig=ta iginim=še PC[en gal=bi=Ø] S[ze=Ø]=me-en  
 low=ABL upper=TERM PC[lord big=3NH.POSS=ABS] S[2SG.PR=ABS]=COP-2SG.S  
 ṛe<sub>26</sub>-e us<sub>2</sub>-sa-zu-me-en,  
 S[ṛe=Ø] PC[us-’a=zu=Ø]=me-en  
 S[1SG.PR=ABS] PC[follow-PT=2SG.POSS=ABS]=COP-2SG.S  
 “(For the people) from the south to the highlands, their great lord is you. As for me, I am indeed only second one to you.”

## (g)-(h)

a ru-a-ta gaba-ri-zu nu-me-en  
 a=Ø ru-’a=ta PC[gabari=zu=Ø] S<sub>1</sub>nu-S<sub>2</sub>i-S<sub>12</sub>me-S<sub>14</sub>en  
 semen=ABS impose-PT=ABL PC[equal=2SG.POSS=ABS] NEG-FIN-COP-2SG.S  
 šeš gal za-e-me-en  
 PC[šeš gal=Ø] S[ze=Ø]=me-en  
 PC[brother big=ABS] S[2SG.PR=ABS]=COP-2SG.S  
 “From the moment of conception, I was not your equal. The older brother is you.”

## (i)

ṛe<sub>26</sub>-e nu-mu-da-sa<sub>2</sub>-e-en ud da-ri<sub>2</sub>-še<sub>3</sub>  
 S[ṛe=Ø] S<sub>1</sub>nu-S<sub>4</sub>mu-S<sub>6</sub>e-S<sub>8</sub>da-S<sub>12</sub>sa-S<sub>14</sub>en ud dari=še  
 S[1SG.PR=ABS] NEG-VEN-2SG-COM-equal-1SG.S day eternal=TERM  
 “As for me, I will never match you!”

The same participant, Enmerkar, who is addressed here in the 2nd ps. sg., functions in this passage in turns as focus, and (established) topic. The speaker contrasts himself twice with him. One may even notice a rhythm in the passage: the sequence focal,

topical occurs three times. The composer of the text evidently was aware of the functions and meanings of the different CCs and made rhetorical use of them.

### 3.5 Summary and Conclusions

Relying only on features noticeable in our written sources, the previous discussion demonstrated that the structural varieties of Sumerian CCs may only be adequately accounted for with reference to the information structure of CCs. A description that refers only to the notions subject and predicate complement cannot account for the attested word order permutations and for the different ways in which the S and the possessor of the PC are expressed.

From the evidence presented above it seems plausible to conclude that Sumerian CCs have two unique structural positions to accommodate constituents functioning as topics and foci. Topics occur in the left periphery of the clause, while foci occur left adjacent to the COP. In addition to their positions, foci and contrastive topics may have also been marked with prosodic prominence, but we have no access to the suprasegmental level of the language. Focus could also be expressed with a biclausal cleft construction. In this construction the first CC is a specificational clause with a focal S preceding the COP.

Note that there is a gap in the typology of CCs given in this chapter: no structural variety of CCs was connected with clauses in which the predicate complement functioned as identificational focus material. An explanation for this lies in the fact that focalization of a PC does not result in a change in word order, and consequently, remains unnoticeable to us.<sup>60</sup> Since the PC already occupies a position directly preceding the COP, there is no resulting change in word order.<sup>61</sup>

Consider, for example, the last clause of ex. (107) below: **esi=ø=am-ø** “It is of DIORITE” (small capitals indicate focus). It appears to be a type (Aii) CC on the basis of its form. It is only its context that makes it fairly likely that the PC functions as an identificational focus here.

(107) Gudea Statue B 7:49-54 (Lagash, 22nd. c.) (P232275)

alan-e,	u <sub>3</sub>	kug	nu
alan=e=ø	u	kug=ø	nu
statue=DEM=ABS	and	silver=ABS	NEG

<sup>60</sup> See, however, ex. (251) in subsection 5.3.3 below. This example almost certainly contains a seemingly type (Ai) CC in which the PC functions as an identificational focus.

<sup>61</sup> In subsection 5.3.5 below, evidence will be presented to show that the focalization of a predicate complement is marked, as expected, only by prosodic prominence.

za-gin <sub>3</sub>		nu-ga-am <sub>3</sub>					
zagin=∅		<sup>s1</sup> nu- <sup>s2</sup> i- <sup>s3</sup> nga- <sup>s12</sup> me= <sup>s14</sup> ∅					
lapis.lazuli=ABS		NEG-FIN-COOR-COP=3NH.S					
u <sub>3</sub>	uruda	nu	u <sub>3</sub>	an-na	nu,	zabar	nu
u	uruda=∅	nu	u	anak=∅	nu	zabar=∅	nu
and	copper=ABS	NEG	and	tin=ABS	NEG	bronze=ABS	NEG
kin <sub>2</sub> -ne <sub>26</sub>	lu <sub>2</sub>		nu-ba- <sup>s1</sup> na <sub>2</sub> - <sup>s7</sup> na <sub>2</sub>			<sup>na4</sup> esi-am <sub>3</sub> <sup>62</sup>	
kin=e	lu=e		<sup>s1</sup> nu- <sup>s5</sup> b- <sup>s7</sup> a- <sup>s12</sup> na <sup>s14</sup> na <sup>s14</sup> - <sup>s14</sup> e			<sup>PC</sup> [esi=∅]=am-∅	
work=DAT.NH	person=ERG		NEG-3NH-DAT-put~PF-3SG.A			<sup>PC</sup> [diorite=ABS]=COP-3NH.S	
“This statue is neither of silver nor lapis lazuli; and neither of copper, nor tin, nor bronze. No one therefore may reuse it (lit., put it to work). It is of DIORITE.”							

Alternatively, a more refined structural typology could have been used to describe Sumerian CCs, which would assume the existence of a structural position, called a focus position, immediately preceding the COP. This would remain empty if no constituent of the clause was focalized, and all focalized constituents would be assumed to “move” into this position. This typology would, however, be difficult to maintain without access to the suprasegmental level of Sumerian, and would force one to classify many examples on an unjustifiable basis.

The description of an extinct language has limitations, which has to be accepted by the linguist, if she or he wants to provide a sound description of the language. With this caveat in mind, I have decided to use a typology that is based only on systematically observable features.

<sup>62</sup> Wilcke (2013, p. 176) translates the last clause “Sie ist **dieser**/Gabbrostein **hier**” (bold is Wilcke’s), and assumes that the writing <sup>na4</sup>esi-am<sub>3</sub> instead of the expected <sup>na4</sup>esi-im is due to the presence of a demonstrative suffix -/e/ after the word <sup>na4</sup>esi “diorite”. His assumption is unlikely to be correct as this clause is a predicational copular clause, in which the predicate complement predicates a property about the subject (= the statue). The noun that functions as the predicate complement is therefore non-referential. See now also Attinger (2014) on Wilcke’s analysis.

## 4 Attributive Copular Biclausal Constructions

### 4.1 Introduction

CCs in Sumerian are characteristically and frequently used as parts of constructions that are biclausal, at least in origin. In Sumerian copular biclausal constructions the initial clause is always a CC. The verb of the second clause is typically a finite, non-copular verb, but occasionally the second clause may also be copular. The defining characteristic of copular biclausal constructions (henceforth, CBCs) is that one of the participants of the CC and one of the participants of the other clause are coreferential. The shared participant occurs as an overt NP only in the initial CC, and is present only in the form of a pronominal affix on the (verbal) predicate in the second clause.

CBCs can be divided into two main groups on the basis of the shared participant's pragmatic function in the initial CC:

1. in *attributive CBCs* the shared participant functions as the topic in the initial CC of the CBC. The initial CC may belong to type (Ai), (Aii), (Bi), or (Dii). In type (Ai) and (Aii) CCs the topic is the S, while in type (Bi) and (Dii) CCs the topic is the possessor of the PC.
2. in *specificational CBCs* the shared participant functions as the identificational focus in the initial CC of the CBC. The initial CC as a rule belongs to a special subtype of type (Di) CCs.<sup>63</sup>

Specificational CBCs are constructions that functionally correspond to English it-clefts; and the COP of these constructions eventually became a focus marker. They will be discussed in Chapter 5 below.

This chapter discusses attributive CBCs. Its main finding is that that attributive CBCs are in essence constructions involving a paratactic relative clause: the PC of the initial CC functions as an appositive (i.e., non restrictive) copular relative clause with an attributive meaning.

In the second section of the chapter the construction will be compared with relative clauses in Sumerian. It will be demonstrated that attributive CBCs are the manifestation of a rare relativization strategy labelled as paratactic by Kuteva and Comrie (2005). The next section discusses evidence indicating that CCs of attributive CBCs overlap functionally not only with relative clauses, but also with appositional con-

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**63** The only exception I am aware of is ex. (251) below, which contains a seemingly type (Ai) CC. In this CC it is not the subject that functions as the identificational focus but the PC.

structions. Type (Aii) CCs are shown to function as substitutes for appositional constructions with a pronominal anchor, which are ungrammatical in Sumerian.

The findings of Sections 4.2 and 4.3 will lead to the conclusion that a Sumerian type (Aii) CC may have three interpretations depending on the context: i) a CC; ii) an attributive appositive construction with a pronominal anchor; iii) an appositional attributive relative clause.

Section 4.4 discusses attributive CBCs in which the CC may be interpreted as a reason or concessive clause. Section 4.5 focuses on attributive CBCs containing a CC with a left-dislocated possessor. These constructions provide compelling evidence that in attributive CBCs the shared participant must function as the topic in the initial CC. Chapter 4 concludes with a section on constructions in which the enclitic COP of the attributive CBC functions as the standard marker of a simulative construction.

## 4.2 Attributive CBCs and the Paratactic Relativization Strategy

A typical example of an attributive CBC is ex. (108) below, in which the topical S of the CC functions as the patient in the matrix clause. The shared participant is **li** “juniper”, which is referred to by a pronominal suffix in S14 of the finite verb in the matrix clause. The two component clauses of this construction could be used independently without any modification as simple sentences. In attributive CBCs the predicate of the initial CC may be interpreted as an attribute of the shared participant, as shown also by the second, non-literal translation of ex. (108).

(108) Gudea Cyl. A 8:10 = 13:26 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232300)

### COPULAR CLAUSE

li <sup>n15</sup>	u <sub>2</sub>	sikil	kur-ra-kam
s[li=∅]	pc[u	sikil	kur=ak=∅]=am-∅
s[juniper=ABS]	pc[plant	pure	mountain=GEN=ABS]=COP-3NH.S

### MATRIX CLAUSE

izi-a	bi <sub>2</sub> -si-si
izi='a	s <sub>5</sub> <sup>b</sup> -s <sub>10</sub> <sup>i</sup> -s <sub>11</sub> <sup>n</sup> -s <sub>12</sub> <sup>i</sup> sisi-s <sub>14</sub> <sup>∅</sup>
fire=L2.NH	3NH-L2-3SG.A-fill~PL-3NH.P

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

Attributive CBCs are characterized by a conceptual asymmetry. Though they consist of two predicates, the two predicates contribute differently to what the construction is meant to communicate. Consider ex. (109), which is from a letter-order. It is meant to instruct Ea-bani to hand over a certain Erra-gashir to Ursaga. Formally it consists of two predicates: “Erra-gashir is a citizen of Nippur” and “He (= Ea-bani) must hand over him (= Erra-gashir) to Ursaga”. But clearly, the predicate in the CC functions

only to provide some additional information about Erra-gashir. What the writer of the letter meant to achieve was that Ea-bani transfer Erra-gashir to Ursaga.

(109) TCS 1, 61 3-6 (Nippur, 21st c.) (P134662)

<sup>m</sup>er<sub>3</sub>-ra-ga-ši-ir,      dumu      nibru<sup>ki</sup>-kam,  
<sub>s</sub>[erragašir=Ø]      <sub>pc</sub>[dumu      nibru=ak=Ø]=am-Ø  
<sub>s</sub>[PN=ABS]      <sub>pc</sub>[child      GN=GEN=ABS]=COP-3SG.S  
ur-sag<sub>9</sub>-ga,      ha-mu-na-šum<sub>2</sub>-mu  
ursaga=ra      <sub>s1</sub>ha-<sub>s4</sub>mu-<sub>s6</sub>nn-<sub>s7</sub>a-<sub>s11</sub>n-<sub>s12</sub>šum-<sub>s14</sub>e  
PN=DAT.H      MOD-VEN-3SG-DAT-3SG.P-give-3SG.A

“(Tell Ea-bani that) he must hand over Erra-gashir, (who is) a citizen of Nippur, to Ursaga!”

The conceptual asymmetry between the two clauses of an attributive CBC may also reveal itself in syntax. Compare exx. (110) and (111), which both contain subordinate clauses. In ex. (110) the CC <sub>s</sub>[amašuhālbi=Ø] <sub>pc</sub>[geme=Ø] i-me-Ø-’a “Ama-shuhalbi is a female slave” is conceptually and structurally on the same level as the following three subordinate clauses, i.e., they are coordinate clauses. Accordingly, the predicate of the CC is an independent COP, as is normal in subordinate clauses.

(110) NG 123 1-8 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P111431)

ku-li-sag<sub>9</sub>-ke<sub>4</sub>,      <sup>m</sup>ama-šu-hal-bi      geme<sub>2</sub>      i<sub>3</sub>-me-a,  
kulisag=e      <sub>s</sub>[amašuhālbi=Ø]      <sub>pc</sub>[geme=Ø]      <sub>s2</sub>i-<sub>s12</sub>me-<sub>s14</sub>Ø-<sub>s15</sub>’a  
PN<sub>1</sub>=ERG      <sub>s</sub>[PN<sub>2</sub>=ABS]      <sub>pc</sub>[maiden=ABS]      FIN-COP-3SG.S-SUB  
na-ba-ra-sa<sub>10</sub>-a,      i-ta-e<sub>3</sub>-a,      nu-na-šum<sub>2</sub>-ma,  
<sub>s1</sub>nu-<sub>s5</sub>ba-<sub>s9</sub>ta-<sub>s11</sub>n-<sub>s12</sub>sa-<sub>s14</sub>Ø-<sub>s15</sub>’a      itaea=ra      <sub>s1</sub>nu-<sub>s6</sub>nn-<sub>s7</sub>a-<sub>s11</sub>n-<sub>s12</sub>šum-<sub>s14</sub>Ø-<sub>s15</sub>’a  
NEG-3NH-ABL-3SG.A-buy-3SG.P-SUB      PN<sub>3</sub>=DAT.H      NEG-3SG-DAT-3SG.A-give-3SG.P-SUB  
ba-da-’zah<sub>3</sub>’-a-kam,      e<sub>2</sub>      <sup>d</sup>nin-’mar’-ki-ka,  
<sub>s5</sub>ba-<sub>s8</sub>da-<sub>s12</sub>zah-<sub>s14</sub>Ø-<sub>s15</sub>’a=ak=am-Ø<sup>64</sup>      e      ninmar=ak=’a  
3NH-COM-disappear-3SG.S-SUB=GEN=COP-3NH.S      house      GN=GEN=L1  
nam-erim<sub>2</sub>-bi      in-kud  
namerim=bi=Ø      <sub>s2</sub>i-<sub>s11</sub>n-<sub>s12</sub>kud-<sub>s14</sub>Ø  
oath=3NH.POSS=ABS      FIN-3SG.A-cut-3NH.P

“In the temple in Ninmarki, Kuli-sag took the affirmatory oath that Ama-shuhalbi was a female slave, that he did not sell her, that he did not gave her to Itaea, and that she run away.”

In ex. (111), however, the CC has the same subject, Lu-girizal and Lu-digira, as the following (subordinate) clause, but the predicate of the CC is an enclitic COP, indicating two things: i) formally the CC is not subordinate; ii) the relationship between the CC

64 About the function of the enclitic COP here, see Section 6.3 below.

and the following (subordinate) finite clause is not coordination. In other words, ex. (111) cannot be interpreted as saying “Atu swore by the king’s name that Lu-girizal and Lu-digira are the brother of Atu, and that they will not contest the adoption.” It can only mean “He (= Atu) swore by the king’s name that Lu-girizal and Lu-digira, (who are) the brother of Atu, will not contest it (=Atu’s adoption of a slave as his heir) (lit. will not come back to it).”

(111) NATN 920 6-9 (Nippur, 21st c.) (P121617)

lu <sub>2</sub> -giri <sub>17</sub> -zal,	lu <sub>2</sub> -dinjir-ra	šeš	a-tu-me,
<sub>s</sub> [lugirizal	ludinjirak=∅]	<sub>PC</sub> [šeš	atu=ak=∅]=me-eš
<sub>s</sub> [PN <sub>1</sub>	PN <sub>2</sub> =ABS]	<sub>PC</sub> [brother	PN <sub>3</sub> =GEN=ABS]=COP-3PL.S

nu-u<sub>3</sub>-ub-gi<sub>4</sub>-gi<sub>4</sub>-de<sub>3</sub>-ša,

<sub>s1</sub>nu-<sub>s2</sub>i-<sub>s5</sub>b-<sub>s10</sub>∅-<sub>s12</sub>gi<sub>4</sub>-<sub>s13</sub>ed-<sub>s14</sub>eš-<sub>s15</sub>'a=ak

NEG-FIN-3NH-L2.SYN-return~PF-PF-3PL.S-SUB=GEN

mu	lugal-bi	in-pad <sub>3</sub>
mu	lugal=ak=bi=∅	<sub>s2</sub> i- <sub>s11</sub> n- <sub>s12</sub> pad- <sub>s14</sub> ∅

name king=GEN=POSS.3NH=ABS FIN-3SG.A-call-3NH.P

“He (= Atu) swore by the king’s name that Lu-girizal and Lu-digira, who are the brother of Atu, will not contest it (= Atu’s adoption of a slave as his heir) (lit. will not come back to it).”

As exx. (109) and (111) above showed, in attributive CBCs the PC of the CC provides some additional information about one of the participants of the finite verb in the matrix clause. The predicate of the CC thus appears to function as an appositive relative clause whose head is the topical S of the CC in these examples. It seems therefore worthwhile to examine how this construction relates to constructions that may be considered relative clauses in Sumerian.

In Sumerian a noun may be modified by two varieties of verbal predicates: 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*.<sup>65</sup> From a typological point of view (Lehmann, 1986), both of these types of relative clauses are thus head-external, or post-nominal relative clauses.

In finite relative clauses the finite verb of the clause is suffixed as a rule with the subordinator suffix *-(/ʿ)a/*, and the subordinate clause occupies the modifier position of the noun phrase (= P2) whose head (= P1) is the relativized noun, as in exx. (112)-(116) below. In non-finite relative clauses the verb is reduced to a non-finite verbal form: it does not occur with any of the affixes of a finite verbal form, except for the negation

<sup>65</sup> See Comrie (1989, pp. 142-143), who argues that the notion of relative clause should also include non-finite constructions.



prefix /**nu**-, and it displays a set of tense distinctions in terms of whether it is suffixed with **-/ø**/ as in ex. (118), with **-(ʔ)a**/ as in exx. (117), (119) and (120), or with **-/ed**/ as in ex. (121). The non-finite relative clause also occupies the modifier position of the noun phrase whose head is the relativized noun. The Agent of the non-finite verbal form may be expressed either by an NP in the ergative case preceding the verbal form (as in ex. [120]), or by an NP in the genitive case, as the possessor of the relativized noun (as in exx. [117] and [119]). Exx. (116) and (117) are especially 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) En-metena 7 14-16 (RIME 1.9.5.7) (Lagash, 25th c.) (P222539)

gur<sub>4</sub>-gur<sub>4</sub> kug luh-ha i<sub>3</sub> itud<sup>i</sup>-da  
<sub>p1</sub>[gurgur kug luh-ʔa=ak] <sub>p2</sub>[i itud=ak=ø  
<sub>p1</sub>[vessel silver clean-PT=GEN] <sub>p2</sub>[oil month=GEN=ABS  
<sup>d</sup>nin-nir<sub>2</sub>-su<sub>2</sub>-ke<sub>4</sub> ab-ta-gu<sub>7</sub>-a,  
 ninnirsuk=e <sub>s2</sub>a-<sub>s5</sub>b-<sub>s9</sub>ta-<sub>s12</sub>gu-<sub>s14</sub>e-<sub>s15</sub>ʔa]=<sub>p5</sub>ø  
 DN=ERG FIN-3NH-ABL-eat-3SG.A-SUB]=<sub>p5</sub>ABS  
 mu-na-dim<sub>2</sub>  
<sub>s4</sub>mu-<sub>s6</sub>nn-<sub>s7</sub>a-<sub>s11</sub>n-<sub>s12</sub>dim-<sub>s14</sub>ø  
 VEN-3SG-DAT-3SG.A-create-3NH.P

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

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

šū-ni-al-dugud, kindagal, nam-nu-banda<sub>3</sub> e<sub>2</sub>-šag<sub>4</sub>-ga,  
<sub>p1</sub>šunialdugud <sub>p1</sub>kindagal <sub>p2</sub>[namnubanda ešag=ak=ø  
<sub>p1</sub>PN <sub>p1</sub>chief.barber <sub>p2</sub>[overseership inner.room=GEN=ABS  
 an-na-tah-ha, KIB mu-dim<sub>2</sub>-dim<sub>2</sub>  
<sub>s2</sub>a-<sub>s6</sub>nn-<sub>s7</sub>a-<sub>s12</sub>ta-<sub>s14</sub>ø-<sub>s15</sub>ʔa]=<sub>p5</sub>e KIB=ø <sub>s4</sub>mu-<sub>s11</sub>n-<sub>s12</sub>dimdim-<sub>s14</sub>ø  
 FIN-3SG-DAT-add-3NH.S-SUB]=<sub>p5</sub>ERG nail=ABS VEN-3SG.A-create~PL-3NH.P

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

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

ensi<sub>2</sub> inim bi<sub>2</sub>-ib<sub>2</sub>-gi<sub>4</sub>-gi<sub>4</sub>-a  
<sub>p1</sub>ensik <sub>p2</sub>[inim=ø <sub>s5</sub>b-<sub>s10</sub>i-<sub>s11</sub>b-<sub>s12</sub>gigi-<sub>s14</sub>e-<sub>s15</sub>ʔa](=ak)<sup>66</sup>  
<sub>p1</sub>ruler <sub>p2</sub>[word=ABS 3NH-L2-3NH.P-return~PF-3SG.A-SUB](=p5 GEN)  
 “The ruler who withdraws (the regular offerings), ...”

<sup>66</sup> This NP is the first in a sequence of NPs standing in apposition to each other. Only the last of these NPs is case-marked with the genitive, which is to be understood as the case-marker of all NPs in the sequence.

(115) Gudea Cyl. A 5:9 (Lagash, 22nd. c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232300)

ud ki-šar<sub>2</sub>-ra ma-ra-ta-e<sub>3</sub>-a  
<sub>P1</sub>ud <sub>P2</sub>[kišar='a] <sub>S4</sub>mu-<sub>S6</sub>r-<sub>S7</sub>a-<sub>S9</sub>ta-<sub>S10</sub>y-<sub>S12</sub>e-<sub>S14</sub>ø-<sub>S15</sub>'a]=<sub>P5</sub>ø  
<sub>P1</sub>light <sub>P2</sub>[horizon=L2.NH VEN-2SG-DAT-ABL-L2-come.out-3NH.S-SUB]=<sub>P5</sub>ABS  
 “The daylight that had risen for you on the horizon ...”

(116) Gudea Cyl. A 7:11-12 (Lagash, 22nd. c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232300)

inim <sup>d</sup>nanše-e mu-na-dug<sub>4</sub>-ga-aš,  
<sub>P1</sub>inim <sub>P2</sub>[nanše=e] <sub>S4</sub>mu-<sub>S6</sub>nn-<sub>S7</sub>a-<sub>S11</sub>n-<sub>S12</sub>dug-<sub>S14</sub>ø-<sub>S15</sub>'a]=<sub>P5</sub>še  
<sub>P1</sub>word <sub>P2</sub>[DN=ERG VEN-3SG-DAT-3SG.A-speak-3NH.P-SUB]=<sub>P5</sub>TERM  
 saṇ sig ba-ši-ṇar  
 saṇ sig=ø <sub>S5</sub>ba-<sub>S9</sub>ši-<sub>S12</sub>n-<sub>S13</sub>ṇar-<sub>S14</sub>ø  
 head low=ABS 3NH-TERM-3SG.A-put-3NH.P

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

(117) Gudea Cyl. A 12:14-15 (Lagash, 22nd. c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232300)

inim dug<sub>4</sub>-ga <sup>d</sup>nin-ṇir<sub>2</sub>-su-ka-še<sub>3</sub>,  
<sub>P1</sub>inim <sub>P2</sub>[dug-'a] <sub>P3</sub>[ninṇirsuk=ak]=<sub>P5</sub>še  
<sub>P1</sub>word <sub>P2</sub>[speak-PT] <sub>P3</sub>[DN=GEN]=<sub>P5</sub>TERM  
 saṇ sig ba-ši-ṇar  
 saṇ sig=ø <sub>S5</sub>ba-<sub>S9</sub>ši-<sub>S11</sub>n-<sub>S12</sub>ṇar-<sub>S14</sub>ø  
 head low=ABS 3NH-TERM-3SG.A-put-3NH.P

“He accepted what was told by Ningirsu.”

(118) Gudea Statue E 2:1-4 (Lagash, 22nd. c.) (P232278)

arad<sub>2</sub> ni<sub>2</sub> tuku  
<sub>P1</sub>arad <sub>P2</sub>[ni=ø] tuku-ø]  
<sub>P1</sub>slave <sub>P2</sub>[fear=ABS have-TL]

Lit. “slave who has fear (of gods)” = “reverent slave”

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

dumu tud-da <sup>d</sup>ṇa<sub>2</sub>-tum<sub>3</sub>-dug<sub>3</sub>-ke<sub>4</sub>  
<sub>P1</sub>dumu <sub>P2</sub>[tud-'a] <sub>P3</sub>[ṇatumdug=ak]=<sub>P5</sub>e  
<sub>P1</sub>child <sub>P2</sub>[bear-PT] <sub>P3</sub>[DN=GEN]=<sub>P5</sub>ERG  
 “the child born by the goddess Gatumdug”

(120) Gudea Cyl. A 2:28 (Lagash, 22nd. c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232300)

dumu an kug-ge tud-da  
<sub>P1</sub>dumu <sub>P2</sub>[an kug=e tud-'a]=<sub>P5</sub>ø  
<sub>P1</sub>child <sub>P2</sub>[DN holy=ERG bear-PT]=<sub>P5</sub>ABS  
 “the child born by the holy god An”

(121) Gudea Cyl. A 15:19 (Lagash, 22nd. c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232300)

kur	<sup>niš</sup> erin-na	lu <sub>2</sub>	nu-ku <sub>4</sub> -ku <sub>4</sub> -da
<sub>P1</sub> [kur	erin=ak]	<sub>P2</sub> [lu=∅	nu-kuku-ed]= <sub>P5</sub> 'a
<sub>P1</sub> [mountain	cedar=GEN]	<sub>P2</sub> [man=ABS	NEG-enter~PF-PF]= <sub>P5</sub> L1

“Into the mountain of cedars which no one is to penetrate”

There seems to be no restriction on the syntactic function of the participants to be relativized: the relativized noun is the agent in exx. (114) and (118); the subject in ex. (115); the patient in exx. (116), (117), (119), and (120) (cf. also ex. [16] above); the indirect object in ex. (113); a place adverbial in exx. (112) (in the ablative) and (121) (in the locative1). Even possessors of verbal participants may be relativized, as shown by the following examples:

(122) NG 215 5 (Umma, 21st c.) (P131762)

lu <sub>2</sub>	3	šuku-bi	i <sub>3</sub> -la <sub>2</sub> -a
<sub>P1</sub> [lu	3]	<sub>P2</sub> [šukur=bi=∅	<sub>S2</sub> 'i <sub>S12</sub> la <sub>S14</sub> ∅ <sub>S15</sub> 'a]= <sub>P5</sub> e
<sub>P1</sub> [man	3]	<sub>P2</sub> [prebend=3NH.POSS=ABS	FIN-small-3NH.S=SUB]= <sub>P5</sub> ERG

“The three men whose subsistence land was curtailed”

(123) Gudea Cyl. A 17:18 (Lagash, 22nd. c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232300)

e <sub>2</sub>	me-lem <sub>4</sub> -bi	an-ne <sub>2</sub>	us <sub>2</sub> -sa
<sub>P1</sub> e	<sub>P2</sub> [melem=bi=∅	an=e	us-'a]=( <sub>P5</sub> še) <sup>67</sup>
<sub>P1</sub> house	<sub>P2</sub> [halo=POSS.3NH=ABS	heaven=L3.NH	next.to~PT]=( <sub>P5</sub> TERM)

“(Towards) the house whose halo reaches to heaven”

The COP may occur only in finite relative clauses, and only as an independent COP constituting the finite verb (see exx. [124], [125], and [126] below). Non-finite relative clauses with a non-finite COP do not appear to exist; as a matter of fact the COP has no non-finite form in Sumerian.

(124) Letter from Ibbi-Suen to Puzur-Shulgi 19 (ETCSL 3.1.20)

<sup>m</sup> iš-bi-er <sub>3</sub> -ra	numun	ki-en-gi-ra	nu-me-a
<sub>P1</sub> išbierra	<sub>P2</sub> [ <sub>PC</sub> [numun	kiengir=ak=∅]	<sub>S1</sub> nu- <sub>S2</sub> 'i <sub>S12</sub> me- <sub>S14</sub> ∅ <sub>S15</sub> 'a]= <sub>P5</sub> ra
<sub>P1</sub> PN	<sub>P2</sub> [ <sub>PC</sub> [seed	Sumer=GEN=ABS]	NEG-FIN-COP-3SG.S-SUB]= <sub>P5</sub> DAT.H

“(Enlil gave the kingship) to Ishbi-Erra, who is not of Sumerian origin.”

<sup>67</sup> This NP is the first in a sequence of NPs standing in apposition to each other. Only the last of these NPs is case-marked with the terminative, which is to be understood as the case-marker of all NPs in the sequence.

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

ud	tur <sub>5</sub> -ra	i <sub>3</sub> -me-a
p <sub>1</sub> ud	p <sub>2</sub> [ <sub>PC</sub> [tur-'a=∅]]	s <sub>2</sub> i <sub>-</sub> s <sub>12</sub> me <sub>-</sub> s <sub>14</sub> ∅ <sub>-</sub> s <sub>15</sub> 'a]= <sub>p<sub>5</sub></sub> 'a
p <sub>1</sub> day	p <sub>2</sub> [ <sub>PC</sub> [ill-PT=ABS]]	FIN-COP-3SG.S-SUB]= <sub>p<sub>5</sub></sub> L1

“When he was ill, ...”

(126) NG 137 7 (Umma, 21st c.) (P131782)

ab <sub>2</sub>	ša-bar-tur	mu-bi	i <sub>3</sub> -me-a
p <sub>1</sub> ab <sub>2</sub>	p <sub>2</sub> [ <sub>CS</sub> [šabartur=∅]]	p <sub>3</sub> [ <sub>PC</sub> [mu=bi=∅]]	s <sub>3</sub> i <sub>-</sub> s <sub>12</sub> me <sub>-</sub> s <sub>14</sub> ∅ <sub>-</sub> s <sub>15</sub> 'a]= <sub>p<sub>5</sub></sub> ∅
p <sub>1</sub> cow	p <sub>2</sub> [ <sub>CS</sub> [PN=ABS]]	p <sub>3</sub> [ <sub>PC</sub> [name=POSS.3NH=ABS]]	FIN-COP-3SG.S-SUB]= <sub>p<sub>5</sub></sub> ABS

“the cow whose name is Shabar-tur”

As shown above, there seems to be no restriction concerning the syntactic function of the participants relativized in clauses of which the predicate is a non-copular verb. In contrast, the use of copular relative clauses containing an independent COP appears to be restricted either i) to clauses in which the syntactic function of the relativized constituent is *other* than the S (in ex. [125] the relativized constituent is a time adverbial that would be in the locative1 case, while in ex. [126] it is the PC's possessor); or ii) to clauses in which the predicate is negated (ex. [124]). Copular relative clauses in which the S is relativized and the predicate is affirmative are unattested; Sumerian uses attributive CBCs in their place. 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”.

As unusual as the Sumerian attributive CBC may seem, a similar construction is attested in other languages and is recognized by Kuteva and Comrie (2005) as a rare strategy of relative clause formation. This strategy is labelled a paratactic relativization strategy and is considered to be a subtype of the non-reduction strategy together with correlatives and head-internal relatives (Kuteva & Comrie, 2005, p. 211).

In relative clauses using the non-reduction relativization strategy the head noun appears as a full noun phrase inside the relative clause.

“The paratactic relativization strategy involves cases where the ‘relative’ clause contains the full-fledged head and is the same as an unmarked simple (declarative) clause; the relative and main clauses are only very loosely joined together.” (Kuteva & Comrie, 2005, p. 212)

They refer to the sentence “That man just passed by us, he introduced me to the Chancellor of the University yesterday” as a possible English parallel.

This strategy is attested in Amele (spoken in Papua New Guinea):

(127) (Kuteva & Comrie, 2005, p. 212, ex. 9)<sup>68</sup>

mel	mala	heje	on
boy	chicken	illicit	take.3SG.S.REM.PAST
((mel)	eu)	busali	nu-i-a
boy	that	run away	go-3SG.S-TOD.PAST

“The boy that stole the chicken ran away.”

In ex. (127),

“*mel* ‘boy’ is the ‘relativized’ noun in the ‘relative’ clause. This nominal can optionally be referred to in the following ‘matrix’ clause either by the demonstrative *eu* ‘that’ or, if clarification is needed, *mel eu* ‘boy that’. What links the two clauses is the rising intonation at the end of the first clause. This indicates that it is not a final clause and is in either a subordinate or coordinate relationship with the following clause” (Kuteva & Comrie, 2005, p. 213).

Sumerian attributive CBCs appear to be a manifestation of the paratactic relativization strategy as defined by Kuteva and Comrie. Their component clauses may be used separately without any modification as canonical simple clauses; they share a participant and the predicate of the first clause is interpreted as the modifier of the shared participant.

We have no information on the intonation pattern of Sumerian attributive CBCs, but as I demonstrated above the construction is characterized by a conceptual asymmetry that may have syntactic consequences (see ex. [111] above).

It is the biclausal structure of CBCs that is behind the phenomenon’s description in Thomsen’s (1984, p. 53) Sumerian grammar as follows:

“The enclitic copula ... which can occur at the end of the [nominal] chain replaces, so to say, the appropriate case element.”<sup>69</sup>

She means here that in clauses like ex. (128) the Agent followed by an appositive NP should “normally” be marked with an ergative *-e/* case-marker as in the hypothetical ex. (129).

(128) Gudea Cyl. A 1:12 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232300)

ensi <sub>2</sub>	lu <sub>2</sub>	neštug <sub>3</sub>	daṇal-kam
<sub>s</sub> [ensik=∅]	<sub>pc</sub> [lu]	neštug	daṇal=ak=∅]=am-∅
<sub>s</sub> [ruler=ABS]	<sub>pc</sub> [man	ear	wide=GEN=ABS]=COP-3SG.S

<sup>68</sup> The abbreviations are REM.PAST = remote past, TOD.PAST = today past.

<sup>69</sup> The phenomenon is also mentioned by Jagersma: “Copular relative clauses ... are never followed by a phrase-final clitic (2010, p. 706). He, however, leaves it unexplained.

neštug<sub>3</sub>      i<sub>3</sub>-ŋa<sub>2</sub>-ŋa<sub>2</sub>  
 ear=Ø      s<sub>2</sub>i<sub>3</sub>-s<sub>12</sub>ŋaŋa-s<sub>14</sub>e  
 ear=ABS      FIN-put~PF-3SG.A

Lit. “The ruler is a man of wide wisdom, he is going to apply his wisdom.”

(129)

\*ensik      p<sub>1</sub>lu      p<sub>3</sub>[neštug      daŋal=ak]=<sub>p5</sub>e  
 ruler      p<sub>1</sub>man      p<sub>3</sub>[ear      wide=GEN]=<sub>p5</sub>ERG  
 “the ruler, a man of wide wisdom ...”

Thomsen’s description, however, does not do justice to the construction: syntactically the noun **ensik** in ex. (128) is *not* the head of an NP, but the S of a CC; and the NP **lu geštug daŋal=ak** is not appositive to it, but the PC of a CC.<sup>70</sup>

Comparing relativization strategies in the African languages Koyaga and Bambara, Kuteva and Comrie suggest that paratactic relative constructions may develop into correlative ones, if a demonstrative that may occur with the relativized noun in the relative clause of a paratactic construction is grammaticalized into a relativizer (2005, pp. 214-215).

Correlative constructions also consist of two adjacent clauses which share a participant and in which the predicate of the first clause is interpreted as the modifier of the shared participant.<sup>71</sup> An often-cited example from medieval Russian is ex. (130) below (= ex. [60] in Keenan [1985, p. 166]), followed by ex. (131) from Hungarian (= ex. [15] in Bhatt and Lipták [2009, p. 353]<sup>72</sup>) (clause boundaries are indicated by square brackets).

<sup>70</sup> See recently Karahashi (2008, p. 89) who also leaves this point unnoticed: “When the Sumerian particle -ām is attached to a constituent, it supersedes ordinary case-marking .... In other words, attachment of this particle causes neutralization of these case particles, as Falkenstein observed”. In fact, as the glossing of (128) shows, the constituent preceding the COP does have a case; it is in the absolutive, as required by its function as PC. It is also unclear what exactly Karahashi means by the term “neutralization”.

Falkenstein’s original description does more justice to the real character of the construction than that of Thomsen’s or Karahashi’s. His explanation for the apparent lack of case-markers was that “der ursprüngliche Satzcharakter die Setzung von Kasuszeichen verhindert” (1950, p. 32), which is basically the same one offered by this work.

<sup>71</sup> For this type of relative clauses, see also Keenan (1985, pp. 163-168), Lehmann (1986), Andrews (2007, pp. 214-217), Lehmann (2008, pp. 216-219), and Lipták (2009). Correlatives occur in an impressive number of languages (for a list of them, see Lipták [2009, pp. 10-11]).

<sup>72</sup> The glossing of the example follows their glossing (PST = past, PV = preverbal particle).

(130)

[I	<b>kotoruju</b>	zvezdu	potrebno	bylo	nam	videt’]
and	which.ACC	star	necessary	was	us	see.INF
[tu	zvezdu	zaslonilo	tucheju]			
that	star	covered	cloud.by			

Lit.: “Which star we needed to see, that was covered by cloud.” = “The star we needed to see was covered by cloud.”

(131)

[Akit	meghivtunk,]	[annak	küldtünk	meghivót]
who.ACC	PV.invite.PST.1PL	that.DAT	send.PST.1PL	invitation.ACC

“Whom we invited, we sent an invitation to those.

In both ex. (130) and ex. (131) the first clause contains a relative phrase, while the second cause contains an anaphoric demonstrative phrase (both set in bold in the examples). The presence of these elements is considered to be a defining character of correlatives. Paratactic relative clauses differ from correlatives in the lack of a relative phrase.

The Sumerian paratactic construction obviously did not follow the grammaticalization path suggested by Kuteva and Comrie, and did not develop into a correlative construction. It remained a paratactic relative clause: a relative clause whose head noun occurs within a relative clause that is formally fully identical to a non-subordinate CC involving an enclitic COP.<sup>73</sup>

That a CC involving an enclitic COP is capable of functioning as a paratactic relative clause is indicated by the fact that this construction may occupy structural positions that would otherwise be filled by noun phrases, as the examples below can demonstrate.

In ex. (132) below the type (Ai) CC<sub>S</sub> [**bala e ninnjirsuk=ak=ak=ø**]<sub>PC</sub> [**iti 2=ø**]=**am-ø** “the prebend of Ningirsu’s temple is two months (long)” functions as the S of another CC that expresses the relation of possession.

(132) NG 113 1-2 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P110880)<sup>74</sup>

[bala]	e <sub>2</sub>	<sup>d</sup> nin- $\eta$ ir <sub>2</sub> -su-[ka]-ka	iti	2-am <sub>3</sub> ,
<sub>S</sub> [ <sub>S</sub> bala	e	ninnjirsuk=ak=ak=ø]	<sub>PC</sub> [iti	2=ø]=am-ø]
<sub>S</sub> [ <sub>S</sub> prebend	house	DN=GEN=GEN=ABS]	<sub>PC</sub> [month	2=ABS]=COP-3NH.S]

<sup>73</sup> This phenomenon was already noted by Falkenstein: “Sätze mit der enklitischen Kurzform der Kopula ..., die von Haus aus selbständig sind, können wie die unter b behandelten nominalisierten Sätze als Glieder des nominalen Satzteils verwandt werden“ (1950, p. 32, §89d).

Note that Assyriologists describing Sumerian attributive CBCs actually attempt to analyze the CCs functioning as paratactic relative clauses as a strange kind of head-external post-nominal relative clause, whose “strangeness” manifests itself in the “neutralized” (Karahashi, 2008, p. 89) or missing case-markers (Jagersma, 2010, p. 706).

<sup>74</sup> In the transliterations half-brackets indicate partly broken, but readable cuneiform signs.

'ab<sup>1</sup>-ba      gu-la      'lugal<sup>1</sup>-me<sub>3</sub>-ka      i<sub>3</sub>-me-a  
 PC[abba      gal-'a      lugalme=ak=ak]      S<sub>3</sub>i-S<sub>12</sub>me-S<sub>14</sub>Ø-S<sub>14</sub>'a  
 PC[father      big-PT      PN=GEN=GEN]      FIN-COP-3NH.S-SUB

“(A number of people appeared in the court to witness) that the two months long prebend of Ningirsu’s temple belonged to the grandfather of Lugal-me.”

In ex. (133) below, the type (Ai) CC <sub>S</sub>[**udu abba=ηu=ak=Ø**] <sub>PC</sub>[**180=Ø**]=**am-Ø** “the sheep of my father are 180 (in number)” is coordinated with a NP.<sup>75</sup>

(133) NG 138 8-9 (Umma, 21st c.) (P200731)

udu      ab-ba-ηa<sub>2</sub>      180-am<sub>3</sub>      u<sub>3</sub>  
 S[udu      abba=ηu=ak=Ø]      PC[180=Ø]=am-Ø      u  
 S[sheep      father=1SG.POSS=ABS]      PC[180=ABS]=COP-3NH.S      and  
 gab<sub>2</sub>-us<sub>2</sub>-bi,      ki      řu<sub>2</sub>-la-lum-ma-ka      i<sub>3</sub>-du<sub>2</sub>-[ru]-un  
 gabus=bi=Ø      ki      řulalum=ak='a      S<sub>3</sub>i-S<sub>10</sub>n-S<sub>12</sub>durun-S<sub>14</sub>Ø  
 herder=3NH.POSS=ABS      place      PN=GEN=L1      FIN-L1.SYN-sit.PL-3NH.S

“(He told the ruler:) ‘180 sheep of my father and their herders are at the place of Sulalum.’”

In ex. (134) below the type (Ai) CC <sub>S</sub>[**alan=ani=Ø**] <sub>PC</sub>[**anak=Ø**]=**am-Ø** “his statue is of tin” is translated into Akkadian with a noun modified with a genitive construction (*řalma*[*DUL<sub>3</sub>*]-*řu řa amuttim*[*KUG.AN*] : statue-3SG.M.POSS of iron.GEN) just like in English. The PC corresponds to the Akkadian noun in the genitive. In this example the CC does not precede the matrix clause, it is situated between its subject and finite verb; it clearly behaves like a nominal constituent of the matrix clause.

(134) Rimush 18 9-13 (RIME 2.1.2.18) (Nippur, OB copy of text from the 24th c.) (P220619)

ri<sub>2</sub>-mu-uř,      lugal,      kiř,  
 rimuř      lugal      kiř=ak=e  
 PN<sub>1</sub>      king      totality=GEN=ERG  
 alan-na-ni      an-na-kam,      i<sub>3</sub>-dim<sub>2</sub>  
 S[alan=ani=Ø]      PC[anak=Ø]=am-Ø      S<sub>3</sub>i-S<sub>11</sub>n-S<sub>12</sub>dim-S<sub>14</sub>Ø  
 S[statue=3SG.POSS=ABS]      PC[tin=ABS]=COP-3NH.S      FIN-3SG.A-make-3NH.P  
 ri<sub>2</sub>-mu-uř řar(*LUGAL*) kiřřātīm(*KIř*) řalma(*DUL<sub>3</sub>*)-řu řa amuttim(*KUG.AN*) ib-ni-ma  
 “(But now) Rimush, king of the world, fashioned a tin statue of himself.”

In ex. (135) below a type (Aii) CC functions as the PC of another type (Aii) CC. The embedded type (Aii) CC functions here as a headless paratactic relative clause and occupies a structural position which is otherwise occupied by NPs.

<sup>75</sup> See subsection 5.3.4 below for CCs whose PC is a cardinal number.



(135) Lipit-Eshtar A 35 (ETCSL 2.5.5.1)

neš<sub>2</sub>tug<sub>2</sub>                      ba<sub>9</sub>-ra<sub>2</sub>                      <sup>d</sup>en-ki-kam-me-en  
<sub>PC</sub>[<sub>PC</sub>[neš<sub>2</sub>tug=∅                      bar-’a                      enki<sub>1</sub>=∅]=am-∅]=me-en  
<sub>PC</sub>[<sub>PC</sub>[ear=ABS                      open-PT                      DN=ABS]=COP-3SG.S]=COP-1SG.S  
 “I am he whom Enki has given wisdom.”

In ex. (136) below, the type (Aii) CC <sub>PC</sub>[lu e lugal=ani=ak=∅ du-ed]=am-∅ “he is a man who is to build his master’s temple” functions as the anchor (i.e., the head) of an appositional construction, followed by the apposition **ensik=ra** “to the ruler”.

(136) Gudea Cyl. A 16:18-20 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232300)

lu<sub>2</sub>                      e<sub>2</sub>                      lugal-na                      du<sub>3</sub>-dam,                      ensi<sub>2</sub>-ra  
<sub>PC</sub>[lu                      e                      lugal=ani=ak=∅                      du-ed]=am-∅                      ensik=ra  
<sub>PC</sub>[lu                      house                      king=3SG.POSS=GEN=ABS                      build-PF]=COP-3SG.S                      ruler=DAT.H  
 kug-sig<sub>17</sub>                      kur-bi-ta,                      sahar-ba                      mu-na-tum<sub>3</sub>  
 kugsig=∅                      kur=bi=ta                      sahar=bi=’a                      <sub>s4</sub>mu-<sub>s6</sub>nn-<sub>s7</sub>a-<sub>s12</sub>tum-<sub>s14</sub>∅  
 gold=ABS                      mountain=3NH.POSS=ABL                      dust=3NH.POSS=L1                      VEN-3SG-DAT-bring-3NH.S  
 “To him, the man who is to build his master’s temple, the ruler, gold was brought in dust form from its mountains.”

The other side of its double character, its clausal nature, may be observed in ex. (137) below. In ex. (137) the CC contains a conjunction, **tukumbi** “if”, used otherwise in subordinate clauses.

(137) AuOr 17-18, p. 228, 40 5-7 (BM 29745) (Lagash, 21st c.) (P145621)

geme<sub>2</sub>-<sup>d</sup>dumu-zid-da,                      tukum-bi,                      geme<sub>2</sub>                      ba-la-la-kam,  
<sub>s</sub>[gemedumuzidak=∅]                      tukumbi                      <sub>PC</sub>[geme                      balala=ak=∅]=am-∅  
<sub>s</sub>[PN<sub>1</sub>=∅]                      if                      <sub>PC</sub>[maiden                      PN<sub>2</sub>=GEN=ABS]=COP-3SG.S  
 šu                      he<sub>2</sub>-na-bar-re  
 šu=∅                      <sub>s1</sub>ha-<sub>s2</sub>i-<sub>s6</sub>nn-<sub>s7</sub>a-<sub>s12</sub>bar-<sub>s14</sub>e  
 hand=ABS                      MOD-FIN-3SG-DAT-open-3SG.A

“May he (= Ur-Nanshe) release Geme-Dumuzida for him (= Balala), if she is the maiden of Balala.”

To sum up, Sumerian attributive CBCs are the manifestation of a rarely attested relativization strategy labelled as paratactic by Kuteva and Comrie (2005). An important characteristic of these constructions is that their component clauses may be used independently without any modification as canonical simple clauses. Their initial unit is a paratactic relative clause whose head noun occurs within a relative clause

that is formally fully identical to a non-subordinate CC involving an enclitic COP.<sup>76</sup> They thus differ from other finite relative clauses of Sumerian in that the verb that functions as the predicate of the relative clause (i.e., the COP) uses a non-subordinate form.

### 4.3 Attributive CBCs and Appositions

The previous section compared the use of attributive CBCs with the use of relative clauses in Sumerian. It concluded that attributive CBCs are in essence constructions involving a paratactic relative clause. This section is set to examine the relationship between attributive CBCs and non-restrictive appositional constructions in Sumerian. It aims to show that the CC of attributive CBCs may correspond functionally not only to relative clauses but also to attributive appositional constructions.

Following Heringa (2011) and Huddleston and Pullum (2002), appositional constructions will be analyzed as consisting of two parts, an anchor (= ANC) and an apposition (= APP), as shown below:

(138) APPositional CONSTRUCTION

<sup>ANC</sup> [Gudea,]	<sup>APP</sup> [the shepherd,]	built a temple for him.
ANCHOR	APPPOSITION	

Non-restrictive appositions are understood as appositions that “do not restrictively modify their anchors, but convey supplementary information” (Heringa 2011, p. 3). Two main classes of non-restrictive appositional constructions may be distinguished in terms of the semantic relationship between the anchor and the apposition: i) identificational; and ii) attributive.<sup>77</sup> Identificational appositions “give an alternative description for the entity described by the anchor” (Heringa, 2011, p. 89), while attributive appositions “ascribe a property to the anchor’s referent, just like the predicate in a predicational copular clause ascribes a property to the subject’s referent” (ibid.). Heringa’s last clause leads us to the relevance of appositions in the description of attributive CBCs in Sumerian.

It has been observed in linguistics that there is a systematic correspondence between attributive appositional constructions and appositive relatives containing a

<sup>76</sup> See already Poebel (1923, p. 102, §280g): “Die mit -me-(e)n, ‘ich bin’, du bist’, -am ‘er ist’ usw. gebildeten Identifikationen werden, wenn sie in relativischen Sinne gebraucht sind, nicht mit dem Relativ -a versehen”.

<sup>77</sup> Like others, Heringa also distinguishes a third, minor class of appositional constructions, the inclusive one. This class is, however, much less frequent than the other two (Heringa, 2011, pp. 25-60, esp. p. 31).

non-verbal predicate with the copula **be** (Meyer. 1992, p. 55; Heringa, 2011, pp. 14-15). In his book on apposition in contemporary English, Meyer demonstrates this correspondence with the following set of examples (1992, pp. 55, his exx. 155a-c, italics are his), in which the same content is expressed as a) an attributive appositional construction; b) an appositive relative clause; c) a predicational copular clause:<sup>78</sup>

(139)

- a) There is also, in the larva, a tissue known as *mucocartilage*, *an elastic material serving more as an antagonist to the muscles than for their attachment*.
- b) There is also, in the larva, a tissue known as *mucocartilage*, which is an elastic material serving more as an antagonist to the muscles than for their attachment.
- c) There is also, in the larva, a tissue known as *mucocartilage*. *Mucocartilage is an elastic material serving more as an antagonist to the muscles than for their attachment*.

In the previous section of this chapter it was demonstrated that copular relative clauses in which the S is relativized and the predicate is affirmative do not seem to exist in Sumerian; the language uses an attributive CBC instead of them. The sentence “John, who is a sailor, built a house” may thus only be said in Sumerian as “John is a sailor; he built a house”. It follows from this observation that the English correspondence between attributive appositional constructions and appositive relative clauses cannot exist in Sumerian. One would rather expect that attributive appositional constructions correspond to CCs of attributive CBCs in Sumerian.

And as a matter of fact, the Sumerian evidence confirms this expectation. Consider the following examples. In ex. (140) the word **šeš** ‘brother’ stands in apposition to the PN Ur-Bau. In ex. (141) the same word functions as the PC of a CC whose S is two PNs, Ur-takama and Ur-Suena. The type (Ai) CC in ex. (141) is part of a CBC (see ex. [111] above, in which the word **šeš** also functions as the PC).

(140) NG 28 5’-7’ (Lagas, 21st c.) (P111342)

ab-ba-kal-la	dumu	igi-a-a-[na-še <sub>3</sub> -ke <sub>4</sub> ],	ur- <sup>d</sup> ba-u <sub>2</sub>
abbakala	dumu	igiayanaše=ak=e	<sup>ANC</sup> [urbauk]
PN <sub>1</sub>	child	PN <sub>2</sub> =GEN=ERG	<sup>ANC</sup> [PN <sub>3</sub> ]

<sup>78</sup> In fact, Meyer describes this correspondence as such: “An apposition will systematically correspond to a relative clause only if a copular relation exists between the two units in the apposition. That is to say, in order for an apposition to have a relative clause paraphrase, the two units must be able to occur in sentences in which the first unit is subject complement” (1992, p. 55). He does not specify that the appositional construction must be attributive, and the copular clause must be predicational; I concluded these qualifications on the basis of Heringa’s dissertation, and they are not in conflict with Meyer’s actual examples.

šeš-a-ni-ir,	igi-ni	in-ši- <sup>ŋa2</sup> ŋar <sup>aʀ</sup>
<sub>APP</sub> [šeš=ani=ra]	igi=ani=∅	s <sub>2</sub> l <sup>i-s6</sup> nn <sup>-s9</sup> ši <sup>-s11</sup> n <sup>-s12</sup> ŋar <sup>-s14</sup> ∅
<sub>APP</sub> [brother=3SG.POSS=DAT.H]	face=3SG.POSS=ABS	FIN-3SG-TERM-3SG.A-put-3NH.P

“Aba-kala, son of Igi-ayanashe, appeared before Ur-Bau, his brother.”

(141) NATN 255 8-11 (= FaoS 17 12) (Nippur, 21st c.)

ur-taka <sub>4</sub> -ma	u <sub>3</sub>	ur- <sup>d</sup> suenā,	šēš-a-ni-me,
<sub>S</sub> [urtakama	u	ursuenak=∅]	<sub>PC</sub> [šēš=ani=∅]=me-eš
<sub>S</sub> [PN <sub>1</sub>	and	PN <sub>2=ABS</sub> ]	<sub>PC</sub> [brother=3SG.POSS=ABS]=COP-3PL.S
inim	nu-ŋa <sub>2</sub> -ŋa <sub>2</sub> -de <sub>3</sub> ,	mu	lugal-bi
inim=∅	nu-ŋaŋa-ed=e	mu	lugal=ak=bi=∅
word=ABS	NEG-place~PF-PF=DAT.NH	name	king=GEN=3NH.POSS=ABS
in-pad <sub>3</sub> -de <sub>3</sub> -eš			
<sub>S2</sub> i- <sub>S11</sub> n- <sub>S12</sub> pad- <sub>S14</sub> eš			
FIN-3SG.A-call-3PL			

“Urtakama and Ur-Suena, (who are) his brothers, swore by the name of the king not to raise claims.”

In ex. (142) the genitive construction **dumu nibru=ak** (child GN=GEN) ‘‘citizen of Nippur’’ stands in apposition to the PN Lugal-shu. The same construction occurs as the PC of a type (Ai) CC in ex. (143) (= ex. [109], repeated here for convenience), and as the PC of a type (Aii) CC in ex. (144). In the latter two examples the CCs are part of a CBC.

(142) Ni 9944 3 (ISET 1, 204 = Pl. 146) (Nippur) (a ms. of ETCSL 3.3.03) (P343538)

m <sub>ANC</sub> lugal-šu <sub>2</sub>	dumu	nibru <sup>ki</sup>	arad <sub>2</sub> -zu
[lugalšu]	APP[dumu]	nibru=ak]	APP[arad=zu=e]
ANC[PN]	APP[child]	GN=GEN]	APP[servant=2SG.POSS=ERG]
na-ab-be <sub>2</sub> -a			
ana=∅	s <sub>1</sub> i- s <sub>5</sub> b- s <sub>10</sub> ∅- s <sub>12</sub> e- s <sub>14</sub> e- s <sub>15</sub> 'a		
what=ABS	FIN-3NH-L2.SYN-say.PF-3SG.A-SUB		
“This is what Lugal-shu, citizen of Nippur, your servant says:”			

(143) TCS 1, 61 3-6 (Nippur, 21st c.) (P134662)

<sup>m</sup> er <sub>3</sub> -ra-ga-ši-ir, s[erragašir=∅] s[PN=ABS]	dumu pc[dumu pc[child]	nibru <sup>ki</sup> -kam, nibru=ak=∅=am-∅ GN=GEN=ABS=COP-3SG.S
ur-sag <sub>9</sub> -ga, ursaga=ra PN=DAT.H	ha-mu-na-šum <sub>2</sub> -mu s <sub>1</sub> ha <sub>4</sub> mu <sub>54</sub> nn <sub>57</sub> a <sub>51</sub> n <sub>512</sub> šum <sub>514</sub> e	
	MOD-VEN-3SG-DAT1 3SG.P-give-3SG.A	

“(Tell Ea-bani that) he must hand over Erra-gashir, (who is) a citizen of Nippur, to Ur-saga!”

(144) FaoS 19, Gir 32 13-15 (= ITT 1 1100 = LEM 5) (Lagash, 24th c.)

dumu	nibru <sup>ki</sup> -me,	lagaš <sup>ki</sup> -a,	ab-durun <sub>x</sub> (KU.KU)-ne <sub>2</sub> -eš <sub>2</sub>
PC[dumu	nibru=ak=∅]=me-eš	lagaš='a	S <sub>2</sub> a <sub>-S<sub>5</sub></sub> b <sub>-S<sub>10</sub></sub> ∅ <sub>-S<sub>12</sub></sub> durun <sub>-S<sub>14</sub></sub> eš
PC[child	GN=GEN=ABS]=COP-3PL.S	GN=L2.NH	FIN-3NH-L2.SYN-sit.PL-3PL.S

“They, (who are) the citizens of Nippur, live on the territory of Lagash”

In ex. (145) the expression containing the word **ur**<sub>5</sub> ‘loan, debt’ stands in apposition to the amount of silver paid. In ex. (146) a similar expression functions as the PC of a type (Ai) CC, part of a CBC, and the amount of barley paid is the S of the CC.

(145) NATN 131 obv. 13 (Nippur, 21st c.) (P120829)

mu	2 ½	gi <sub>4</sub>	kug-babbar
mu	ANC[2 ½	gi <sub>4</sub>	kugbabbar]
name	ANC[2 ½	shekel	silver]
ur <sub>5</sub>	a-ba	in-su-ga-še <sub>3</sub>	
APP[ura	aba=ak=∅]	S <sub>2</sub> i <sub>-S<sub>11</sub></sub> n <sub>-S<sub>12</sub></sub> sug <sub>-S<sub>14</sub></sub> ∅ <sub>-S<sub>15</sub></sub>	'a=ak=še
APP[loan	PN <sub>1</sub> =GEN=ABS]	FIN-3SG.A-replace-3NH.P-SUB=GEN=TERM	

“Because he has repaid 2 ½ shekels of silver, the debt of Aba, ...”

(146) CUSAS 11, 83 1-8 (Adab, 24th c.) (P323460)

20	la <sub>2</sub>	1.1	še	gur,	še	ur <sub>5</sub> ,	sukkal-a-kam,
S[20	la	1.1	še	gur=∅]	PC[še	urra=ak	sukkal=ak=∅]=am-∅
S[20	minus	1.1	grain	unit=ABS]	PC[grain	loan=GEN	envoy=GEN=ABS]=COP-3NH.S
nin <sub>2</sub> -sam <sub>2</sub> ,	lugal-an-dul <sub>3</sub> ,	dumu	kas <sub>4</sub> -e-ki-a <sub>2</sub> -kam,				
PC[ninsam	lugalandul	dumu	kasekian <sub>2</sub> =ak=ak=∅]=am-∅				
PC[price	PN <sub>1</sub>	child	PN <sub>2</sub> =GEN=GEN=ABS]=COP-3NH.S				
nin-an-DU,	ama-ni,		an-na-[šum <sub>2</sub> ]				
ninanDU	ama=ani=ra		S <sub>2</sub> a <sub>-S<sub>6</sub></sub> nn <sub>-S<sub>7</sub></sub> a <sub>-S<sub>12</sub></sub> šum <sub>-S<sub>14</sub></sub> ∅				
PN <sub>3</sub>	mother=3SG.POSS=DAT.H		FIN-3SG-DAT-give-3NH.S				

“19 *gur* minus 60 *silā* of barley, loan barley of the sukkal, the price of Lugal-andul, son of Kase-kiaga, was given to Nin-andu, his mother.”

In ex. (147), the phrases **šunir utu=ak** “emblem of Utu” and **saṇ alim=ak** “bison head” are in apposition. In ex. (148), a similar construction with **šunir inana=ak** “emblem of Inana” and **ašme** “rosette” is expressed as a type (Ai) CC.

(147) Gudea Cyl. A 26:3-5 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232300)

igi	utu-e <sub>3</sub>	ki	nam	tar-re-ba
igi	utue=ak	ki	nam=∅	tar-ed-bi='a
face	sunrise=GEN	place	fate=ABS	cut-PF-3NH.POSS=L1

šũ-nir	<sup>d</sup> utu	saŋ	alim-ma
<sub>ANC</sub> [šũnir	utu=ak]	<sub>APP</sub> [saŋ	alim=ak=∅]
<sub>ANC</sub> [emblem	DN=GEN]	<sub>APP</sub> [head	bison=GEN=ABS]
im-ma-da-sig <sub>o</sub> -ge			

i- m- ba- da- n- sig- e  
s<sub>2</sub> s<sub>4</sub> s<sub>5</sub> s<sub>8</sub> s<sub>10</sub> s<sub>12</sub> s<sub>14</sub>

FIN-VEN-3NH-COM-L1.SYN-put-3SG.A

“Facing the sunrise, where the fates are decided, he erected the standard of the god Utu, the Bison head, beside others already there.

(148) Gudea Cyl. A 14:27 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232300) cf. A 14:23

aš-me	šu-nir	dinana-kam
<sub>S</sub> [ašme=ø]	<sub>PC</sub> [šunir	inanak=ak=ø]=am-ø
<sub>S</sub> [rosette=ABS]	<sub>PC</sub> [emblem	DN=GEN=ABS]=COP-3NH.S

san-bi-a                      mu-gub

saŋ=bi='a                      s<sub>4</sub> mu- s<sub>11</sub> n- s<sub>12</sub> gub- s<sub>14</sub> ∅

head=3NH.POSS=L1      VEN-3SG.A-stand-3NH.P

Lit. "The rosette is the emblem of the goddess Inana, he placed it in front of them."

“He placed the rosette, the standard of the goddess Inana, in front of them.”

Ex. (149) below is an attributive CBC consisting of four consecutive CCs followed by a clause with a finite verb. The shared participant is the ruler Gudea, who is the referent of the S in all four CCs. He functions as the participant in the dative case in the finite clause, expressed by a composite dative prefix on the verb. The first CC belongs to type (Aii): “He is the one looked on with favour by Nanshe”. The second one belongs to type (Bii): “As for Enlil, he is a man of his heart”. The last two CCs belong to type (Ai): “The ruler is the one ... by Ningirsu” and “Gudea is the one born in the august sanctuary by Gatumdug”.

(149) Gudea Cyl. A 17:10-16 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232300)

igi	zid	bar-ra	<sup>d</sup> nanše-kam,
<sub>PC</sub> [igi	zid=∅	bar-ʼa	nanše=ak=∅]=am-∅
<sub>PC</sub> [eye	true=ABS	direct-PT	DN <sub>1</sub> =GEN=ABS]=COP-3SG.S
<sup>d</sup> en-lil <sub>2</sub> -la <sub>2</sub>	lu <sub>2</sub>	šag <sub>4</sub> -ga-na-kam,	
enlil=ak	<sub>PC</sub> [lu	šag=ani=ak=∅]=am-∅	
DN <sub>2</sub> =GEN	<sub>PC</sub> [man	heart=3SG.POSS=GEN=ABS]=COP-3SG.S	
ensi <sub>2</sub>	[X] X X [(X)]	<sup>d</sup> nin-njir <sub>2</sub> -su-ka-kam,	
<sub>S</sub> [ensik=∅]	<sub>PC</sub> [...	ninnjirsuk=ak=∅]=am-∅	
<sub>S</sub> [ruler=ABS]	<sub>PC</sub> [...	DN <sub>3</sub> =GEN=ABS]=COP-3SG.S	
gu <sub>3</sub> -de <sub>2</sub> -a	unu <sub>6</sub>	mah-a	tud-da, <sup>d</sup> ηa <sub>2</sub> -tum <sub>3</sub> -dug <sub>3</sub> -ga-kam,
<sub>S</sub> [gudea=∅]	<sub>PC</sub> [unu	mah-ʼa	tud-ʼa ηatumdug=ak=∅]=am-∅
<sub>S</sub> [PN <sub>1</sub> =ABS]	<sub>PC</sub> [abode	great-L1	bear-PT DN <sub>2</sub> =GEN=ABS]=COP-3SG.S

<sup>d</sup>nisaba-ke<sub>4</sub> e<sub>2</sub>      ŋeštug<sub>2</sub>-ke<sub>4</sub>      ŋal<sub>2</sub>      mu-na-taka<sub>4</sub>  
 nisabak=e      e      ŋeštug=ak=e      ŋal=∅      <sub>S4</sub>mu-<sub>S6</sub>nn-<sub>S7</sub>a-<sub>S11</sub>n-<sub>S12</sub>taka-<sub>S14</sub>∅  
 DN<sub>5</sub>=ERG      house      ear=GEN=L3.NH      CVN=ABS      VEN-3SG-DAT-3SG.A-leave-3NH.P  
 “For the one (who is) looked on with favour by Nanshe, for (the one who is) Enlil’s favourite, for the ruler, (who was) ... by Ningirsu, for Gudea, (who was) born in the august sanctuary by Gatumdug, Nisaba opened the house of understanding.”

The PC of the first CC in ex. (149) is attested in another inscription as one of a long series of epithets of Gudea, where it functions as an apposition whose anchor (Gudea) is in l. 2:4 of the inscription:

(150) Gudea Statue B 2:10-11 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)

igi      zid      bar-ra,      <sup>d</sup>nanše-ke<sub>4</sub>  
<sub>APP</sub>[igi      zid=∅      bar-’a      nanše=ak=e]  
<sub>APP</sub>[eye      true=ABS      direct-PT      DN<sub>1</sub>=GEN=ERG]  
 “(who is) looked on with favour by Nanshe”

A variant of the third CC’s PC is a frequently used epithet in royal inscriptions, standing in apposition to the name of the ruler:

(151) Ur-Bau 6 1:4-8 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232262)

ur-<sup>d</sup>ba-u<sub>2</sub>,      ensi<sub>2</sub>,      lagaš<sup>ki</sup>,      dumu      tud-da,      <sup>d</sup>nin-a<sub>2</sub>-gal-ka-ke<sub>4</sub>  
<sub>ANC</sub>[urbauk]      <sub>APP</sub>[ensik      lagaš=ak]      <sub>APP</sub>[dumu      tud-’a      ninagalak=ak=e]  
<sub>ANC</sub>[PN]      <sub>APP</sub>[ruler      GN=GEN]      <sub>APP</sub>[child      bear-PT      DN=GEN=ERG]  
 “Ur-Bau, ruler of Lagash, the child born to Nin-agala”

In ex. (152) below the amount of a price is expressed as a CC; the expression “his price” is the S, and the amount is the PC in genitive case. The type (Ai) CC in ex. (152) is part of a CBC.

(152) SRU 41 2:1-6 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P020159)

nin<sub>2</sub>-sam<sub>2</sub>-ma-ni      kug      15      giṇ<sub>4</sub>-kam,  
<sub>S</sub>[ninsam=ani=∅]      <sub>PC</sub>[kug      15      giṇ=ak]=am-∅  
<sub>S</sub>[price=3SG.POSS=ABS]      <sub>PC</sub>[silver      15      shekel=GEN]=COP-3NH.S  
 ninār-mud,      nu-kiri<sub>6</sub>-ra,      barag-nam-tar-ra,      e-na-la<sub>2</sub>  
 ninarmud      nukiri=ra      baragnamtara=e      <sub>S2</sub>e-<sub>S6</sub>nn-<sub>S7</sub>a-<sub>S11</sub>n-<sub>S12</sub>la-<sub>S14</sub>∅  
 PN<sub>1</sub>      gardener=DAT.H      PN<sub>2</sub>=ERG      FIN-3SG-DAT-3SG.A-weigh-3NH.P  
 “(Barag-nam-tara bought one blind worker from Nigar-mud, the gardener.) Barag-nam-tara paid his price, (which is) that of 15 shekels of silver, to Nigar-mud, the gardener.”

In ex. (153), the amount is expressed as an attributive apposition, and the expression “his price” is its anchor (for the structure of line 1 see the comments on ex. [191] below).

(153) NATN 255 8-11 (Nippur, 21st c) (P120953)

1	saṇ	nita,	sim-tur	mu-ni-im,
1	saṇ	nita=∅	simtur=∅	mu=ani=∅=am-∅
1	slave	male=ABS	PN <sub>1</sub> =ABS	name=3SG.POSS=ABS=COP-3NH.S
	nin <sub>2</sub> -sam <sub>2</sub> -ma-ni	10	giṇ <sub>4</sub>	kug-babbar-še <sub>3</sub> ,
ANC	[nin <sub>2</sub> sam=ani]	APP	[10 giṇ	kugbabbar=še]
ANC	[price=3SG.POSS]	APP	[10 shekel	silver=TERM]
	a <sub>2</sub> -zid-da	dumu	lugal-gaba-ke <sub>4</sub>	
	azida	dumu	lugalgaba=ak=e	
	PN <sub>2</sub>	child	PN <sub>3</sub> =GEN=ERG	
	iri-na	dumu	ma <sub>2</sub> -gur <sub>8</sub> -re-ka	in-ši-sa <sub>10</sub>
	irina	dumu	magure=ak='a	s <sub>2</sub> -s <sub>6</sub> nn-s <sub>9</sub> ši-s <sub>11</sub> n-s <sub>12</sub> sa-s <sub>14</sub> ∅
	PN <sub>4</sub>	child	PN <sub>5</sub> =GEN=?	FIN-3SG-term-3SG.A-buy-3SG.P

“A-zida, son of Lugal-gaba, bought one male slave, him, whose name is Sim-tur, for his price, 10 shekels of silver from Irina, son of Magure.”

Ex. (154) below contains two CCs: an initial type (Bi) CC<sub>PC's POSS</sub> [**id=ak**]<sub>S</sub> [**nannagugal=∅**]<sub>PC</sub> [**mu=bi=∅**]=**am-∅** “of the canal, Nanna-gugal is its name”, followed by a type (Aii) CC<sub>PC</sub> [**id kisura=ak=∅**]=**am-∅** “it is a border canal”. Both CCs form an attributive CBC with a matrix clause whose predicate is the verb **bal** ‘to dig’. In ex. (155), the name of the canal is expressed as an appositional construction instead of a CC, and the phrase **id kisura=ak ninnjirsuk=ak=∅** “Ningirsu’s border canal” stands in apposition to this name.

(154) Ur-Namma 28 1:10-13 (RIME 3/2.1.1.28) (Ur, 21st c.)

id <sub>2</sub> -da,	<sup>d</sup> nanna-gu <sub>2</sub> -gal	mu-bi,
PC's POSS <sub>S</sub> [id=ak]	S <sub>S</sub> [nannagugal=∅]	PC [mu=bi=∅]=am-∅
PC's POSS <sub>S</sub> [canal=GEN]	S <sub>S</sub> [GN=ABS]	PC [name=3NH.POSS=ABS]=COP-3NH.S
id <sub>2</sub>	ki-sur-ra-kam,	mu-ba-al
PC [id	kisura=ak=∅]=am-∅	S <sub>4</sub> mu-s <sub>11</sub> n-s <sub>12</sub> bal-s <sub>14</sub> ∅
PC [canal	border=GEN=ABS]=COP-3NH.S	VEN-3SG.A-dig-3NH.P

“He (= Ur-Namma) dug a canal whose name is Nanna-gugal, (and) which is a boundary canal.”

(155) Ur-Namma 22 Frgm 1+2 9''-12'' (RIME 3/2.1.1.22) (Ur, 21st c.)

id <sub>2</sub>	<sup>d</sup> nanna-gu <sub>2</sub> -gal,	<sup>r</sup> id <sub>2</sub>	ki-sur-ra <sub>1</sub> ,
ANC <sub>ANC</sub> [id	APP [nannagugal]]	APP [id	kisura=ak
ANC <sub>ANC</sub> [canal	APPL [GN]]	APP [canal	border=GEN
[ <sup>q</sup> ]nin-nir <sub>2</sub> <sup>1</sup> -su,	<sup>r</sup> mu <sup>1</sup> -ba-al		
ninnjirsuk=ak=∅]	S <sub>4</sub> mu-s <sub>11</sub> n-s <sub>12</sub> bal-s <sub>14</sub> ∅		
DN=GEN=ABS]	VEN-3SG.A-dig-3NH.P		

“He dug the canal Nanna-gugal, the border canal of Ningirsu.”



The examples above, exx. (140)-(155), showed that attributive appositional constructions systematically correspond to CCs of attributive CBCs in Sumerian, just as they correspond to appositive relative clauses in English. This correspondence supports the findings of section 4.1, in which we concluded that the CC of attributive CBCs functions as a paratactic relative clause. The semantic basis of the correspondence is that in attributive appositional constructions the apposition “attributes a particular characteristic to the first unit” (Meyer 1992, p. 69); and this is exactly the kind of semantic relation that one finds in a predicational CC, in which the PC predicates a property about a referential S. Attributive CBCs are thus used in contexts that may correspond to the semantic relation expressed by attributive appositional constructions.

One may also observe in relation to these examples that the correspondence between appositive constructions and CCs functioning as paratactic relative clauses is asymmetric: CBCs involving a type (Ai) CC may correspond to an appositional construction, but there is no appositional construction corresponding to a CBC involving a type (Aii) CC. So, for example, a CBC such as the one in ex. (156) below may not be transformed into an appositional construction like the hypothetical ex. (157), in which the anchor is an independent pronoun. Ex. (157) would be ungrammatical in Sumerian.<sup>79</sup>

(156) Gudea Cyl. B 2:5 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232301)

sipad-me	e <sub>2</sub>	mu-du <sub>3</sub>
PC[sipad=Ø]=me-en	e=Ø	S <sub>4</sub> mu-S <sub>11</sub> y-S <sub>12</sub> du-S <sub>14</sub> Ø
PC[shepherd=ABS]=COP-1SG.S	house=ABS	VEN-1SG.A-build-3NH.P

“I am a shepherd, I have built the temple. = I, who am a shepherd, have built the temple. = I, the shepherd, have built the temple.”

<sup>79</sup> For this rule, see Thomsen (1984, p. 69, §95; p. 277, §545) and Jagersma (2010, p. 93). The often quoted single exception to this rule from Gudea Cyl. A 9: 20 is, in fact, not an exception (Thomsen, 1984, p. 69, §95; Jagersma, 2010, p. 211), because the pronoun functions here as a contrastive topic. In this example, the 1st ps. sg. independent pronoun is a left-dislocated pronoun that agrees in number and person with the enclitic possessive pronoun attached to the word *e* ‘house’ in l. 23. The left-dislocated independent pronoun expresses contrastive topicality (indicated with small capitals in the translation) similarly to the left-dislocated independent pronoun in exx. (89) and (90) above.

Gudea Cyl. A 9:20-23 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7)

ne <sub>26</sub>	‘nin-nir <sub>2</sub> -su	a	huš	gi <sub>4</sub> -a,
ne=Ø	ningirsu	a	huš-Ø=Ø	gi <sub>4</sub> -‘a
1SG.PR=ABS	DN	water	awesome-TL=ABS	return-PT
..., ...,				
e <sub>2</sub> -nu <sub>10</sub>	e <sub>2</sub> -ninnu	ne <sub>26</sub> -en	kur-ra	ab-dirig
e=nu	eninnu	men=Ø	kur=‘a	S <sub>2</sub> a-S <sub>5</sub> b-S <sub>10</sub> Ø-S <sub>12</sub> dirig-S <sub>14</sub> Ø
house=1SG.POSS	TN	crown=ABS	mountain=L2.NH	FIN-3NH-L2.SYN-exceed-3NH.S

“My (in contrast to the temples of other gods), Ningirsu’s (who has turned back the fierce waters, ..., ...) temple, the E-ninnu, a crown, is bigger than the mountains.”

(157)

* $\eta e_{26}$ -e	sipad-e	$e_2$	mu-du <sub>3</sub>
$\eta e$	sipad=e	e=∅	$\mu_{S4}$ - $\mu_{S11}$ y- $\mu_{S12}$ du- $\mu_{S14}$ ∅
1SG.PR	shepherd=ERG	house=ABS	VEN-1SG.A-build-3NH.P

“I, the shepherd, have built the temple.”

The ungrammaticality of ex. (157) follows from a general rule on the use of independent pronouns in Sumerian: only participants functioning as identificational foci or contrastive topics are referred to by independent pronouns; participants in other functions are referred to only by verbal pronominal prefixes. In ex. (157) the S is neither a focus nor a contrastive topic, it is an active topical subject, which is normally expressed solely by an unaccented pronominal suffix in Sumerian. Type (Aii) CCs in attributive CBCs may therefore be considered as substitute constructions for an ungrammatical appositional construction with a pronominal anchor.

A similar conclusion can be reached by examining the subtype of attributive CBCs in which the topical S of the CC is coreferential not with one of the verbal participants in the matrix clause but with one of the verbal participants’ possessor. In the following I will refer to this subtype of attributive CBCs as possessive CBCs. The CC of possessive CBCs may belong either to type (Ai) or type (Aii).

In ex. (158) below the CC belongs to type (Ai). The topical S of the CC is **erin** “cedar resin”. It is coreferential with the possessor of **ibi** “smoke” in the following matrix clause, expressed as the pronominal possessive enclitic =/bi/, which agrees in number and gender with **erin** “cedar resin”.

(158) Gudea Cyl. A 8:11-12 = 13:27 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232300)

$\tilde{s}_{im}$ erin	ir-sim	dinir-ra-kam,
$s_{[erin=\emptyset]}$	$pc_{[irsim}$	dinir=ak=∅]=am-∅
$s_{[cedar.resin=ABS]}$	$pc_{[fragrance}$	god=GEN=ABS]=COP-3NH.S
$i_3$ -bi <sub>2</sub> -bi	mu-du <sub>3</sub>	
ibi=bi=∅	$\mu_{S4}$ - $\mu_{S11}$ n- $\mu_{S12}$ du- $\mu_{S14}$ ∅	
smoke=3NH.POSS=ABS	VEN-3SG.A-build-3NH.P	

Lit.: “The cedar resin is the scent of gods; he (= Gudea) raised its smoke.” = “He (= Gudea) raised smoke of cedar resin, (which is) the scent of gods.”

In ex. (159) below, the CC is a type (Aii), with its topical S being provided by the extra-linguistic context: it is the very statue that carries the inscription. Accordingly it is expressed only as a pronominal affix on the enclitic COP. It is coreferential with the possessor of **kiguba** “pedestal” in the following matrix clause, expressed as the pronominal possessive enclitic =/bi/.

(159) Gudea Statue E 9:6-10 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232278)

alan            lu<sub>2</sub>            e<sub>2</sub>            <sup>0</sup>ba-u<sub>2</sub>,  
 PC[alan        lu        e        bau=ak=∅  
 PC[statue     man     house   DN=GEN=ABS  
 mu-du<sub>3</sub>-a-kam  
 mu-n-du-∅-'a=ak=∅]=am-∅  
 VEN-3SG.A-build-3NH.P-SUB=GEN=ABS]=COP-3NH.S  
 ki-gub-ba-bi                            lu<sub>2</sub>            nu-zi-zi  
 kiguba=bi=∅                            lu=e            <sub>S1</sub>nu-<sub>S12</sub>zizi-<sub>S14</sub>e  
 pedestal=3NH.POSS=ABS    man=ERG    NEG-rise~PF-3SG.A

“This is the statue of the man who built the temple of Bau. No one should lift its pedestal.” = “No one should lift the pedestal of this, (which is) the statue of the man who built the temple of Bau.”

Possessive CBCs show a similarity to constructions in which the possessor is left-dislocated.<sup>80</sup> Compare for example, ex. (160) with ex. (161). In ex. (160) below the appositional construction “Gudea, the man of temple building” is a left-dislocated possessor. It is in the genitive case, and there is a resumptive enclitic possessive pronoun (=/*ani*/ : 3SG.POSS) attached to the possessum (**namtil** “life”), with which it agrees in gender, person and number.

(160) Gudea Statue C 3:18-4:1 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232276)

gu<sub>3</sub>-de<sub>2</sub>-a,        lu<sub>2</sub>            e<sub>2</sub>            du<sub>3</sub>-a-ka,  
 ANC[Gudea]        APP[lu        e=∅            du-∅=ak]=ak  
 ANC[**RN**]            APP[man     house=ABS    build-TL=GEN]=GEN  
 nam-til<sub>3</sub>-la-ni                            he<sub>2</sub>-sud  
 namtil=ani=∅                            <sub>S1</sub>ha-<sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S12</sub>sud-<sub>S14</sub>∅  
 life=3SG.POSS=ABS        MOD-FIN-long-3NH.S

“As for Gudea, the temple-builder, may his life be long!”

In ex. (161) the same expression and the same construction (**nam-til<sub>3</sub>... he<sub>2</sub>-sud**) occurs as part of a possessive CBC. The possessor of **nam-til<sub>3</sub>** “life” is expressed by a type (Aii) CC. Why does ex. (160) use a left-dislocated possessor, while ex. (161) uses a possessive CBC?

<sup>80</sup> See Zólyomi (2005) for a detailed description of left-dislocated possessors in Sumerian. Left-dislocation of the possessor is referred to as the “anticipatory genitive” in Assyriology.

(161) Ur-Ningirsu II 6 2:4-5 (RIME 3/1.1.8.6) (Lagash, 22nd c.)

lu<sub>2</sub>      diŋir-ra-ni      ki      aŋ<sub>2</sub>-me,  
<sub>PC</sub>[lu      diŋir=ani=e      ki=∅      aŋ-∅=∅]=me-en  
<sub>PC</sub>[man      god=3SG.POSS=ERG      place=ABS      measure-TL=ABS]=COP-1SG.S  
nam-ti<sub>3</sub>-ŋu<sub>10</sub>      he<sub>2</sub>-sud  
namtil=ŋu=∅      <sub>S1</sub>ha-<sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S12</sub>sud-<sub>S14</sub>∅  
life=1SG.POSS=ABS      MOD-FIN-long-3NH.S

“I, (who am) a man beloved by his personal god, may my life be long!”

The answer to this question follows from the observations made in connection with ex. (156) and the hypothetical ex. (157). In ex. (160) the left-dislocated expression is an appositional construction consisting of two NPs: <sup>ANC</sup>[Gudea] <sup>APP</sup>[lu e du=ak]=ak; and this construction is coreferential with the resumptive enclitic possessive pronoun (=/**ani**/ : 3SG.POSS) attached to the possessum (**namtil** “life”).

In ex. (161) the resumptive enclitic possessive pronoun (=/**ŋu**/ : 1SG.POSS) attached to the possessum (**namtil** “life”) is coreferential with the S of the type (Aii) CC <sub>PC</sub>[lu **diŋir=ani=e ki=∅ aŋ-∅=∅]=me-en**, this S being expressed only as a pronominal affix on the enclitic COP. In ex. (161) only a type (Aii) CC may be used, because an appositional construction consisting of an independent pronoun and an NP (“I, the man beloved by his personal god”) would be ungrammatical in Sumerian. In other words, the type (Aii) CC is also used here as a substitute construction for an appositional construction with a pronominal anchor, which is ungrammatical in Sumerian.

The structure of ex. (162) below is very similar to that of ex. (161). It begins with a type (Aii) CC. The S of this CC is coreferential with the resumptive enclitic possessive pronoun (=/**ŋu**/ : 1SG.POSS) attached to the possessum (**mu** “name”) in the matrix clause. Here too, the type (Aii) CC is used as a substitute construction for an ungrammatical appositional construction with a pronominal anchor.

(162) Shulgi C, Segment A 112 (ETCSL 2.4.2.3)

ur-saŋ-me-en      mu-ŋu<sub>10</sub>      zid-de<sub>3</sub>-eš<sub>2</sub>  
<sub>PC</sub>[ursan=∅]=me-en      mu=ŋu=∅      zid=eš  
<sub>PC</sub>[warrior=ABS]=COP-1SG.S      name=1SG.POSS=ABS      true=ADV  
he<sub>2</sub>-em-pad<sub>3</sub>-pad<sub>3</sub>-de<sub>3</sub>-ne  
<sub>S1</sub>ha-<sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S4</sub>m-<sub>S12</sub>padpad-<sub>S14</sub>ene  
MOD-FIN-VEN-call-PL-3PL.A

Lit. “I, (who am) a hero, may they keep recalling appropriately my name!” = “May they keep recalling appropriately my, the hero’s, name!”

Possessive CBCs containing a type (Aii) CC are therefore constructions that substitute left-dislocated possessors that would consist of an appositional construction with a pronominal anchor.

The asymmetric correspondence between appositional constructions and CCs functioning as paratactic relative clauses may also be observed in the case of possessive CBCs. Ex. (158) above is a possessive CBC involving a type (Ai) CC, a CC with an overt NP as its topical S. A construction with a left-dislocated possessor like the hypothetical ex. (163) below, built on the pattern of ex. (160), would be grammatically correct in Sumerian.

(163)

*šim <sup>ANC</sup> erin	ir-sim	diñir-ra-ka,
[erin]	APP <sup>ANC</sup> [irsim]	diñir=ak]=ak
[cedar.resin]	APP <sup>ANC</sup> [fragrance	god=GEN]=GEN
i <sub>3</sub> -bi <sub>2</sub> -bi		mu-du <sub>3</sub>
ibi=bi=∅		S <sub>4</sub> mu <sub>S11</sub> n <sub>S12</sub> du <sub>S14</sub> ∅
smoke=3NH.POSS=ABS		VEN-3SG.A-build-3NH.P

“As for the cedar resin, the fragrance of gods, he (= Gudea) raised its smoke.”

The asymmetric correspondence between appositional constructions and CCs of attributive CBCs is illustrated in Table 4.1 below:

**Tab. 4.1:** The correspondence between appositions and attributive CBCs

APPOSITIONS	CBCs
$  \begin{array}{c}  \text{ANC} \quad \text{NP} \quad \text{APP} \quad \text{NP} \\  \text{ANC} \quad \text{PRON} \quad \text{APP} \quad \text{NP}  \end{array}  $	<p>with a type (Ai) CC</p> <p>with a type (Aii) CC</p>

What Table 4.1 shows is that, while CBCs involving a type (Ai) CC may vary with appositions with a nominal anchor, CBCs involving a type (Aii) CC are the only grammatically correct constructions in certain contexts. The existence of CBCs involving a type (Aii) CC, one could say, fills in a gap in the language, a gap that originates in a constraint on the use of independent pronouns in Sumerian.

One of the consequences of the asymmetric correspondence illustrated in Table 4.1 is that a type (Aii) CC like ex. (164) below may have three interpretations depending on the context: i) a CC (“I am a shepherd”); ii) an attributive appositional construction with a pronominal anchor (“I, the shepherd”); iii) an appositional attributive relative clause (“I, who am the shepherd”).

(164) Gudea Cyl. B 2:5 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232301)

sipad-me  
<sub>PC</sub>[sipad=∅]=me-en  
<sub>PC</sub>[shepherd=ABS]=COP-1SG.S

In many contexts, interpretations ii) and iii) are pointless to distinguish, as their difference is somehow stylistic in English as well. It would make more sense to distinguish only a) a clausal interpretation and function, and b) an attributive interpretation and function, which would include both ii) and iii).

The three English translations and the underlying interpretations are expressed in Sumerian by *one and the same* construction.<sup>81</sup> (The polyfunctionality of this construction played an important role also in the development of the Sumerian cleft constructions, so I will return to it in Chapter 5 when discussing the origin of clefts.)

In summary, this section has shown that CCs of attributive CBCs overlap functionally not only with relative clauses, but also with appositional constructions. Moreover, type (Aii) CCs were found to substitute appositional constructions with a pronominal anchor. CCs of attributive CBCs were thus the functional equivalent of two constructions at the same time in Sumerian.

#### 4.4 Attributive CBCs in Which the CC Functions as Reason or Concessive Clause

Although the CC of attributive CBCs overlaps functionally with appositional constructions as I tried to show in the previous section, the meaning of the two constructions does not always seem to be the same. In particular, CCs of attributive CBCs may function as reason or concessive clauses in certain contexts. This section shows examples of these uses.

In many attributive CBCs the property predicated about the S by the PC appears to explain why the action described in the matrix clause happens. In these constructions the CC functions thus as a reason clause. Ex. (165) below (= [141], repeated here for convenience) is from a sale document in which someone buys a male servant from a brother of Urtakama and Ur-Suena. They have to make the promissory oath because they are the seller's brothers, and consequently they may have the right to raise claims to the property of their brother in certain circumstances. Here they explicitly renounce any claims to the sold servant. The CC of this attributive CBC appears to explain the action described in the matrix clause: they swear because they are the seller's brother.

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<sup>81</sup> The polyfunctionality of the construction was already noted by Arno Poebel who wrote: "Dass diese enklitische Verbalformen die Bedeutung von persönlichen Fürwörtern erhalten, verdanken sie dem Umstand, dass das Sumerische eine Vorliebe für das beordnende Satzgefüge hat und deswegen beispielsweise den Satz 'ich, der ich König bin, befehle dir', bez. 'ich, der König (oder: ich als König), befehle dir' durch die beiden Hauptsätze *lugal-me-(e)n*, *maradugen* 'ich bin König; ich befehle dir' ausdrückt, wobei dem Sinne nach der sumerische Satz *lugal-men* 'ich bin König' dem deutschen pronominalen Ausdruck 'ich, der König', und somit die Verbalform *(i)-me-(e)n* 'ich bin' dem deutschen Pronomen 'ich' entspricht" (1923, p. 71, §194).

One could therefore translate this example as “Being his (i.e., the seller’s) brothers, Ur-takama and Ur-Suena, swore by the name of the king not to raise claims”.

(165) NATN 255 8-11 (= FaoS 17 12) (Nippur, 21st c)

ur-taka<sub>4</sub>-ma    u<sub>3</sub>    ur-<sup>d</sup>suena,    šeš-a-ni-me,  
<sub>s</sub>[urtakama    u    ursuenak=∅]    <sub>pc</sub>[šeš=ani=∅]=me-eš  
<sub>s</sub>[PN<sub>1</sub>    and    PN<sub>2</sub>=ABS]    <sub>pc</sub>[brother=3SG.POSS=ABS]=COP-3PL.S  
inim    nu- $\eta$ a<sub>2</sub>- $\eta$ a<sub>2</sub>-de<sub>3</sub>,    mu    lugal-bi  
inim=∅    nu- $\eta$ a $\eta$ a-ed=e    mu    lugal=ak=bi=∅  
word=ABS    NEG-place~PF-PF=DAT.NH    name    king=GEN=3NH.POSS=ABS  
in-pad<sub>3</sub>-de<sub>3</sub>-eš  
<sub>s2</sub>i-<sub>s11</sub>n-<sub>s12</sub>pad-<sub>s14</sub>eš  
FIN-3SG.A-call-3PL

“Being his (i.e., the seller’s) brothers, Ur-takama and Ur-Suena, swore by the name of the king not to raise claims”.

Ex. (166) below (ex. [109] = [143], repeated here for convenience) comes from an administrative letter sealed and consequently sent by Dada, the governor of Nippur. It probably has to be interpreted in such a way that the reason why Erra-gashir must be handed over is that he is a citizen of Nippur and belongs under the authority of Dada, represented here by Ur-saga.

(166) TCS 1, 61 3-6 (Nippur, 21st c.) (P134662)

<sup>m</sup>er<sub>3</sub>-ra-ga-ši-ir,    dumu    nibru<sup>ki</sup>-kam,  
<sub>s</sub>[erragašir=∅]    <sub>pc</sub>[dumu    nibru=ak=∅]=am-∅  
<sub>s</sub>[PN=ABS]    <sub>pc</sub>[child    GN=GEN=ABS]=COP-3SG.S  
ur-sag<sub>9</sub>-ga,    ha-mu-na-šum<sub>2</sub>-mu  
ursaga=ra    <sub>s1</sub>ha-<sub>s4</sub>mu-<sub>s6</sub>nn-<sub>s7</sub>a-<sub>s11</sub>n-<sub>s12</sub>šum-<sub>s14</sub>e  
PN=DAT.H    MOD-VEN-3SG-DAT-3SG.P-give-3SG.A

“(Tell Ea-bani that) he must hand over Erra-gashir, (who is) a citizen of Nippur, to Ur-saga!” = “(Tell Ea-bani that), as Erra-gashir is a citizen of Nippur, he must hand him over to Ur-saga!”

By the same token, in ex. (158) above, Gudea’s use of cedar resin for the purpose of burnt offering is the consequence of its being a fragrance preferred by the gods. Accordingly, ex. (158) may be translated as “As it is the scent of gods, he (= Gudea) raised the smoke of cedar-resin.”

The context of ex. (159) also prefers the reason clause interpretation: “As this is the statue of the man who built the temple of Bau, no one should lift its pedestal!” Here the mentioning of the fact that the statue is of the builder of Bau’s temple makes sense only as an explanation of the subsequent prohibition.

Similarly, ex. (161) above may also be translated as containing a reason clause “Being a man beloved by his personal god, may my life be long!”, and ex. (162) as “As I am a hero, may they keep recalling appropriately my name!”. Ex. (160), which uses a left-dislocated appositional construction, however, does not seem to convey the meaning: \* “As Gudea is a man of temple-building, may his life be long!”.

The reason clause interpretation of the CC appears to be very common in possessive CBCs, the subtype of attributive CBCs in which the topical S of the CC is coreferential not with one of the verbal participants in the matrix clause, but with one of the verbal participants’ possessor. In all of the following examples, the CC may be interpreted as a reason clause.

(167) FaoS 19, Ad 3:16-17 (= LEM 30 = Yang, Adab A 638) (Adab, 24th c.)

arad <sub>2</sub>	kalag-ga-ni-me-en <sub>6</sub> ,	ga-na
pc[arad	kalag=ani=∅]=me-en	gana
pc[slave	strong=3SG.POSS=ABS]=COP=1SG.S	come.on
šag <sub>4</sub> -ηu <sub>10</sub>	he <sub>2</sub> -eb-hul <sub>2</sub> -le	
šag=ηu=∅	s <sub>1</sub> ha-s <sub>2</sub> i-s <sub>11</sub> b-s <sub>12</sub> hul-s <sub>14</sub> e	
heart=1SG.POSS=ABS	MOD-FIN-3NH.P-happy-3SG.A	

Lit. “I am his loyal servant. Come on, may he make my heart happy.” = As I am his loyal servant, come on, may he make my heart happy!”

(168) Gudea Cyl. A 3:3-4 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232300)

nin	ama	lagaš <sup>ki</sup>	ki	ηar-ra-me,
s[nin=∅]	pc[ama	lagaš=∅	ki=∅	ηar-a=∅]=me-en
s[lady=ABS]	pc[mother	GN=ABS	place=ABS	put-PT=ABS]=COP-2SG.S
igi	uη <sub>3</sub> -še <sub>3</sub>	u <sub>3</sub> -ši-bar-ra-zu		
s[igi	uη=še	s <sub>1</sub> u-s <sub>5</sub> b-s <sub>9</sub> ši-s <sub>11</sub> y-s <sub>12</sub> bar-s <sub>14</sub> ∅-s <sub>15</sub>		’a=zu=∅]
s[eye	people=TERM	ANT-3NH-TERM-2SG.A-direct-3NH.P-SUB=2SG.POSS=ABS]		
ni <sub>2</sub> -a	he <sub>2</sub> -ηal <sub>2</sub> -la-am <sub>3</sub>			
ni=’a	pc[heηal=∅]=am-∅			
self=L1	pc[abundance=ABS]=COP-3NH.S			

Lit. “Lady, you are the mother who founded Lagash. Your look upon the people is by itself abundance. = “Lady, as you are the mother who founded Lagash, if you but look upon your people, it brings abundance.”

(169) Gudea Cyl. A 3:14-15 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232300)

an-du <sub>3</sub>	daηal-me		
pc[andul	daηal=∅]=me-en		
pc[sunshade	wide=ABS]=COP-2SG.S		
ηissu-zu-še <sub>3</sub> ,	ni <sub>2</sub>	ga-ma-ši-ib <sub>2</sub> -te	
ηissu=zu=še	ni=∅	s <sub>1</sub> ga-s <sub>4</sub> m-s <sub>5</sub> ba-s <sub>9</sub> ši-s <sub>11</sub> b-s <sub>12</sub> ten	
shade=2SG.POSS=TERM	self=ABS	MOD-VEN-3NH-TERM-3NH.P-cool	



Lit. “You are a broad sunshade. I will cool off in your shade!” = “As you are a broad sunshade, I will cool off in your shade!”

(170) Gudea Statue B 8:35-37 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)

lu <sub>2</sub>	nin-du <sub>7</sub> -e	pa	e <sub>3</sub> -a-am <sub>3</sub> ,
pc[lu	nin <sub>du</sub> =e	pa=∅	e-'a=∅]=am-∅
pc[man	appropriateness=L3.NH	branch=ABS	leave-PT=ABS]=COP-3SG.S
ka-ga <sub>14</sub> -ni,	lu <sub>2</sub>	nu-u <sub>3</sub> -kur <sub>2</sub> -e	
kag=ani=∅	lu=e	s <sub>1</sub> nu-s <sub>2</sub> i-s <sub>12</sub> kur-s <sub>14</sub> e	
mouth=3SG.POSS=ABS	man=ERG	NEG-FIN-change-3SG.A	

Lit. “He is the man who brought about perfection. No one is to change his commands.” = “As he is the man who brought about perfection, no one is to change his commands.”

(171) Gudea Statue E 2:1-4 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232278)

arad <sub>2</sub>	ni <sub>2</sub> -tuku,	nin-a-na-kam,
pc[arad	nituku-∅	nin=ani=ak=∅]=am-∅
pc[slave	pious=TL	lady=3SG.POSS=GEN=ABS]=COP-3SG.S
nam-mah	nin-a-na,	mu-zu-zu
nammah	nin=ani=ak=∅	s <sub>4</sub> mu-s <sub>11</sub> n-s <sub>12</sub> zuzu-s <sub>14</sub> ∅
greatness	nin=3SG.POSS=GEN=ABS	VEN-3SG.A-ZU~PL-3NH.P

Lit. “He is his lady’s reverent servant, he proclaimed everywhere his lady’s greatness.”  
 “Being his lady’s reverent servant, he proclaimed his lady’s greatness.”

In ex. (172) below (= ex. [144], repeated here for convenience) the CC appears to function as a concessive clause. In the context of this letter, the information contained in the CC, that certain people are from Nippur, makes sense only if it appears to contradict the information provided by the matrix clause, that they live in Lagash.

(172) FaoS 19, Gir 32 13-15 (= ITT 1 1100 = LEM 5) (Lagash, 24th c.) (P213570)

dumu	nibru <sup>ki</sup> -me,	lagaš <sup>ki</sup> -a,	ab-durun <sub>x</sub> (KU.KU)-ne <sub>2</sub> -eš <sub>2</sub>
pc[dumu	nibru=ak=∅]=me-eš	lagaš='a	s <sub>2</sub> a-s <sub>5</sub> b-s <sub>10</sub> ∅-s <sub>12</sub> durun-s <sub>14</sub> eš
pc[child	GN=GEN=ABS]=COP-3PL.S	GN=L2.NH	FIN-3NH-L2.SYN-sit.PL-3PL.S

Lit. “They are the citizens of Nippur, they live on the territory of Lagash.” = Although they are the citizens of Nippur, they live on the territory of Lagash.”

In ex. (173) below (= ex. [142], repeated here for convenience) the expression **dumu nibru=ak** “citizen of Nippur” is an apposition in an appositional construction. In this case, the reason or concessive clause interpretation does not seem to be valid: “As he is a citizen of Nippur, this is what Lugal-shu, your servant says”.

(173) (ISET 1, 204 = Pl. 146) (Nippur) (a ms. of ETCSL 3.3.03) (P343538)

<sup>m</sup>lugal-š<sub>u</sub><sub>2</sub>      dumu      nibru<sup>ki</sup>      arad<sub>2</sub>-zu  
<sup>ANC</sup>[lugalš<sub>u</sub>]      <sup>APP</sup>[dumu      nibru=ak]      <sup>APP</sup>[arad=zu=e]  
<sup>ANC</sup>[PN]      <sup>APP</sup>[child      GN=GEN]      <sup>APP</sup>[servant=2SG.POSS=ERG]  
na-ab-be<sub>2</sub>-a  
ana=∅      <sub>S1</sub>i-<sub>S5</sub>b-<sub>S10</sub>∅-<sub>S12</sub>e-<sub>S14</sub>e-<sub>S15</sub>'a  
what=ABS      FIN-3NH-L2.SYN-say.PF-3SG.A-SUB  
“This is what Lugal-shu, citizen of Nippur, your servant says:”

In ex. (174) (= ex. [111], repeated here for convenience) Atū guarantees that his brothers will not dispute the legal status of his adopted son, although it would be advantageous to his brothers if Atū dies without an heir.

(174) NATN 920 6-9 (Nippur, 21st c.) (P121617)<sup>82</sup>

lu<sub>2</sub>-giri<sub>17</sub>-zal,      lu<sub>2</sub>-diṇir-ra      šeš      a-tu-me,  
<sub>S</sub>[lugirizal      ludiṇirak=∅]      <sub>PC</sub>[šeš      atu=ak=∅]=me-eš  
<sub>S</sub>[PN<sub>1</sub>      PN<sub>2</sub>=ABS]      <sub>PC</sub>[brother      PN<sub>3</sub>=GEN=ABS]=COP-3PL.S  
nu-u<sub>3</sub>-ub-gi<sub>4</sub>-gi<sub>4</sub>-de<sub>3</sub>-ša,  
<sub>S1</sub>nu-<sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S5</sub>b-<sub>S10</sub>∅-<sub>S12</sub>gigi-<sub>S13</sub>ed-<sub>S14</sub>eš-<sub>S15</sub>'a=ak  
NEG-FIN-3NH-L2.SYN-return~PF-PF-3PL.S-SUB=GEN  
mu      lugal-bi      in-pad<sub>3</sub>  
mu      lugal=ak=bi=∅      <sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S11</sub>n-<sub>S12</sub>pad-<sub>S14</sub>∅  
name      king=GEN=3NH.POSS=ABS      FIN-3SG.A-call-3NH.P

Lit. “He (= Atū) swore by the king’s name that Lu-girizal and Lu-digira, (who are the brothers of Atū) will not contest it (= Atū’s adoption of a slave as his heir).”

“He (= Atū) swore by the king’s name that, although Lu-girizal and Lu-digira are the brothers of Atū, they will not contest it (= Atū’s adoption of a slave as his heir).”

The reason or concessive clause interpretation of CCs in attributive CBCs may have developed through the conventionalization of implicature, when the pragmatic inferences that could be made on the basis of the CBCs became part of their meaning. These interpretations are, however, only possible but not necessary.

No reason or concessive clause interpretation seems to be possible for the CC in ex. (175), a possessive CBC, and in ex. (176) below; in these examples the PC of the CC is a cardinal number.<sup>83</sup>

<sup>82</sup> For the interpretation of the text, see Wilcke (1998, pp. 53-54).

<sup>83</sup> See also ex. (133) above, and subsection 5.3.4 below on this type of CC.

(175) E-ana-tum 1 rev. 1:33-34 (RIME 1.9.3.1) (Lagash, 24th c.)

tu<sup>mušen</sup> 2-nam, igi-ba  
<sub>s</sub>[tu=∅] <sub>pc</sub>[2=∅]=am-∅ igi=bi='a  
<sub>s</sub>[dove=ABS] <sub>pc</sub>[2=ABS]=COP-3NH.S eye=3NH.POSS=L1  
 šembi ba-ni-ṇar  
 šembi=∅ <sub>s5</sub>ba-<sub>s10</sub>ni-<sub>s11</sub>n-<sub>s12</sub>ṇar-<sub>s14</sub>∅  
 kohl=ABS MID-L1-3SG.A-put-3NH.P

Lit. “The doves are two (in number). He made up their eyes with kohl.” = “He made up the eyes of two doves with kohl.”

(176) NG 209 60-66 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P134582)

gud-apin 3-am<sub>3</sub>, ud 3-še<sub>3</sub>, huṇ-ṇa<sub>2</sub>-aš,  
<sub>s</sub>[gudapin=∅] <sub>pc</sub>[3=∅]=am-∅ ud 3=še huṇ-'a=še  
<sub>s</sub>[plow.ox=ABS] <sub>pc</sub>[3=ABS]=COP-3NH.S day 3=TERM hire-PT-TERM  
 lu<sub>2</sub>-ṇiṣ-bar-e<sub>3</sub>, u<sub>3</sub> šeš-kal-la šeš-a-na,<sup>84</sup>  
 luṇiṣbare u šeškala šeš=ani='a  
 PN<sub>1</sub> and PN<sub>2</sub> brother=3SG.POSS=L2.NH  
 ur-me-me-ke<sub>4</sub> i<sub>3</sub>-na-šum<sub>2</sub>-ma  
 urmemek=e <sub>s2</sub>i-<sub>s6</sub>nn-<sub>s7</sub>a-<sub>s11</sub>n-<sub>s12</sub>šum-<sub>s14</sub>∅-<sub>s15</sub>'a=ak  
 PN<sub>3</sub>=ERG FIN-3SG-DAT-3SG.A-give-3NH.P-SUB=GEN

Lit. “(Three people witnessed that) the plow-oxen are three (in number); Ur-meme hired them out to Lu-Gishbare and his brother Shesh-kala, for three days.” = “Ur-meme hired out 3 plow-oxen to Lu-Gishbare and his brother Shesh-kala for three days.”

The reason or concessive interpretations do not seem to work in the following examples either, which come from administrative and legal texts.

(177) SRU 43 1:1-2:2 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P221413)

1 saṇ munus, pu<sub>2</sub>-ta pad<sub>3</sub>-da-am<sub>6</sub>,  
<sub>s</sub>[1 saṇ munus=∅] <sub>pc</sub>[pu=ta pad-'a=∅]=am-∅  
<sub>s</sub>[1 slave female=ABS] <sub>pc</sub>[well=ABL find-PT=ABS]=COP-3SG.S  
 za-ni-ni, geme<sub>2</sub> ṇin-ṇir<sub>2</sub>-su-ka-še<sub>3</sub>  
 zanini geme ninṇirsuk=ak=še  
 PN<sub>1</sub> maiden DN=GEN=TERM  
 dim<sub>3</sub>-tur, dam saṇṇa, ṇin-ṇir<sub>2</sub>-su-ka-ke<sub>4</sub>, e-še<sub>3</sub>-sa<sub>10</sub>  
 dimtur dam saṇṇa ninṇirsuk=ak=ak=e <sub>s2</sub>i-<sub>s6</sub>nn-<sub>s9</sub>še-<sub>s11</sub>n-<sub>s12</sub>sa-<sub>s14</sub>∅  
 PN<sub>2</sub> wife official DN=GEN=GEN=ERG FIN-3SG-TERM-3SG.A-buy-3SG.P

“Dim-tur, the wife of Ningirsu’s temple administrator, bought a female slave, (who is) a findling, from Zanini, a maiden of Ningirsu.”

<sup>84</sup> See Black and Zólyomi (2007, p. 14) for the case-marking of this participant.

(178) SRU 51 1-4 (Lagash, 23rd c.) (P214331)

15 gi<sub>4</sub> kug-[babbar], ni<sub>2</sub>-sam<sub>2</sub> <sup>m</sup>ur-<sup>d</sup>ištaran-kam,  
<sub>s</sub>[15 gi<sub>4</sub> kugbabbar=∅] <sub>pc</sub>[ni<sub>2</sub> sam urištaran=ak=∅]=am-∅  
<sub>s</sub>[15 shekel silver=ABS] <sub>pc</sub>[price PN<sub>1</sub>=GEN=ABS]=COP-3NH.S  
<sup>d</sup>en-lil<sub>2</sub>-sipad-e, i<sub>3</sub>-ši-la<sub>2</sub>  
 enlilsipad=e <sub>s2</sub>i<sub>3</sub>-<sub>s6</sub>nn-<sub>s9</sub>ši-<sub>s11</sub>n-<sub>s12</sub>la-<sub>s14</sub>∅  
 PN<sub>2</sub>=ERG FIN-3SG-TERM-3SG.A-weigh-3NH.P

Lit. “15 shekels of silver is the price of Ur-Ishtaran. Enlil-sipad paid them.” = “Enlil-sipad paid 15 shekels of silver, (which is) the price of Ur-Ishtaran.”

(179) OSP 2, 62 3:14-18 (Nippur, 23rd c.) (P216216)

10 še lid<sub>2</sub>-ga, ni<sub>2</sub>-sam<sub>2</sub> e<sub>2</sub>-kam  
<sub>s</sub>[10 še lidga=∅] <sub>pc</sub>[ni<sub>2</sub> sam e=ak=∅]=am-∅  
<sub>s</sub>[10 grain vessel=ABS] <sub>pc</sub>[price house=GEN=ABS]=COP-3NH.S  
 e<sub>2</sub>-ki-gal-la, e<sub>2</sub>-lu<sub>2</sub>, in-na-a<sub>2</sub>  
 ekigala=e elu=ra <sub>s2</sub>i<sub>3</sub>-<sub>s6</sub>nn-<sub>s7</sub>a-<sub>s11</sub>n-<sub>s12</sub>a<sub>2</sub>-<sub>s14</sub>∅  
 PN<sub>1</sub>=ERG PN<sub>2</sub>=DAT.H FIN-3SG-DAT-3SG.A-measure-3NH.P

Lit. “10 *lidga*-vessels of grain is the price of the house. E-kigala measured them out for Elu.” = “E-kigala measured out 10 *lidga*-vessels of grain, (which is) the price of the house, for Elu.”

(180) OSP 2, 58 1-4 (Nippur, 23rd c.) (P216212)

16 <sup>r</sup>kug gi<sub>4</sub><sup>1</sup>, kug <sup>ηi</sup>s<sup>d</sup>usu-kam,  
<sub>s</sub>[16 kug gi<sub>4</sub>=∅] <sub>pc</sub>[kug dusu=ak=∅]=am-∅  
<sub>s</sub>[16 silver shekel=ABS] <sub>pc</sub>[silver corvée=GEN=ABS]=COP-3NH.S  
<sup>d</sup>en-lil<sub>2</sub>-le-ma-ba-ra, an-na-la<sub>2</sub>  
 enlilemaba=ra <sub>s2</sub>a<sub>3</sub>-<sub>s6</sub>nn-<sub>s7</sub>a-<sub>s12</sub>la-<sub>s14</sub>∅  
 PN=DAT.H FIN-3SG-DAT-weigh-3NH.S

Lit. “16 shekels of silver is the value of the corvée obligation. They were paid to Enlile-maba.” = “16 shekels of silver, (which is) the value of the corvée obligation, were paid to Enlile-maba.”

(181) NG 99 36-42 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P111162)

<sup>m</sup>geme<sub>2</sub>-ti-ra-aš<sub>2</sub>, <sup>m</sup>ma-gi-na, <sup>m</sup>sa<sub>2</sub>-<sup>d</sup>ba-u<sub>2</sub>-tuku,  
<sub>s</sub>[gemetiraš magina sa<sub>2</sub>bautuku=∅]  
<sub>s</sub>[PN<sub>1</sub> PN<sub>2</sub> PN<sub>3</sub>=ABS]  
 dumu-munus nin-a-na dumu nin-za-ka-me,  
<sub>pc</sub>[dumumunus ninana dumu ninza=ak=ak=∅]=me-eš  
<sub>pc</sub>[daughter PN<sub>4</sub> child PN<sub>5</sub>=GEN=GEN=ABS]=COP=3PL.S  
 in-na-sag<sub>9</sub>-ga dam du-du-ke<sub>4</sub>, igi di-ku<sub>5</sub>-ne-še<sub>3</sub>,  
 inasaga dam dudu=ak=e igi dikud=ene=ak=še  
 PN<sub>6</sub> wife PN<sub>7</sub>=GEN=ERG face judge=PL=GEN=TERM

ama-ar-gi<sub>8</sub>-bi                      in-ŋar<sup>ar</sup>  
 amargi=bi=∅                      <sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S11</sub>n-<sub>S12</sub>ŋar-<sub>S14</sub>∅  
 freedom=3NH.POSS=ABS      FIN-3SG.A-put-3NH.P

Lit. “Geme-Tirash, Magina, Sag-Bau-tuku are the daughters of Ninana, son of Ninza. Inasaga, the wife of Dudu, established their freedom before the judges.”

“Inasaga, the wife of Dudu, established the freedom of Geme-Tirash, Magina, Sagg-Bau-tuku, (who are) the daughters of Ninana, son of Ninza, before the judges.”

## 4.5 Attributive CBCs Containing CCs with Left-dislocated Possessors

When a type (Ai) or (Aii) CC is used as a paratactic relative clause in an attributive CBC, then it is the topical S of the CC that is interpreted as the head of the relative clause. In ex. (182) (= ex. [148], repeated here for convenience), for example, it is **ašme** “rosette”, the topical S of the type (Ai) CC, that is interpreted as the head of the attributive relative clause “which is the standard of the goddess Inana”.

(182) Gudea Cyl. A 14:27 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232300) cf. A 14:23

aš-me                      šu-nir                      <sup>d</sup>inana-kam  
<sub>S</sub>[ašme=∅]                      <sub>PC</sub>[šunir                      inana=ak=∅]=am-∅  
<sub>S</sub>[rosette=ABS]                      <sub>PC</sub>[emblem                      DN=GEN=ABS]=COP-3NH.S  
 saŋ-bi-a                      mu-gub  
 saŋ=bi=’a                      <sub>S4</sub>mu-<sub>S11</sub>n-<sub>S12</sub>gub-<sub>S14</sub>∅  
 head=3NH.POSS=L1                      VEN-3SG.A-stand-3NH.P

Lit. “The rosette is the emblem of the goddess Inana, he placed it in front of them.”  
 “He placed the rosette, (which is) the standard of the goddess Inana, in front of them.”

Consider now ex. (183) (= ex. [154], repeated here for convenience). This example contains two CCs: an initial type (Bi) CC <sub>PC</sub>’s POSS [id=ak] <sub>S</sub> [nannagugal=∅] <sub>PC</sub> [mu=bi=∅]=am-∅ “of the canal, Nanna-gugal is its name”, followed by a type (Aii) CC <sub>PC</sub> [id kisura=ak=∅]=am-∅ “it is a border canal”. Both CCs form an attributive CBC with a matrix clause whose predicate is the verb **bal** “to dig”. In the type (Bi) CC the possessor of the PC is left-dislocated. It is in the genitive case, and there is a resumptive enclitic possessive pronoun (= /bi/ : 3NH.POSS) attached to the possessum (**mu** “name”), with which it agrees in gender, person, and number.

(183) Ur-Namma 28 1:10-13 (RIME 3/2.1.1.28) (Ur, 21st c.)

id<sub>2</sub>-da,                      <sup>d</sup>nanna-gu<sub>2</sub>-gal                      mu-bi,  
<sub>PC</sub>’s POSS [id=ak]                      <sub>S</sub> [nannagugal=∅]                      <sub>PC</sub> [mu=bi=∅]=am-∅  
<sub>PC</sub>’s POSS [canal=GEN]                      <sub>S</sub> [GN=ABS]                      <sub>PC</sub> [name=3NH.POSS=ABS]=COP-3NH.S

id<sub>2</sub>                      ki-sur-ra-kam,                      mu-ba-al  
 PC[id                      kisura=ak=∅]=am-∅                      S<sub>4</sub>mu<sub>-S11</sub>-n<sub>-S12</sub>bal<sub>-S14</sub>∅  
 PC[canal                      border=GEN=ABS]=COP-3NH.S                      VEN-3SG.A-dig-3NH.P  
 “He (= Ur-Namma) dug a canal, whose name is Nanna-gugal, (and) which is a border canal.”

In this construction it is not the S of the type (Bi) CC (“Nanna-gugal”), but the left-dislocated possessor of the PC (id “canal”) that functions as the topic of the CC; consequently, it is the left-dislocated possessor that is interpreted as the head of the paratactic relative clause, resulting in the English translation “the canal, whose name is Nanna-gugal”.

Another example of the same phenomenon is ex. (184) below, whose sentence initial CC also belongs to type (Bi).<sup>85</sup> Here too, it is the left-dislocated possessor of the PC that is topical and consequently is interpreted as the head of the paratactic relative clause “E-ana-tum, whose own name is E-ana-tum”. The oddity of this example is due to the fact that the person whose name is specified by the S is referred to by the very same name in the left-dislocated possessor of the PC. The reason for this is clear; this CC contrasts with the subsequent one: the former gives E-ana-tum’s usual name, while the latter gives another name of his.

(184) E-ana-tum 5 5:10-17 (RIME 1.9.3.5) (Lagash, 25th c.) (P222400-1)

e<sub>2</sub>-an-na-tum<sub>2</sub>-ma,                      e<sub>2</sub>-an-na-tum<sub>2</sub>,                      mu                      ‘u<sub>2</sub>-rum-ma-ni’,  
 PC’s POSS[eanatum=ak]                      S[eanatum=∅]                      PC[mu                      urum=ani=∅]=am-∅  
 PC’s POSS[PN=GEN]                      S[PN=ABS]                      PC[name                      own=3SG.POSS=ABS]=COP-3NH.S  
 mu                      ‘GIR<sub>3</sub><sup>1</sup>. GIR<sub>3</sub>-ni,                      ‘lum-ma-a<sup>1</sup>,<sup>86</sup>  
 PC[mu                      GIRGIR=ani=∅]                      S[luma=∅]=am-∅  
 PC[name                      ?=3SG.POSS=ABS]                      S[PN=ABS]=COP-3NH.S  
<sup>d</sup>nin-<sup>r</sup>nir<sub>2</sub><sup>1</sup>-su<sub>2</sub>-<sup>r</sup>ra<sup>1</sup>,                      id<sub>5</sub>                      gibil,                      mu-na-dun  
 nin<sup>n</sup>jirsuk=ra                      id                      gibil-∅=∅                      S<sub>4</sub>mu<sub>-S6</sub>-nn<sub>-S7</sub>a<sub>-S11</sub>-n<sub>-S12</sub>dun<sub>-S14</sub>∅  
 DN=DAT.H                      canal                      new-TL=ABS                      VEN-3SG-DAT-3SG.A-dig-3NH.P

“(In those days), E-ana-tum, whose own name is E-ana-tum, (but) whose ... name is Luma, dug a new canal for the god Ningirsu.”

<sup>85</sup> See Zólyomi (2010a) about this example, and for previous literature on it.

<sup>86</sup> I assume that the orthography **lum-ma-a** stands for **luma=∅=am-∅** (**PN=ABS=COP-3NH.S**), and not for **luma=e** (**PN=ERG**) as assumed by Attinger (1993, p. 211), and earlier also by me (Zólyomi, 2010a). It is indeed unexpected that the 3rd ps. sg. enclitic COP might be written with the grapheme **A** in the 25th c. BC, but note that in Iri-kagina 1 7: 28 (RIME 1.9.9.1) (Lagash, 25th c.) one manuscript writes **e-me-a** (AO3278), and the other **e-me-am**<sub>6</sub> (AO3149), yet both verbal forms must be analyzed similarly as <sub>S<sub>2</sub></sub>i<sub>-S11</sub><sub>-S14</sub>**me**<sub>-S14</sub>**∅=am-∅** (**FIN-COP-3NH.S=COP-3NH.S**). The 3rd ps. sg. enclitic COP is thus written unquestionably with the grapheme **A** in the first manuscript of Iri-kagina 1.

The second CC of ex. (184) belongs to type (Dii). It shares its topic with the sentence initial CC, i.e., the topic of both CCs is “E-ana-tum”.

The importance of exx. (183) and (184) is that they confirm the assumption that the shared participant must function as the topic of the initial CC in attributive CBCs. The examples also show that CCs used as paratactic relative clauses may also occur in a series sharing their heads, just like subordinate finite relative clauses. In ex. (183), for example, the head of both paratactic relative clauses is **id** “canal”. In the first CC the head functions as the possessor of the PC, while in the second CC it functions as the S; but in both CCs it functions as the topic.

There exists a type of CBC that shows some similarity with exx. (183) and (184), but at the same time differs from them in another respect. In these examples too, the participant that functions as the head of the paratactic relative clause is apparently a left-dislocated possessor: in exx. (185)-(187) this participant is the possessor of the S, while in ex. (188) it is the possessor of the PC. These examples, however, differ from exx. (183) and (184) in terms of the morphological case of the left-dislocated possessor. In exx. (183) and (184) the left-dislocated possessor is in the genitive. In contrast, the left-dislocated possessor is in the ergative case, the case required by the matrix clause, in both ex. (185) and ex. (188). In exx. (186) and (187) the case of the left-dislocated possessors cannot be decided with certainty in the orthography of the period, because they end in a vowel. Moreover, in ex. (187) even the cases governed by the verb of the matrix clause are unclear.

(185) Gudea Cyl. A 7:7-8 (Lagash, 22nd. c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232300)

ur-saṇ-e	me-ni	gal-gal-la-am <sub>3</sub> ,
<b>ursan</b> =e	<sub>S</sub> [me= <b>ani</b> =∅]	<sub>PC</sub> [galgal=∅]=am-∅
warrior=ERG	<sub>S</sub> [essence=3SG.POSS=ABS]	<sub>PC</sub> [big~RDP=ABS]=COP-3NH.S
šu	ma-ra-ni-ib <sub>2</sub> -mu <sub>2</sub> -mu <sub>2</sub>	
šu=∅	<sub>S4</sub> mu- <sub>S6</sub> r- <sub>S7</sub> a- <sub>S10</sub> ni- <sub>S11</sub> b- <sub>S12</sub> mumu- <sub>S14</sub> e	
hand=ABS	VEN-2SG-DAT-L1-3NH.P-grow~PF-3SG.A	

“The warrior, he, whose divine powers are the greatest, will make it (= the temple) grow for you.”

(186) Gudea Cyl. A 1:20-21 (Lagash, 22nd. c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232300)

e <sub>2</sub> -ninnu	me-bi	gal-gal-la-am <sub>3</sub> ,
<b>eninnu</b> =’a(?)	<sub>S</sub> [me= <b>bi</b> =∅]	<sub>PC</sub> [galgal=∅]=am-∅
TN=L2.NH	<sub>S</sub> [essence=3NH.POSS=ABS]	<sub>PC</sub> [big~PL=ABS]=COP-3NH.S
igi	mu-na-ni-ṇar	
igi=∅	<sub>S4</sub> mu- <sub>S6</sub> nn- <sub>S7</sub> a- <sub>S10</sub> ni- <sub>S11</sub> n- <sub>S12</sub> ṇar- <sub>S14</sub> ∅	
eye=ABS	VEN-3SG-DAT-L1-3SG.A-put-3NH.P	

“He showed him the temple Eninnu, it, whose divine powers are the greatest, in it (= the dream).”

(187) Gudea Cyl. A 1:22-23 (Lagash, 22nd. c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232300)

gu <sub>3</sub> -de <sub>2</sub> -a	šag <sub>4</sub> -ga-ni	su <sub>3</sub> -ra <sub>2</sub> -am <sub>3</sub> ,
<b>gudea</b> =x	<sub>s</sub> [šag=ani=ø]	<sub>pc</sub> [sud-'a=ø]=am-ø
PN=x	<sub>s</sub> [heart=3SG.POSS=ABS]	<sub>pc</sub> [long=ABS]=COP-3NH.S
inim-e	mi-ni-kuš <sub>2</sub> -u <sub>3</sub>	
inim=e	<sub>s4</sub> mu- <sub>s10</sub> ni- <sub>s11</sub> n- <sub>s12</sub> kušu- <sub>s14</sub> ø	
word=x	VEN-L1-3SG.A-tired-3NH.P	

“Gudea, he, whose mind is outstanding, will care about the instruction.

(188) E-ana-tum 5 7:14-20 (RIME 1.9.3.5) (Lagash, 25th c.) (P222400-1)

e <sub>2</sub> -an-na-tum <sub>2</sub> ,	lu <sub>2</sub>	inim-ma	sig <sub>10</sub> -ga,	<sup>d</sup> nin- <sub>nj</sub> r <sub>2</sub> -su-ka-ke <sub>4</sub> ,
<b>eanatum</b>	lu	inim='a	sig-'a	nin <sub>nj</sub> suk=ak=e
PN	man	word=L2.NH	place-PT	DN=GEN=ERG
din <sub>nj</sub> ir-ra-ni,		<sup>d</sup> šul-MUŠ×PA,		
<sub>pc</sub> [din <sub>nj</sub> ir=ani=ø]		<sub>s</sub> [šul-MUŠ×PA=ø]=am-ø		
<sub>pc</sub> [god=3SG.POSS=ABS]		<sub>s</sub> [DN=ABS]=COP-3SG.S		
e <sub>2</sub>	gal	ti-ra-aš <sub>2</sub> ,	mu-na-du <sub>3</sub>	
e	gal	tiraš=ak=ø	<sub>s4</sub> mu- <sub>s6</sub> nn- <sub>s7</sub> a- <sub>s11</sub> n- <sub>s12</sub> du- <sub>s14</sub> ø	
house	big	TN=GEN=ABS	VEN-3SG-DAT-3SG.A-build-3NH.P	

“E-ana-tum, who submits to the orders of Ningirsu, he, whose personal god is Šul-MUŠ×PA, built the great temple of Tirash for him (= Ningirsu).”

How can we explain that in these examples the left-dislocated possessors appear to be in the case required by the matrix clause? An answer to this question may follow from the observation made in Chapter 3 above that if the topic denotation is clear from the extra-linguistic context, then the topic of a CC might be expressed only by an enclitic possessive pronoun attached to a constituent which, in fact, is in the comment. So, for example, we argued that in ex. (189) (= [82], repeated here for convenience) the 3rd ps. non-human enclitic possessive pronoun attached to the PC refers back to the legal case recorded on the tablet. The clause in ex. (189) is thus construed as being about this legal case; it asserts that its commissioner was a person named Dadu. Consequently its topic denotation is the legal case, not Dadu, the S of the clause. Note also that in ex. (189) the topical expression functions as the possessor of the PC. (See also ex. [81] in Chapter 3 above).

(189) BPOA 1, 972 rev. 7 (Umma, 21st. c.) (P209369)

da-du	maškim-bi-im
<sub>s</sub> [dadu=ø]	<sub>pc</sub> [maškim=bi=ø]=am-ø
<sub>s</sub> [PN=ABS]	<sub>pc</sub> [bailiff=3NH.POSS=ABS]=COP-3SG.S

“(As for the legal case), Dadu was its commissioner.”



The initial CCs in exx. (185)-(187) are type (Biii) clauses like ex. (190) below (= [88], repeated here for convenience). In ex. (190) the topic of the clause is the left-dislocated possessor of the S.

(190) Gilgamesh and Huwawa A 11 (ETCSL 1.8.1.5)

kur-ra	dim <sub>2</sub> -ma-bi	<sup>d</sup> utu-kam
S's POSS [kur=ak]	S [dima=bi=∅]	PC [utu=ak]=am-∅
S's POSS [mountain=GEN]	S [thought=3NH.POSS=ABS]	PC [DN=GEN]=COP-3NH.S

“As regards the mountains, a plan that concerns them is Utu’s business.”

Exx. (185)-(187), however, differ from ex. (190) in expressing the topic of the CC only by an enclitic possessive pronoun attached to the S. So, for example, the topic denotation of the CC <sub>S</sub>[**me=ani=∅**] <sub>PC</sub>[**galgal=∅**]=**am-∅** “his divine powers are the greatest” in ex. (185) is “he”; consequently, if this CC is used as a paratactic attributive relative clause, then it is the 3rd ps. sg. pronoun that must interpreted as its head: “he, whose divine powers are the greatest”. The noun **ur-saṇ** “warrior” preceding this CC is in the ergative case required by the matrix clause, because it is not a constituent of the CC. Rather, the noun **ur-saṇ** “warrior” and the subsequent CC form an appositional construction of which the former functions as the anchor and the latter as the appositive.<sup>87</sup>

The case of an appositional construction may be expressed in two ways in Sumerian: a) the case-marker is attached only to the last constituent of the appositional construction; or b) the case-marker is attached to every constituent of the appositional construction.<sup>88</sup> In ex. (185) the second pattern is used, probably motivated by the fact that the case is not marked on the subsequent CC.

In sum, the first part of ex. (185) is an appositional construction <sub>ANC</sub>[**ursan**=e] <sub>APP-S</sub>[**me=ani=∅**] <sub>PC</sub>[**galgal=∅**]=**am-∅** consisting of a noun and a type (Biii) CC used as a headless paratactic relative clause; it may be translated as “The warrior, he, whose divine powers are the greatest”.<sup>89</sup>

In ex. (188) the CC belongs to type (Dii), and the first part of the example can also be analyzed as consisting of an appositional construction similarly to exx. (185)-(187): <sub>ANC</sub>[**eanatum lu inim=’a sig-’a ninjirsuk=ak=e**] <sub>APP-PC</sub>[**dinir=ani=∅**] <sub>S</sub>[**šul-MUŠxPA=∅**]=**am-∅** “E-ana-tum, who submits to the orders of Ningirsu, he, whose personal god is Šul-MUŠxPA”.

A similar construction is used in texts recording the sale of slaves from the end of the 3rd millennium BC (see also ex. [153] above).<sup>90</sup> The appositional constructions used in ex. (191) are different from those used in exx. (185)-(187) only in that the head

<sup>87</sup> See ex. [136] above, in which, similarly, a CC and a NP form an appositional construction.

<sup>88</sup> See Jagersma (2010, p. 92).

<sup>89</sup> Cf. Jagersma (2010, pp. 708-709) for a similar analysis of the example.

<sup>90</sup> See Steinkeller (1989, p. 128).

of the paratactic relative clauses functions as the possessor of the PC, not as the possessor of the S. In other words, these CCs belong to type (Bi), and not (Biii) as in exx. (185)-(187).

(191) FaoS 17, 121 1-6 (?, 21st c.) (P112551)

1 san munus  
 1 <sub>ANC</sub>[san munus=∅]  
 1 <sub>ANC</sub>[slave female=ABS]  
<sup>d</sup>ba-u<sub>2</sub>-lu<sub>2</sub>-sag<sub>9</sub>-sag<sub>9</sub> mu-ni-im,  
<sub>APP<sub>S</sub></sub>[baulusagsag=∅] <sub>PC</sub>[mu=ani=∅]=am-∅]  
<sub>APP<sub>S</sub></sub>[PN<sub>1</sub>=ABS] <sub>PC</sub>[name=3SG.POSS=ABS]=COP-3NH.S]  
 1 san nita dumu nita<sub>2</sub>-ni,  
 1 <sub>ANC</sub>[san nita] <sub>APP</sub>[dumu nita=ani=∅]  
 1 <sub>ANC</sub>[slave male] <sub>APP</sub>[child male=3SG.POSS=ABS]  
 a-ba-in-da-an-e<sub>3</sub> mu-ni-im, kug 12 giṇ<sub>4</sub>-še<sub>3</sub>  
<sub>APP<sub>S</sub></sub>[abaindane=∅] <sub>PC</sub>[mu=ani=∅]=am-∅] kug 12 giṇ=še  
<sub>APP<sub>S</sub></sub>[PN<sub>2</sub>=ABS] <sub>PC</sub>[name=3SG.POSS=ABS]=COP-3NH.S] silver 12 shekel=TERM  
 lu<sub>2</sub>-<sup>d</sup>šara<sub>2</sub> dumu gu-du-du-še<sub>3</sub>, ab-ba-gi-na in-ši-sa<sub>10</sub>  
 lušara dumu gududu=ak=še abbagina=e <sub>S<sub>2</sub></sub>i-<sub>S<sub>6</sub></sub>nn-<sub>S<sub>9</sub></sub>ši-<sub>S<sub>11</sub></sub>n-<sub>S<sub>12</sub></sub>sa-<sub>S<sub>14</sub></sub>∅  
 PN<sub>3</sub> child PN<sub>4</sub>=GEN=TERM PN<sub>5</sub>=ERG FIN-3SG-TERM-3SG.A-buy-3SG.P

“Abba-gina, bought one female slave, her, whose name is Bau-lu-sagsag, (and) one male slave, her son, him, whose name is Aba-indane, for 12 shekels of silver, from Lu-Shara, son of Gududu.”

It is unclear what the difference is between the construction used in exx. (183) and (184) and the construction used in exx. (185)-(191) in terms of their use. A mixture of the two constructions is also attested; in ex. (192) below the apposition part of the appositional construction is a type (Bi) CC, in which the topic is expressed both by an enclitic possessive pronoun attached to the PC and by a left-dislocated possessor.

(192) FaoS 17, 93 1-6 (Umma, 21st c.) (P200890)

1 san nita, san-ba ha-ba-lu<sub>5</sub>-ge<sub>2</sub>  
 1 <sub>ANC</sub>[san nita=∅] <sub>APP<sub>PC'S POSS</sub></sub>[san=bi=ak] <sub>S</sub>[habaluge=∅]  
 1 <sub>ANC</sub>[slave male=ABS] <sub>APP<sub>PC'S POSS</sub></sub>[slave=DEM=GEN] <sub>S</sub>[PN<sub>1</sub>=ABS]  
 mu-ni, kug-bi 3 giṇ<sub>4</sub> kug-babbar,  
<sub>PC</sub>[mu=ani=∅]=am-∅] kug=bi 3 giṇ kugbabbar=∅  
<sub>PC</sub>[name=3SG.POSS=ABS]=COP-3NH.S] silver=3NH.POSS 3 shekel silver=ABS  
 ur-<sup>d</sup>dumu-zid-da-ka, lu<sub>2</sub>-<sup>d</sup>šara<sub>2</sub>-ke<sub>4</sub>, i<sub>3</sub>-ši-sa<sub>10</sub>  
 urdumuzidak='a lušarak=e <sub>S<sub>2</sub></sub>i-<sub>S<sub>6</sub></sub>nn-<sub>S<sub>9</sub></sub>ši-<sub>S<sub>11</sub></sub>n-<sub>S<sub>12</sub></sub>sa-<sub>S<sub>14</sub></sub>∅  
 PN<sub>2</sub>=X PN<sub>3</sub>=ERG FIN-3SG-TERM-3SG.A-buy-3SG.P

“Lu-Shara bought one male slave, that slave, whose name is Habaluge, for its price, 3 shekels of silver, from Ur-Dumuzida.”

Finally, note that the subordinate relative clause used in ex. (193) below (= [126], repeated here for convenience) and the paratactic relative clause used in ex. (183) are functionally equivalent.

(193) NG 137 7 (Umma, 21st c.) (P131782)<sup>91</sup>

ab <sub>2</sub>	ša-bar-tur	mu-bi	i <sub>3</sub> -me-a
<sub>P1</sub> ab	<sub>P2</sub> [šabartur=∅	mu=bi=∅	<sub>S3</sub> i- <sub>S12</sub> me- <sub>S14</sub> ∅- <sub>S14</sub> 'a]= <sub>P5</sub> ∅
cow	PN=ABS	name=POSS.3NH=ABS	FIN-COP-3NH.S-SUB=ABS

“The cow whose name is Šabar-tur”

In both constructions the possessor of the PC is relativized, but in ex. (193) this participant functions as the head of a subordinate relative clause, while in ex. (183) it is left-dislocated and marked with the genitive case, as shown in the schemas (194) and (195) below.

(194)

PC'S POSS	S	PC	COP	
<sub>P1</sub> ab	<sub>P2</sub> [šabartur=∅	mu=bi=∅	<sub>S3</sub> i- <sub>S12</sub> me- <sub>S14</sub> ∅- <sub>S14</sub> 'a]	= <sub>P5</sub> ∅
<sub>P1</sub> cow	<sub>P2</sub> [PN=ABS	name=3NH.POSS=ABS	FIN-COP-3SG.S-SUB	= <sub>P5</sub> ABS

(195)

PC'S POSS	S	PC	COP
id=ak	nannagugal=∅	mu=bi=∅	=am-∅
canal=GEN	GN=ABS	name=3NH.POSS=ABS	=COP-3NH.S

Among the participants of a CC, the PC's possessor is the only one that is attested being relativized with both subordinate and paratactic constructions; the S is only attested relativized in a paratactic construction. As we have only a couple of examples, it is impossible to tell whether the coexistence of functionally equivalent constructions might indicate the gradual replacement of an (older) paratactic construction by a subordinate construction.

## 4.6 The Copula Functioning as Standard Marker

In some of its occurrences the 3rd ps. sg. enclitic COP =/am/ lends itself easily to a translation with the preposition “like”:

<sup>91</sup> See ex. (271) below in Chapter 5 for the whole context of ex. (193).

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

lugal<sub>1</sub> diŋir-am<sub>3</sub> šag<sub>4</sub>-bi-a mu-un-da-an-til<sub>3</sub>  
 lugal=∅ diŋir=∅=am-∅ šag=bi='a <sub>S4</sub>mu-<sub>S6</sub>nn-<sub>S7</sub>da-<sub>S10</sub>n-<sub>S12</sub>til-<sub>S14</sub>∅  
 king=ABS god=ABS=COP=3NH.S heart=3NH.POSS=L1 VEN-3SG-COM-L1.SYN-live-3SG.S  
 “Lit. “The king is a god, he lives with her in it.” = “The king lives with her (= the goddess Ninegala) in it like a god.”

The ancient scribes have already recognized this usage. In a grammatical text from the first millennium BC (NGBT IX 1. 270-1 in MSL 4: 175), the enclitic COP is equated with the Akkadian preposition *kīma* “like”. There are also a number of Sumerian literary texts whose manuscripts vary in using either =/am/ or the Sumerian equative enclitic =/gin/ “like”.<sup>92</sup>

Clauses like ex. (196) above are similitive constructions in essence. Similitive constructions, which express sameness of manner, and equative constructions, which express sameness of extent, are expressed in Sumerian, as in many other languages, with the same structural means.<sup>93</sup>

Following Haspelmath and Buchholz (1998), similitive and equative constructions may be schematized as consisting of five constituent parts. In English the equative and the similitive constructions differ, as the examples below show:

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

In Sumerian, however, the standard marker is as a rule the equative enclitic =/gin/ “like” in both equative and similitive constructions. Ex. (197) below is a personal name containing an equative construction. The goddess Bau functions as standard, and the standard marker is the equative enclitic.<sup>94</sup>

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

<sup>d</sup>ba-u<sub>2</sub>-gin<sub>7</sub>-a-ba-sag<sub>9</sub>  
 bau=gin aba=∅ <sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S12</sub>sag-<sub>S14</sub>∅  
 DN=EQU who=ABS FIN-fine-3SG.S  
 “Who-is-as-kind-as-the-goddess-Bau?”

<sup>92</sup> See Heimpel (1968, pp. 33-36).

<sup>93</sup> See Sövegjártó (2011).

<sup>94</sup> See subsection 5.3.5 for the analysis of this personal name.

In ex. (198), a similitive construction, the new moon is the standard, and the standard marker is again the enclitic **=/gin/**:

(198) Gudea Cyl. A 24:10 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232300)

ud-sakar	gibil-gin <sub>7</sub>	men	bi <sub>2</sub> -il <sub>2</sub>
udsakar	gibil=gin	men=Ø	<sub>S5</sub> b- <sub>S10</sub> i- <sub>S11</sub> n- <sub>S12</sub> il- <sub>S14</sub> Ø
crescent.moon	new=QU	crown=ABS	3NH-L3-3SG.A-carry-3NH.P

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

In example ex. (196) above, the word **dinir** “god” appears to function as the standard, and the 3rd ps. sg. enclitic COP attached to it functions as the standard marker. In this example, therefore, the COP has a function similar to that of the equative enclitic.

It is easy to see that this use of the 3rd ps. sg. enclitic COP may come from a context-dependent reinterpretation of attributive CBCs similar to ex. (199) below. In this and similar examples, the S of the CC is said to belong to a class of entities (expressed by the PC), and the event described by the matrix clause’s finite verb is carried out characteristically by this class of entities. So in the CC of ex. (199), the E-ninnu temple is said to be a white Anzud bird, a mythical eagle. The verb in the matrix clause, “to spread the talons”, suits the bird semantically, but not the temple.

(199) Gudea Cyl. B 1:8-9 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232301)

e <sub>2</sub> -ninnu	anzud <sub>2</sub> <sup>mušen</sup>	babbar <sub>2</sub> -ra-am <sub>3</sub> ,
<sub>S</sub> [eninnu=Ø]	<sub>PC</sub> [anzud	babbar=Ø]=am-Ø
<sub>S</sub> [TN=ABS]	<sub>PC</sub> [bird	white=ABS]=COP-3NH.S
kur-ra	dub <sub>3</sub>	mi-ni-ib <sub>2</sub> -bad
kur=’a	dub=Ø	<sub>S4</sub> mu- <sub>S10</sub> ni- <sub>S11</sub> b- <sub>S12</sub> bad- <sub>S14</sub> Ø
mountain=L1	knee=ABS	VEN-L1-3NH.A-open-3NH.P

The context of the sentence implies an interpretation in which the PC of the type (Ai) CC functions as the standard of a similitive construction, and the enclitic **=/am/** functions as a standard marker.

1. “The E-ninnu is a white Anzud bird, it spreads its talons in the mountains.”  
     ⇓
2. “The E-ninnu, (which is) a white Anzud bird, spreads its talons in mountains.”  
     ⇓
3. “The E-ninnu like a white Anzud bird spreads its talons in the mountains.”

When the verb in the matrix clause also requires its S to be in the absolutive case, then the participant functioning as the S of the CC may easily be reinterpreted as the S of the matrix clause, and the original predicate as a noun phrase with a standard marker. So the surface form of ex. (200) below may correspond to both of the syntactic

analyses a) and b), while the interpretation in iii) may prefer syntactic analysis b) (in the glosses the standard marker use of the COP is glossed as STM).

(200) Gudea Cyl. B 1:6-7 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232301)

e <sub>2</sub>	kur	gal-am <sub>3</sub> ,	an-ne <sub>2</sub>	im-us <sub>2</sub> ,
a = i) or ii)				
s[e=∅]	PC[kur	gal-∅=∅]=am-∅	an=e	s <sub>2</sub> i-s <sub>4</sub> m-s <sub>11</sub> b-s <sub>12</sub> us-s <sub>14</sub> ∅
s[house=ABS]	PC[mountain	great-TL=ABS]=COP-3NH.S	sky=L3	FIN-VEN-3NH.L3-next.to-3NH.S
b) = iii)				
e=∅	kur	gal-∅=am	an=e	s <sub>2</sub> i-s <sub>4</sub> m-s <sub>11</sub> b-s <sub>12</sub> us-s <sub>14</sub> ∅
house=ABS	mountain	great-TL=STM	sky=L3	FIN-VEN-3NH.L3-next.to-3NH.S

i. “The temple is a great mountain, it reaches to the sky.”



ii. “The temple, (which is) a great mountain, reaches to the sky.”



iii. “The temple like a great mountain reaches to the sky.”

Interpretations i) and iii) are different not only in the function they assume for the 3rd ps. sg. enclitic COP, but also in their underlying clausal structure. The clausal structure underlying interpretation i) is biclausal, while that underlying interpretation iii) is monoclausal. Evidence in favour of the underlying monoclausal structure of examples similar to ex. (200) may come from the case-marking of the constituent that would function as the S of the CC in the original CBC. If the case of this constituent is determined by the matrix clause, then the underlying structure of the sentence is monoclausal.

There are a number of examples in the cylinder inscriptions of Gudea, ruler of Lagash, from the end of the 3rd millennium BC in which this is exactly what one can observe. In ex. (201) the constituent **šag enlil=ak** “the heart of the god Enlil” is in the ergative case, the case required by the transitive verb of the matrix clause. If this constituent functioned as the S of the CC “the heart of the god Enlil is the river Tigris”, then it should be in the absolutive case.

(201) Gudea Cyl. A 1:9 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232300)

šag <sub>4</sub>	en-lil <sub>2</sub> -la <sub>2</sub> -ke <sub>4</sub>	id <sub>2</sub> idigna-am <sub>3</sub>
šag	enlil=ak=e	idigna=am
heart	DN=GEN=ERG	WN=STM
a	dug <sub>3</sub> -ga	nam-de <sub>6</sub>
a	dug-'a=∅	s <sub>1</sub> na-s <sub>4</sub> m-s <sub>11</sub> b-s <sub>12</sub> de-s <sub>14</sub> ∅
water	sweet-PT=ABS	MOD-VEN-3NH.A-bring-3NH.P

“The heart of the god Enlil brought sweet water like the river Tigris.”

Similarly in ex. (202) below, the constituent **šumin** “hammer-stones” is in the ergative case, the case required by the verb of the matrix clause.

(202) Gudea Cyl. A 16:31 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232300)

<sup>na</sup> <sub>4</sub> š <u>u</u> -min-e	ud-da-am <sub>3</sub>	šeg <sub>12</sub>	mu-na-ab-gi <sub>4</sub>
šumin=e	ud=am	šeg=∅	<sub>S4</sub> mu- <sub>S6</sub> nn- <sub>S7</sub> a- <sub>S11</sub> b- <sub>S12</sub> gi- <sub>S14</sub> ∅
hammerstone=ERG	storm=STM	voice=ABS	VEN-3SG-DAT-3NH.A-return-3NH.P

“The heavy hammer-stones roared for him like a storm”

In ex. (203) one can only assume that the constituent **ala** “drum” is in the ergative. The word ends in a vowel which probably contracted with the ergative case-marker, so the case-marker leaves no trace in the orthography of the 3rd millennium BC.

(203) Gudea Cyl. A 19:1 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232300)

a <sub>2</sub> -la <sub>2</sub>	ud-dam	šeg <sub>12</sub>	mu-na-ab-gi <sub>4</sub>
ala=e	ud=am	šeg=∅	<sub>S4</sub> mu- <sub>S6</sub> nn- <sub>S7</sub> a- <sub>S11</sub> b- <sub>S12</sub> gi- <sub>S14</sub> ∅
drum=ERG	storm=STM	voice=ABS	VEN-3SG-DAT-3NH.A-return-3NH.P

“The ala drums roared for him like a storm.”

The same applies to ex. (199) above, in which the constituent E-ninnu may well in fact be in the ergative case. It was analyzed and glossed as being in the absolutive case only to demonstrate the kind of structures in which the use of the 3rd ps. sg. enclitic COP as a standard marker may have had its origin. As is often the case for Sumerian, an extinct language with no known relatives, one can only hypothesize as to the most likely origin and course of syntactic change on the basis of quasi-synchronic evidence, as we have no relevant linguistic data from previous periods. In the case of the 3rd ps. sg. enclitic COP used as a standard marker, one can thus only claim with certainty that by the end of the 3rd millennium a number of occurrences are attested which argue for the monoclausal structure of the constructions in question. It is, however, impossible to know for certain when the semantic shift of the COP began and what type of structures served as its source. Nevertheless, if my assumption about the grammaticalization of the 3rd ps. sg. enclitic COP into a standard marker is plausible, then this development is another example of the process in which a biclausal structure acquires the characteristics of a monoclausal structure, as described by Harris and Campbell (1995, pp. 151-194).

Another piece of evidence that points to an underlying monoclausal structure may be provided by word order. In ex. (204) below the adverbial constituent specifying the place where the god Ningirsu stands precedes the constituent **utu=am**. If **utu=am** were still the PC of a CC, one might expect the place adverbial of the matrix clause to follow it. Here, however, the place adverbial stands at the very beginning of the sentence, suggesting that the construction was no longer interpreted as consisting of a CC and a matrix clause, but as being a single clause.

(204) Gudea Cyl. A 16:15-16 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232300)

<sup>ni5</sup> gigir	za-gin <sub>3</sub>	ul	guru <sub>3</sub> -a-na	
gigir	zagin	ul=∅	guru-∅=ani='a	
chariot	lapis.lazuli	flower=ABS	carry-TL=3SG.POSS=L1	
lugal-bi	ur-saṇ	<sup>d</sup> nin-ṇir <sub>2</sub> -su	<sup>r</sup> dutu-am <sub>3</sub> <sup>1</sup>	mu-gub
lugal=bi	ursan	ninṇirsu=∅	utu=am	<sub>S4</sub> mu- <sub>S10</sub> n- <sub>S12</sub> gub- <sub>S14</sub> ∅
king=3NH.POSS	warrior	DN <sub>1</sub> =ABS	DN <sub>2</sub> =STM	VEN-L1.SYN-stand-3SG.S

“In his blue chariot decorated with flowers, its owner, warrior Ningirsu, stood like the god Utu.”

Exx. (205)-(209) below are further examples of the COP used as a standard marker. Ex. (205) is the earliest attested example of an attributive CBC in which the COP may be interpreted as a standard marker. Note that ex. (205) is still clearly biclausal as the word “my house” is in the absolute case, not in the locative1 as would be required by the matrix clause.

(205) Iri-kagina 1, 12: 4-5 (RIME1.9.9.1) (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222607-9)

e <sub>2</sub> -ṇu <sub>10</sub>	šen-nam
e=ṇu=∅	šen=∅=am-∅
house=1SG.POSS=ABS	chest=ABS=COP-3NH.S
še	si-ma-ni
še=∅	<sub>S1</sub> si- <sub>S4</sub> m- <sub>S6</sub> a- <sub>S10</sub> ni- <sub>S11</sub> b
barley=ABS	fill-VEN-DAT-L1-3SG.P

“Fill my house like a chest with barley for me.” = Lit. “My house is a chest; fill it with barley for me!”

(206) Gudea Cyl. B 1:8 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232301)

<sup>d</sup> utu-am <sub>3</sub>	an-šag <sub>4</sub> -ge	im-si
utu=am	anšag=e	<sub>S2</sub> i- <sub>S4</sub> m- <sub>S11</sub> b- <sub>S12</sub> si- <sub>S14</sub> ∅
DN=STM	heaven=L3.NH	FIN-VEN-3NH.L3-fill-3NH.S

“It (= the temple) fills the midst of the heavens like the god Utu.”

(207) Gudea Cyl. A 19:28 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232300)

šag <sub>4</sub>	lugal-na	ud-dam	mu-<na>-e <sub>3</sub>
šag	lugal=ani=ak=∅	ud=am	<sub>S4</sub> mu- <sub>S6</sub> nn- <sub>S7</sub> a- <sub>S12</sub> e= <sub>S14</sub> ∅
heart	king=3SG.POSS=GEN=ABS	sun=STM	VEN-3SG-DAT-come.out-3NH.S

“The intention of his master had become as clear for him as the Sun.”

(208) Gudea Cyl. A 22:14 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232300)

temen	an-na	ur-saṇ-am <sub>3</sub>
temen	an=ak=∅	ursan=am
peg	sky=GEN=ABS	warrior=STM



e<sub>2</sub>-e                      im-mi-dab<sub>6</sub>  
 e=e                      i<sub>S2</sub>-m<sub>S4</sub>-b<sub>S5</sub>-i<sub>S10</sub>-n<sub>S11</sub>-dab<sub>S12</sub>-<sub>S14</sub>∅  
 house=L3.NH      FIN-VEN-3NH-L3-3SG.A-go.round-3NH.P  
 “He had heavenly foundation pegs surround the temple like warriors.”

(209) Shulgi F 63<sup>95</sup> (ETCSL 2.4.2.6)

neš<sub>3</sub>      zid-<sup>r</sup>dam      kurun<sub>3</sub><sup>1</sup>      kug      mu-<sup>r</sup>un-il<sub>2</sub><sup>1</sup>  
 meš      zid=am      kurun      kug=∅      <sub>S4</sub>mu-<sub>S11</sub>n-<sub>S12</sub>il-<sub>S14</sub>∅  
 tree      true=STM      fruit      holy=ABS      VEN-3SG.A-bear-3NH.P  
 “He (= Shulgi) bears holy fruits like a true *mesh*-tree.”

It is impossible to say what exactly the relation was between the two morphemes used as standard markers in terms of their use. Nevertheless, the use of **=/am/** as a standard marker appears to be restricted to literary texts, suggesting that it belonged to a higher register.

An interesting phenomenon is that the equative case-marker may occur with an attached COP in literary texts.

(210) Lament for Urim 369 (ETCSL 2.2.2)

nin-ηu<sub>10</sub>                      uru<sub>2</sub>-zu                      ama-bi-gin<sub>7</sub>-nam  
 nin=ηu=∅                      uru=zu=e                      ama=bi=gin=am  
 lady=1SG.POSS=ABS      city=2SG.POSS=ERG      mother=3NH.POSS=EQU=STM  
 er<sub>2</sub>                      mu-e-ši-še<sub>8</sub>-še<sub>8</sub>  
 er=∅                      <sub>S4</sub>mu-<sub>S6</sub>e-<sub>S9</sub>ši-<sub>S12</sub>šeše-<sub>S14</sub>e  
 tears=ABS                      VEN-2SG-TERM-weep~PF-3SG.A  
 “My lady, your city weeps before you as before its mother.”

(211) Letter from Shu-Suen to Sharrum-bani 24 (ETCSL 3.1.16)<sup>96</sup>

a-na-aš-am<sub>3</sub>                      ηa<sub>2</sub>-a-gin<sub>7</sub>-nam                      nu-ak  
 ana=še=am-∅                      ηa=gin=am                      <sub>S1</sub>nu-<sub>S11</sub>e-<sub>S12</sub>ak-<sub>S14</sub>∅  
 what=TERM=COP-3NH.S      1SG.PR=EQU=STM      NEG-2SG.A-do-3NH.P  
 “(That was how I instructed you.) Why did you not do as I (instructed you to do)?

The forms containing both the equative enclitic **=/gin/** and an enclitic COP are hypercharacterized forms.<sup>97</sup> The equative and the COP both function as standard markers in these constructions. The motivation behind these pleonastic forms is most likely to lend extra emphasis. It may be no accident that these hypercharacterized forms occur in literary texts.

<sup>95</sup> Line numbering follows Lämmerhirt (2012).

<sup>96</sup> The composition is Letter 19 in Michalowski's (2011) latest edition.

<sup>97</sup> See Lehmann (2005) on hypercharacterization.

## 5 Specificational Copular Bicausal Constructions

### 5.1 Introduction

The other major type of bicausal constructions involving a CC is represented by examples like (212) and (213) below:

(212) Gudea Cyl. A 13:2 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232300)

siki            udu            gan-na-kam  
<sub>s</sub>[siki        udu        gan=ak=∅]=am-∅  
<sub>s</sub>[wool       sheep       bearing=GEN=ABS]=COP-3NH.S  
 šu-a            mi-ni-ṇar-ṇar  
 šu='a            <sub>s4</sub>mu-<sub>s10</sub>ni-<sub>s11</sub>n-<sub>s12</sub>ṇarṇar-<sub>s14</sub>∅  
 hand=L1        VEN-L1-3SG.A-put~PL-3NH.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.”

(213) TCS 1, 81 1-6 (= LEM 141) (Lagash, 21st c.) (P135178)

ab-ba-kal-la,    ur-meš<sub>3</sub>-ra,    zi        lugal,  
 abbakala=∅    urmeš=ra        zi        lugal=ak=∅  
 PN<sub>1</sub>=ABS        PN<sub>2</sub>=DAT.H    life    king=GEN=ABS  
 ṇe<sub>26</sub>-e-me,                                    ha-na-šum<sub>2</sub>  
<sub>s</sub>[ṇe=∅]=me-en                                <sub>s1</sub>ha-<sub>s6</sub>nn-<sub>s7</sub>a-<sub>s11</sub>y-<sub>s12</sub>šum-<sub>s14</sub>∅  
<sub>s</sub>[1SG.PR=ABS]=COP-1SG.S                MOD-3SG-DAT-1SG.A-give-3SG.P

“(Tell Era:) ‘By the life of the king, it is me who gave Aba-kala to Ur-mesh!’”

Both examples consist of a CC and a non-copular clause with a finite verb. The CC is a type (Di) clause: the constituent next to the COP is the S as indicated by ex. (213), in which the COP agrees with a 1st ps. sg. pronoun. In ex. (212) the CC is in sentence initial position, while in ex. (213) the CC is in a sentence internal position, preceding the finite verb, preceded by other constituents. I will discuss the significance of these positions in detail both here and the next section of the chapter.

As the accompanying translations suggest, this type of CBC is thought to correspond to the cleft-sentence in English; the constituent followed by the COP is interpreted as identificational focus. In these constructions the COP therefore seems to function as a focus marker. Cross-linguistically this is far from unexpected as in lan-

guages with a morphological focus marker, the marker is often found to be cognate with a COP, and they often develop from cleft-like constructions.<sup>98</sup>

In the second section of the chapter, I will argue that these constructions developed from specificational CBCs in Sumerian. The CC of these CBCs belongs to a special class of specificational CCs, which are characterized by an anaphoric “it” or “that” subject in English (Mikkelsen, 2005, pp. 118-130). In an influential article about cleft-sentences in the languages of the world, Harries-Delisle (1978) demonstrated that cross-linguistic variation in the syntax of cleft sentences typically reflects differences in the way the languages construct specificational CCs and relative clauses. I will argue that the characteristics of Sumerian cleft constructions, as compared to English *it*-clefts, have language particular motivations.

In the third section of the chapter, I will examine the question of the degree to which Sumerian specificational CBCs have acquired the characteristics of a monoclausal structure. I will conclude that the Sumerian construction corresponds to what Heine and Reh (1984) call a “weakly grammaticalized system” and represents an intermediate stage in the grammaticalization of the COP into a true focus particle.

An important element of this chapter is the reconstruction of the grammaticalization of the original COP into a focus marker. As often in the case of Sumerian, an extinct language without known relatives, this reconstruction must, however, rely on quasi-synchronic evidence, as we have no relevant linguistic data from previous periods. This state of affairs has the consequence that at different parts of my exposition I may analyze a given construction or morpheme differently, for example, once as the assumed original source construction or morpheme, and once as it may be analyzed on the basis of the evidence at our disposal. This may seem to be an inherent methodological weakness, but I think that this method of arguing is unavoidable in the case of Sumerian. Most of the linguistic features discussed in this work developed before the appearance of written sources. So without related languages, we cannot but reconstruct linguistic developments in Sumerian relying on some kind of internal reconstruction. It is this approach that results in my assigning different analyses to constructions or morphemes at different points of my exposition for the sake of argument.

## 5.2 The Origin of the Sumerian Cleft Construction

Ex. (214) below (= [104], repeated here for the sake of convenience) is a biclausal construction, a specificational CBC, in which both clauses are CCs. The initial CC is type (Di), while the second one is type (Aii). The shared participant functions as the

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<sup>98</sup> See Harris & Campbell (1995, pp. 151-162), Givón (2001, pp. 221-251), and Heine & Kuteva (2002, pp. 95-96).

focus in the initial CC. As shown above in subsection 3.3.5, this construction is used to express exhaustive identification; the 2nd ps. sg. pronoun functions as the identificational focus of the whole construction.

(214) Enmerkar and En-suhgir-ana 276 (ETCSL 1.8.2.4)

**type (Di)**

za-e-me-en

<sub>S</sub>[ze=∅]=me-en

<sub>S</sub>[2SG.PR=ABS]=COP-2SG.S

**type (Aii)**

en ki aṇ<sub>2</sub> d'ina-na-me-en

<sub>PC</sub>[en ki=∅ aṇ-∅ inanak=ak=∅]=me-en

<sub>PC</sub>[lord place=ABS measure-TL DN=GEN=ABS]=COP-2SG.S

“It is you who is the lord beloved by the goddess Inana.”

A comparison between ex. (214) and its English translation reveals significant differences between the constructions in Sumerian and English (the labelling of subparts of the English cleft sentence follows Lambrecht [2001]).

MATRIX SUBJECT	COPULA	FOCUS PHRASE	RELATIVE CLAUSE
It	is	you	who is the lord beloved by the goddess Inana.
—	=me-en	ze=∅	en ki=∅ aṇ-∅ inanak=ak=∅-me-en
—	=COP-2SG	2SG.PR=ABS	lord place=ABS measure-TL DN=GEN=ABS=COP-2SG.S

1. In Sumerian the participant interpreted as being in focus is the S, not the PC of the first CC. Accordingly the COP agrees in number and person with this participant.
2. In Sumerian there is no overt morpheme corresponding to the pronoun “it”, which functions as the S of the matrix CC in English.
3. The Sumerian clause corresponding to the relative clause in English is not subordinate. In the Sumerian construction both clauses are main clauses; neither of them is subordinate, and in both clauses the COP agrees with the focal participant.

First, I will examine the syntactic status of the focal participant in the English and Sumerian constructions. English it-clefts typically begin with a CC of the type “It is NP”. In a section about CCs of the type “That/It is NP”, called “truncated clefts” in the linguistic literature, Mikkelsen convincingly argues that both “truncated clefts” and the matrix clauses of English it-clefts are in fact specificational clauses: “the focus position of [a] cleft **is** the focus position of [a] specificational clause as the diagram in [(215)] makes clear” (Mikkelsen, 2005, p. 129, reproducing her diagram 7.77, DP corresponds to NP in the terminology of this work):

(215)

(Truncated) cleft:	{ <i>That</i> / <i>It</i> }	BE	DP <sub>focus</sub> ( <i>wh</i> - . . . )
Specificational clause	DP	BE	DP <sub>focus</sub>

The first CC of ex. (214) is a type (Di) specificational CC, with the S in focus. As it was shown in sub-section 3.3.4 above, specificational CCs are characterized by the inversion of S and PC in Sumerian: the S of a specificational CC is situated next to the COP. Thus, Sumerian <sub>S</sub>[*ze=ø*]-*me-en* corresponds to “it is you” in English.<sup>99</sup> The two clauses have the same information structure in both languages; the difference is in the correspondence between the syntactic and pragmatic functions, as shown in Table 5.1 below.

Tab. 5.1: The clause “it is you” in English and Sumerian

TOPIC		FOCUS	
<sub>PC</sub> [ <i>ø</i> ]		<sub>S</sub> [ <i>ze=ø</i> ]	= <i>me-en</i>
<sub>S</sub> <i>it</i>	<i>is</i>	<sub>PC</sub> <i>you</i>	

That is, in English the pronoun “it” is the S, while the participant under focus is the PC. In Sumerian, however, the participant under focus is the S, while the topical PC has no overt expression. The PC has no overt expression because a) in Sumerian non-contrastive pronouns as a rule do not occur as independent pronouns, rather they

<sup>99</sup> Jagersma (2010, p. 682, p. 708) considers the phrase *ne=ø=me-en* (1SG.PR=ABS=COP-1SG.S) in ex. (213) above a headless copular relative clause and translates it as “I, myself, (lit. ‘(I) who is me’)”. Jagersma’s interpretation is motivated by his desire to accommodate CCs of the type *ne=ø=me-en* to CCs like *ka<sub>3</sub>-li-am<sub>3</sub>* (*kali=am-ø* : PN=COP-3NH.S), see ex. (232) below. He assumes about the latter type that the personal name Kali is the PC of the CC. By analogy with this latter type he then analyzes the personal pronoun in *ne=ø=me-en* also as the PC. Since in this CC the COP agrees with a 1st ps. sg. S, he is forced to assume that both the S and the PC are 1st ps. sg. Jagersma’s interpretation is based on mistaken premises; his description does not recognize the function of CCs in which the order of S and PC is inverted, and he does not make a distinction between specificational and predicational CCs. Accepting the existence of specificational CCs with inverted word order results in a reasoning opposite to his, namely, it is the specificational analysis *ne=ø=me-en* that should apply to CCs like *ka<sub>3</sub>-li-am<sub>3</sub>*, and not the other way round as he did. Note also that his interpretation of *ne=ø=me-en* (“I, myself, [lit. ‘(I) who is me’]”) does not explain the use of this construction in cleft constructions, while the interpretation of this work provides a natural explanation. Jagersma refers to the cleft constructions discussed here as “highlighting constructions”. The use of this notion may have been acceptable at the time when Falkenstein’s grammar was written (“Hervorhebung”, 1950, p. 32), but, I think, is hardly adequate in these days after many decades of linguistic research on information structure: “The notion of highlighting is a particularly unclear one that is hardly predictive as long as we do not have a worked-out theory of what highlighting is.” (Krifka, 2007, p. 28)

are expressed as unaccented pronominal affixes on the verb; b) and the COP shows agreement only with its S and not with its PC. Note that Latin behaves similarly to Sumerian in this respect: **ego sum** may correspond to “it is me”; and this form may be used in Latin cleft clauses:<sup>100</sup>

(216) Plautus, *Mercator* 758

Non	ego	sum	qui	te	dudum	conduxi.
not	I	am	who	you	just.now	hired

“It is not me who hired you a short while ago.”

As unusual as the Sumerian construction may seem, in fact, cleft constructions in which the COP agrees with the NP interpreted as the focus but not with the anaphoric pronoun are well attested. In French, the present-day pattern, in which the COP agrees in number and person with the pronoun **ce**, is the result of a development which started in Middle French. In the original pattern, the COP showed agreement with the NP interpreted as the focus (just like in Sumerian); other Romance languages, for example, Spanish, retained the original pattern (Dufter, 2008, pp. 34-35, the examples shown here are his examples 3a-c):

(217) (Middle French) [Antoine de la Sale (1456); BFM1<sup>101</sup>]

Ce	estes	vous	que	je	doy	remercier
it	be.2PL	you.2PL	that	I	must.1SG	thank

“It is you (PL / SG.POLITE) whom I have to thank.”

(218) (Modern French)

C'	(*êtes / est)	vous	que	je	dois	remercier
it	(*be.2PL / be.3SG)	you.2PL	that	I	must.1SG	thank

“It is you (PL / SG.POLITE) whom I have to thank.”

(219) (Peninsular Spanish)

(Sois/ *Es)	vosotros	a	los	que	tengo	que	agradecer
(be.2PL / *be.3SG)	you.PL	to	who.PL	that	have.1SG	that	thank

“It is you (PL) whom I have to thank.”

In French the development is related to the evolution by which the CC of the type **ce suis je** has changed to **c'est moi** (see Hatcher 1948, Dufter 2008). In the former construction the COP agreed with the personal pronoun in the focus position, and the demonstrative pronoun **ce** functioned as the PC, while in the latter, it is the other

<sup>100</sup> See, for example, Bauer (2009, pp. 282-286).

<sup>101</sup> BFM1 = *Base de Français Médiéval 1*, version avril 2005 (<http://bfm.ens-lsh.fr>).

way round. The Sumerian cleft construction, in which the COP shows agreement with the participant in the focus position, is therefore a cross-linguistically well-attested pattern.

In the preceding paragraphs, I argued that the difference between English and Sumerian clefts in the syntactic function of their focal participant reflects the difference in the syntactic structure of their specificational clauses. In the remaining part of this section I will discuss the other major difference between their structures: the syntactic status of the clause that corresponds to the relative clause in the English *it*-clefts.

As stated above, the clause that corresponds to the English relative clause is not subordinate in Sumerian. Karahashi (2008) attempted to solve this mismatch by assuming that the attested occurrences originate in a construction in which the second clause was subordinate (I reproduce here Karahashi's example 10b with her translation but with my glosses).

(220)

*ur-saη-ηa <sub>2</sub> -am <sub>3</sub>	a <sub>2</sub>	mu-gur-ra
ursaη=∅=am-∅	a=∅	<sub>S4</sub> mu- <sub>S11</sub> n- <sub>S12</sub> gur- <sub>S14</sub> ∅- <sub>S15</sub> 'a
warrior=ABS=COP-3SG.S	arm=ABS	VEN-3SG.A-bend-3NH.P-SUB

"It is the warrior who bent his arm."

She states that later, "the enclitic -àm, based on its use in cleft sentences, was reanalyzed in the history of Sumerian as a true focus particle" (2008, p. 89), resulting also in the disappearance of subordination:

(221) Gudea Cyl. A 5:2-3 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232300)

ur-saη-ηa <sub>2</sub> -am <sub>3</sub>	a <sub>2</sub>	mu-gur
ursaη-∅=am-∅	a=∅	<sub>S4</sub> mu- <sub>S11</sub> n- <sub>S12</sub> gur- <sub>S14</sub> ∅
warrior=ABS=COP-3SG.S	arm=ABS	VEN-3SG.A-bend-3NH.P-SUB

"It is the warrior who bent his arm."

Karahashi refers to an allegedly similar development in Kihungan (a Bantu language; I reproduce here Karahashi's example 11b as it is in Givón [2001, p. 236, ex. 37b]); see also Takizala [1972]):

(222)

Kwe	<b>Kípes</b>	a-swiim-in	kit
be	<b>K.</b>	he-buy-past	chair

"It's KIPES (who) bought the chair"

Karahashi made some important observations; however, one may disagree with her argument for a number of reasons. First, the reconstructed form is not attested in

Sumerian, and nothing indicates that the verbal form in constructions like (221) was ever subordinate. In contrast, in the Kihungan example the verbal prefix /a/- indicates clearly that the construction derives from a construction in which the verbal form was once subordinate (Givón, 2001, pp. 234-237).

Second, should the reconstructed verbal form have ever existed in Sumerian, it should have had a form like (223) below, because Sumerian finite relative clauses occupy the modifier position, P2, of the noun phrase, which precedes the case-marker of the head (see, for example, ex. [116] above).<sup>102</sup>

(223)

*ur-sa <sub>n</sub>	a <sub>2</sub>	mu-gur-ra-am <sub>3</sub>
p <sub>1</sub> [ursan]	p <sub>2</sub> [a=∅	s <sub>4</sub> mu-s <sub>11</sub> n-s <sub>12</sub> gur-s <sub>14</sub> ∅-s <sub>15</sub> 'a]=∅=am-∅
p <sub>1</sub> [warrior]	p <sub>2</sub> [arm=ABS	VEN-3SG.A-bend-3NH.P-SUB]=ABS=COP-3NH.S

“It is the warrior who bent his arm.”

Karahashi’s reconstruction is motivated by the valid observation that in the attested examples of the Sumerian cleft construction the constituent corresponding to the relative-like constituent in the English is a non-subordinate main clause. She then attempts to solve this discrepancy by assuming that what looks in our texts like a main clause derives in fact from a relative like construction. I tried to demonstrate above that Karahashi’s reconstruction finds no support in the Sumerian evidence.

My proposed reconstruction is based on a different set of assumptions. First, I will assume that in most of the attested examples of the Sumerian cleft constructions the COP is in fact a focus marker. In other words, although the construction originates without a doubt in a biclausal construction, it has become monoclausal by the time from which the bulk of our linguistic evidence comes; I will present the evidence supporting this assumption in the next section.

Second, although most of the attestations of the Sumerian cleft construction are like exx. (212) and (213) above, this should not mean that the original construction from which it developed was like them. What we are looking for is a construction that may be interpreted as subordinate but *does not* look subordinate.

Remember that in Chapter 4 above I showed that in attributive CBCs the initial CC might function as a relative clause using a paratactic strategy. So ex. (224) below (= [156], repeated here for convenience) may be interpreted and translated as “I, who

<sup>102</sup> Another reason to disagree with Karahashi’s argument is that the example she uses is not quoted properly. Her first word is in fact the PC of a previous CC, the two lines in their entirety being: **min<sub>3</sub>-kam ur-sa<sub>n</sub>-ṭa<sub>2</sub>-am<sub>3</sub> / a<sub>2</sub> mu-gur li-um za-gin<sub>3</sub> šu im-mi-du<sub>8</sub>** (Gudea Cyl. A 5:23) “The second (figure in the dream) was a warrior. He bent his arm, holding a lapis lazuli tablet in his hand.” My translation indicates another problem, namely, the CC used by Karahashi is predicational, not specificational as her translation of ex. (220) assumes.



am a shepherd, have built the temple”; and the “I, who am a shepherd” part of this translation corresponds a type (Aii) CC in Sumerian.

(224) Gudea Cyl. B 2:5 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232301)

**COPULAR CLAUSE**

sipad-me

<sub>PC</sub>[sipad=∅]=me-en

<sub>PC</sub>[shepherd=ABS]=COP-1SG.S

**MATRIX CLAUSE**

e<sub>2</sub>

e=∅

house=ABS

mu-du<sub>3</sub>

<sub>S4</sub>mu-<sub>S11</sub>y-<sub>S12</sub>du-<sub>S14</sub>∅

VEN-1SG.A-build-3NH.P

Lit. “I am a shepherd, I have built the temple. = I, who am a shepherd, have built the temple. = I, the shepherd, have built the temple.”

This CC is formally not subordinate and could be used independently without any modification as a simple sentence. In an attributive CBC the CC may therefore be interpreted as subordinate but *does not* look subordinate. Remember that in section 2.2 above I showed that subordinate CCs use the independent form of the COP, but in ex. (224) the COP occurs in its enclitic form.

Given the fact that attributive CBCs involve a paratactic relative clause, it seems plausible to assume that the non-subordinate CC may function as a relative clause in specificational CBCs like ex. (214), too. What makes things somehow complicated, however, is that in examples like (225) (= [104] = [214], repeated here below for convenience) the order of the copular and the matrix clause is the other way round compared to the order of these clauses in attributive CBCs.

(225) Enmerkar and En-suhgir-ana 276 (ETCSL 1.8.2.4)

**MATRIX CLAUSE**

za-e-me-en

<sub>S</sub>[ze=∅]=me-en

<sub>S</sub>[2SG.PR=ABS]=COP-2SG.S

**COPULAR CLAUSE**

en

ki

an<sub>2</sub>

<sup>d</sup>inana-me-en

<sub>PC</sub>[en

ki=∅

an-∅

inanak=ak=∅]=me-en

<sub>PC</sub>[lord

place=ABS

measure-TL

DN=GEN=ABS]=COP-2SG.S

Lit. “It is you. You are the lord beloved by the goddess Inana.”

= “It is you. You, who are the lord beloved by the goddess Inana.”

= “It is you who is the lord beloved by the goddess Inana.”

In ex. (225) it is the type (Di) specificational CC at the beginning of the construction that functions as the matrix clause. The type (Aii) CC following it plays the same role as the type (Aii) CC in ex. (224): it functions as a relative clause whose head is the participant shared by the matrix and the copular clauses. In ex. (224) the shared participant is the 1st ps. sg. pronoun, while in ex. (225) it is the 2nd ps. sg. pronoun that functions as the focus of the matrix clause. As in attributive CBCs, here too

the shared participant occurs as an overt NP only in the initial CC, which happens to be the matrix clause in this construction. It is the specificational meaning of the matrix clause that makes the meaning of the relative clause restrictive in this construction.

The essence of a cleft is that it identifies a description with an entity: “[What he put into all hands] was [wool from lamb-bearing sheep]”, just like a specificational CC. Ex. (225) does exactly this: it identifies the entity “you” with the description “the lord beloved by the goddess Inana”. This construction corresponds almost exactly to the definition of clefts given by Lambrecht:

“CLEFT CONSTRUCTION (CC) is a complex sentence structure consisting of a matrix clause headed by a copula and a relative or relative-like clause whose relativized argument is coindexed with the predicative argument of the copula. Taken together, the matrix and the relative express a logically simple proposition, which can also be expressed in the form of a single clause without a change in truth conditions.” (Lambrecht, 2001, p. 467)

As I argued in section 4.2 above, a type (Aii) CC is a relative clause in one of its possible interpretations. The only difference between English and Sumerian is in the constituent coindexed with the relativized argument of the relative-like clause: it is the S, not the PC in Sumerian.

Specificational CBCs like ex. (225) are thus similar to attributive CBCs in involving a paratactic relative clause; one may therefore call them “paratactic clefts”. Ex. (225), however, belongs to a special type of specificational CBCs, to a kind of construction called type (E) in subsection 3.3.5 above. It is a specificational CBC in which the clause that corresponds to the relative clause of the English it-cleft is a CC. As mentioned above, the clause that corresponds to the relative clause of the English it-cleft contains a non-copular finite verb in the great majority of specificational CBCs. In these specificational CBCs too, the verbal form is not subordinate in the clause following the specificational CC. This is, however, unexpected, as non-copular verbs as a rule need to be subordinate when used in relative clauses.

Before trying to give an explanation of this phenomenon, I would like to draw attention again to an important difference between ex. (212) and ex. (213). In ex. (212) the constituent marked with the COP as focus is in sentence initial position, while in ex. (213) it is in a sentence internal position, next to the finite verb, preceded by other constituents. In the next section of this chapter, I will argue that in examples like (213) the COP does not function as a COP anymore, but rather as a focus marker.

Examples like (212) are, however, different. They appear to have a biclausal structure: a type (Di) CC followed by a non-subordinate clause with a non-copular verb. It therefore has a structure very similar to that of ex. (225), which was labelled a paratactic cleft. I suggest that constructions like (212) were formed on analogy with paratactic clefts like ex. (225). (226a) attempts to schematize the function of a paratactic cleft. It says that if there is a type (Di) specificational CC followed by a type (Aii) CC, and the two clauses share their S, then the construction may be interpreted as a cleft. (226c)

states that if there is a type (Di) specificational CC followed by a clause with a non-copular verb, and the S of the CC is the same as one of the participants of the second clause, then the construction may be interpreted as a cleft.

(226)

- a)  $_{S=FOC} X \text{ COP } ({}_S X) \text{ PC COP} \rightarrow \text{It is } X \text{ who is PC.}$   
 \* $[b]_{S=FOC} X \text{ COP } ({}_S X) V_{int} \rightarrow \text{It is } X \text{ who } Vs]$   
 c)  $_{S=FOC} X \text{ COP } (X) V \rightarrow \text{It is } X \dots \text{ who(m) } V(s/ed).$

In actual examples, the participant shared by the matrix and the second non-copular clause may have any syntactic function in the second clause (see the next section of this Chapter), but it is unlikely that it was immediately so. One might assume that the cleft interpretation was first extended to structures similar to (226b), in which the initial type (Di) CC and the second clause with an intransitive verb shared their S; we have, however, no evidence at all to support this assumption.<sup>103</sup>

The emergence of constructions like exx. (212) and (213) assumes at least two, partly parallel developments:

- a) The structure of paratactic clefts is overtaken by constructions in which the second clause was not a CC.
- b) The COP grammaticalizes into a focus marker.

Development a) must remain speculative to the extent that we do not have the kind of linguistic evidence that might prove the assumed development from (226a) to (226c). Nevertheless both (226a) and (226c) are based on actual examples; what is speculative is the assumption that the latter was formed on analogy with the former.

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**103** Cleft constructions used to express theticity (see section 6.2 onthetic constructions in Sumerian below) are attested in a number of languages (Sasse 1987, pp. 538-544; Lambrecht, 2000, pp. 653-654; Lambrecht, 2001, pp. 507-510; Güldemann, 2010). In some of the languages the same cleft construction may express both identificational focus and theticity (Güldemann, 2010). Sasse describes cleft constructions expressing theticity in Boni (Eastern Cushitic) and Chinese (1987, pp. 541-542; see also Lambrecht, 2001, pp. 509-510) that are structurally (but not functionally) comparable to the structure hypothesized in (226b): “Some languages, while extracting the subject and presenting it as the predicate noun of an existential or copular clause in exactly the same way as in the examples considered so far, do not construct the rest of the sentence as a relative clause, a participle, or a comparable attributive nonfinite form, but add it with a finite verb in a looser appositional connection.” (p. 541) Sasse’s description would also be fitting to the paratactic clefts in Sumerian: [These constructions] “disrupt the direct connection of the entity and the event by first introducing the entity by an existential or copular clause and then, quasi appositionally, making a statement about it. This ‘making a statement about’, however, differs radically from the normal theme-rheme or topic-comment structure. The assertion of the event is subordinate pragmatically, semantically, and syntactically to the existential expression. Though syntactically predicative in character (at least in Boni), it is not a main predication but rather a predication of the type found in a dependent clause: a predication without illocutive force.” (p. 542)

Note that this development might have been facilitated by the influence of Akkadian, which uses the enclitic *=/ma/* to mark identificational focus, see ex. (96) above and ex. (240) below. Cohen (2000, pp. 214-217) argues that this use of *=/ma/* is the vestige of an original cleft construction in which the *=/ma/* functioned as a relativizer (“substantivizing converter”).<sup>104</sup> On a synchronic level the clause that corresponds to the relative clause of the English *it*-cleft is not subordinate in the Akkadian construction either, just as in the Sumerian one. In Akkadian, however, this may be easily explained by the grammaticalization of the original relativizer into a focus marker.

Development a) would then be an example of what is called the replication of use patterns by Heine and Kuteva (2005, pp. 40–62). Heine and Kuteva argue that in contact induced replication the emergence of a new pattern (in our case, the Sumerian cleft construction) is based on the extension of an already existing use pattern (in our case, the Sumerian paratactic cleft): “... contact induced new use patterns do not normally emerge *ex nihilo*; rather they are likely to be the result of a process whereby an existing minor use pattern give rise to a major use pattern ....” (pp. 45-46).

In terms of evidence we are in a better position as regards development b). This development assumes that the original biclausal construction is reinterpreted as monoclausal. The next section of this Chapter will discuss all the linguistic evidence supporting this assumption.

Another not entirely implausible scenario might be to assume that the grammaticalization of the COP into a focus marker took place exclusively in specificational CBCs similar to ex. (225), and the original COP was used as a focus marker in constructions in which the second clause was not a CC. This assumption would make the development outlined in (226) above unnecessary. Nevertheless, I consider this scenario less likely as the evidence collected in section 5.3 will show that grammaticalization of the COP into a focus marker reached only an intermediate stage.

To sum up, I argued in this subsection that Sumerian cleft constructions emerged on analogy with specificational CBCs like ex. (225), in which both clauses are CCs: a type (Di) specificational followed by a type (Aii) predication CC. In these constructions the second, type (Aii) predication CC may be interpreted as an attributive relative clause. I also suggested that the corresponding construction in Akkadian might have facilitated this development. The emergence of Sumerian cleft constructions may therefore ultimately be ascribed to the existence of paratactic relative clauses in Sumerian.

The reconstruction outlined in this subsection can explain the most noticeable difference between English *it*-clefts and their corresponding Sumerian constructions, namely, that the Sumerian equivalent of the English relative clause is not a subordinate relative-like construction, but a main clause.

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<sup>104</sup> Note that Cohen uses a terminology different from the one applied in this work.

### 5.3 Copula or Focus Marker?

Harris and Campbell (1995, p. 167) claim that “in any language in which a high-lighting construction is derived from a cleft construction changes ([227]a-c) will occur”:<sup>105</sup>

(227)

- a) “The two clauses of the cleft construction become a single clause in surface structure.”
- b) “The highlighted constituent is realized in the grammatical relation that the clefted constituent bore in the content clause in the input.”
- c) “A discourse marker ... is formed from some combination of (i) the copula, (ii) the relativizer, and (iii) the expletive pronoun.”

The change described in (227a) will be tested by examining the word order in the Sumerian construction. The basic assumption is that if the constituent marked as focus with the COP occurs within the matrix clause rather than in front of it, then the original biclausal construction has become monoclausal.

(227b) will be tested by examining the case-marker of the focused constituent. As demonstrated in Chapter 3 and in the previous section, the constituent before the COP is the S in the original cleft construction. Consequently, if this constituent is marked with a case-marker corresponding to its function in the content clause, then the COP must be considered a focus marker.

As regards (227c), the original construction did not contain any relativizer, and did not use an overt pronoun referring to the PC (as discussed in the previous section). The Sumerian focus marker therefore must have been formed from the COP alone.

First, I will discuss the change described in (227b), followed by a discussion of (227a). The linguistic evidence will be presented after these two subsections in an appendix. It will be arranged according to the case the focused element should be in in the content clause. Within each case the examples will be arranged according to their date.

The subsection presenting the linguistic evidence will be followed by a subsection on numerical expressions under focus. It will be suggested that attaching the COP to a numerical expression has become a grammatical device to emphasize that what is meant is “exactly *n*” in Sumerian. The next subsection discusses the syntax of constituent questions in Sumerian. It will show that identificational foci and constituent questions exhibit the same syntactic pattern in Sumerian, similarly to other languages. The section concludes with a summary in which the evidence collected and discussed is evaluated.

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<sup>105</sup> See also Harris (2001).

### 5.3.1 The Case-marker of the Focused Constituent

Table 5.2 below summarizes the results of the investigation of the case-marking of focused constituents. The numeral after the sign “+” refers to the number of examples in which the focused constituent is case-marked according to its function in the content clause. The numeral after the sign “-” refers to the number of examples in which the focused constituent is case-marked as the S of the original CC. The numeral after the sign “≠” refers to the number of examples in which the case-marker of the focused constituent cannot be decided.

In terms of their dates, the data sources are divided into three groups: manuscripts i) from before the Ur III period; ii) from the Ur III period (end of the 3rd mill. B.C.) (including the Gudea corpus); and literary texts from the Old Babylonian period (first half of the 2nd mill. B.C.). In the cases of the first two groups one can be certain that the manuscripts were composed and written at around the same time. In the case of the third group the composition and the writing of the manuscripts are likely to be separated by a process of (in some cases, long) transmission with all its consequences. Consequently, even in literary compositions of kings from the Ur III period the grammar may reflect the usage of the time from which the manuscript comes from, i.e. the usage of the Old Babylonian Period.

**Tab. 5.2:** The case-markers of the focused constituent

	BEFORE UR III	UR III	OB LITERARY
ERGATIVE	—	(≠10)	(≠3)
ABSOLUTIVE (S)	—	(≠3)	(≠3)
ABSOLUTIVE (P)	—	(≠4)	(≠2)
DATIVE (H)	—	(+1) (-1)	—
LOCATIVE1	(≠1)	(+1)?	(≠3)
LOCATIVE2 (NH)	(≠1)	—	(≠1)
ABLATIVE	—	(+7)	(+1)
TERMINATIVE	—	(+6)	(+2)
EQUATIVE	—	(+1)	—
ADVERBIATIVE	—		(+1)

The data in the table immediately reveal that the cases can be divided into two groups in terms of their usefulness for our inquiry. Ergative (=/**e**/), absolutive (=/**ø**/), locative1 and non-human locative2 (=/**(ʾ)a**/) may not be used because the presence of their markers is, as a rule, not indicated by the orthography. Only cases whose case-marker cannot contract with the COP and may thus not remain invisible in the orthography are diagnostic: human dative (=/**ra**/), ablative (=/**ta**/), terminative (=/**še**/), equative (=/**gin**/), and adverbial (=/**eš**/).<sup>106</sup> In the examples of the Appendix below I glossed the focused constituents whose case-marker cannot be decided as being in the absolutive.

Two conclusions can be drawn on the basis of the data presented in Table 5.2. First, focused constituents in diagnostic cases are always case-marked according to their function in the content clause. The single exception is ex. (254), in which one would expect a human dative case-marker. This conclusion, can, however, be misleading, because the cases which happen to be diagnostic differ from the other cases not only in the form of their markers, but also in another respect: the ablative case used with an instrumental meaning, the terminative case used with a purposive meaning, the equative, and the adverbial are, as a rule, not cross-referenced by a corresponding dimensional prefix in the verbal prefix-chain. The use of a case-marker to indicate the syntactic function of a constituent in one of these cases was therefore more to the purpose than for a constituent that was in a case regularly cross-referenced in the verbal prefix-chain. The existence of such a motivation, however, would not change the fact that there exist examples in which the case-marker of the focal constituent is clearly *not* the absolutive, the case of an S in a CC.

The second conclusion to be drawn on the basis of Table 5.2 is that no changes can be detected along the dimension of time. This is, however, probably due to the fact that the great majority of our evidence comes from the Ur III period; simply, we have not enough data for a statistically valid conclusion.

### 5.3.2 Word Order in the Cleft Construction

Table 5.3 below summarizes the positions of the constituent with the attached COP in the examples presented in the Appendix. Three positions are distinguished: A) sentence initial; B) immediately before the verbal form; C) neither A) nor B). When the focused constituent is in sentence initial position, then its position corresponds to its position in the original cleft construction. Position B), the position preceding the verbal form, was shown to be a structural focus position in CCs in Chapter 3. It is assumed here that in clauses with non-copular finite verbs the position has a similar function; see also subsection 5.3.5 below.<sup>107</sup> Clauses that consist solely of the focused constituent and the finite verb (cf., for example, exx. [231], [236], [262], [269] below) will be categorised as “AB” in Table 5.3, as in these clauses the positions A) and B) cannot be distinguished. The numbers after the letters represent the number of occurrences among the examples listed in subsection 5.3.3 below.

<sup>106</sup> Among the four diagnostic cases, the ablative and the equative are attested with CCs used on their own (see, e.g., ex. [24] above). In these constructions, however, it is the PC that may be in the ablative or the equative. So the occurrence of a constituent in the ablative or the equative in a structural position that in the original construction was filled with the S may indicate that the original COP has become a focus marker.

<sup>107</sup> See C. Huber (2000, pp. 98-99) for a similar conclusion, and É. Kiss (1995, p. 20): “In most of the languages known to have a structural position ... the focus is located next to inflected V.”

**Tab. 5.3:** Position of the focused constituent

	BEFORE Ur III	Ur III	OB LITERARY
ERGATIVE	—	(A4) (B2) (AB4)	(A1) (B2)
ABSOLUTIVE (S)	—	(A2) (AB1)	(AB3)
ABSOLUTIVE (P)	—	(A3) (B1)	(AB2)
DATIVE (H)	—	(B2)	—
LOCATIVE1	(AB1)	(B1)	(A1) (B1) (C1)
LOCATIVE2 (NH)	(B1)	—	(AB1)
ABLATIVE		(A1) (B2) (AB1) (C3)	(B1)
TERMINATIVE		(A1) (B3) (AB1) (C1)	(A1) (C1)
EQUATIVE	—	(A1)	—
ADVERBIATIVE			(B1)
SUMMARY	(AB1) (B1)	(A12) (B11) (AB7) (C4)	(A3) (B5) (AB6) (C2)

The data in Table 5.3 show that in the great majority of the examples the focused constituent is either in position A) or B). The frequent use of the COP in position B) suggests a path along which the COP grammaticalized into a focus marker: it may have occurred first as an optional morphological means of reinforcing the focus function of the constituent immediately before the finite verb (see also the remarks on ex. (270) below. Clauses that consist solely of a focal constituent followed by a COP and a finite verb, categorised as AB above, may have played an important role in this process; this clause type provided a morphosyntactic context in which the reinterpretation of the COP's function could easily take place.

### 5.3.3 Appendix: The Linguistic Evidence

This subsection presents the evidence on which the previous two subsections were based. Before looking at the evidence, however, it is necessary to clarify an issue that influences the way the examples below are interpreted and translated.

In Sumerian the COP is attached to a phrasal category. If the constituent marked as focus with the COP has a complex structure (e.g. it contains a modifier or a possessor), then it is possible that what is in fact contrasted by focus is a sub-constituent of the constituent. It is useful, therefore, to distinguish between a focused phrase and focus (proper). In exx. (228a-c) below the focused phrase is “the green blanket” in all three examples.<sup>108</sup> In ex. (228a) the focus (proper) is the adjective “green”, while in

<sup>108</sup> The examples are the translations accompanying the Hungarian exx. (49a-c) in Gyuris (2002, p. 64). For the distinction between focused phrase and focus (proper), see Gyuris (2009, p. 89).



(228b) it is the noun “blanket”. Only in (228c) are the focused phrase and the focus (proper) the same.

(228)

- a) The hospital ordered the GREEN blankets (and not the blue blankets).
- b) The hospital ordered the green BLANKETS (and not the green sheets).
- c) The hospital ordered the GREEN BLANKETS (and not the blue sheets).

In living languages, differences of this sort are marked by prosodic means. In Hungarian, for example,

“whenever a constituent which cannot be moved out of a larger constituent is contrasted with constituents of the same type (e.g. an attributive adjective which cannot be detached from the noun), the larger constituent moves into focus position, but only the constituent (word) to be contrasted bears an eradicating stress”. (Gyuris, 2002, p. 63)

We can safely assume that Sumerian was not different in this respect, but as we have no access to the prosodic level of the language, we have to speculate in many instances. Fortunately, there are some clear examples in which a distinction between focused phrase and focus (proper) can clearly be observed because of the context.

In ex. (249) below, for example, the COP marks the NP **udu=ġu=ø=am-ø** (sheep=1SG.POSS=ABS=COP-3NH.S) “my sheep” as the focused phrase. From the context, however, it is clear, that the focus (proper) is the enclitic possessive pronoun “my”, as Turam-ili intends to defend himself against accusations that he has given someone else’s sheep to Sulalum.

It is the numeral modifier that is the focus (proper) in ex. (260) below. Here the COP marks the complex NP **šag udu 1=ak=ø=am-ø** (heart sheep one=GEN=ABS=COP-3NH.S) “in the insides of one sheep” as the focused phrase. King Shulgi boasts here about being able to reveal the divine messages from the insides of a single sheep, in contrast to less talented diviners who may need more than one sheep for that purpose. Consequently the focus proper is the numeral “one”, the possessor’s numeral modifier.

In the translations below small capitals will indicate the focus (proper) (when it is thought to be different from the focused phrase), or when the it-cleft translation is not possible or clumsy.

In the last part of the examples’ heading I will indicate my classification in terms of the categories distinguished in Table 5.2 and 5.3 So, for example, ex. (229) below will be tagged as (≠, AB), indicating that in Table 5.2 it is classified as “≠”, and that the position of its focused constituent is classified as AB in Table 5.3.

*Ergative*

(229) NG 83 obv. 9 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P110962) (≠, AB)

nin <sub>9</sub> -gu-la	ama-ηu <sub>10</sub> -am <sub>3</sub>	ʿin <sup>1</sup> -[sa <sub>10</sub> ]
ningula	ama=ηu=∅=am-∅	s <sub>2</sub> i <sup>-</sup> <sub>s11</sub> n <sup>-</sup> <sub>s12</sub> sa <sup>-</sup> <sub>s14</sub> ∅
PN <sub>1</sub>	mother=1SG.POSS=ABS=COP-3SG.S	FIN-3SG.A-buy-3SG.P

“It was my mother, Nin-gula, who bought her (= Ana, the maiden).”

(230) NG 106 10-11 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P110790) (≠, A)

u <sub>3</sub>	ha-la- <sup>d</sup> ba-u <sub>2</sub> -kam,	e <sub>2</sub> -bi	in-sa <sub>10</sub> -a
u	halabauk=∅=am-∅	e=bi=∅	s <sub>2</sub> i <sup>-</sup> <sub>s11</sub> n <sup>-</sup> <sub>s12</sub> sa <sup>-</sup> <sub>s14</sub> ∅- <sup>’</sup> a
and	PN=ABS=COP-3SG.S	house=DEM=ABS	FIN-3SG.A-buy-3NH.P-SUB

“And (various people swore the assertory oath) that it was Hala-Bau who bought this house.”

(231) NG 127 1-5 (Umma, 21st c.) (P131777) (≠, AB)

lugal-ezem-am <sub>3</sub> ,	ma-an-šum <sub>2</sub>	bi <sub>2</sub> -in-dug <sub>4</sub>
lugalezem=∅=am-∅	s <sub>4</sub> m <sup>-</sup> <sub>s7</sub> a <sup>-</sup> <sub>s11</sub> n <sup>-</sup> <sub>s12</sub> šum <sup>-</sup> <sub>s14</sub> ∅	s <sub>5</sub> b <sup>-</sup> <sub>s10</sub> i <sup>-</sup> <sub>s11</sub> n <sup>-</sup> <sub>s12</sub> dug <sup>-</sup> <sub>s14</sub> ∅
PN=ABS=COP-3SG.S	VEN-DAT-3SG.A-give-3NH.P	3NH-L2-3SG.A-speak-3NH.P

“Shu-ili’s sheep got stolen. Anagu was accused with it. Anagu appeared in court and) declared: ‘It was Lugal-ezem who has given them to me!’”

(232) NG 202 15-18 (Umma, 21st c.) (P131781) (≠, A)

ka <sub>3</sub> -li-am <sub>3</sub>	igi-še <sub>3</sub>	gešba <sub>2</sub> <sup>ba</sup>	mu-ra
kali=∅=am-∅	igi=še	gešba=∅	s <sub>4</sub> mu <sup>-</sup> <sub>s10</sub> y <sup>-</sup> <sub>s11</sub> n <sup>-</sup> <sub>s12</sub> ra <sup>-</sup> <sub>s14</sub> ∅
PN=ABS=COP-3SG.S	face=TERM	fist=ABS	VEN-L2-3SG.A-hit-3NH.P

“(Durgarni killed Kali. Durgarni was questioned, and he said:) ‘It was Kali who first punched me’.”

(233) NG 214 obv. 2:13 (Umma 21st c.) (P131761) (≠, AB)

ur-niṇar <sup>nar</sup>	nu-banda <sub>3</sub> -am <sub>3</sub>	mu-da-an-kar
urniṇar	nubanda=∅=am-∅	s <sub>4</sub> mu <sup>-</sup> <sub>s6</sub> y <sup>-</sup> <sub>s8</sub> da <sup>-</sup> <sub>s11</sub> n <sup>-</sup> <sub>s12</sub> kar <sup>-</sup> <sub>s14</sub> ∅
PN	overseer=ABS=COP-3SG.S	VEN-1SG-COM-3SG.A-flee-3NH.P

“(Ur-Ninmuga stated:) ‘It was Ur-nigar, the overseer, who took it (= grain) away from me’.”

(234) TCS 1, 54 6 (= LEM 127) (Lagash, 21st. c) (P111320) (≠, A)

e-ne-am <sub>3</sub>	inim	en-nu-ηa <sub>2</sub> -[ta]	ma-an-dab <sub>5</sub>
ene=∅=am-∅	inim	enuṇ=ak=ta	s <sub>4</sub> m <sup>-</sup> <sub>s7</sub> a <sup>-</sup> <sub>s11</sub> n <sup>-</sup> <sub>s12</sub> dab <sup>-</sup> <sub>s14</sub> ∅
3SG.PR=ABS=COP-3SG.S	word	guard=GEN=ABL	VEN-DAT-3SG.A-take-3SG.P

“It was him (= Ur-Bau) who captured him (= Lu-Ninshubur) for me by the order of the guards.”

(235) TCS 1, 81 1-6 (= LEM 141) (Lagash, 21st c.) (P135178) (≠, B)

ab-ba-kal-la, ur-meš<sub>3</sub>-ra, zi lugal,  
 abbakala=∅ urmeš=ra zi lugal=ak=∅  
 PN<sub>1</sub>=ABS PN<sub>2</sub>=DAT.H life king=GEN=ABS  
 ηe<sub>26</sub>-e-me, ha-na-šum<sub>2</sub>  
 ηe=∅=me-en s<sub>1</sub>ha-s<sub>6</sub>nn-s<sub>7</sub>a-s<sub>11</sub>y-s<sub>12</sub>šum-s<sub>14</sub>∅  
 1SG.PR=ABS=COP-1SG.S MOD-3SG-DAT-1SG.A-give-3SG.P

“(Tell Era:) ‘By the life of the king, it is me who gave Aba-kala to Ur-mesh!’”

(236) TCS 1, 148 21-22 (= LEM 76 = Fs. Kienast, pp. 243-244 no. 3) (P141927) (≠, AB)<sup>109</sup>

u<sub>3</sub> a-ne-<sup>r</sup>am<sub>3</sub><sup>1</sup> a ni-in-<sup>r</sup>de<sub>2</sub><sup>1</sup>  
 u ane=∅=am-∅ a=∅ s<sub>10</sub>ni-s<sub>11</sub>n-s<sub>12</sub>de-s<sub>14</sub>∅  
 and 3SG.PR=ABS=COP-3SG.S water=ABS L1-3SG.A-pour-3NH.P

“(Ur-digira farmed a piece of land ) and it was him who watered it.”

(237) BM 23678 rev. 6-7 (Fs. Pettinato, p. 183, no. 4) (Lagash, 21st c.) (P211380) (≠, B)

kug-ηu<sub>10</sub> ama nir-ra-ηu<sub>10</sub>-um ba-an-gu<sub>7</sub>  
 kug=ηu=∅ ama anir=ak=ηu=∅=am-∅ s<sub>5</sub>ba-s<sub>11</sub>n-s<sub>12</sub>gu-s<sub>14</sub>∅  
 silver=1SG.POSS=ABS mother lament=GEN=1SG.PR=ABS=COP-3SG.S MID-3SG.A-eat-3NH.P

“(Damqat declared:) ‘It was my lamenting mother that used my silver up for herself’.”

(238) Gudea Cyl. A 6:12-13 (ETCSL 2.1.7) (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232300) (≠, A)

ze<sub>2</sub>-me e<sub>2</sub>-ninnu-<sup>r</sup>uš<sub>2</sub><sup>1</sup> ni-is-ku-gin<sub>7</sub>  
 ze=∅=me-en eninnu=še nisku=gin  
 2SG.PR=ABS=COP-2SG.S TN=TERM equid=EQU

ki im-ši-hur-e  
 ki=∅ s<sub>2</sub>i-s<sub>4</sub>m-s<sub>5</sub>b-s<sub>9</sub>ši-s<sub>12</sub>hur-s<sub>14</sub>en  
 earth=ABS FIN-VEN-3NH-TERM-scratch-2SG.A

“(As regards [that part of the dream when] the right-side donkey stallion of your master, as you said, pawed the ground for you;) it is you who will paw the ground for the E-ninnu like a choice steed.”

(239) Ishme-Dagan A + V 316-317 (ETCSL 2.5.4.01) (≠, B)

urud<sup>u</sup>alan ad-da tud-da-ηu<sub>10</sub>, e<sub>2</sub> <sup>d</sup>en-lil<sub>2</sub>-la<sub>2</sub>-ka  
 alan adda tud-<sup>r</sup>a-ηu=∅ e enlil=ak=<sup>r</sup>a  
 statue father bear-PT-1SG.POSS=ABS house DN<sub>1</sub>=GEN=L1

<sup>109</sup> The nominal part of compound verbs, consisting of a non-referential object which contributes to an idiomatic reading, is considered to form a semantic unit with the verb, and the nominal and the verbal parts of compound verbs behave as a single word. This example is, therefore, classified as AB.

<sup>d</sup>nin-lil<sub>2</sub>      nin-ṇa<sub>2</sub>-ka  
 ninlil      nin=ṇu=ak='a  
 DN<sub>2</sub>      lady=1SG.POSS=GEN=L1

ṇe<sub>26</sub>-e-me-en      hu-mu-ni-kur<sub>9</sub>  
 ṇe=∅=me-en      <sub>S1</sub>ha-<sub>S4</sub>mu-<sub>S10</sub>ni-<sub>S11</sub>y-<sub>S12</sub>kur-<sub>S14</sub>∅  
 1SG.PR=ABS=COP-1SG.S      MOD-VEN-L1-1SG.A-enter-3NH.P

“It was me who brought into the temple of Enlil and Ninlil, my lady, a copper statue of my own father.”

(240) HS 1512 obv. 9-10 (ZA 91 243) (Nippur, OB period) (≠, B)

diṇir      an      ki-a      za-e-me-en      i<sub>3</sub>-zalag-ge-en  
 diṇir      an      ki=ak=∅      ze=∅=me-en      <sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S12</sub>zalag-<sub>S14</sub>en  
 god      sky      earth=GEN=ABS      2SG.PR=ABS=COP-2SG      FIN-shine-2SG.A

i<sub>3</sub>-li ša AN u KI at-ta-**ma** tu-na-ma-ar

“It is you who illuminates for the gods of heaven and earth.”

In ex. (240) above the focal interpretation of “you” is confirmed by the Akkadian translation, in which an enclitic =/**ma**/ follows the 2nd ps. sg. pronoun *atta*, marking it as the identificational focus of the clause.<sup>110</sup>

(241) Hoe and Plough 147 (ETCSL 5.3.1) (≠, A)

ṇe<sub>26</sub>-e-me-en      mu<sub>2</sub>-sar-ra      a      bi<sub>2</sub>-ib<sub>2</sub>-sig<sub>10</sub>-sig<sub>10</sub>-ge-en  
 ṇe=∅=me-en      musar='a      a=∅      <sub>S5</sub>b-<sub>S10</sub>i-<sub>S11</sub>b-<sub>S12</sub>sig<sub>S14</sub>sig=<sub>S14</sub>en  
 1SG.PR=ABS=COP-1SG      plot=L2.NH      water=ABS      3NH-L2-3NH.P-put~PL-1SG.A

“It is me who puts water in all the plots.”

*Absolutive (Subject)*

(242) TCS 1, 128 6-7 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P111261) (≠, A)

ze<sub>2</sub>-e-me      maškim-a-ni      <sup>r</sup>he<sub>2</sub><sup>1</sup>-me  
 ze=∅=me-en      maškim=ani=∅      <sub>S1</sub>ha-<sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S12</sub>me-<sub>S14</sub>en  
 2SG.PR=ABS=COP-2SG.S      bailiff=3SG.POSS=ABS      MOD-FIN-COP-2SG.S

“It is you who should be his commissioner!”

(243) FaoS 17, 45 10 (Nippur, 21st c.) (P123220)(≠, A)

ne-me      arad<sub>2</sub>      ha-me  
 ne=∅=me-eš      arad=∅      <sub>S1</sub>ha-<sub>S12</sub>me-<sub>S14</sub>eš  
 this=ABS=COP-3PL.S      slave=ABS      MOD-COP-3PL.S

“(Ipqusha and Shu-Ninmug sold their sister Ala-NE. If she stops working,) it is these (i.e., the brothers) who should be slaves (in her place).”

<sup>110</sup> See Cohen (2005, pp. 31-35) about the use of =/**ma**/ as focus marker.

(244) NG 121 18-19 (Umma, 21st c.) (P131778) (≠, AB) (second sentence)

i<sub>3</sub>-lum-ma      maškim-še<sub>3</sub>-am<sub>3</sub>      nu-un-da-gi<sub>4</sub>  
 iluma=∅      maškim=še=am-∅      <sub>S1</sub>nu-<sub>S6</sub>nn-<sub>S8</sub>da-<sub>S12</sub>gi-<sub>S14</sub>∅  
 PN<sub>1</sub>=ABS      bailiff=TERM=COP-3NH.S      NEG-3SG-COM-return-3SG.S  
 SU-nam-il<sub>2</sub>-NE-am<sub>3</sub>      in-da-gi<sub>4</sub>  
 sunamilne=∅=am-∅      <sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S6</sub>nn-<sub>S8</sub>da-<sub>S12</sub>gi-<sub>S14</sub>∅  
 PN<sub>2</sub>=ABS=COP-3SG.S      FIN-3SG-COM-return-3SG.S

“(He stated:) ‘Iluma returned with him not as a commissioner, it is Sunamilne who returned with him (as a commissioner)’.”

(245) Ishme-Dagan A + V 273 (ETCSL 2.5.4.01) (≠, AB)

ne<sub>26</sub>-e-me-en      <sup>d</sup>en-lil<sub>2</sub>-še<sub>3</sub>      ηal<sub>2</sub>-la-me-en  
 ne=∅=me-en      enlil=še      ηal-’a=∅=me-en  
 1SG.PR=ABS=COP-1SG.S      DN=TERM      exist-PT=ABS=COP-1SG.S  
 ki      aη<sub>2</sub>      e<sub>2</sub>-kur-ra-me-en  
 ki=∅      aη-∅      ekur=ak=∅=me-en  
 place=ABS      measure-TL      TN=GEN=ABS=COP-1SG.S

“It is me who is all for Enlil, who is the beloved of E-kur.”

(246) Proverbs collection 2 + 6 72 (ETCSL 6.1.02) (≠, AB)<sup>111</sup>

dub-sar      šu      ka-ta      sa<sub>2</sub>-a  
<sub>APP</sub>[dubsar      šu=∅      ka=da      sa-’a]  
<sub>APP</sub>[scribe      hand=ABS      ka=COM      equal-PT]  
 e-ne-am<sub>3</sub>      dub-sar-ra-am<sub>3</sub>  
<sub>ANC</sub>[ene=∅=am-∅]      dubsar=∅=am-∅  
<sub>ANC</sub>[3SG.PR=ABS=COP-3SG.S]      scribe=ABS=COP-3SG.S

Lit. “It is him, the scribe whose hand can follow dictation, who is a scribe.” = “Only a scribe whose hand can follow dictation is a scribe.”

(247) Proverbs collection 2 + 6 99 (ETCSL 6.1.02) (≠, AB)

nar      za-pa-aη<sub>2</sub>      he<sub>2</sub>-en-dug<sub>3</sub>  
<sub>APP</sub>[nar      zapaη=∅      <sub>S1</sub>ha-<sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S11</sub>n-<sub>S12</sub>dug-<sub>S14</sub>∅]  
<sub>APP</sub>[singer      voice=ABS      MOD-FIN-3SG.A-sweet-3NH.P]  
 e-ne-am<sub>3</sub>      nar-am<sub>3</sub>  
<sub>ANC</sub>[ene=∅=am-∅]      nar=∅=am-∅  
<sub>ANC</sub>[3SG.PR=ABS=COP-3SG.S]      singer=ABS=COP-3SG.S

Lit. “It is him, the singer who truly produces a sweet voice, who is a singer.” = “Only a singer whose voice is truly sweet is a singer.”

<sup>111</sup> The first CC of this and the following example is a specificational CC whose pronominal subject is preceded by an appositional description. See ex. (95) above for a similar specificational CC.

*Absolutive (Patient)*

(248) Gudea Cyl. A 13:2 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232300) (≠, A)

siki udu gan-na-kam  
 siki udu gan=ak=∅=am-∅  
 wool sheep bearing=GEN=ABS=COP-3NH.S  
 šu-a mi-ni-ṇar-ṇar  
 šu='a <sub>S4</sub>mu-<sub>S10</sub>ni-<sub>S11</sub>n-<sub>S12</sub>ṇarṇar-<sub>S14</sub>∅  
 hand=L1 VEN-L1-3SG.A-put~PL-3NH.P

“(He undid the tongue of the goad and the whip;) it was wool from lamb-bearing sheep that he placed in all hands.”

(249) NG 138 22 (Umma, 21st c.) (P200731) (≠, A)

udu-ṇu<sub>10</sub>-um <sub>S2</sub>ṣu-<sub>S6</sub>la-lum-ra in-na-šum<sub>2</sub>  
 udu=ṇu=∅=am-∅ <sub>S2</sub>ṣulalum=ra <sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S6</sub>nn-<sub>S7</sub>a-<sub>S11</sub>y-<sub>S12</sub>šum-<sub>S14</sub>∅  
 sheep=1SG.POSS=ABS=COP-3NH.S PN=DAT.H FIN-3SG-DAT-1SG.A-give-3NH.P  
 “(Turam-ili declared: ‘I gave MY sheep to Sulalum’.”

(250) NG 215 1-2 (Umma, 21st c.) (P131762) (≠, A)

šuku lu<sub>2</sub> 3-a-kam, lu<sub>2</sub>-ša-lim-e ba-ra-an-kid<sub>7</sub>  
 šukur lu 3=ak=∅=am-∅ lušalim=e <sub>S5</sub>ba-<sub>S9</sub>ta-<sub>S11</sub>n-<sub>S12</sub>kid-<sub>S14</sub>∅  
 prebend person 3=GEN=ABS=COP-3NH.S PN=ERG 3NH-ABL-3SG.A-cut-3NH.P  
 “(The troops stated): ‘Lu-shalim has cut off from the subsistence land of THREE persons’.”

Ex. (250) above comes from the very beginning of a text. It is therefore difficult to distinguish its focus. I assume that the focus proper is the number of people who were thought to be affected by Lu-shalim’s activity.

Ex. (251) below differs from all examples of this subsection in containing a CC which seemingly belongs to type (Ai) instead of type (Di). In this CC <sub>S</sub>[kug]<sub>PC</sub>[ninga=ani=∅]=am-∅, it is not the S but the PC that functions as the identificational focus. As argued above in section 3.5 this type is usually unnoticeable for us because it does not involve a change in word order, and the prosodic prominence that must have marked the PC’s focality leaves no trace in the orthography. The focus proper is the 3rd ps. sg. possessive enclitic =/ani/; Ur-Shuludul asserts that he paid with *his own* money, meaning that he bought the slave for himself, and not in the name of someone else.

(251) NG 210 4:4-6 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P135698) (≠, B)

dug<sub>4</sub>-ga-<sup>d</sup>ba-u<sub>2</sub>-še<sub>3</sub>, ur-<sup>d</sup>šul<sup>1</sup>-udul<sub>5</sub>-ke<sub>4</sub>, kug niṇ<sub>2</sub>-GA-ni-im  
 dugabauk=še uršuludulak=e kug ninga=ani=∅=am-∅  
 PN=TERM PN=ERG silver property=3SG.POSS=ABS=COP-3NH.S

in-ši-in-la<sub>2</sub>-a

<sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S6</sub>nn-<sub>S9</sub>ši-<sub>S11</sub>n-<sub>S12</sub>la-<sub>S14</sub>Ø-<sub>S14</sub>'a=Ø

FIN-3SG-TERM-3SG.A-weigh-3NH.P-SUB=ABS

“(Ur-Shuludul is to swear the assertory oath) that Ur-Shuludul paid for Duga-Bau with silver that is HIS property.”

(252) Inana and Gudam, Segment C 11 (ETCSL 1.3.4) (≠, AB)

ninda nu-e-gu<sub>7</sub>

ninda=Ø <sub>S1</sub>nu-<sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S11</sub>e-<sub>S12</sub>gu-<sub>S14</sub>Ø

bread=ABS NEG-FIN-2SG.A-eat-3NH.P

uzu-zu-um (X)<sup>112</sup> <sub>3</sub>i-gu<sub>7</sub>

uzu=zu=Ø=am-Ø <sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S11</sub>e-<sub>S12</sub>gu-<sub>S14</sub>Ø

flesh=2SG.POSS=ABS=COP-3NH.S FIN-2SG.A-eat-3NH.P

“It was not bread that you have eaten, it was your flesh that you have eaten!”

(253) Inana and Gudam, Segment C 13 (ETCSL 1.3.4) (≠, AB)

kaš nu-e-gu<sub>7</sub>

kaš=Ø <sub>S1</sub>nu-<sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S11</sub>e-<sub>S12</sub>naḥ-<sub>S14</sub>Ø

beer=ABS NEG-FIN-2SG.A-drink-3NH.P

uš<sub>2</sub>-zu-um (X)<sup>113</sup> <sub>3</sub>i-gu<sub>7</sub>

uš=zu=Ø=am-Ø <sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S11</sub>e-<sub>S12</sub>naḥ-<sub>S14</sub>Ø

blood=2SG.POSS=ABS=COP-3NH.S FIN-2SG.A-drink-3NH.P

“It was not beer that you drank, it was your blood that you have drunk!”

### Dative

(254) NG 113 25-27 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P110880) (-, B)

ki di-kud lugal-ke<sub>4</sub>-ne-ka,

ki dikud lugal=ak=ene=ak='a

place judge king=GEN=PL=GEN=L1

[lugal]-ṛme<sub>3</sub>-ka<sup>1</sup>-am<sub>3</sub>, ba-an-ṛna<sup>1</sup>-šum<sub>2</sub>

lugalmek=Ø=am-Ø <sub>S5</sub>ba-<sub>S6</sub>nn-<sub>S7</sub>a-<sub>S12</sub>šum-<sub>S14</sub>Ø

PN=ABS=COP-3SG.S MID-3SG-DAT-give-3NH.S

“At the place of the royal judges, it was Lugal-me to whom it (= the prebend) was given.”

(255) NG 167 10-11 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P111384) (+, B)

ur-<sup>d</sup>ba-u<sub>2</sub>-ke<sub>4</sub> ur[...] nam-ṛmussa<sup>1</sup>-[še<sub>3</sub>]

urbauk=e ur[...]=Ø nammussa=še

PN<sub>1</sub>=ERG PN<sub>2</sub>=ABS son.in.law=TERM

<sup>112</sup> Possibly an erasure.

<sup>113</sup> Possibly an erasure.

<sup>1</sup>ni<sub>2</sub><sup>1</sup>-u<sub>2</sub>-rum-ra-am<sub>3</sub>      in-[na-šum<sub>2</sub>-ma]  
 ninurum=ra=am-∅      s<sub>2</sub>i<sub>56</sub>nn<sub>57</sub>a<sub>511</sub>n<sub>512</sub>šum<sub>514</sub>∅<sub>515</sub>'a  
 PN<sub>3</sub>=DAT.H=COP-3SG.S      FIN-3SG-DAT-3SG.A-give-3SG.P-SUB  
 “(Ur-Bau swore the assertory oath) that) Ur-Bau has given Ur... as son-in-law to NIGURUM.”

*Locative 1*

(256) CUSAS 11, 259 2:2-3 (Adab, 24th c.) (P322863) (≠, AB)

e<sub>2</sub>      me-me-kam,      al-ur<sub>4</sub>  
 e      meme=ak=∅=am-∅      s<sub>2</sub>al<sub>512</sub>ur<sub>514</sub>∅  
 house      PN=GEN=ABS=COP-3NH.S      FIN-shear-3NH.S  
 “They (= sheep) were shorn in the estate of MEME.”

(257) NG 32 10-12 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P110613) (+?, B)

ur-<sup>d</sup>lama-ke<sub>4</sub>,      šeš-kal-la      arad<sub>2</sub>  
 urlamak=e      šeškala      arad=∅  
 PN<sub>1</sub>=ERG      PN<sub>2</sub>      slave=ABS  
 ki      ur-<sup>d</sup>kuš<sub>7</sub>-<sup>d</sup>ba-u<sub>2</sub>-ka-am<sub>3</sub>      ni-tud-da  
 ki      urkušbau=ak='a=am-∅      s<sub>10</sub>ni<sub>511</sub>n<sub>512</sub>tud<sub>514</sub>∅<sub>515</sub>'a  
 place      PN<sub>3</sub>=GEN=L1=COP-3NH.S      L1-3SG.A-procreate-3SG.P-SUB  
 “(Two persons took the assertory oath) that Ur-Lama had procreated Shesh-kala, the slave at the place of UR-KUSH-BAU.”

(258) Shulgi A 57-58 (ETCSL 2.4.2.01) (≠, B)

e<sub>2</sub>-gal-mah      <sup>d</sup>nin-e<sub>2</sub>-gal-ka-kam      dub<sub>3</sub>      he<sub>2</sub>-ni-dub<sub>2</sub>  
 egalmah      ninegalak=ak=∅=am-∅      dub=∅      s<sub>1</sub>ha<sub>510</sub>ni<sub>511</sub>y<sub>512</sub>dub<sub>514</sub>∅  
 TN      DN=GEN=ABS=COP-3NH.S      knee=ABS      MOD-L1-1SG.A-tremble-3NH.P  
 a      zal-le      he<sub>2</sub>-ni-tu<sub>5</sub>  
 a      zal-ed=∅      s<sub>1</sub>ha<sub>510</sub>ni<sub>511</sub>y<sub>512</sub>tu<sub>514</sub>∅  
 water      flow-PF=ABS      MOD-L1-1SG.A-bath-3NH.P  
 “I rested and bathed in the Egal-mah of NIN-EGALA.”

(259) Shulgi A 79-80 (ETCSL 2.4.2.01) (≠, A)

šeš      gu<sub>5</sub>-li-ηu<sub>10</sub>      šul      <sup>d</sup>utu-am<sub>3</sub>  
 šeš      guli=ηu=∅      šul      utu=∅=am-∅  
 brother      friend=1SG.POSS=ABS      youth      DN=ABS=COP-3SG.S  
 e<sub>2</sub>-gal      an-ne<sub>2</sub>      ki      ηar-ra-am<sub>3</sub>  
 egal      an=e      ki=∅      ηar-'a=∅=am-∅  
 palace      DN=ERG      place=ABS      put=PT=ABS=COP-3NH.S



kaš hu-mu-un-di-ni-naŋ

kaš=∅<sub>S1</sub> ha-<sub>S4</sub> mu-<sub>S6</sub> nn-<sub>S8</sub> da-<sub>S10</sub> ni-<sub>S11</sub> y-<sub>S12</sub> naŋ-<sub>S14</sub> ∅

bier=ABS MOD-VEN-3SG-COM-L1-1SG.A-drink-3NH.P

“My brother and friend is the hero Utu. I drank beer with him in the palace founded by AN.”

(260) Shulgi B 148-149 (ETCSL 2.4.2.02) (≠, C)

lugal-me-en šag<sub>4</sub> udu 1-a-kam,

lugal=∅=me-en šag udu 1=ak=∅=am-∅

king=ABS=COP-2SG.S heart sheep 1=GEN=ABS=COP-3NH.S

a<sub>2</sub>-aŋ<sub>2</sub>-ŋa<sub>2</sub> niŋ<sub>2</sub>-ki-šar<sub>2</sub>-ra-ka igi mu-na-ni-du<sub>8</sub>

a’aga niŋkišara=ak=’a igi=∅<sub>S4</sub> mu-<sub>S6</sub> nn-<sub>S7</sub> a-<sub>S10</sub> ni-<sub>S11</sub> n-<sub>S12</sub> du-<sub>S14</sub> ∅

message totality=GEN=L1 eye=ABS VEN-3SG-DAT-L1-3SG.A-open-3NH.P

“I, the king, can find the (divine) messages concerning the universe in the insides of a SINGLE sheep.”

### Locative2

(261) En-shakush-ana 2 1-5 (RIME 1.14.17.2) (Nippur, 24th c.) (≠, B)

[d]<sup>1</sup>en<sup>1</sup>-lil<sub>2</sub>-’la<sup>1</sup>, ’en<sup>1</sup>-šag<sub>4</sub>-kuš<sub>2</sub>-an-’na<sup>1</sup>, niŋ<sub>2</sub>-gur<sub>11</sub>

enlil=ra enšagkušana=e niŋgur

DN=DAT.H PN=ERG goods

kiš<sup>ki</sup>, hul-a-kam, a mu-na-’ru<sup>1</sup>

kiš hul-’a=ak=∅=am-∅ a=∅<sub>S4</sub> mu-<sub>S6</sub> nn-<sub>S7</sub> a-<sub>S11</sub> n-<sub>S12</sub> ru-<sub>S14</sub> ∅

GN raid-PT=GEN=ABS=COP-3NH.S water=ABS VEN-3SG-DAT-3SG.A-put-3NH.P

“En-shakush-Ana dedicated the goods of plundered KISH to Enlil.”

(262) An adab to Bau for Luma 2, 5 (ETCSL 2.3.1) (≠, AB)

nam-ereš kalam-ma-kam bi<sub>2</sub>-in-tum<sub>2</sub>-en

namereš kalam=ak=am-∅<sub>S5</sub> b-<sub>S6</sub> i-<sub>S11</sub> n-<sub>S12</sub> tum-<sub>S14</sub> en

ladyship land=GEN=ABS=COP-3NH.S 3NH-L2-3SG.A-be.worthy-2SG.P

“(Having chosen you, child of An, great goddess, from the great place in his holy heart), it is the ladyship of the land that he made you worthy of.”

### Abative

(263) BM 110171 obv. 9-10 (Fs. Owen, pp. 206-207 no. 4) (Umma, 21st c.) (P375923) (+, C)

<sup>niš</sup>kiri<sub>6</sub>-bi inim u<sub>3</sub>-ma-ni šeš gal

kiri=bi=∅ inim umani šeš gal

garden=DEM=ABS word PN<sub>1</sub> brother big

a-ad-da-ka-ta-am<sub>3</sub> aya<sub>2</sub>-kal-la in-sa<sub>10</sub>

aadda=ak=ak=ta=am-∅ ayakala=e<sub>S1</sub> i-<sub>S11</sub> n-<sub>S12</sub> sa-<sub>S14</sub> ∅

PN<sub>2</sub>=GEN=GEN=ABL=COP-3NH.S PN<sub>3</sub>=ERG FIN-3SG.A-buy-3NH.P

“Aya-kala bought this garden with the permission of UMANI, the elder brother of A-adda.”

(264) NG 16 12-14 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P143154) (+, A)

u<sub>3</sub>      inim      a<sub>2</sub>-na-na      ab-ba-ta-am<sub>3</sub>,  
 u      inim      anana      abba=ak=ta=am-ø  
 and      word      PN<sub>1</sub>      father=GEN=ABL=COP-3NH.S  
 šeš-kal-la-a,      nin<sub>9</sub>-ab-ba-na      ba-an-tuku  
 šeškala=e      ninabanak=ø      s<sub>5</sub>ba-s<sub>11</sub>n-s<sub>12</sub>tuku-s<sub>14</sub>ø  
 PN<sub>2</sub>=ERG      PN<sub>3</sub>=ABS      MID-3SG.A-have-3SG.P

“And it was with the permission of ANANA, the father, that Shesh-kala married Nin-abana.”

(265) NG 99 11 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P111162) (+, B)

e<sub>2</sub>      kug      šu-na-ta-am<sub>3</sub>      in-sa<sub>10</sub>-a  
 e=ø      kug      šu=ani=ak=ta=am-ø      s<sub>2</sub>i-s<sub>11</sub>n-s<sub>12</sub>sa-s<sub>14</sub>ø-s<sub>15</sub>'a  
 house=ABS      silver      hand=3SG.POSS=GEN=ABL=COP-3NH.S      FIN-3SG.A-buy-3NH.P-SUB  
 “(Inasaga took an assertory oath) that she had bought the house with the silver of HER OWN hand.”

(266) NG 166 7 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P110955) (+, C)

kišib      inim-ta-am<sub>3</sub>      ma-an-gi      in-tuku-a  
 kišib=ø      inim=ta=am-ø      mangi=e      s<sub>2</sub>i-s<sub>11</sub>n-s<sub>12</sub>tuku-s<sub>14</sub>ø-s<sub>15</sub>'a  
 seal=ABS      word=ABL=COP-3NH.S      PN=ERG      FIN-3SG.A-have-3NH.S-SUB  
 “(Daga the wife of Shesh-kala took an assertory oath) that Mangi had the sealed tablet ON THE BASIS OF A VERBAL AGREEMENT.”

(267) NG 213 31 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P110794) (+, B)

X + 1 1/5      gur      še-ŋiš-i<sub>3</sub>      šuku      erin<sub>2</sub>-na  
 X + 1 1/5      gur      šenjiši      šukur      erin=ak=ø  
 X + 1 1/5      unit      sesam      ration      troops=GEN=ABS  
 inim      ensi<sub>2</sub>-<ka>-ta-am<sub>3</sub>      ba-dab<sub>5</sub>  
 inim      ensik=ak=ta=am-ø      s<sub>5</sub>ba-s<sub>12</sub>dab-s<sub>14</sub>ø  
 word      ruler=GEN=ABL=COP-3NH.S      MID-take-3NH.S  
 “(It was confirmed that) X + 1 1/5 gurs of sesam, the food allocation of the troops, was received by order of the RULER.”

(268) NG 215 11-12 (Umma, 21st c.) (P131762) (+, C)

tukum-bi      eger<sub>5</sub>      ab-ba-na-ta-am<sub>3</sub>,  
 tukumbi      eger      abba=ani=ak=ta=am-ø  
 if      back      father=3SG.POSS=GEN=ABL=COP-3NH.S  
 lu<sub>2</sub>-ša-lim-e      saŋ      šuku-ra      ba-ra-an-kid<sub>7</sub>  
 lušalim=e      saŋ      šukur=ak=ø      s<sub>5</sub>ba-s<sub>9</sub>ta-s<sub>11</sub>n-s<sub>12</sub>kid-s<sub>14</sub>ø  
 PN=ERG      head      prebend=GEN=ABS      3NH-ABL-3SG.A-cut-3NH.P  
 “(If already his father used them [= the subsistence lands in question], then he [= Lu-

shalim] is not guilty. But,) if it was only after the death of his father that he cut off from the best part of the subsistence fields(, then Lu-shalim is guilty)”.<sup>114</sup>

(269) BM 106466 14-15 (Fs. Owen, pp. 205-206 no. 3) (Umma, 21st. c.) (P200710) (+, AB)

inim en-ta-am<sub>3</sub>, ba-ra-sa<sub>10</sub>  
 inim en=ak=ta=am-∅<sub>S5</sub> ba-<sub>S9</sub>ta-<sub>S12</sub>sa-<sub>S14</sub>∅  
 word lord=GEN=ABL=COP-3NH.S MID-ABL-buy-3NH.S  
 “‘It was sold with the permission of the LORD’ (they stated).”

(270) Gilgamesh, Enkidu and the netherworld 36-37 (ms. UET 6/1 55)<sup>114</sup> (Ur, OB period) (ETCSL 1.8.1.4) (+, B)

[munus-e] ṛḡiš<sup>1</sup> šu-na ṛli<sup>1</sup>-bi<sub>2</sub>-in-gub,  
 munus=e ḡiš=∅ šu=ani=<sup>1</sup>a<sub>S1</sub> nu-<sub>S5</sub>b-<sub>S10</sub>i-<sub>S11</sub>n-<sub>S12</sub>gub-<sub>S14</sub>∅  
 woman=ERG tree=ABS hand=3SG.POSS=L1 NEG-3NH-L2-3SG.A-plant-3NH.P  
 ḡiri<sub>3</sub>-ni-ta-am<sub>3</sub> <<li->>bi<sub>2</sub>-in-gub,  
 ḡiri=ani=ta=am-∅<sub>S5</sub> b-<sub>S10</sub>i-<sub>S11</sub>n-<sub>S12</sub>gub-<sub>S14</sub>∅  
 foot=3SG.POSS=ABL=COP-3NH.S 3NH-L2-3SG.A-plant-3NH.P  
 [munus-e] ṛḡiš<sup>1</sup> šu-na a ṛli<sup>1</sup>-bi<sub>2</sub>-in-dug<sub>4</sub>,  
 munus=e ḡiš=∅ šu=ani=<sup>1</sup>a<sub>S1</sub> nu-<sub>S5</sub>b-<sub>S10</sub>i-<sub>S11</sub>n-<sub>S12</sub>dug-<sub>S14</sub>∅  
 woman=ERG tree=ABS hand=3SG.POSS=L1 water=ABS NEG-3NH-L2-3SG.A-do-3NH.P  
 ḡiri<sub>3</sub>-ni-ta-am<sub>3</sub> bi<sub>2</sub>-in-dug<sub>4</sub>,  
 ḡiri=ani=ta=am-∅<sub>S5</sub> b-<sub>S10</sub>i-<sub>S11</sub>n-<sub>S12</sub>dug-<sub>S14</sub>∅  
 foot=3SG.POSS=ABL=COP-3NH.S 3NH-L2-3SG.A-do-3NH.P

“The woman did not plant the tree with her hands; she planted with her FEET. The woman did not water the tree with her hands; she watered it with her FEET.”

The fact that only one of the mss. uses the COP suggests that marking the focus additionally with the COP may have been a matter of choice if the position (and possibly its prosodic prominence) have already indicated its focality. Note that in this ex. the position of the focal “with her feet” is immediately before the verb, which in CCs was also shown to be the focus position in Chapter 3 above.

Ex. (270) is also interesting because of the first members of the sentence pairs. These are negated sentences, which could also be translated with clefts: “It was not with her hands that the woman planted the tree” and “It was not with her hands that the woman watered the tree”.<sup>115</sup> The position of the word **šu=ani=<sup>1</sup>a** “with her hands”, immediately preceding the verbal form indicates that they are in focus,

<sup>114</sup> The other mss. that contain these lines do not use the COP. See Attinger (1993, p. 482, ex. 238) for the variants.

<sup>115</sup> Here the word “water” is considered to form a semantic unit with the verb, and the nominal and the verbal parts of compound verbs behave as a single word.

namely a special kind of focus called “focus of negation”.<sup>116</sup> Focus of negation can also be observed in the first sentences of exx. (252) and (253), and in exx. (273), (274) and (280).

### *Terminative*

(271) NG 137 7-10 (Umma, 21st c.) (P131782) (+, B)

ab<sub>2</sub>      ša-bar-tur      mu-bi      i<sub>3</sub>-me-a  
 ab<sub>2</sub>      šabartur=∅      mu=bi=∅      s<sub>2</sub>i<sub>3</sub>-s<sub>12</sub>me<sub>3</sub>-s<sub>14</sub>∅-s<sub>15</sub>'a=∅  
 cow      PN<sub>1</sub>=ABS      name=POSS.3NH=ABS      FIN-COP-3NH.S-SUB=ABS  
 lugal-ba-ta-e<sub>3</sub>, maš<sub>2</sub>-še<sub>3</sub>-am<sub>3</sub>      da      i<sub>3</sub>-na-an-de<sub>6</sub>-a  
 lugalbatae=e      maš=še=am-∅      da=a      s<sub>2</sub>i<sub>3</sub>-s<sub>6</sub>nn<sub>3</sub>-s<sub>7</sub>a<sub>3</sub>-s<sub>11</sub>n<sub>3</sub>-s<sub>12</sub>de<sub>3</sub>-s<sub>14</sub>∅-s<sub>15</sub>'a=ak  
 PN<sub>2</sub>=ERG      goat=TERM=COP-3NH.S      da=L2.NH      FIN-3SG-DAT-3SG.A-bring-3NH.P-SUB=GEN  
 “(Aya-kala is to take an assertory oath) that the cow whose name is Shabar-tur was brought by Lugal-batae to him as a GIFT.”

(272) NG 197 31'-33' (Lagash, 21st c.) (P128466) (+, A)

nin<sup>nar</sup>-e-šub      ʾama<sup>1</sup>      na-na      ʾgeme<sub>2</sub><sup>1</sup>-še<sub>3</sub>-am<sub>3</sub>,  
 ninarešub      ama      nana      geme=ak=še=am-∅  
 PN<sub>1</sub>      mother      PN<sub>2</sub>      maiden=GEN=TERM=COP-3SG.S  
 lu<sub>2</sub>-<sup>d</sup>nin-šubur      ʾlunga<sup>1</sup>,      igi-ni      in-ši-<sup>na2</sup>r<sup>ar</sup>nar<sup>ar</sup>  
 luninšubur      lunga=e      igi=ani=∅      s<sub>2</sub>i<sub>3</sub>-s<sub>6</sub>nn<sub>3</sub>-s<sub>9</sub>ši<sub>3</sub>-s<sub>11</sub>n<sub>3</sub>-s<sub>12</sub>nar<sub>3</sub>-s<sub>14</sub>∅  
 PN<sub>3</sub>      brewer=ERG      face=3SG.POSS=ABS      FIN-3SG-TERM-3SG.A-put-3NH.P  
 “(Two people took an assertory oath that) it was before Nigar-eshub, the mother of Nana, the slave girl, that Lu-Ninshubur, the brewer, appeared (and said ...)”

(273) NG 22 9-11 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P110818) (+, C)

[nin-munus-zid],      [lu<sub>2</sub>]-<sup>d</sup>r<sup>ar</sup>ba-u<sub>2</sub><sup>1</sup>-[da],      ʾnam<sup>1</sup>-dam-še<sub>3</sub>-am<sub>3</sub>  
 ninmunuszid=∅      lubauk=da      namdam=še=am-∅  
 PN<sub>1</sub>=ABS      PN<sub>2</sub>=COM      marriage=TERM=COP-3NH.S  
 ʾda<sup>1</sup>-ga-na      nu-u<sub>3</sub>-nu<sub>2</sub>-a  
 daggan=ʾa      s<sub>1</sub>nu<sub>3</sub>-s<sub>2</sub>i<sub>3</sub>-s<sub>10</sub>n<sub>3</sub>-s<sub>12</sub>nu<sub>3</sub>-s<sub>14</sub>∅-s<sub>15</sub>'a  
 chamber=L1      NEG-FIN-L1.SYN-lie-3SG.S-SUB  
 “(Lu-Bau took an assertory oath) that Nin-munus-zid slept not in her capacity as wife with Lu-Bau in the sleeping chamber.”

<sup>116</sup> See Willis et al. (2013, p. 5): “it is rarely the case that all that a negative clause conveys is that the proposition expressed is false. Often, contrastive focus is also placed on some element within the clause, inviting the inference that replacing this element with some other member from a set of alternatives would render the proposition expressed no longer false. This is called ‘focus of negation’.” See also Jäger (2008, pp. 21-22).

The structure of ex. (274) below is very similar to that of exx. (252), (253) and (270). They are all sentence pairs, whose first member is negated, followed by an affirmative sentence in which there is a focal constituent followed by a COP. I assume therefore that in ex. (274) the word **maškim** “commissioner” functions as a focus of negation, marked here as such not only by its position immediately before the verb but also by the COP.

(274) NG 121 18-19 (Umma, 21st c.) (P131778) (+, B) (first sentence)

i<sub>3</sub>-lum-ma      maškim-še<sub>3</sub>-am<sub>3</sub>      nu-un-da-gi<sub>4</sub>  
 iluma=∅      maškim=še=am-∅      <sub>S1</sub>nu-<sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S6</sub>nn-<sub>S8</sub>da-<sub>S12</sub>gi-<sub>S14</sub>∅  
 PN<sub>1</sub>=ABS      bailiff=TERM=COP-3NH.S      NEG-FIN-3SG-COM-return-3SG.S  
 SU-nam-IL<sub>2</sub>-NE-am<sub>3</sub>      in-da-gi<sub>4</sub>  
 sunamilne=∅=am-∅      <sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S6</sub>nn-<sub>S8</sub>da-<sub>S12</sub>gi-<sub>S14</sub>∅  
 PN<sub>2</sub>=ABS=COP-3SG.S      FIN-3SG-COM-return-3SG.S

“(He stated:) ‘Iluma returned with him not as a commissioner, it is Sunamilne who returned with him (as a commissioner)’.”

(275) TCS 1, 95 3-6 (Ur, 21st c.) (P136323) (+, B)

10    eren<sub>2</sub>      e<sub>2</sub>-lugal-la<sup>ki</sup>      20    eren<sub>2</sub>      ga-eš<sup>ki</sup><sub>5</sub>  
 10    eren      elugalak=ak=∅      20    eren      gaeš=ak=∅  
 10    people    GN=GEN=ABS      20    people    GN=GEN=ABS  
 kaskal-še<sub>3</sub>-am<sub>3</sub>,      he<sub>2</sub>-em-gi<sub>4</sub>-gi<sub>4</sub>  
 kaskal=še=am-∅      <sub>S1</sub>ha-<sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S4</sub>m-<sub>S11</sub>b-<sub>S12</sub>gigi-<sub>S14</sub>e  
 way=TERM=COP-3NH.S      MOD-FIN-VEN-3SG.P-gigi~PF-3SG.A

“It is for the expedition that he should send here 10 troops from E-lugala, and 20 troops from Gaesh.”

(276) BM 23678 rev. 9 (Fs. Pettinato, p. 183, no. 4) (Girsu, 21st c.) (P211380) (+, AB)

ni<sub>2</sub>-tuku      ab-ba-<sub>2</sub>še<sub>3</sub>-am<sub>3</sub>  
 ni<sub>2</sub>tuku      abba=<sub>2</sub>u=ak=še=am-∅  
 property    father=1SG.POSS=GEN=TERM=COP-3NH.S  
 šu      ba-an-ti-a  
 šu=e      <sub>S5</sub>b-<sub>S7</sub>a-<sub>S10</sub>n-<sub>S12</sub>ti-<sub>S14</sub>∅-<sub>S15</sub>’a=ak  
 hand=DAT.NH      3NH-DAT-3SG.A-receive-3NH.P-SUB=GEN

“(She [= Damqat] said: ‘May the debt collectors of my father swear for me) that she (= Damqat’s mother) received it (= the silver) as the property of MY FATHER!’.”

(277) Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta 200-202 (= 128-130) (ETCSL 1.8.2.3) (+, A)

ṇa<sub>2</sub>-a-še<sub>3</sub>-am<sub>3</sub> ...      kur      me      sikil-la-ke<sub>4</sub>  
 ṇa=še=am-∅      kur      me      sikil-∅=ak=e  
 1SG.PR=TERM=COP-3SG.S      mountain    power    pure-TL=GEN=L3.NH

ha-ma-du<sub>3</sub>-e

<sub>s1</sub>ha-<sub>s4</sub>m-<sub>s7</sub>a-<sub>s12</sub>du-<sub>s14</sub>e

MOD-VEN-DAT-build-3SG.A

“It is for me, (chosen by the junior Enlil of Sumer, lord Numimmud, in his holy heart), that he (= lord of Aratta) should make the mountain of the pure divine powers (= Aratta) build it (= the temple of Inana).”

Note that in this example, the COP shows no agreement with the focalized pronoun.

(278) Ur-Ninurta A 89 (ETCSL 2.5.6.1) (-, C)<sup>117</sup>

<sup>d</sup>mu-ul-lil<sub>2</sub>-le nam-sipad ka-na-a<sub>η</sub><sub>2</sub>-<sub>η</sub>a<sub>2</sub>-kam

enlil=e namsipad kalam=ak=∅=am-∅

DN=ERG shepherdsip land=GEN=ABS=COP-3NH.S

zid-de<sub>3</sub>-eš mu-un-pad<sub>3</sub>-de<sub>3</sub>-en

zid=eš <sub>s4</sub>mu-<sub>s11</sub>n-<sub>s12</sub>pad-<sub>s14</sub>en

true=ADV VEN-3SG.A-find-1SG.P

“It is for the shepherdship of the Land that Enlil has truly chosen me.”

### *Equative*

(279) NG 75 8 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P200598) (+, A)

dumu lu<sub>2</sub> 1-gin<sub>7</sub>-na-am<sub>3</sub> he<sub>2</sub>-dim<sub>2</sub>

dumu lu=ak 1=gin=am-∅ <sub>s1</sub>ha-<sub>s2</sub>i-<sub>s12</sub>dim-<sub>s14</sub>∅

child person=GEN 1=EQU=COP-3SG.S MOD-FIN-make-3SG.S

“(A number of persons took an assertory oath that PN<sub>1</sub> and PN<sub>2</sub> had appeared in court and declared: ‘By the name of the king, may PN<sub>3</sub> be freed!) May he act as the SINGLE son of a free man!’.”<sup>118</sup>

### *Adverbialive*

(280) Shulgi A 88 (ETCSL 2.4.2.01) (+, B)

ni<sub>2</sub>-<sub>η</sub>u<sub>10</sub> silim-eš<sub>2</sub>-am<sub>3</sub> ba-ra-dug<sub>4</sub>

ni=<sub>η</sub>u=∅ silim=eš=am-∅ bara-y-dug-∅

self=1SG.POSS=ABS praise=ADV=COP-3NH.S MOD-1SG.A-speak-3NH.P

“Truly I am not boasting!” (= Lit. “I definitely do not speak of myself vaingloriously”)

In ex. (280) above the COP probably marks the focus of negation; thus, the sentence may also be translated as “I speak of myself not vaingloriously”.

<sup>117</sup> In the idiom “to select someone for something”, the NP denoting the “something” is in the terminative, cf. ex. (106) above, Ur-Ninurta A 10 (ETCSL 2.5.6.1), Rim-Sin C 6 (ETCSL 2.6.9.3).

<sup>118</sup> See Civil (2011, p. 263) for translating the idiom “X-gin<sub>7</sub> — dim<sub>2</sub>” as “to behave/act as/like X”. Alternatively, the COP may function as standard marker here; cf. exx. (210)–(211) above.

### 5.3.4 Numerical Expressions in Focus

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. (281) and (282) below:

(281) Gudea 56 3:3-4 (RIME 3/1.1.756) (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P234436)

šita<sub>x</sub>(KAK.GIŠ)      ur      saṇ      3-še<sub>3</sub>,      mu-na-dim<sub>2</sub>  
 šita      ur      p<sub>1</sub>[saṇ]      p<sub>2</sub>[3]=p<sub>5</sub>[še]      s<sub>4</sub>mu-s<sub>6</sub>nn-s<sub>7</sub>a-s<sub>11</sub>n-s<sub>12</sub>dim-s<sub>14</sub>∅  
 mace      lion      p<sub>1</sub>[head]      p<sub>2</sub>[3]=p<sub>5</sub>[TERM]      VEN-3SG-DAT-3SG.A-make-3NH.P  
 “He fashioned a mace with three lion heads from it.”

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

SAHAR.DU<sub>6</sub>.TAK<sub>4</sub>-bi,      ki      5-a,  
 SAHARDUTAK=bi=∅      p<sub>1</sub>[ki]      p<sub>2</sub>[5]=p<sub>5</sub>[’a]  
 burial.mound=3NH.POSS=ABS      p<sub>1</sub>[place]      p<sub>2</sub>[5]=p<sub>5</sub>[L2.NH]  
 i<sub>3</sub>-mi-dub  
 s<sub>2</sub>i-s<sub>4</sub>m-s<sub>5</sub>b-s<sub>10</sub>i-s<sub>11</sub>n-s<sub>12</sub>dub-s<sub>14</sub>∅  
 FIN-VEN-3NH-L2-3SG.A-pile.up-3NH.P  
 “He piled up their burial mounds in five places.”

In construction b) the cardinal number functions as the PC of a type (Ai) CC, which is in turn part of an attributive CBC as in exx. (283) and (284) below (cf. also ex. [133] above).

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

ud      7-am<sub>3</sub>      še      la-ba-ara<sub>3</sub>  
 s[ud=∅]      p<sub>C</sub>[7=∅]=am-∅      še=∅      s<sub>1</sub>nu-s<sub>5</sub>ba-s<sub>12</sub>ara-s<sub>14</sub>∅  
 s[day=ABS]      p<sub>C</sub>[7=ABS]=COP-3NH.S      grain=ABS      NEG-MID-grind-3NH.S  
 Lit “For days that are seven (in number) no grain was ground.” = “For seven days no grain was ground.”

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

mu      dumu-ni      3-am<sub>3</sub>      ba-gub-ba-še<sub>3</sub>  
 mu      s[dumu=ani=∅]      p<sub>C</sub>[3=∅]=am-∅      s<sub>5</sub>ba-s<sub>12</sub>gub-s<sub>14</sub>∅-s<sub>15</sub>’a=ak=še  
 name      s[child=3SG.POSS=ABS]      p<sub>C</sub>[3=ABS]=COP-3SG.S      MID-stand-3SG.S-SUB=GEN=TERM  
 Lit. “Because his sons that are three (in number) were on duty.” = “Because his three son were on duty.”

Constructions a) and b) are described in detail by Jagersma in his grammar (2010, pp. 246-255, pp. 706-707). There exists, however, a type of construction involving a

numeral and a COP that appears to be unaccounted for by Jagersma. These constructions typically contain a metrological expression as in ex. (285) below:

(285) TCS 1, 131 3-6 (? , 21st c.) (P145679)

1 gi<sub>4</sub> kug-babbar-am<sub>3</sub>, mu- $\eta$ u<sub>10</sub>-še<sub>3</sub>,  
 1 gi<sub>4</sub> kugbabbar=ø=am-ø mu=ηu=še  
 1 shekel silver=ABS=COP-3NH.S name=1SG.POSS=TERM  
 ba-sag<sub>9</sub>-ga, he<sub>2</sub>-na-ab-šum<sub>2</sub>-mu  
 basaga=ra s<sub>1</sub>ha-s<sub>2</sub>i-s<sub>6</sub>nn-s<sub>7</sub>a-s<sub>11</sub>b-s<sub>12</sub>šum-s<sub>14</sub>e  
 PN=DAT.H MOD-FIN-3SG-DAT-3NH.P-give-3SG.A

“(Tell Lu-Shara that) he should give ONE shekel of silver to Basaga on my behalf!”

Jagersma convincingly argues (2010, pp. 251-254) that 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 the norm becomes “numeral - measure - measured item” by the end of the 3rd mill. BC. This latter order is the one used in ex. (285), while the former one is used in ex. (286) below.

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

lu<sub>2</sub> dam u<sub>3</sub>-taka<sub>4</sub>, kug gi<sub>4</sub> 5-am<sub>6</sub>,  
 lu=e dam=ø s<sub>1</sub>u-s<sub>11</sub>n-s<sub>12</sub>taka-s<sub>14</sub>ø kug gi<sub>4</sub> 5=ø=am-ø  
 man=ERG wife=ABS ANT-3SG.A-leave-3SG.P silver shekel 5=ABS=COP-3NH.S  
 ensi<sub>2</sub>-ke<sub>4</sub>, ba-de<sub>6</sub>  
 ensik=e s<sub>5</sub>ba-s<sub>11</sub>n-s<sub>12</sub>de-s<sub>14</sub>ø  
 ruler=ERG MID-3SG.A-bring-3NH.P

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

Jagersma (2010, p. 707) analyzes the “measure - numeral” part of the metrological expression in ex. (286) as an example of construction b) “shekels which are five (in number)”.

How then is the numerical expression in ex. (285) to be interpreted? Jagersma’s description would allow for an interpretation similar to the interpretation of the numerical expression in ex. (286): assuming that the written sequence “numeral - measure - measured item” stands for the spoken “measured item - measure - numeral”, one could argue that the written **1 gi<sub>4</sub> kug-babbar-am<sub>3</sub>** stands for spoken **kug-babbar gi<sub>4</sub> 1-am<sub>3</sub>** “silver, shekel which are 1 (in number)” = 1 shekel of silver”. I will call this interpretation attributive as it interprets the numerical expressions with a COP as if it contained an attributive CBC.<sup>119</sup>

<sup>119</sup> Note that the attributive interpretation of expressions like **1 gi<sub>4</sub> kug-babbar-am<sub>3</sub>** is a possibility



I suggest, however, that in examples like (285) (and also in ex. [286]) the COP is attached to the numerical expression to mark it as focus. One piece of evidence in favour of my analysis is ex. (287) below.

(287) SAT 3, 2005 8 (Umma, 21st. c.) (P145205)

arad<sub>2</sub>      10   gin<sub>4</sub>      kug-še<sub>3</sub>-am<sub>3</sub>      in-na-an-šum<sub>2</sub>-ma  
 arad=∅      10   gin      kug=še=am-∅      i<sub>52</sub>-nn<sub>56</sub>-a<sub>57</sub>-n<sub>511</sub>-šum<sub>512</sub>-∅<sub>514</sub>-a<sub>515</sub>  
 slave=ABS   10   shekel   silver=TERM=COP-3NH.S   FIN-3SG-DAT-3SG.A-give-3SG.P=SUB  
 “(Dudurumu is to take an assertory oath for Aya-kala) that he gave the slave for 10 shekels of silver to him (= Aya-kala).”

Here the numerical expression is case-marked with the terminative (because of its function in the clause) and is followed by the COP. This construction cannot have an attributive interpretation because in attributive CBCs the PC never receives the case-marker that corresponds to the function of its S in the matrix clause. This is a defining feature of attributive CBCs. A good example is ex. (283) above in which the phrase **ud 7-am<sub>3</sub>** should be in the terminative case because of its function in the matrix clause, yet there is no terminative case-marker.

The question then arises: why should a numerical expression be under focus in clauses like ex. (285) or ex. (287)? The answer lies in the interpretation of numerical expressions under focus. In an article about the exhaustive meaning of identificational focus in Hungarian, É. Kiss presents evidence that numerical expressions in focus acquire an “exactly *n*” interpretation (2010, pp. 77-88). She explains the phenomenon like this:

“If focusing means the exhaustive identification of the alternative named by the focused expression from among the set of potential alternatives, then the focusing of an expression containing the numeral *n* will exclude the alternatives containing *n* + 1, *n* + 2, *n* + 3 etc.” (É. Kiss, 2010, p. 79)

This interpretation was already used in ex. (260) above, in which king Shulgi relied on the insides of a single sheep. It may also be observed in ex. (288) below, in which the issue is the exact price of the slave called Ur-Shara.

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that is not mentioned by Jagersma in his grammar, but I think that his description allows for it. I have found only one example of this type in his grammar (NATN 571 obv. 12 - rev. 1 = his. ex. [88a] on p. 603 = my ex. [292] below), which he translated as a cleft “It is two pounds of silver that I will pay”, but he does not discuss this type of example in his section “29.7. The copula in highlighting constructions”. Note also that Jagersma’s translation of NATN 571 is probably not entirely correct as the it-cleft translation cannot make a distinction between focused phrase and focus (proper), and here the focus proper is the number.

(288) AoF 36, p. 350-351, rev. 6-7 (Umma, 21st. c.) (P388144)

2 1/3 gi<sub>4</sub> kug-babbar i<sub>3</sub>-me-a-na-na,  
 2 1/3 gi<sub>4</sub> kugbabbar=∅<sub>S2 S12</sub> me-<sub>S14</sub>∅-<sub>S15</sub>'a=nanna  
 2 1/3 shekel silver=ABS FIN-COP-3NH.S-SUB=EXCEPT

sa<sub>10</sub>-am<sub>3</sub> ur-<sup>d</sup>šara<sub>2</sub>-ka nu-me-a,  
 sam uršarak=ak=∅<sub>S1</sub> nu-<sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S12</sub>me-<sub>S14</sub>∅-<sub>S15</sub>'a=ak  
 price PN=GEN=ABS NEG-FIN-COP-3NH.S-SUB=GEN

“(After Girini-isag had taken the assertory oath) that there was no other purchase price for Ur-Sara except for (exactly) TWO AND ONE-THIRD shekels of silver(, ....)”

The COP occurs in its independent form, because it is in a subordinate construction governed by the particle =/**nanna**/; see subsection 2.2 above, and for another attestation of the particle, see ex. [365] below). Ex. (288) indicates that the COP retains its verbal morphosyntactic properties in this construction; for another example of this phenomenon, see ex. (400) below.

Here are some more examples of numerical expression in focus:

(289) NG 20 7-8 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P128442)

10 gi<sub>4</sub> kug-babbar-am<sub>3</sub> šum<sub>2</sub>-ma-ab,  
 10 gi<sub>4</sub> kug-babbar=∅=am-∅<sub>S1</sub> šum-<sub>S4</sub>m-<sub>S7</sub>a-<sub>S12</sub>b  
 10 shekel silver=ABS=COP-3NH.S give-VEN-DAT-3NH.P  
 di ba-ra-a-da-ab-be<sub>2</sub>-en<sub>6</sub>  
 di=∅<sub>S1</sub> bara-<sub>S6</sub>y-<sub>S8</sub>da-<sub>S11</sub>b-<sub>S12</sub>e-<sub>S14</sub>en  
 case=ABS MOD-2SG-COM-3NH.P-speak.PF-1SG.A

“Give me TEN shekels of silver, and I promise not to sue you!”

(290) TCS 1, 216, 3-6 (Umma, 21st c.) (P145724)

ṇuruš 10-am<sub>3</sub>, ma<sub>2</sub> dug ba-al-e-de<sub>3</sub>,  
 ṇuruš 10=∅=am-∅ ma dug=ak=∅ bal-ed=e  
 man 10=ABS=COP-3NH.S boat pot=GEN=ABS unload=PF=DAT.NH  
 lu<sub>2</sub>-<sup>d</sup>šara<sub>2</sub>-ra he<sub>2</sub>-na-šum<sub>2</sub>-mu  
 lušarak=ra<sub>S1</sub> ha-<sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S6</sub>nn-<sub>S7</sub>a-<sub>S12</sub>šum-<sub>S14</sub>e  
 PN=DAT.H MOD-FIN-3SG-DAT-give-3SG.A

“May he give TEN labourers to Lu-Shara for unloading the boat of pots!”

(291) NRVN 1, 2 rev. 2-3 (Nippur, 21st. c.) (P122215)

108 še gur-am<sub>3</sub>, i<sub>3</sub>-na-ab-su-su  
 108 še gur=∅=am-∅<sub>S1</sub> i-<sub>S6</sub>nn-<sub>S7</sub>a-<sub>S11</sub>b-<sub>S12</sub>susu-<sub>S14</sub>e  
 108 grain unit=ABS=COP-3NH.S FIN-3SG-DAT-3NH.P-repay-PF-3SG.A

“He is to repay ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHT gurs of grain for him.”

(292) NATN 571 obv. 12-rev. 1 (Nippur, 21st. c.) (P121269)

2 ma-na kug-babbar-<sup>r</sup>am<sub>3</sub><sup>1</sup>, ga-la<sub>2</sub>  
 2 mana kugbabbar= $\emptyset$ =am- $\emptyset$  <sub>s1</sub>ga-<sub>s12</sub>la  
 2 pound silver=ABS=COP-3NH.S MOD-weigh  
 “(He said to him:) I will pay TWO pounds of silver!”

(293) ASJ 6, p. 127 no. 1 rev. 2-3 (= LEM 227) (?, 21st c.) (P102175)

3 guruš-am<sub>3</sub> <sup>r</sup>ma<sub>2</sub> he<sub>2</sub><sup>1</sup>-da-gid<sub>2</sub>  
 3 guruš= $\emptyset$ =am- $\emptyset$  ma= $\emptyset$  <sub>s1</sub>ha-<sub>s2</sub>i-<sub>s5</sub>b-<sub>s7</sub>da-<sub>s12</sub>gid-<sub>s14</sub> $\emptyset$   
 3 man=COP-3NH.S boat=ABS MOD-FIN-3NH-COM-haul-3NH.S  
 “May THREE workers haul the boat!”

(294) AAICAB 1/2, pl. 104, Ashm. 1937-061 3 (Drehem, 21st. c.) (P248672)

mu udu e<sub>2</sub>-gal 3-am<sub>3</sub>  
 mu udu egal=ak 3= $\emptyset$ =am- $\emptyset$   
 name sheep palace=GEN 3=ABS=COP-3NH.S  
 udu-na ba-an-dab<sub>5</sub>-ba-še<sub>3</sub>  
 udu=ani=<sup>r</sup>a <sub>s5</sub>ba-<sub>s10</sub>n-<sub>s12</sub>dab-<sub>s14</sub> $\emptyset$ -<sub>s15</sub><sup>r</sup>a=ak=še  
 sheep=3SG.POSS=L1 MID-L1.SYN-take-3NH.S-SUB=GEN=TERM  
 “Because THREE sheep of the palace were caught among his sheep, (Ur-nigar, ..., had to pay 9 ewes and 29 sheep in compensation).”

(295) TCS 1 121:10-12 (?, 21st c.) (P142180)

<sup>niš</sup>gana<sub>2</sub>-ur<sub>3</sub> 1-am<sub>3</sub>, ur-<sup>d</sup>kuš<sub>7</sub>-<sup>d</sup>ba-u<sub>2</sub>-ra, ha-na-ab-šum<sub>2</sub>-mu  
 ganaur 1= $\emptyset$ =am- $\emptyset$  urkusbauk=ra <sub>s1</sub>ha-<sub>s6</sub>nn-<sub>s7</sub>a-<sub>s11</sub>b-<sub>s12</sub>šum-<sub>s14</sub>e  
 harrow 1=ABS=COP-3NH.S PN=DAT.H MOD-3NH-DAT-3NH.P-give-3SG.A  
 “May he give ONE harrow to Ur-Kush-Bau!”

(296) The Law Collection of Ur-Namma 363-365<sup>120</sup> (§30) (Ur, 21st c.)

1 sila<sub>3</sub> mun-am<sub>3</sub> ka-ga<sub>14</sub>-ne<sub>2</sub> i<sub>3</sub>-sub<sub>6</sub>-be<sub>2</sub>  
 1 sila mun= $\emptyset$ =am- $\emptyset$  kag=ani=e <sub>s2</sub>i-<sub>s11</sub>b-<sub>s12</sub>sub-<sub>s13</sub>ed-<sub>s14</sub> $\emptyset$   
 1 unit salt=ABS=COP-3NH.S mouth=3SG.POSS=L3.NH FIN-3NH.L3-rub-PF-3NH.S  
 “(If a slave girl insults someone who is acting as her mistress), her mouth will be rubbed with ONE liter salt.”

In sum, I suggest that attaching the COP to a numerical expression has become a grammatical device to emphasize that what is meant is “exactly n” in Sumerian. In these examples the focus proper is as a rule the numeral. These constructions charac-

<sup>120</sup> Line numbering follows the edition of Civil (2011).

teristically occur embedded in real utterances, but not in lists where one would not expect that information packaging plays a role.

Finally note that it is not always possible to decide whether a constituent involving a numeral and a COP is to be interpreted attributively or focally. In particular one can only be certain about an attributive interpretation if the counted item has an enclitic possessive pronoun like in ex. (284) above. This has the consequence that many of the examples classified as attributive by Jagersma (2010, p. 707, exx. [170]–[174]) should in fact be interpreted as containing a numerical expression in focus, like for example ex. (297) below (= his ex. [170] on p. 707):

(297) TRU 2 rev. 3 (Drehem, 21st. c.) (P134766)

šag <sub>4</sub> -ba	itud	dirig	6-am <sub>3</sub>	i <sub>3</sub> -ηal <sub>2</sub>
šag=bi='a	itud	dirig-∅	6=∅=am-∅	s <sub>2</sub> i <sub>-</sub> s <sub>10</sub> n <sub>-</sub> s <sub>12</sub> ηal <sub>-</sub> s <sub>14</sub> ∅
heart=3NH.POSS=L1	month	exceed-TL	6=ABS=COP-3NH.S	FIN-L1.SYN-exist-3NH.S

“In this (basket) there are (tablets concerning) SIX intercalary months.”

### 5.3.5 Constituent Questions

It has been observed in a wide variety of languages that interrogative pronouns in constituent questions share the syntactic behavior of foci.<sup>121</sup> Interrogative pronouns are therefore assumed to be instances of focus or of a sub-type of it. A prime example of this type of language is Hungarian, in which identificational foci occupy a position immediately before the verb, and the interrogative pronoun occupies the same position, as the examples below demonstrate. Both the identificational focus and the question word are in complementary distribution with the preverbal modifier (= PV), as shown by exx. (299) and (300); and they are also in complementary distribution with each other, as shown by ex. (301), which is ungrammatical.

(298)

János	meg	hívta	Marit.
John.NOM	PV	invite.PT.3SG	Mary.ACC

“John invited Mary.”

(299)

János	hívta	meg	Marit.
John.NOM	invite.PT.3SG	PV	Mary.ACC

“It was John who invited Mary.”

<sup>121</sup> See, for example, Croft (2003, pp. 66–67), É. Kiss (1987, pp. 53–61; 1995, p. 23), Lipták (2002, Chapter 2, section 1.1: “Similarities between *wh*-items and focus”), Schwarz (2003, pp. 54–58), and Haida (2008, Chapter 7: “The Focusing of *Wh*-Words”).

(300)

Kit	hívott	meg	János.
who.ACC	invite.PT.3SG	PV	John.NOM

“Who did John invite?”

(301)

*Kit	János	hívott	meg?
who.ACC	John.NOM	invite.PT.3SG	PV

In Chapter 3 and in the previous subsections of this chapter it was shown that identificational focus in Sumerian is either associated with a structural position immediately before the verb or is expressed as a cleft construction. When the cleft construction is used, then the focal constituent usually occupies a sentence initial position and is followed by an enclitic COP. Given the observation made in the linguistic literature that clauses containing an identificational focus and constituent questions may exhibit the same syntactic pattern, it seems worth examining whether the syntax of interrogative pronouns in Sumerian may support our assumptions about the expression of focus in declarative clauses.

Note that in declarative clauses the focus function of a constituent occupying a position immediately before the verb may remain unnoticeable. This function was in all probability also associated with prosodic prominence, but we have no access to this level of the language. We cannot decide, therefore, on the basis of our written texts whether a constituent that stands immediately before the verb and is not followed by a COP functions as an identificational focus, unless the context helps us.<sup>122</sup> Like specificational CC clauses in Chapter 3, constituent questions, too, may help us in identifying the means by which focus is expressed in Sumerian; their syntax may be used as a diagnostic tool.

The two most frequent interrogative pronouns are /**aba**/ and /**ana**/ in Sumerian. The human interrogative pronoun has the stem /**aba**/, while the non-human has the stem /**ana**/, e.g., **a-ba** (**aba**= $\emptyset$  : who=ABS) = “who”, “whom”, **a-ba-a** (**aba**=**e** : who=ERG) “who”, **a-na** (**ana**= $\emptyset$  : what=ABS) “what”, **a-na-aš** (**ana**=**še** : what=TERM) literally “for what”, but used in the idiomatic meaning “why”.

Constituent questions in Sumerian follow two main patterns in terms of form and position of the interrogative pronouns (henceforth, IPs). An IP may occur: i) in 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 COP. When it occurs immediately before the verb, then it usually occurs alone.<sup>123</sup> First I will demonstrate the syntactic

<sup>122</sup> See for example exx. (252)–(253) above, where because of the negation, one may be almost certain that the NP immediately before the verb functions as an identificational focus.

<sup>123</sup> Attinger (2004), Jagersma (2010, pp. 228–229).

behavior of IPs in clauses with verbal predicates. This will be followed by a subsection on constituent questions containing a non-verbal predicate.

In exx. (302)-(305) the IP occupies sentence initial position and is followed by a 3rd ps. sg. enclitic COP.<sup>124</sup>

(302) MVN 11, 168 3-5 (Umma, 21st c.) (P116181)

a-na-aš-am<sub>3</sub>,                      dumu-dumu-e-ne-ke<sub>4</sub>-eš,  
 ana=še=am-ø                      dumudumu=ene=ak=eš  
 what=TERM=COP-3NH.S      DUMU~PL=PL=GEN=ADV  
 inim      sig-ηu<sub>10</sub>                      ib<sub>2</sub>-be<sub>2</sub>  
 inim      sig=ηu=ø                      i<sub>s2</sub>-<sub>s11</sub>b<sub>s12</sub>e<sub>s14</sub>e  
 word      low=1SG.POSS=ABS      FIN-3NH.P-speak.PF-3SG.A

“Why does he demean my reputation because of the children?”

(303) TCS 1, 121 rev. 2-5 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P142180)

a-na-aš-am<sub>3</sub>,                      ur-<sup>d</sup>lamma-ke<sub>4</sub>,      u<sub>2</sub>                      gu<sub>7</sub>-de<sub>3</sub>,  
 ana=še=am-ø                      urlammak=e      u=ø                      gu-ed=e  
 what=TERM=COP-3NH.S      PN=ERG                      grass=ABS      eat-PF=DAT.NH  
 nu-ub-še-ge  
<sub>s1</sub>nu-<sub>s11</sub>b-<sub>s12</sub>šeg-<sub>s14</sub>e  
 NEG-3NH.P-allow-3SG.A

“Why does Ur-Lamma not allow them (= the oxen) to graze?”

(304) (= [211] above) Letter from Shu-Suen to Sharrum-bani 24 (ETCSL 3.1.16)<sup>125</sup>

a-na-aš-am<sub>3</sub>                      ηa<sub>2</sub>-a-gin<sub>7</sub>-nam                      nu-ak  
 ana=še=am-ø                      ηa=gin=am                      <sub>s1</sub>nu-<sub>s11</sub>e-<sub>s12</sub>ak-<sub>s14</sub>ø  
 what=TERM=COP-3NH.S      1SG.PR=EQU=STM      NEG-2SG.A-do-3NH.P

“(That was how I instructed you.) Why did you not do as I (instructed you to do)?”

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

a-ba-am<sub>3</sub>                      ηi<sub>5</sub>ma<sub>2</sub>                      bi<sub>2</sub>-in-du<sub>8</sub>  
 aba=ø=am-ø                      ma=e                      <sub>s5</sub>b-<sub>s10</sub>i-<sub>s11</sub>n-<sub>s12</sub>du-<sub>s14</sub>ø  
 who=ABS=COP-3SG.S      boat=L3.NH      3NH-L3-3SG.A-caulk-3NH.P

“Who caulked the boat?”

In exx. (306)-(312) the IP occurs immediately before the verb, preceded by other constituents of the sentence (see also ex. [90] above).

<sup>124</sup> I will not use the cleft constructions in the translation of constituent questions, as these sound peculiar in English.

<sup>125</sup> See section 4.6 above on the function of the standard marker following the equative case-marker.

## (306) Shulgi D 14 (ETCSL 2.4.2.04)

za-gin<sub>7</sub>            a-ba            an-ga-kalag  
 za=gin            aba=∅            <sub>S2</sub>a-<sub>S3</sub>nga-<sub>S12</sub>kalag-<sub>S14</sub>∅  
 2PS.PR=EQU    who=ABS    FIN-COOR-strong-3SG.S  
 a-ba            an-ga-a-da-sa<sub>2</sub>  
 aba=∅            <sub>S2</sub>a-<sub>S3</sub>nga-<sub>S6</sub>e-<sub>S8</sub>da-<sub>S12</sub>sa-<sub>S14</sub>∅  
 who=ABS    FIN-COOR-2SG-COM-equal-3SG.S  
 “Who is as mighty as you, and who rivals you?”

## (307) Shulgi G 8 (ETCSL 2.4.2.07)

<sup>d</sup>nin-lil<sub>2</sub>-da    a-ba            a<sub>2</sub>            mu-da-an-an<sub>2</sub>  
 enlil=da            aba=e            a=∅            <sub>S4</sub>mu-<sub>S6</sub>nn-<sub>S8</sub>da-<sub>S11</sub>n-<sub>S12</sub>an-<sub>S14</sub>∅  
 DN=COM    aba=ERG    arm=ABS    VEN-3SG-COM-3SG.A-measure-3NH.P  
 a-ba-            ga-an-da-sa<sub>2</sub>  
 aba=∅            <sub>S2</sub>a-<sub>S3</sub>nga-<sub>S6</sub>nn-<sub>S8</sub>da-<sub>S12</sub>sa-<sub>S14</sub>∅  
 who=ABS    FIN-COOR-3SG-COM-equal-3SG.S  
 “Who ever instructed Enlil, who ever rivalled him?”

## (308) The Kesh Temple Hymn 20 (= 43, 57, 73, 86, 102, 126) (ETCSL 4.80.2)

nin-bi            <sup>d</sup>nin-tur<sub>5</sub>-gin<sub>7</sub>    rib-ba-ra  
 nin=bi            nintur=gin    rib-’a=ra  
 lady=3NH.POSS    DN=EQU    huge-PT=L2.H  
 a-ba-a            igi            mu-ni-in-du<sub>8</sub>  
 aba=e            igi=∅            <sub>S4</sub>mu-<sub>S6</sub>nn-<sub>S10</sub>i-<sub>S11</sub>n-<sub>S12</sub>du-<sub>S14</sub>∅  
 who=ERG    eye=ABS    VEN-3SG-L2-3SG.A-open-3NH.P  
 “Who has ever seen anyone as great as its lady, Nintur?”

## (309) Ur-Namma D, version of unknown provenance 2 (ETCSL 2.4.1.4)

id<sub>2</sub>            a-ba-a            mu-un-ba-al-e  
 id=∅            aba=e            <sub>S4</sub>mu-<sub>S10</sub>n-<sub>S12</sub>bal-<sub>S14</sub>e  
 canal=ABS    who=ERG    VEN-L1.SYN-dig-3SG.A  
 “Who will dig the canal there?”

## (310) Enki and Ninmah 130 (ETCSL 1.1.2)

inim    ka-zu                            e<sub>3</sub>-a            a-ba-a            i<sub>3</sub>-kur<sub>2</sub>-re  
 inim    ka=zu=ta                        e-’a=∅            aba=e            <sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S12</sub>kur-<sub>S14</sub>e  
 word    mouth=2SG.POSS=ABL    leave-PT=ABS    who=ERG    FIN-change-3SG.A  
 “Who could change the words that left your mouth?”

(311) Gudea Cyl. A 9:4 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232300)

ne<sub>26</sub>                      a-na                      mu-u<sub>3</sub>-da-zu  
 ne=e                      ana=∅                      <sub>s4</sub>mu-<sub>s6</sub>e-<sub>s8</sub>da-<sub>s11</sub>y-<sub>s12</sub>zu-<sub>s14</sub>∅  
 1SG.PR=ERG    what=ABS    VEN-2SG-COM-1SG.A-know-3NH.P  
 “As for me, what can I know about (your intention)?”<sup>126</sup>

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

en                      unug<sup>ki</sup>-ga                      en                      kul-aba<sup>ki</sup>-ra                      a-na                      ga-an-na-ab-be<sub>2</sub>  
 en                      unug=ak                      en                      kulaba=ak=ra                      ana=∅                      <sub>s1</sub>ga-<sub>s6</sub>nn-<sub>s7</sub>a-<sub>s11</sub>b-<sub>s12</sub>e  
 lord    GN                      lord    GN=GEN=DAT.H                      what=ABS                      MOD-3SG-DAT-3NH.P-speak.PF  
 “What shall I say to the lord of Unug, the lord of Kulaba?”

In the first sentence of ex. (307) above the predicate is a so called compound verb consisting of the NP (**a**<sub>2</sub> “arm”) and the verb (**an**<sub>2</sub> “to measure”); its meaning is “to instruct”. Compound verbs in Sumerian are the combination of a verb and a NP which is non-referential and forms a semantic unit with the verb.<sup>127</sup> The nominal and the verbal parts of compound verbs behave as a single word. Consequently, the IP always occupies a position immediately before the nominal part of the compound verb. Ex. (308) also contains a compound verb, consisting of **igi** (“eye”) and **du**<sub>8</sub> (“open”), meaning “to see”. The IP here, too, occupies a position immediately before the nominal part of the compound verb.

In addition to these two main patterns one may find minor patterns in which the IP occupies a different position. IPs that occur with the COP may also occupy a position immediately before the verb as in exx. (313)-(316) below.<sup>128</sup>

<sup>126</sup> Here the pronoun in S<sub>6</sub> agrees with the possessor of the constituent in the comitative (occurring in the previous lines, not shown here), an example of external possession in Sumerian; see Zólyomi (1999, p. 138 and 2005, p. 185, n. 23).

<sup>127</sup> Functionally these constructions compensate for the lack of Sumerian derivational affixes deriving verbs from nouns. See Attinger (2004), who uses the position of the IP as a diagnostic tool to recognize compound verbs.

<sup>128</sup> Fruzsina Csorba wrote her BA thesis (Csorba, 2012) on the syntax of constituent questions in Sumerian. Her database was based on literary texts from the first half of the 2nd millennium BC (basically on the corpus of ETCSL), on royal inscriptions, and on administrative letters from the end of the 3rd millennium BC. She collected 248 occurrences of IPs without a COP. Among 248 occurrences, in 225 (= 90,73 %) the IP occurs immediately before the verb, in 23 (= 9,27%) it occurs in another position, mostly sentence initial. She collected 106 occurrences of IPs with a COP. Among 106 occurrences, in 83 (= 78,30%) the IP occurs in sentence initial position, in 22 (= 20,75%) immediately before the verb, and only in 1 (= 0,95%) in another position. As a number of these occurrences are difficult to interpret, these numbers warrant caution, yet they indicate a tendency.



## (313) Dumuzid-Inana C 1 (ETCSL 4.08.03)

nin <sub>9</sub> -ηu <sub>10</sub>	e <sub>2</sub> -a	a-na-am <sub>3</sub>	mu-e-[ak]
nin=ηu=∅	e='a	ana=∅=am-∅	<sub>S4</sub> mu- <sub>S11</sub> e- <sub>S12</sub> ak- <sub>S14</sub> ∅
sister=1SG.POSS=ABS	house=L1	what=ABS=COP-3NH.S	VEN-2SG.A-do-3NH.P

“My sister, what have you been doing in the house?”

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

amar-e	a-ba-am <sub>3</sub>	ba-an-tum <sub>2</sub>
amar=e=∅	aba=∅=am-∅	<sub>S5</sub> ba- <sub>S11</sub> n- <sub>S12</sub> tum- <sub>S14</sub> ∅
calf=DEM=ABS	who=ABS=COP-3SG.S	MID-3SG.A-lead-3NH.P

“Who leads this calf away?”

## (315) Proverbs collection 3 Segment A 51 (6.1.03)

<sup>d</sup> en-lil <sub>2</sub> -le	a-na-am <sub>3</sub>	in-ak
enlil=e	ana=∅=am-∅	<sub>S2</sub> i- <sub>S11</sub> n- <sub>S12</sub> ak- <sub>S14</sub> ∅
DN=ERG	what=ABS=COP-3NH.S	FIN-3SG.A-do-3NH.P

“What did Enlil do?”

## (316) Proverbs collection 3 Segment A 182 (6.1.03)

ka	an-tuku-da
ka=∅	<sub>S2</sub> a- <sub>S11</sub> n- <sub>S12</sub> tuku- <sub>S14</sub> ∅- <sub>S15</sub> 'a=da
mouth=ABS	FIN-3SG.A-have-3NH.P-SUB=COM
a-ba-am <sub>3</sub>	mu-da-ab-sa <sub>2</sub> -e
aba=∅=am-∅	<sub>S4</sub> mu- <sub>S6</sub> nn- <sub>S8</sub> da- <sub>S11</sub> b- <sub>S12</sub> sa- <sub>S14</sub> e
who=ABS=COP-3SG.S	VEN-3SG.COM-3NH.P-equal-3SG.A

“Who can rival a garrulous man?”

In ex. (317) the IP occurs without a COP, although it is in sentence initial position.

## (317) Shulgi D 15 (= 37, 62) (ETCSL 2.4.2.04)

a-ba	za-gin <sub>7</sub>	šag <sub>4</sub> -ta	ηeštug <sub>2</sub> -ga
aba=ra	za=gin	šag=ta	ġeštug='a
who=L3.H	2SG.PR=EQU	heart=ABL	ear=L1
šu	daŋal	mu-ni-in-dug <sub>4</sub>	
šu	daŋal-∅=∅	<sub>S4</sub> mu- <sub>S10</sub> ni- <sub>S11</sub> n- <sub>S12</sub> dug- <sub>S14</sub> ∅	
hand	wide-TL=ABS	VEN-L1-3SG.L3-speak-3NH.S	

“Who is there who from birth is as richly endowed with understanding as you?”

In ex. (318) below the IP is neither in sentence initial position nor in a position immediately before the verb.

(318) Shulgi C 110-111 (ETCSL 2.4.2.04)

šag<sub>4</sub>-ge      dug<sub>4</sub>-ga      eme-a      ηa<sub>2</sub>-ra-a  
 šag=e      dug='a      eme='a      ηar-'a=ak  
 heart=ERG      say=PT      tongue=L2.NH      put-PT=GEN  
 a-ba-a      ηe<sub>26</sub>-gin<sub>7</sub>      bur<sub>2</sub>-bur<sub>2</sub>-bi      mu-zu  
 aba=a      ηe=gin      burbur-ø=bi=ø      <sub>S4</sub>mu-<sub>S11</sub>n-<sub>S12</sub>zu-<sub>S14</sub>ø  
 who=ERG      1SG.PR=EQU      solve~PL-TL=3NH.POSS=ABS      VEN-3SG.A-know-3NH.P  
 “Who like me is able to interpret what is spoken in the heart or is articulated on the tongue?”

Constituent questions containing a non-verbal predicate exhibit syntactic patterns similar to those of sentences with verbal predicates. Nevertheless, their classification must be slightly different due to their structure. Table 5.4 below shows the four possible types of constituent questions with a non-verbal predicate.

**Tab. 5.4:** Patterns of constituent questions with a non-verbal predicate

POSITION	FUNCTION OF IP	
	S	PC
CLAUSE INITIAL WITH A COP	ia	ib
CLAUSE FINAL WITH A COP	iia	iib

Exx. (319)-(321) below belong to type iib): the IP functions as the PC and is in a position next to the COP and preceded by S. Contrary to expectation (cf. subsection 2.3.4 above), the COP is not dropped in exx. (320) and (321), although the S is 3rd ps. sg. in both of them. The syntactic function of the IP is especially clear in ex. (319), in which the subject is 1st ps. sg. and the COP agrees in person and number with it.

(319) Inana B 92 (ETCSL 4.07.2)

ki      zi-šag<sub>4</sub>-ηal<sub>2</sub>-la-ka      ηe<sub>26</sub>-e      a-na-me-en  
 ki      zišagηal=ak='a      <sub>S</sub>[ηe=ø]      <sub>PC</sub>[ana=ø]=me=en  
 place      encouragement=GEN=L1      <sub>S</sub>[1SG.PR=ABS]      <sub>PC</sub>[what=ABS]=COP-1SG.S  
 “In the place of divine encouragement, what am I?”

Since in exx. (320) and (321) both constituents are in the 3rd ps. sg., it may seem difficult to determine which of them functions as the S. What helps in the identification of the S is the case-marker of the IP: the S of a CC is always in the absolutive case, while its PC may be in another case. In ex. (320) the IP is in the genitive case, and it is in the equative case in ex. (321). Consequently, in both examples, the IP must function as the PC.

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

amar-e                      a-ba-kam  
<sub>S</sub>[amar=e=∅]              <sub>PC</sub>[aba=ak=am-∅]  
<sub>S</sub>[calf=DEM=ABS]      <sub>PC</sub>[who=GEN=COP-3SG.S]  
 “Whom does this calf belong to?”

(321) Shulgi B 327 (ETCSL 2.4.2.02)

nin<sub>2</sub>-lul              nig<sub>2</sub>-gen<sub>6</sub>-na      nu-me-a                      sar-re-bi  
<sub>S</sub><sup>S</sup>POSS [ninlul      ningena      <sub>S1</sub>nu-<sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S12</sub>me-<sub>S14</sub>∅-<sub>S15</sub>'a=ak]      <sub>S</sub>[sar-ed=bi=∅]  
<sub>S</sub><sup>S</sup>POSS [lie      truth=∅      NEG-FIN-COP-3NH.S-SUB=GEN]      <sub>S</sub>[write-PF=3NH.POSS=ABS]  
 a-na-gin<sub>7</sub>-nam  
<sub>PC</sub>[ana=gin=am-∅]  
<sub>PC</sub>[what=EQU=COP-3NH.S]  
 “What is the use of writing lies without truth?”

A possible explanation for the use of the COP in exx. (320) and (321) is connected with a gap in the typology of CCs given in Chapter 3 above. In Chapter 3 no structural type of CCs was connected with clauses in which the PC functioned as an identificational focus.

Focus has a particular structural position before the COP in CCs, and is most probably also marked with prosodic prominence. In our evidence the prosodic prominence of a constituent may normally be hypothesized only when it goes together with a change in word order: the S occupies a position immediately before the COP in type (D) CCs, which is a marked word order. The focalization of a PC, however, does not result in a change in a word order; it is probably marked only with prosodic prominence. As the PC already occupies a position before the COP, there is no motivation for a change in word order.

The presence of the COP in exx. (320) and (321) must be the effect of the prosodic prominence of the IP functioning as the PC. In other words, copula dropping was conditioned not only by the person and number of the S in interrogative clauses as originally assumed by Jagersma (2010, p. 717), but also by the presence of a focal constituent: the COP may not be dropped if the constituent next to it is focal and therefore carries prosodic prominence.

Exx. (322)-(327) below belong to type ib). The syntactic function of the clause initial IP with the COP is the PC in the content clause. Ex. (322), for example, could, in theory, be converted to a type iib) clause such as \*<sub>S</sub>[ze=∅] <sub>PC</sub>[aba=∅]=me-en.

(322) Enlil and Nam-zid-tara 10-11 (ETCSL 5.7.1)

a-ba-am<sub>3</sub>                      za-e-me-en  
 aba=∅=am-∅              <sub>S</sub>[ze=∅]=me-en  
 who=ABS=COP-3SG.S      <sub>S</sub>[2SG.PR=ABS]=COP-2SG.S  
 “Who are you?”

(323) Inana's descent to the netherworld 240 (ETCSL 1.4.1)

a-ba-am <sub>3</sub>	za-e-me-en-ze <sub>2</sub> -en
aba=∅=am-∅	<sub>s</sub> [ze=∅]=me-enzen
who=ABS=COP-3SG.S	<sub>s</sub> [2SG.PR=ABS]=COP-2PL.S

“Who are you (pl.)?”

(324) Enki and Ninhursaga 201 (ETCSL 1.1.1)

a-na-am <sub>3</sub>	ne-e
ana=∅=am-∅	<sub>s</sub> [ne=∅]
what=ABS=COP-3NH.S	<sub>s</sub> [this=ABS]

“What is this?”

(325) Proverbs collection 23, Segment B 19 (ETCSL 6.1.23)

a-ba-am <sub>3</sub>	e-ne
aba=∅=am-∅	<sub>s</sub> [ene=∅]
who=ABS=COP-3SG.S	<sub>s</sub> [3SG.PR=ABS]

“Who is he?”

(326) Enki and Ninhursaga 224 (ETCSL 1.1.1)

a-na-am <sub>3</sub>	nin <sub>2</sub> -ba-ηu <sub>10</sub>
ana=∅=am-∅	<sub>s</sub> [ninba=ηu=∅]
what=ABS=COP-3NH.S	<sub>s</sub> [reward=1SG.POSS=ABS]

“(If I bring Ninhursaga to you,) what will be my reward?”

(327) CBS 6894 rev. 20 (= Inana's descent to the netherworld 395 [ETCSL 1.4.1])  
(P264321)

a-na-am <sub>3</sub>	nin <sub>2</sub> -ba-ηu <sub>10</sub> -um
ana=∅=am-∅	<sub>s</sub> [ninba=ηu=∅]=am-∅
what=ABS=COP-3NH.S	<sub>s</sub> [reward=1SG.POSS=ABS]=COP-3SG.S

“(If I show you where your man is,) what will be my reward?”

Exx. (319)-(321) and exx. (322)-(327) represent the two kinds of constructions in which an IP functioning as a PC may be expressed in non-verbal clauses. The former group uses pattern iib), while the latter group uses pattern ib). The two groups of examples differ in terms of the grammatical device that marks the focality of the IP. In exx. (319)-(321) focality is marked through the syntactic position of the IP next to the COP, while in exx. (322)-(327) it is marked through a cleft-like construction. Note that the second device, at least in its origin, also uses the syntactic position to signal focality, since the IP is also in a position next to the COP in the cleft-like construction.

There is an interesting problem of how to analyze the construction of exx. (322)-(327). One may assign two structural analyses, for example, to ex. (322):

(328)

a)  $_S[aba]=\emptyset=am-\emptyset$   $_S[ze=\emptyset]$   $_{PC}[\emptyset]=me-en$ b)  $_{PC}[aba]=\emptyset=am-\emptyset$   $_S[ze=\emptyset]=me-en$ 

(328a) analyzes the construction of ex. (322) as biclausal, postulating a structural position immediately before the COP which is left empty in this construction. (328b) analyzes the construction of ex. (322) as monoclausal, assuming that the COP after the IP functions as a focus-marker. In the former analysis the focality of the IP is marked by its position in the first CC of the construction, while in the latter analysis the focality is marked by morphological means.

In exx. (322)-(326) the constituent functioning as the S has no prosodic prominence, which is also reflected in the form of exx. (324)-(326), in which the S is not followed by the COP. Exx. (320)-(321) and exx. (324)-(326) can thus be contrasted with each other in terms of the presence or absence of prosodic prominence on the last constituent, resulting in the presence or absence of the COP.

Ex. (327) contains the same expression as ex. (326), but in ex. (327) the COP is not dropped. This variation suggests that the conditions on copula dropping might have varied according to period and/or place.

Exx. (329) and (330) below belong to type ia). The syntactic function of the clause initial IP with the COP is the S in the content clause.

(329) (= ex. [45] above) Enlil and Nam-zid-tara 23-24 (ETCSL 5.7.1)

a-ba-am<sub>3</sub>                      mu-zu,aba= $\emptyset$ =am- $\emptyset$                        $_{PC}[mu=zu=\emptyset]$ who=ABS=COP-3SG.S                       $_{PC}[name=2SG.POSS=ABS]$ nam-zid-tar-ra                      mu-gu<sub>10</sub>-um $_S[namzid tara=\emptyset]$                        $_{PC}[mu=\eta u=\emptyset]=am-\emptyset$  $_S[PN=ABS]$                        $_{PC}[name=1SG.POSS=ABS]=COP-3NH.S$ 

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

(330) Sumerian King List 284 (ETCSL 2.1.1)

a-ba- $\text{r}am_3$                        $\text{r}lugal$ aba= $\emptyset$ =am- $\emptyset$                        $_{PC}[lugal=\emptyset]$ who=ABS=COP-3SG.S                       $_{PC}[king=ABS]$ 

“Who was the king?”

One may again assign two structural analyses, for example, to ex. (329):

(331)

a)  $_S[aba]=\emptyset=am-\emptyset$   $_S[\emptyset]$   $_{PC}[mu=zu=\emptyset]$ b)  $_S[aba]=\emptyset=am-\emptyset$   $_{PC}[mu=zu=\emptyset]$

Exx. (329) and (330) are structurally similar to ex. (332) (= [104], repeated here for convenience), which was analyzed above as an example of a paratactic cleft. The COP occurs after the PC in ex. (332) because it is a declarative clauses and its S is in the 2nd ps. sg. The analysis of ex. (332) is just as ambiguous as that of exx. (329) and (330): they may be analyzed either as biclausal or monoclausal. In the latter case the COP must be considered to function as a morphological marker of focus.

(332) Enmerkar and En-suhgir-ana 276 (ETCSL 1.8.2.4)

**type (Di)**

za-e-me-en

<sub>S</sub>[ze=ø]=me-en

<sub>S</sub>[2SG.PR=ABS]=COP-2SG.S

**type (Aii)**

en ki an<sub>2</sub> d<sup>i</sup>inana-me-en

<sub>PC</sub>[en ki=ø an-ø inanak=ak=ø]=me-en

<sub>PC</sub>[lord place=ABS measure-TL DN=GEN=ABS]=COP-2SG.S

“It is you who is the lord beloved by the goddess Inana.”

In theory, ex. (329) could be converted to a type iia) clause such as \*<sub>PC</sub>[**mu=zu=ø**] <sub>S</sub>[**aba=ø**]=**am-ø**, assuming that the COP may not be dropped because of the prosodic prominence on the IP in focal position. However, no examples of type iia) constituent questions are attested, as far as I know. Their absence may only be accidental though, given the small number of examples we have to rely on.<sup>129</sup>

There exist two groups of examples that seemingly contradict the generalizations made above. In exx. (333)–(337) below the IP functioning as the S occupies sentence initial position. One would expect, for example, instead of ex. (333) either a) \***aba=ø=am-ø** <sub>PC</sub>[šara=**gin**<sub>7</sub>] or b) \*<sub>PC</sub>[šara=**gin**<sub>7</sub>] <sub>S</sub>[**aba=ø**]=**am-ø**. In ex. (306) above **za=gin aba=ø** is followed by a verbal predicate; thus, this example corresponds to b). In ex. (317) above we also find the “incorrect form” of exx. (333)–(337). It is likely that the “incorrect” forms are the result of the influence of Akkadian, as they seem to be a mirror translation of the Akkadian phrase **mannum ki PN/DN**(who.NOM like) “who is like PN/DN?”, in which the interrogative pronoun precedes the noun used as the basis of comparison.

<sup>129</sup> Note, however, that Schwarz (2003, p. 57, pp. 91-92) describes a very similar asymmetry in Kikuyu. In this language, subject questions using a construction corresponding to Sumerian ii) and iia) are missing; only subject questions using a construction corresponding to i) and ia) can be used. In Kikuyu the lack of subject questions using the former construction characterize all constituent questions, verbal and non-verbal alike. In Sumerian, however, there are numerous examples of subject questions using pattern ii), see, for example, exx. (306) and (307) above.

(333) Aleppo 469 obv. 6' (Umma, 21st c.) (P100801)

a-ba-<sup>d</sup>šara<sub>2</sub>-gin<sub>7</sub>

<sub>s</sub>[aba=Ø] <sub>pc</sub>[šara=gin]

<sub>s</sub>[who=ABS] <sub>pc</sub>[DN=EQU]

“Who-is-like-the-god-Shara?”

(334) Ontario 2, 436 rev. 3 (Umma, 21st c.) (P209643)

a-ba-diŋir-ŋu<sub>10</sub>-gin<sub>7</sub>

<sub>s</sub>[aba=Ø] <sub>pc</sub>[diŋir=ŋu=gin]

<sub>s</sub>[who=ABS] <sub>pc</sub>[god=1 SG.POSS=EQU]

“Who-is-like-my-personal-god?”

(335) RTC 290 obv. 7 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P128443)

a-ba-ne-gin<sub>7</sub>

<sub>s</sub>[aba=Ø] <sub>pc</sub>[ne=gin]

<sub>s</sub>[who=ABS] <sub>pc</sub>[this=EQU]

“Who-is-like-this (person)?”

(336) TCS 1, 143 8 (= MVN 6, 429) (Lagash, 21st c.) (P114829)

a-ba                      šeš-ŋu<sub>10</sub>-gi<sub>2</sub>

<sub>s</sub>[aba=Ø]                      <sub>pc</sub>[šeš=ŋu=gin]

<sub>s</sub>[who=ABS]                      <sub>pc</sub>[brother=1 SG.POSS=EQU]

“Who is like my brother?”

(337) The Exploits of Ninurta 661 (ETCSL 1.6.2)

a-ba                      za-a-gin<sub>7</sub>

<sub>s</sub>[aba=Ø]                      <sub>pc</sub>[za=gin]

<sub>s</sub>[who=ABS]                      <sub>pc</sub>[2 SG.PR=EQU]

“Who is like you, (Ninurta, lord, son of Enlil, hero)?”

In ex. (338a) below, the IP stands in front of the PC without a COP. One would expect either a) <sub>s</sub>[aba=Ø]=am-Ø utu=gin <sub>pc</sub>[sag=Ø=Ø] or b) utu=gin <sub>pc</sub>[sag=Ø=Ø] <sub>s</sub>[aba=Ø]=am-Ø. It is likely, however, that in these types of examples the predicate is in fact not non-verbal, but verbal: the writing **a-ba-sag<sub>9</sub>** is probably a Sandhi writing for **aba=Ø i-sag-Ø** as shown in (338b).<sup>130</sup> In this case the form will become “correct” and the example will follow pattern ii) of constituent questions with a verbal predi-

<sup>130</sup> See Jagersma (2010, p. 204, ex. 334) for a similar interpretation of this type of personal names. See also exx. (306) and (307) above, in which the second clause contains an instance of **a-ba** in Sandhi writing with the verbal prefix-chain.

cate, in which the IP is immediately before the verbal form without an accompanying COP.

(338a) DP 138 4:15 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P220788)

<sup>m</sup>utu-gin<sub>7</sub>-a-ba-sag<sub>9</sub>  
 utu=gin<sub>5</sub>[aba=∅]<sub>pc</sub>[sag-∅=∅]  
 DN=EQU<sub>5</sub>[who=ABS]<sub>pc</sub>[kind-TL=ABS]  
 “Who-is-as-kind-as-the-god-Utu?”

(338b) DP 138 4:15 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P220788)

<sup>m</sup>utu-gin<sub>7</sub>-a-ba-sag<sub>9</sub>  
 utu=gin<sub>5</sub>[aba=∅]<sub>s2</sub>i<sub>s12</sub>sag<sub>s14</sub>∅  
 DN=EQU<sub>5</sub>[who=ABS] FIN-fine-3SG.S  
 “Who-is-as-kind-as-the-god-Utu?”

Other examples of the same type are exx. (339)-(341) below.

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

<sup>d</sup>ba-u<sub>2</sub>-gin<sub>7</sub>-a-ba-sag<sub>9</sub>  
 bau=gin<sub>5</sub>[aba=∅]<sub>s2</sub>i<sub>s12</sub>sag<sub>s14</sub>∅  
 DN=EQU<sub>5</sub>[who=ABS] FIN-fine-3SG.S  
 “Who-is-as-kind-as-the-goddess-Bau?”

(340) DP 122 1:16 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P220762)

nin-ra-a-na-gu-lu<sub>5</sub>  
 nin=ra<sub>5</sub>[ana=∅]<sub>s2</sub>i<sub>s6</sub>nn<sub>s10</sub>∅<sub>s12</sub>gulud<sub>s14</sub>∅  
 lady=L2.H<sub>5</sub>[what=ABS] FIN-3SG-L2.SYN-clever-3NH.S  
 “What-is-more-ingenuous-than-the-Lady?”

(341) CT 50, 34 2:13 (Lagash, 24th c.) (P221671)

iri-na-a-na-gu-lu<sub>5</sub>  
 iri=ani=<sup>a</sup>a<sub>5</sub>[ana=∅]<sub>s2</sub>i<sub>s5</sub>b<sub>s10</sub>∅<sub>s12</sub>gulud<sub>s14</sub>∅  
 city=3SG.POSS=L2.NH<sub>5</sub>[what=ABS] FIN-3NH-L2.SYN-clever-3NH.S  
 “What-is-more-ingenuos-than-his-city?”

In conclusion, it can be stated that the analysis of constituent questions provides additional support to the assumption that the structural position immediately before the verb is associated with identificational focus in Sumerian. In one of the main syntactic patterns used in constituent questions, the interrogative pronoun occupies a position immediately before the verb, which indicates that a similar position must have existed also in declarative sentences.



The comparison of different types of constituent questions with non-verbal predicates furthermore suggests that in declarative CCs the focality of the PC, the constituent whose normal position is immediately before the COP, may only be marked by additional prosodic prominence. CCs in which the PC functions as an identificational focus, as a rule, remain unnoticeable for us since the writing system used for recording Sumerian does not reflect prosodic prominence.

### 5.3.6 Summary and Conclusions

As Chapter 3 and the previous subsections demonstrated, identificational focus in Sumerian is either associated with a structural position immediately before the verb or is expressed with a cleft construction. Between the two grammatical devices the former may be considered primary, since focus is marked by putting the S in a position immediately before the verbal COP also in the type (Di) CC that functions as the matrix clause of the cleft construction.

In languages with a morphological focus marker, the focus marker is often found to be cognate with a COP, and the source of such markers is usually a cleft construction. The evidence presented in this chapter may help us to consider whether Sumerian specificational CBCs have undergone a similar development resulting in the COP's grammaticalization into a focus marker.

Heine (2003, p. 579) distinguishes four interrelated mechanisms that play role in grammaticalization:

1. Desemanticization or “bleaching”
2. Extension, use in new contexts
3. Decategorialization, loss in morphosyntactic properties characteristic of the source forms
4. Erosion or “phonetic reduction”

In what follows I will discuss the Sumerian evidence collected and partly discussed in subsections 5.3.1-5.3.5. in connection with these four mechanisms.

In the original cleft construction, the specificational CBC, the matrix clause was a specificational, type (Di) CC, and consequently the constituent next to the COP was the S. Accordingly, this constituent was in the absolutive case. The evidence presented above shows that there exist numerous examples in which the case-marker of the focal constituent is clearly *not* the absolutive. These constituents are case-marked according to their function in the content clause.

The case-marking of the focal constituents thus suggests that the original COP has undergone a semantic shift. It functions no longer as the verbal COP of a CC in these constructions, but rather as a focus marker. This conclusion is also supported by the data on word order in the cleft constructions. The evidence collected above shows that the position of focal constituents followed by the COP is no longer restricted to a sentence initial position. The same phenomenon could be observed among con-

stituent questions, where the position of an interrogative pronoun followed by a COP and immediately before the verbal form has also become possible, cf. exx. (313)-(316) above. The use of the focal constituent followed by the COP has thus become extended. It can be used in a new context, in a position immediately before the verbal form, or in other non-sentence initial positions, where it could not be used previously. It is also regularly used with numerical expressions as a grammatical device to emphasize that what is meant is “exactly *n*”.

These findings also have relevance to the issue of whether to analyze the Sumerian cleft construction as biclausal or monoclausal, which was raised in the beginning of section 5.3. If the COP no longer functions as a verbal COP but rather as a focus marker, then the construction may no longer be considered biclausal.

The constructions in which a focal constituent followed by the COP occurs immediately before the verbal form are hypercharacterized forms with regard to focality.<sup>131</sup> Both the COP functioning as a focus marker and the position immediately before the verbal form, accompanied probably with prosodic prominence, fulfill the same function in these constructions.

The relatively frequent occurrence of these hypercharacterized forms in the corpus suggests a path along which the COP grammaticalized into a focus marker: the COP may have occurred first as an optional morphological means of reinforcing the focus function of the constituent immediately before the finite verb. Clauses that consist solely of a focal constituent followed by a COP and a finite verb may have played an important role in this process; this clause type provided a morphosyntactic context in which the reinterpretation of the COP’s function could easily take place.

The use of the hypercharacterized forms also indicates that Sumerian has started to change from syntactic focus marking towards morphological focus marking.

Nevertheless, the COP functioning as a focus marker appears to have retained its morphosyntactic properties as a verbal copula. It shows as a rule agreement with the focal constituent; see, for example, exx. (235) and (242) above. I have found only a single example in which the COP functioning as a focus marker shows no agreement with a focalized 1st ps. sg. pronoun, see ex. (277) above. Also, the COP functioning as focus marker occurs in its independent form when used in a subordinate context in ex. (288) above.

As regards phonetic reduction, we have no evidence that it occurred to the COP functioning as a focus marker. Note, however, that the conservative character of cuneiform writing would probably hide any phonetic change in the form of the COP anyway.

Heine (2003, p. 579) describes the evolution of linguistic expressions enabled by the mechanisms discussed above in the form of a three-stage model, the overlap model:

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<sup>131</sup> See Lehmann (2005) on hypercharacterization.

1. There is a linguistic expression A that is recruited for grammaticalization.
2. This expression acquires a second use pattern, B, with the effect that there is ambiguity between A and B.
3. Finally, A is lost, that is, there is now only B.”

The Sumerian evidence suggests that the grammaticalization of the COP into a focus marker in specificational CBCs only reached the second stage of Heine’s model. The Sumerian COP remains to be used as a verbal COP in CCs and in attributive CBCs. The Sumerian system thus corresponds to what Heine and Reh (1984: 181) call a “weakly grammaticalized system” and represents an intermediate stage in the grammaticalization of the COP into a true focus particle.

It has to be pointed out that morphological focus marking did not replace the syntactic strategy, the latter continued to be used, and both grammatical devices played a role in the language.

The question also arises as to what might have been the functional motivation for Sumerian to move towards a morphological focus marking system, replacing or rather supplementing an already existing syntactic device. The usual suspect is again Akkadian, in which identificational focus was marked morphologically by the enclitic *=/ma/*; see exx. (96) and (240) above.<sup>132</sup> Cohen (2000, pp. 214-217) argues that the use of *=/ma/* as the marker of identificational focus is the vestige of an earlier cleft construction.<sup>133</sup> In Cohen’s view the function of *=/ma/* in the original construction was a “substantivizing converter” which corresponds to a relativizer in Harris and Campbell’s (1995, p. 167) reconstruction of the development in which a cleft construction grammaticalizes into a “highlighting” construction. On a synchronic level the clause that corresponds to the relative clause of the English it-cleft is not subordinate in the Akkadian construction, just as in the Sumerian one. In Akkadian this may easily be explained in terms of the development by which the original relativizer, the very marker of subordination, grammaticalized into a focus marker.

The use of the COP as a morphological marker of focus might have been thus the result of convergence between the two languages, helping to achieve a morpheme-per-morpheme intertranslatability. Consider again the bilingual ex. (96) from subsection 3.3.4 and ex. (240) from subsection 5.3.3 above. It is easy to see that the Sumerian and Akkadian versions correspond to each other almost completely as regards word order and the position and marking of the focal constituent.

(96) Letter from X to the god Nanna 16 (ETCSL 3.3.22)

[an ki]-bi-ta	lugal-bi	za-e-me-en	nam-bi	i <sub>3</sub> - <sup>1</sup> tar-re <sup>1</sup>
ša-me-e u <sub>3</sub> er-še-tam	be-el-šu-nu	at-ta-ma	ši-ma-ti-šu-nu	ta-ši-a-am

“As for the universe, its lord is you. You decide its fate.”

<sup>132</sup> See Cohen (2001) and (2005, pp. 31-35) on the use of the enclitic *=/ma/* as a focus marker.

<sup>133</sup> Note that Cohen uses a terminology different from the one applied in this work.

(240) HS 1512 obv. 9-10 (ZA 91 243) (Nippur, OB period)

diñir an ki-a za-e-**me-en** i<sub>3</sub>-zalag-ge-en

i<sub>3</sub>-li ša AN u KI at-ta-**ma** tu-na-ma-ar

“It is you who illuminates for the gods of heaven and earth.”

## 6 Subordinate Clauses Followed by a Copula

### 6.1 Introduction

In the examples discussed in the previous chapter the COP was attached to a noun phrase; consequently, the constituent marked as focus with the COP was a noun phrase or a sub-constituent of the noun phrase. The COP, however, may also be attached to a subordinate clause in Sumerian. A typical example of this construction is ex. (342) below:

(342) BM 22867 obv. 2-3 (Fs. Greenfield, p. 614, no. 4) (Lagaš, 21st c.) (P145896)

nin-ka-gi-na	dumu	lu <sub>2</sub> - <sup>d</sup> nanna-ka,	
<sub>PC</sub> [ninkagina	dumu	lunannak=ak=ø	
<sub>PC</sub> [PN <sub>1</sub>	child	PN <sub>2</sub> =GEN=ABS	
ur- <sup>d</sup> ba-u <sub>2</sub>	dumu	di-gi <sub>4</sub> -di-gi <sub>4</sub> -ke <sub>4</sub> ,	in-tuku-am <sub>3</sub>
urbauk	dumu	digidigi=ak=e	<sub>S1</sub> i- <sub>S11</sub> n- <sub>S12</sub> tuku- <sub>S14</sub> ø-( <sub>S15</sub> 'a)?=ø]=am-ø
PN <sub>3</sub>	child	PN <sub>4</sub> =GEN=ERG	FIN-3SG.A-have-3SG.P-(SUB)?=ABS]=COP-3NH.S

“It was (the case) that Ur-Bau, child of Digidigi, had been married to Nin-kagina, child of Lu-Nanna.”

The construction involves a subordinate clause followed by an enclitic COP, which is attached to the last unit of the subordinate clause, the finite verb. The subordinate clause functions as the PC of the matrix type (Aii) CC, whose S is a “dummy” S without any semantic content, as reflected by the translation given to ex. (342).

That the construction indeed involves a subordinate clause may be seen from examples in which the predicate is a COP, like, e.g., in ex. (352) below. In these examples the COP occurs in its independent form indicating, even when the orthography is unclear, that the clause is subordinate.

The finite verb of subordinate clauses is suffixed as a rule with the subordinator suffix **-(/’)*a*/** in S15. In texts from around the middle of the 3rd millennium BC, however, finite verbs with a stative meaning may lack the subordinator suffix in subordinate clauses.<sup>134</sup> In ex. (343) below the finite verb is written as **e-*ṅal*<sub>2</sub>-lam**. As in this period the 3rd ps. sg enclitic COP started most probably with a glottal stop, if

**134** For other constructions in which the same phenomenon may be observed, see Jagersma (2010, pp. 592-95).

the verbal form had contained a subordinator suffix *-(/ʿ)a/*, then it would have been written as **e-*ḡal*<sub>2</sub>-*la-am*<sub>6</sub>** according to the orthographic rules of the period.

(343) Iri-kagina 1 4:13-18 (RIME 1.9.9.1) (Lagash, 24th. c) (P222607-9)

ašag sag<sub>9</sub>-ga, diŋir-re<sub>2</sub>-ne-ka, ki šum<sub>2</sub>-ma,  
<sub>PC</sub>[ašag sag-ʿa diŋir=ene=ak=ʿa ki šum=ak  
<sub>PC</sub>[field good-PT god=PL=GEN=L1 place onion=GEN  
 ki ukuš<sub>2</sub>, ensi<sub>2</sub>-ka, e-ḡal<sub>2</sub>-lam  
 ki ukuš=ak ensik=ak=∅ <sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S10</sub>n-<sub>S12</sub>ḡal-<sub>S14</sub>∅=∅]=am-∅  
 place cucumber=GEN ruler=GEN=ABS FIN-L1.SYN-exist-3NH.S=ABS]=COP-3NH.S  
 “It was (the case) that on the best fields of the gods were the ruler’s onion and cucumber plots.”

Another clear example of this phenomenon is ex. (344). Here the finite verb of the relative clause (**a-dul<sub>5</sub>**) lacks the subordinator suffix, most probably because of the verb’s stative meaning.

(344) En-metena 12 6:1-3 (RIME 1.9.5.12) (Lagash, 25th c.) (P222513-9, P418034)

<sup>d</sup>nin-ḡir<sub>2</sub>-su<sub>2</sub>-ra an-ta-sur-ra  
 Ninḡirsuk=ra <sub>P1</sub>antasura  
 DN=DAT.H <sub>P1</sub>TN  
 e<sub>2</sub> me-lem<sub>4</sub>-bi kur-kur-ra  
<sub>P1</sub>e <sub>P2</sub>[melem=bi=∅ kurkur=ʿa  
<sub>P1</sub>house <sub>P2</sub>[halo=POSS.3NH=ABS mountain~RDP=L2.NH  
 a-dul<sub>5</sub> mu-na-du<sub>3</sub>  
<sub>S2</sub>a-<sub>S5</sub>b-<sub>S10</sub>∅-<sub>S12</sub>dul-<sub>S14</sub>∅]=∅ <sub>S4</sub>mu-<sub>S6</sub>nn-<sub>S7</sub>a-<sub>S11</sub>n-<sub>S12</sub>du-<sub>S14</sub>∅  
 FIN-3NH-L2.SYN-cover-3NH.S]=ABS VEN-3SG-DAT-3SG.A-build-3NH.P  
 “For Ningirsu, he built the Anta-sura, the temple whose fearsome radiance covers all the lands.”

The difference between a finite verbal form with and without a subordinator suffix could be recognized only in the case of a small number of verbs in the orthography of this period. In particular, only verbal stems ending with /l/, /d/, /k/ or /n/ might have different writings depending on the presence or absence of the subordinator suffix. After the middle of the 3rd millennium the orthography ceases to express this difference in a reliable way, partly because of the loss of the initial glottal stop of the 3rd ps. sg enclitic COP, and partly because of certain changes in the orthographic rules.<sup>135</sup> I will assume that the contrast between stative and dynamic verbal forms disappears

<sup>135</sup> See Jagersma (2010, p. 685, pp. 702-703) for more details.

in texts from later periods and will gloss the examples accordingly, unless there are strong orthographic indications otherwise.<sup>136</sup>

In the following two sections I will argue that there exist two main types of constructions involving a subordinate clause with a COP. The first construction discussed is “presentational”, functioning to introduce new entities into the discourse. In this construction the scope of the focus is the sentence, and the COP may be interpreted in these cases as a focus marker marking the whole sentence as focus. In the second construction the scope of the focus is the proposition expressed by the clause, and the construction functions to express verum or polarity focus.

## 6.2 Thetic Sentences in Sumerian

The first type of construction in which a 3rd ps. sg. enclitic COP is attached to a subordinate clause typically occurs at the beginning of administrative or legal texts. In these sentences all participants are expressed with an overt lexical NP; they appear to be thetic sentences with a “presentational” function, i.e., with a function to introduce new entities into the discourse.

Thetic sentences are distinguished from categorical sentences.<sup>137</sup> This distinction postulates

“a fundamental difference between utterances which are logically analyzed into two successive mutually related judgments, one naming an individual and one naming an event (categorical statements), and utterances in which the logical relations between the various parts of the communicated state of affairs remain unanalyzed (thetic statements)” (Sasse, 1987, p. 554).

In terms of information structure, thetic sentences present a state of affairs as a unitary whole without analysis in terms of a topic and a comment.<sup>138</sup> In other words, a thetic sentence is a sentence without any topic which the predication is pragmatically about. They may occur “at any point in a text where information is not given about someone or something, but about an entire state of affairs” (Sasse, 1987, p. 535). They

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**136** Attinger (1993, p. 313, §216 4°) assumes that there is a difference in meaning between forms with and without a subordinator suffix. The subsequent discussion will show that pace Attinger the meaning of the construction does not depend on the presence or absence of the subordinator suffix. The presence or absence of the subordinator suffix is contingent solely on the meaning of the verbal form. Nevertheless, as constructions with a thetic meaning (see below) very often involve a verb with a stative meaning, most of the constructions without a subordinator suffix will have a thetic meaning.

**137** For this distinction see Sasse (1987), Lambrecht (1994, pp. 137-146) and Lambrecht (2000).

**138** I follow Lambrecht (1994, pp. 137-146; 2000), who characterizes thetic sentences principally in terms of their information structure, and not in terms of their logico-semantic characteristics as, for example, Sasse (1987).

are sentences that may function as appropriate answers to questions like “What happened?”, i.e. “as answers to questions not imposing textual presuppositions” (Sasse, 1987, p. 528).

Formally, languages may distinguish *thetic* sentences from sentences with a *topic-comment* articulation with the use of various grammatical devices. The left-hand answers in (345)<sup>139</sup> below show that, for example, in English the *S* of a *thetic* sentence is accented, in contrast with that of a sentence with a *topic* and a *comment* (in the right-hand column), which is unaccented. In Italian and Hungarian the difference is in the position of the *S*: in *thetic* sentences it is *postverbal*, in *topic-comment* sentences it is *preverbal*. In French the *S* of *thetic* sentences is *clefted*. In Japanese it is followed by the particle *ga*, in contrast with that of a *topic-comment* sentence, which is followed by *wa*.

(345)

- |   |                                    |
|---|------------------------------------|
| i) What is the matter?                          | ii) How is your neck?              |
| a) My <i>NECK</i> hurts.                        | a) My neck <i>HURTS</i> .          |
| b) Mi fa male il <i>COLLO</i> .                 | b) Il collo mi fa <i>MALE</i> .    |
| c) Fáj a <i>NYAKAM</i> .                        | c) A nyakam <i>FÁJ</i> .           |
| d) J'ai mon <i>COU</i> qui me fait <i>MAL</i> . | d) Mon cou il me fait <i>MAL</i> . |
| e) KUBI <i>ga</i> ITAI.                         | e) Kubi <i>wa</i> ITAI.            |

The common denominator of the grammatical devices in (345) is that they indicate a difference from the corresponding *topic-comment* sentences (Lambrecht, 2000), i.e. they indicate that “the individual pieces of information in the sentence are not to be analyzed in terms of foreground vs. background, salient vs. not salient” (Güldemann, 2010, p. 86). I suggest that the Sumerian construction has a similar function. The main trait of the Sumerian construction is that the content clause becomes subordinate to a CC. The subordination demotes the content clause, suppresses its *topic-comment* structure and transfers it into a single, pragmatically unstructured unit. In other words, the construction “cancels the *topic-comment* configuration” (Güldemann, 2010, p. 88).

The most exhaustive inventory of the typical contexts in which *thetic* sentences may appear is given by Sasse (1987, pp. 566-567), reproduced in Table 6.1 below.

<sup>139</sup> All examples except for the Hungarian ones are from Lambrecht (1994, p. 137, ex. 4.10); small capitals indicate accent. Lambrecht also remarks that “under the minimal context provided here the sentences on the right-hand side would normally not contain full lexical subjects. ... Nevertheless unaccented subject NPs are pragmatically POSSIBLE in such sentences. They may therefore be used to emphasize the formal contrast between the two types.”



Tab. 6.1: Typical contexts of thetic sentences

1.	EXISTENTIAL STATEMENTS (in a wider sense; presence, appearance, continuation, etc., positively and negatively)
2.	EXPLANATIONS (with or without preceding questions such as ‘what happened?’, ‘why did it happen?’, etc.)
3.	SURPRISING OR UNEXPECTED EVENTS
4.	GENERAL STATEMENTS (aphorisms, etc.)
5.	BACKGROUND DESCRIPTIONS (local, temporal, etc., setting)
6.	WEATHER EXPRESSIONS
7.	STATEMENTS RELATING TO BODY PARTS

Most of the Sumerian thetic examples appear to belong to the category “Explanations”. They come from the beginning of administrative or legal texts and appear to have a double function: they introduce new entities, the main characters of the ensuing text, into the discourse; and(/or) provide a setting or give a background to the litigation or the events described in the ensuing part of the text by providing information on the state of affairs preceding the time of the main events described in the text.

Falkenstein (1956b, p. 42, note 5) refers to these constructions together with attributive CBCs and copular complement clauses as “anakolutische Konstruktion”. His description of their function, however, is not far from the characterization given in the previous paragraph, as he thinks that in the texts he refers to

“die im Prozeß eine Rolle spielende Personen oder Gegebenheiten am Anfang des Protokolls in anakolutischer Konstruktion genannt sind.”

The following examples all come from the beginning of texts of legal nature, introduce all the main characters and function to provide a setting for what follows in the text. The translations starting with “It was (the case) that ...” are an attempt to reflect or indicate their thetic character in the English translation.

(346) BM 111032 1-2 (Umma, 21st c.) (P375929)<sup>140</sup>

AN-ga-a,      še      erin<sub>2</sub>-na-da      ib<sub>2</sub>-da-tuš-am<sub>3</sub>  
anga=ø      še      erin=ak=da      s<sub>1</sub><sup>i</sup>-s<sub>5</sub><sup>b</sup>-s<sub>8</sub><sup>da</sup>-s<sub>12</sub><sup>tuš</sup>-s<sub>14</sub><sup>ø</sup>-s<sub>15</sub><sup>'a</sup>=ø=am-ø  
PN=ABS    grain    troop=GEN=COM    FIN-3NH-COM-sit-3SG.S-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S  
“It was (the case) that Anga had been on duty with the grain of the troops.”

<sup>140</sup> See Civil (2011, p. 232).

(347) MVN 18, 505 1 (Umma, 21st c.) (P119866)

u<sub>3</sub>-ma-<sup>r</sup>ni<sup>1</sup> [mu] la<sub>2</sub>-i<sub>3</sub>-na-še<sub>3</sub>  
 umani=∅ mu la'i=ani=ak=še  
 PN=ABS name arrears=3SG.POSS=GEN=TERM  
<sup>r</sup>en<sup>1</sup>-[nu]- $\eta$ a<sub>2</sub> i<sub>3</sub>-in-<sup>r</sup>ti<sub>3</sub><sup>1</sup>-[la]-am<sub>3</sub>  
 enu $\eta$ =<sup>a</sup> s<sub>1</sub>i-<sub>s10</sub>n-<sub>s12</sub>ti<sub>3</sub>-<sub>s14</sub>∅-<sub>s15</sub><sup>a</sup>=∅=am-∅  
 prison=L1 FIN-L1.SYN-live-3SG.S-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S

"It was (the case) that Umani had been imprisoned because of his arrears."

(348) BM 107955 1-4 (JNES 63: 3) (Umma, 21st c.) (P208683)

<sup>m</sup>im-ti-X, arad<sub>2</sub> e<sub>2</sub>-gal,  
 imti-X arad egal=ak=∅  
 PN<sub>1</sub> slave palace=GEN=ABS  
 mu 3-am<sub>3</sub>, i<sub>3</sub>-zah<sub>3</sub>-am<sub>3</sub>  
 mu=∅ 3=∅=am-∅ s<sub>1</sub>i-<sub>s12</sub>zah-<sub>s14</sub>∅-<sub>s15</sub><sup>a</sup>=∅=am-∅  
 year=ABS 3=ABS=COP-3NH.S FIN-flee-3SG.S-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S

"It was (the case) that Imti-X, the slave of the palace, had been on the run for three years."

(349) SANTAG 6, 154 1-9 (Umma, 21st c.) (P211581)

<sup>m</sup>lu<sub>2</sub>-ma<sub>2</sub>-gan, <sup>m</sup>lu<sub>2</sub>-di $\eta$ ir-ra, <sup>m</sup>lu<sub>2</sub>-<sup>d</sup>iškur, <sup>m</sup>ur-ni<sub>9</sub>- $\eta$ ar, <sup>m</sup>al-lu, <sup>m</sup>di $\eta$ ir- $\eta$ u<sub>10</sub>-dah, <sup>m</sup>ur-<sup>d</sup>dumu-zid-da,  
 mu ma<sub>2</sub>-a-še<sub>3</sub>, en-nu- $\eta$ a<sub>2</sub> i<sub>3</sub>-in-ze<sub>2</sub>-eš-am<sub>3</sub>  
 mu ma=ak=še enu $\eta$ =<sup>a</sup> s<sub>1</sub>i-<sub>s10</sub>n-<sub>s12</sub>ze-<sub>s14</sub>eš-<sub>s15</sub><sup>a</sup>=∅=am-∅  
 name boat=GEN=TERM prison=L1 FIN-L1.SYN-live.PL-3PL.S-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S

"It was (the case) that Lu-magan, Lu-digira, Lu-Ishkur, Ur-nigar, Allu, Digirgu-dah and Ur-Dumuzida had been imprisoned because of a boat."

(350) BM 106470 1-4 (Fs. Owen, pp. 203-204 no. 2) (Umma, 21st. c.) (P200717)

1/3 ma-na 1/2 gi $\eta$ <sub>4</sub> kug-babbar,  
 1/3 mana 1/2 gi $\eta$  kugbabbar=∅  
 1/3 unit 1/2 shekel silver=ABS  
 šeš-a-ni-ir, ur-kal-la- $\eta$ u<sub>10</sub>, in-da-an-tuku-am<sub>3</sub>  
 šešani=ra urkalanu=e s<sub>1</sub>i-<sub>s6</sub>nn-<sub>s8</sub>da-<sub>s11</sub>n-<sub>s12</sub>tuku-<sub>s14</sub>∅-<sub>s15</sub><sup>a</sup>=∅=am-∅  
 PN<sub>1</sub>=DAT.H PN<sub>2</sub>=ERG FIN-3SG-COM-3SG.A-have-3NH.P-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S

"It was (the case) that Sheshani owed 20 and a half shekels to Ur-kalagu."

(351) BPOA 1, 495 1-3 (Umma, 21st c.) (P339153)

<sup>m</sup>aya<sub>2</sub>-kal-la dumu a-na,  
 ayakala dumu ana=ak=∅  
 PN<sub>1</sub> child PN<sub>2</sub>=GEN=ABS

arad<sub>2</sub> ninir-di-de<sub>3</sub> i<sub>3</sub>-me-am<sub>3</sub>  
 arad ninirdide=ak=∅ i<sub>S2</sub>-me-<sub>S12</sub>∅-<sub>S14</sub>∅-<sub>S15</sub>'a=∅=am-∅  
 slave PN<sub>3</sub>=GEN=ABS FIN-COP-3SG.S-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S  
 “It was the (case) that Aya-kala, son of Ana, had been the slave of Nigir-dide.”

(352) NG 6 1-2 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P111358)

<sup>m</sup>lal<sub>3</sub>-la-gu-la dumu e-la gudu<sub>4</sub>  
 lalagula dumu ela gudu=ak=∅  
 PN<sub>1</sub> child PN<sub>2</sub> priest=GEN=ABS  
 nu-mu-su<sub>2</sub> i<sub>3</sub>-me-am<sub>3</sub>  
 numusu=∅ i<sub>S2</sub>-me-<sub>S12</sub>∅-<sub>S14</sub>∅-<sub>S15</sub>'a=∅=am-∅  
 widow=ABS FIN-COP-3SG.S-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S  
 “It was (the case) that Lala-gula, child of Ela, the *gudu*-priest, had been a widow.  
 (Ur-Igalima, child of Lugal-igihush, the *gudu*-priest, married her.”

(353) NG 70 9 (Lagaš, 21st c.) (P111448)

lu<sub>2</sub>-<sup>u</sup>li<sub>9</sub>-si<sub>4</sub> lu<sub>2</sub>-gi-<sup>r</sup>na<sup>1</sup>-ab-tum-bi i<sub>3</sub>-me-am<sub>3</sub>  
 lulisi=∅ luginabtum=bi=∅ i<sub>S2</sub>-me-<sub>S12</sub>∅-<sub>S14</sub>∅-<sub>S15</sub>'a=∅=am-∅  
 PN=ABS guarantor=3NH.POSS=ABS FIN-COP-3SG.S-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S  
 “It was (the case) that Lu-Lisi was its guarantor.”

(354) NG 75 2 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P200598)

<sup>m</sup>ur-saṇ-ub<sub>3</sub><sup>ki</sup> arad<sub>2</sub> u<sub>2</sub>-uh i<sub>3</sub>-me-am<sub>3</sub>  
 ursanubak=∅ arad uh=ak=∅ i<sub>S2</sub>-me-<sub>S12</sub>∅-<sub>S14</sub>∅-<sub>S15</sub>'a=∅=am-∅  
 PN<sub>1</sub>=ABS slave PN<sub>2</sub>=GEN=ABS FIN-COP-3SG.S-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S  
 “It was (the case) that Ur-saguba had been the slave of Uh.”

(355) NG 83 obv. 2-3 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P110962)<sup>141</sup>

<sup>m</sup>a-na geme<sub>2</sub> nin<sub>9</sub>-gu-[la] dam da-bi-um <sup>r</sup>nagar<sup>1</sup>  
 ana geme ningula dam dabium nagar=ak=∅  
 PN<sub>1</sub> maiden PN<sub>2</sub> spouse PN<sub>3</sub> carpenter=GEN=ABS  
 ki ab-ba-kal-la dumu nin<sub>9</sub>-<sup>r</sup>gu<sup>1</sup>-la-ka  
 ki abbakala dumu ningula=ak=<sup>a</sup>  
 place PN<sub>4</sub> child PN<sub>2</sub>=GEN=L1  
 i<sub>3</sub>-gub-ba-am<sub>3</sub>  
 i<sub>S2</sub>-n-<sub>S10</sub>gub-<sub>S12</sub>∅-<sub>S14</sub>∅-<sub>S15</sub>'a=∅=am-∅  
 FIN-L1.SYN-stand-3SG.S-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S  
 “It was (the case) that Ana, the female servant of Nin-gula, wife of Dabium, the car-  
 penter, had been at service at Abba-kala, child of Nin-gula.”

<sup>141</sup> For a similar example, see NG 87 2-9 (P110798).

(356) NG 205 2:1-8 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P111164)<sup>142</sup>

ur- <sup>d</sup> lamma	dumu	ʾlu <sub>2</sub> <sup>ʾ</sup> - <sup>d</sup> ba <sup>ʾ</sup> -u-ka-ke <sub>4</sub> ,	ka-ta	dumu
urlammak	dumu	lubauk=ak=e	kata	dumu
PN <sub>1</sub>	child	PN <sub>2</sub> =GEN=ERG	PN <sub>3</sub>	child
lugal-igi-huš	nu- <sup>niš</sup> kiri <sub>6</sub> -ka,	in-tuku-am <sub>3</sub>		
lugaligihuš	nukirik=ak=ø	s <sub>1</sub> i- <sub>s11</sub> n- <sub>s12</sub> tuku- <sub>s14</sub> ø- <sub>s15</sub> 'a=ø=am-ø		
PN <sub>4</sub>	gardener=GEN=ABS	FIN-3SG.A-have-3SG.P-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S		

“It was (the case) that Ur-Lamma, son of Lu-Bau, had been married to Kata, daughter of Lugal-igihush, the gardener.”

mu	ur- <sup>d</sup> lamma	dam-e	nu-u <sub>3</sub> -zu-be <sub>2</sub>
mu	urlammak	dam=e	s <sub>1</sub> nu- <sub>s2</sub> i- <sub>s11</sub> n- <sub>s12</sub> zu- <sub>s14</sub> ø=bi=e
name	PN <sub>1</sub>	spouse=ERG	NEG-FIN-3SG.A-know-3NH.P=3NH.POSS=L3.NH
lu <sub>2</sub> -kur	in-da-nu <sub>2</sub> -a		
lukur=ø	s <sub>2</sub> i- <sub>s6</sub> nn- <sub>s8</sub> da- <sub>s12</sub> nu- <sub>s14</sub> ø- <sub>s15</sub> 'a=ak		
stranger=ABS	FIN-3SG-COM-lie.down-3SG.S-SUB=GEN		
nam-erim <sub>2</sub> -bi-ta	im-ma-ra-gur-ra		
namerim=bi=ta	s <sub>2</sub> i- <sub>s4</sub> m- <sub>s5</sub> ba- <sub>s9</sub> ta- <sub>s12</sub> gur- <sub>s14</sub> ø- <sub>s15</sub> 'a		
oath=3NH.POSS=ABL	FIN-VEN-3NH.ABL-return-3SG.S-SUB		

“Because, (although) Ur-Lamma, the husband, refused to make the assertory oath that he did not know that another man slept with her (before marriage),

mu	ka-ta-e	dug <sub>4</sub> -ga-na	ba-ni-gi-na-a-še <sub>3</sub>
mu	kata=e	dug-'a=ani='a	s <sub>5</sub> ba- <sub>s10</sub> ni- <sub>s11</sub> n- <sub>s12</sub> gin- <sub>s14</sub> ø- <sub>s15</sub> 'a=ak=še
name	PN <sub>3</sub> =ERG	speak-PT=3SG.POSS=L1	MID-L1-3SG.A-firm-3NH.P-SUB=GEN=TERM
ka-ta	ba-taka <sub>4</sub>		
kata=ø	s <sub>5</sub> ba- <sub>s12</sub> taka- <sub>s14</sub> ø		
PN <sub>3</sub> =ABS	MID-leave-3SG.S		

but Kata confirmed this with her statement, Kata became divorced.”

Ex. (356) above may be contrasted with ex. (357) below. The subject matter of the latter is also a marriage, but ex. (357) simply records the fact that a marriage has taken place and the required oath has been taken. In ex. (356), however, the existence of the marriage provides background for the ensuing litigation described later in the text. Accordingly, the initial sentence describing the act of marrying is athetic sentence in ex. (356), while it is a normal sentence with a topic-comment articulation in ex. (357).

(357) NG 2 2-5 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P111156)

ur-e <sub>2</sub> -ninnu	dumu	ab-ba	unu <sub>3</sub> -ke <sub>4</sub> ,	geme <sub>2</sub> - <sup>d</sup> nanše	dumu
ureninnuk	dumu	abba	unu=ak=e	gemenanšek	dumu
PN <sub>1</sub>	child	PN <sub>2</sub>	shepherd=GEN=ERG	PN <sub>3</sub>	child

<sup>142</sup> For similar examples, see NG 23 2-3 (P111362) and NG 169 17-19 (P110964).

ur-še-il<sub>2</sub>-la-ka, ba-an-tuku,  
 uršeilak=ak=∅<sub>S5</sub> ba-n<sub>S11</sub>-n<sub>S12</sub>-tuku<sub>S14</sub>∅  
 PN<sub>4</sub>=GEN=ABS MID-3SG.A-have-3SG.P  
 mu lugal-bi in-pad<sub>3</sub>  
 mu lugal=ak=bi=∅<sub>S2</sub> i<sub>S11</sub>-n<sub>S12</sub>-pad<sub>S14</sub>∅  
 name king=GEN=3NH.POSS=ABS FIN-3SG.A-call-3NH.P  
 “Ur-Eninnu, son of Abba, the shepherd, married Geme-Nanshe, daughter of Ur-she-  
 ila, and took the promissory oath concerning it.”

A similar contrast may be demonstrated by the comparison of exx. (358) and (359) below. Ex. (358) is a sale document recording a transaction in which the ownership of a slave is transferred. Here the final part of the example naming the guarantor of the transaction is a type (Bi) CC with an enclitic COP.

(358) FaoS 17, 121 1-7 (Umma?, 21st c.) (P112551)

1 saṇ munus <sup>d</sup>ba-u<sub>2</sub>-lu<sub>2</sub>-sag<sub>9</sub>-sag<sub>9</sub> mu-ni-im,  
 1 saṇ munus=∅ baulusagsag=∅ mu=ani=∅=am-∅  
 1 slave female=ABS PN<sub>1</sub>=ABS name=3SG.POSS=ABS=COP-3NH.S  
 1 saṇ nita dumu nita<sub>2</sub>-ni,  
 1 saṇ nita dumu nita=ani=∅  
 1 slave male child male=3SG.POSS=ABS  
 a-ba-in-da-an-e<sub>3</sub> mu-ni-im, kug 12 giṇ<sub>4</sub>-še<sub>3</sub>  
 abaindane=∅ mu=ani=∅=am-∅ kug 12 giṇ=še  
 PN<sub>2</sub>=ABS name=3SG.POSS=ABS=COP-3NH.S silver 12 shekel=TERM  
 lu<sub>2</sub>-<sup>d</sup>šara<sub>2</sub> dumu gu-du-du-še<sub>3</sub>, ab-ba-gi-na in-ši-sa<sub>10</sub>  
 lušara dumu gududu=ak=še abbagina=e <sub>S2</sub>i<sub>S6</sub>-nn<sub>S9</sub>-ši<sub>S11</sub>-n<sub>S12</sub>-sa<sub>S14</sub>∅  
 PN<sub>3</sub> child PN<sub>4</sub>=GEN=TERM PN<sub>5</sub>=ERG FIN-3SG-TERM-3SG.A-buy-3SG.P  
 ur-<sup>d</sup>ištaran kug-dim<sub>2</sub> lu<sub>2</sub>-gi<sub>5</sub>-na-ab-tum-bi-im  
 urištaran kugdim=∅ luginabtum=bi=∅=am-∅  
 PN<sub>6</sub> goldsmith=ABS guarantor=3NH.POSS=ABS=COP-3NH.S  
 “Abba-gina bought one female slave, her, whose name is Bau-lu-sagsag, (and) one male  
 slave, her son, him, whose name is Aba-indane, for 12 shekels of silver, from Lu-Shara,  
 son of Gududu. Ur-Ishtaran, the goldsmith, was its (= the transaction’s) guarantor.”

Ex. (359) below is a legal document recording a litigation that concerns the ownership of a slave. It starts with the description of a transaction very similar to the one in ex. (358). Here, however, the final part of the example naming the guarantor of the transaction is athetic sentence. The reason for the use of a thetic construction lies in the function of these clauses. They provide information on the state of affairs which forms the basis of the litigation described in the ensuing part of the document. In ex. (358), however, the description of the transaction continues with other details, e.g., with the names of the witnesses. Here the transaction itself is the object of the docu-

ment, and there is no ensuing part for which the initial part of the text might function as a background.

(359) BM 106427 obv. 1-5 (Fs. Sigrist, p. 136, no. 9) (Umma) (P375920)<sup>143</sup>

<sup>m</sup> ur-zikum-ma	dumu	hu-la-lum-ma,	šu	ur-sig <sub>5</sub> -ta,
urzikumak	dumu	hulalum=ak=∅	šu	ursig=ak=ta
PN <sub>1</sub>	child	PN <sub>2</sub> =GEN=ABS	hand	PN <sub>3</sub> =GEN=ABL
3	gi <sub>4</sub>	kug-babbar-še <sub>3</sub> ,	lugal-an-ne <sub>2</sub>	in-sa <sub>10</sub>
3	gi <sub>4</sub>	kugbabbar=še	lugalane=e	i <sub>52</sub> - <sub>511</sub> n <sub>512</sub> sa <sub>514</sub> ∅
3	shekel	silver=TERM	PN <sub>4</sub> =ERG	FIN-3SG.A-buy-3SG.P
gu <sub>2</sub> -lu	lu <sub>2</sub> -gi-na-ab-tum <sub>2</sub> -bi		i <sub>3</sub> -me-am <sub>3</sub>	
gulu=∅	luginabtum=bi=∅		i <sub>52</sub> - <sub>512</sub> me <sub>514</sub> ∅- <sub>515</sub> 'a=∅=am-∅	
PN=ABS	guarantor=3NH.POSS=ABS		FIN-COP-3SG.S-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S	

“It was the (case) that Lugal-ane bought Ur-zikuma, son of Hulalum from Ur-sig for three shekels of silver, Gulu was its (= the transaction’s) guarantor.”

Ex. (359) consist of two sentences, but only the second one is a thetic one formally. The first sentence, whose verb is **sa**<sub>10</sub> “to buy”, is apparently a sentence with a normal topic-comment articulation, although one may safely assume that both sentences belong to the background part of the text.

The situation may be explained by a restriction on thetic sentences described by both Sasse (1987, p. 529) and Lambrecht (2000, p. 623): thetic sentences, i.e. grammatical constructions *formally* marked as expressing a sentence without a topic, are distributionally marked, their subject must be coded lexically, and as a rule their semantic role cannot be that of Agent.<sup>144</sup> Consequently, there may be verbs or verbal forms which cannot function as the predicate of a thetic sentence because of their meaning.

In all the Sumerian examples shown so far the verb has a stative meaning: **gub** “to stand” (in the meaning “to be at the service at someone”), **me** “to be”, **til**<sub>3</sub> “to live”, **tuku** “to have” (in the meanings “to have someone [as a spouse]= to be married to” and “to own”), **tuš** “to stay”, **zah**<sub>3</sub> “to be away”. The semantic role of these verbs’ subjects is not that of Agent; even if it is marked as an ergative, this indicates only that the verb is transitive in Sumerian, but tells nothing about the semantic role of its grammatical subject.

Sumerian appears to apply two strategies to verbs or verbal forms which are incompatible with a thetic construction if the sentence containing the verb occurs in a “thetic context”. The sentence containing the verbal form may remain unaltered as in the first sentence of ex. (359) above. Sentence types associated with a topic-comment

<sup>143</sup> For a similar example, see NG 63 1-12 (P111367).

<sup>144</sup> Exceptions to the restriction on the semantic type of subjects are, however, also noted by Lambrecht (2000, p. 617).

construal are pragmatically unmarked, consequently, their grammatical form is compatible with alternative pragmatic construals, as pointed out by Lambrecht (2000, p. 621). As we have no access to the prosodic level of the language, one can only speculate as to whether a thetic construal might have also been accompanied by a prosodic change.

If there is no verb which is compatible with a thetic construction in a text, then the thetic character of a sentence may remain formally unmarked and consequently unnoticeable for us. In ex. (360) below, the initial part of a legal text (ll. 2-8) is followed by the description of a litigation (ll. 9-14). The initial part functions as the background to the litigation described in the ensuing part of the document, but it contains a transitive verb that apparently may not occur in a thetic construction.

(360) NG 194 2-14 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P110833)

<sup>m</sup> nin- $\eta$ u <sub>10</sub> -igi- $\eta$ u <sub>10</sub>	geme <sub>2</sub>	geme <sub>2</sub>	a <sub>2</sub> -na-na	dam-gar <sub>3</sub> ,
nin $\eta$ uigi $\eta$ u	geme	geme	anana	damgar=ak=∅
PN <sub>1</sub>	maiden	maiden	PN <sub>2</sub>	merchant=GEN=ABS
ur-zikum-ma-ke <sub>4</sub> ,	zum-zum-a,	<sup>d</sup> utu-me-lem <sub>4</sub> -a,	u <sub>3</sub>	
urzikumak=e	zumzum=a	utumelem='a	u	
PN <sub>3</sub> =ERG	PN <sub>4</sub> =L2.NH	PN <sub>5</sub> =L2.NH	and	
igi	a- <sup>r</sup> zid	dam <sup>1</sup>	a <sub>2</sub> -na-na-še <sub>3</sub> ,	in-ši-sa <sub>10</sub>
igi	azid	dam	anana=ak=še	s <sub>2</sub> <sup>i</sup> -s <sub>6</sub> nn-s <sub>9</sub> š <sup>i</sup> -s <sub>11</sub> n-s <sub>12</sub> sa-s <sub>14</sub> ∅
face	PN <sub>6</sub>	spouse	PN <sub>2</sub> =GEN=TERM	FIN-3SG-TERM-3SG.A-buy-3SG.P

“(It was the case that)? Ur-zikuma bought Ningū-igigu, the maiden, a maiden of Anana, the merchant, from Zumzum and Utu-melem in the presence of A-zid, the spouse of Anana.”

ur- <sup>d</sup> ba-u <sub>2</sub> -[ke <sub>4</sub> ],	<sup>m</sup> nin- $\eta$ u <sub>10</sub> -igi- $\eta$ u <sub>10</sub> -ra,	inim	in-ni-[ $\eta$ ar]
urbauk=e	nin $\eta$ uigi $\eta$ u=ra	inim=∅	s <sub>2</sub> <sup>i</sup> -s <sub>6</sub> nn-s <sub>10</sub> i-s <sub>11</sub> n-s <sub>12</sub> $\eta$ ar-s <sub>14</sub> ∅
PN <sub>7</sub> =ERG	PN <sub>1</sub> =L2.H	word=ABS	FIN-3SG-L2-3SG.A-put-3NH.P
ur-zikum-ma-[ra],	<sup>m</sup> nin- $\eta$ u <sub>10</sub> -igi- $\eta$ u <sub>10</sub>	[nam-geme <sub>2</sub> -še <sub>3</sub> ]	ba-na-[gi-in]
urzikumak=ra	nin $\eta$ uigi $\eta$ u=∅	namgeme=še	ba-nn-a-gin-∅
PN <sub>3</sub> =DAT.H	PN <sub>1</sub> =ABS	maidenship=TERM	MID-3SG-DAT-firm-3SG.S

“Ur-Bau laid a claim on Ningū-igigu. Ningū-igigu was confirmed as a female servant to Ur-zikuma.”

In ex. (361) below, however, the first two sentences in the background part of the text have stative verbs, and the verb in the third one is an intransitive verb. Accordingly all three sentences are thetic.

(361) BM 22867 rev. 2-4 (Fs. Greenfield, p. 614, no. 4) (Lagash, 21st c.) (P145896)

nin-ka-gi-na	dumu	lu <sub>2</sub> - <sup>d</sup> nanna-ka,	ur- <sup>d</sup> ba-u <sub>2</sub>
ninkaginak	dumu	lunannak=ak=∅	urbauk
PN <sub>1</sub>	child	PN <sub>2</sub> =GEN=ABS	PN <sub>3</sub>

dumu di-gi<sub>4</sub>-di-gi<sub>4</sub>-ke<sub>4</sub>, in-tuku-am<sub>3</sub>  
 dumu digidigi=ak=e i<sub>s1</sub>-n<sub>s11</sub>-tuku<sub>s14</sub>-ø<sub>s15</sub> 'a=ø=am-ø  
 child PN<sub>4</sub>=GEN=ERG FIN-3SG.A-have-3SG.P-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S  
 “It was (the case) that Ur-Bau, son of Digidigi, had been married to Nin-kagina,  
 daughter of Lu-Nanna;  
 nin-ka-gi-na-ke<sub>4</sub>, e<sub>2</sub> lu<sub>2</sub>-<sup>d</sup>nanna ab-ba-na-ka,  
 ninkaginak=e e lunannak abba=ani=ak='a  
 PN<sub>1</sub>=ERG house PN<sub>2</sub> father=3SG.POSS=GEN=L1  
 ur-<sup>d</sup>ba-u<sub>2</sub>-ra, zag in-na-us<sub>2</sub>-sa-am<sub>3</sub>  
 urbauk=ra zag=ø s<sub>2</sub>i<sub>s6</sub>-nn<sub>s7</sub>-a<sub>s11</sub>-n<sub>s12</sub>-us<sub>s14</sub>-ø<sub>s15</sub> 'a=ø=am-ø  
 PN<sub>3</sub>=DAT.H side=ABS FIN-3SG-DAT-3SG.A-next.to-3NH.P-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S  
 Nin-kagina had waited(?) for Ur-Bau in the house of Lu-Nanna, his father;  
 ur-<sup>d</sup>ba-u<sub>2</sub> ŋir<sub>2</sub>-su<sup>ki</sup>-a til<sub>3</sub>-la-a-ne<sub>2</sub>, dam-ni-ir!(NI)  
 urbauk=ø ŋirsu='a til-a=ani=e dam=ani=ra  
 PN<sub>3</sub>=ABS GN=L1 live-PT=3SG.POSS=L3.NH spouse=3SG.POSS=DAT.H  
 itud 3-<sup>r</sup>am<sub>3</sub><sup>1</sup>, e<sub>2</sub>-a  
 itud 3=ø=am-ø e='a  
 month 3=ABS=COP-3NH.S house=L1  
 nu-ši-kur<sub>x</sub>(LIL)-ra-[am<sub>3</sub><sup>?</sup>]  
 s<sub>1</sub>nu-s<sub>2</sub>i<sub>s6</sub>-nn<sub>s9</sub>-š<sub>s10</sub>i<sub>s10</sub>-n<sub>s12</sub>kur<sub>s14</sub>-ø<sub>s15</sub> 'a=ø=am-ø  
 NEG-FIN-3SG-TERM-L1.SYN-3SG.S-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S  
 (and), while Ur-Bau stayed in Girsu, he had not visited his spouse in the house for  
 three months.”  
 mu ur-<sup>d</sup>ba-u<sub>2</sub>-ke<sub>4</sub>, dug<sub>4</sub>-ga-na ba-ni-gi-na-a-še<sub>3</sub>  
 mu urbauk=e dug-'a=ani='a s<sub>5</sub>ba<sub>s10</sub>-ni<sub>s11</sub>-n<sub>s12</sub>gin<sub>s14</sub>-ø<sub>s15</sub> 'a=ak=še  
 name PN<sub>3</sub>=ERG speak-PT=3SG.POSS=L1 MID-L1-3SG.A-firm-3NH.P-SUB=GEN=TERM  
 ur-<sup>d</sup>ba-u<sub>2</sub>-ke<sub>4</sub>, nin-ka-gi-na, in-taka<sub>4</sub>  
 urbauk=e ninkaginak=ø s<sub>2</sub>i<sub>s11</sub>-n<sub>s12</sub>taka<sub>s14</sub>-ø  
 PN<sub>3</sub>=ERG PN<sub>1</sub>=ABS FIN-3SG.A-leave-3SG.P  
 “Because Ur-Bau confirmed this (state of affairs) with his testimony, Ur-Bau divorced  
 Nin-kagina.”  
 kal-la dumu ur-<sup>d</sup>en-lil<sub>2</sub>-la<sub>2</sub> maškim  
 kala dumu urenlil=ak=ø maškim=ø  
 PN<sub>5</sub> child PN<sub>6</sub>=GEN=ABS commissioner=ABS  
 lu<sub>2</sub>-eb-gal, ur-<sup>d</sup>ištaran, di-kud-bi-me  
 luebgal urištaran=ø dikud=bi=ø=me-eš  
 PN<sub>7</sub> PN<sub>8</sub>=ABS judge=3NH.POSS=ABS=COP-3PL.S  
 “Kala, son of Ur-Enlil, was the commissioner. Lu-Ebgal and Ur-Ishtaran were (the  
 case's) judges.”

Ex. (362) below is from a short letter concerning administrative issues. Its first two sentences after the addressing statement outline the background of the ensuing part



of the letter. The first sentence contains the stative verb **ḡal**<sub>2</sub> “to exist (somewhere)”, and occurs in a thetic construction. The second one contains a transitive verbal form that cannot occur in a thetic construction.

(362) TCS 1 148 3-8 (= LEM 76 = Fs. Kienast, pp. 243-244 no. 3) (P141927)

lugal-ḡu <sub>10</sub> - <sup>r</sup> ra <sup>1</sup> ,	u <sub>3</sub> -na-a-dug <sub>4</sub> ,	4	gana <sub>2</sub>	šuku
lugal=ḡu=ra	s <sub>11</sub> u <sub>s6</sub> nn <sub>s7</sub> a <sub>s11</sub> y <sub>s12</sub> dug <sub>s14</sub> ∅	4	gana	šukur
king=1SG.POSS=DAT.H	ANT-3SG-DAT-2SG.A-speak-3NH.P	4	field	prebend
ur-diḡir-ka,	a-šag <sub>4</sub>	ka-ma-ri <sup>ki</sup> -ka,	i <sub>3</sub> -in-ḡal <sub>2</sub> -am <sub>3</sub> ,	
urdiḡirak=ak=∅	ašag	kamari=ak=’a	s <sub>2</sub> i <sub>s10</sub> n <sub>s12</sub> ḡal <sub>s14</sub> ∅ <sub>s15</sub> ’a=∅=am-∅	
PN <sub>1</sub> =GEN=ABS	field	GN=GEN=L1	FIN-L1.SYN-exist-3NH.S-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S	
mu	ḡšu-ḡsuen	lugal-ta,		
mu	šusuen=∅	lugal=∅=ta		
year	PN <sub>2</sub> =ABS	king=ABS=ABL		
lu <sub>2</sub> -ḡnin-sa-za	a-zu,	ba-an-de <sub>6</sub>		
luninsaza	azu=e	s <sub>5</sub> ba <sub>s11</sub> n <sub>s12</sub> de <sub>s14</sub> ∅		
PN <sub>3</sub>	doctor=ERG	MID-3SG.A-take-3NH.P		

“Tell my lord: ‘It is (the case) that the four *iku* subsistence land of Ur-digir is on the field of Kamari, and Lu-Ninsaza, the doctor, has taken it for himself since the first year of king Shu-Suen.”

An alternative strategy for verbs incompatible with a thetic construction is the use of a non-finite form of the verb in a construction in which the stative verb **ḡal**<sub>2</sub> “to exist (somewhere)” functions as the predicate, as in ex. (363) below.

(363) Iri-kagina 1 7:12-16 (RIME 1.9.9.1) (Lagash, 24th. c) (P222607-9)

ki-sur-ra,	ḡnin-ḡir <sub>2</sub> -su-ka-ta,	a-ab-še <sub>3</sub>
kisura	ningirsuk=ak=ta	a’ab=še
border	DN=GEN=ABL	sea=TERM
maškim	di	e-ḡal <sub>2</sub> -lam
maškim=∅	di=∅	s <sub>2</sub> i <sub>s12</sub> ḡal <sub>s14</sub> ∅=∅=am-∅
bailiff=ABS	speak.PF=ABS	FIN-exist-3NH.S=ABS=COP-3NH.S

“From the border territory of Ningirsu until the sea there were commissioners acting (in the name of the ruler).”

This example comes from a 118 line long section of a lengthy inscription of Iri-kagina, ruler of Lagash. The section describes the deplorable conditions that had prevailed before the ruler was ordered by the god Ningirsu to change them. All stative or passive verbs of this section occur in thetic sentences; ex. (363), too, is a thetic sentence. Literally the sentence says that “It was (the case) that from the border territory of Ningirsu until the sea there existed acting as commissioner”. The form **di** is the present-future non-finite form of the verb **dug**<sub>4</sub> “to speak”. The corresponding sentence from the

second part of the text, which describes the effects of the ruler's edicts, is ex. (364) below. The predicate of ex. (364) is a finite, present-future, negative form of the verb **du<sub>g</sub>** "to speak".

(364) Iri-kagina 1 9:22-25 (RIME 1.9.9.1) (Lagash, 24th. c) (P222607-9)

ki-sur-ra,	<sup>d</sup> nin- <sub>nir</sub> <sub>2</sub> -su-ka-ta,	a-ab-še <sub>3</sub>
kisura	ningirsuk=ak=ta	a'ab=še
border	DN=GEN=ABL	sea=TERM
maškim	lu <sub>2</sub>	nu-e
maškim=ø	lu=e	<sub>s1</sub> nu- <sub>s2</sub> i- <sub>s12</sub> e- <sub>s14</sub> e
bailiff=ABS	person=ERG	NEG-FIN-speak.PF-3SG.A

"From the border territory of Ningirsu until the sea no one acts (in the name of the ruler) as commissioner anymore."

The interesting thing about these examples is that they are not corresponding affirmative and negative sentences: ex. (363) is not the affirmative version of ex. (364) in the preterit tense; and ex. (364) is not the negative version of ex. (363) in the present-future tense either. In ex. (364) the subject **lu<sub>2</sub>** "person" functions basically as an indefinite pronoun. This may explain that the corresponding sentence in thethetic context uses a construction in which the grammatical subject is the activity ("acting as commissioner") and which resembles the English presentational *there*-construction.

Exx. (365) and (366) come from royal inscriptions that commemorate the erection of a building. Both inscriptions contain a part which describes the conditions that existed until the main events described in the text occurred and prompted the ruler to erect the building commemorated by the inscription. In both inscriptions these sentences arethetic; their verbal predicate is passive and stative. The function of thethetic sentences here is similar to those in the legal texts: they provide information on the state of affairs which forms the basis of the events described in the ensuing part of the text.

(365) Amar-Suena 9 4-8 (RIME 3/2.1.3.9) (Ur, 21st c.)

ud	ul-le <sub>2</sub> -a-ta,	ki-šu-tag,	šutug <sub>x</sub> (PAD.UD)	šub-ba,
ud	ul e-'a=ta	kišutag	šutug	šub-'a=ø
day	bud leave-PT=ABL	offering.place	reed.hut	fall-PT=ABS
i <sub>3</sub> -me-a-na-an-na,				
<sub>s2</sub> i- <sub>s12</sub> me- <sub>s14</sub> ø- <sub>s15</sub> 'a=nanna				
FIN-COP-3NH.S-SUB=EXCEPT				
e <sub>2</sub> -bi		nu-du <sub>3</sub> -am <sub>3</sub>		
e=bi=ø		<sub>s1</sub> nu- <sub>s2</sub> i- <sub>s12</sub> du- <sub>s14</sub> ø- <sub>s15</sub> 'a=ø=am-ø		
house=3NH.POSS=ABS		NEG-FIN-build-3NH.S-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S		

"Since the beginning of time there had been no temple built (for the Dubla-mah) except for an offering-place, which was an erected reed hut, (but now for Nanna ... Amar-Suena ... built a temple for the Dubla-mah ...)."

(366) Amar-Suena 16 16-18 (RIME 3/2.1.3.16) (Ur, 21st c.) cf. also Amar-Suena 17 13-16

ud ul-le<sub>2</sub>-a=ta,

ud ul e-'a-ta

day bud leave-PT=ABL

ni<sub>6</sub>-par<sub>4</sub>-bi nu-du<sub>3</sub>-am<sub>3</sub>,

ni<sub>6</sub>par=bi=∅ <sub>S1</sub>nu-<sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S12</sub>du-<sub>S14</sub>∅-<sub>S15</sub>'a=∅=am-∅

building=3NH.POSS=ABS NEG-FIN-build-3NH.S-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S

en nu-un-til<sub>3</sub>-la-am<sub>3</sub>

en=∅ <sub>S1</sub>nu-<sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S10</sub>n-<sub>S12</sub>til-<sub>S14</sub>∅-<sub>S15</sub>'a=∅=am-∅

priestess=ABS NEG-FIN-L1.SYN-live-3SG.S-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S

“(In Karzida, where) since the beginning of time there never had been a *gipar* built and no *en* priestess had dwelt, (Amar-Suena ... built his holy *gipar* for Nanna of Karzida).”

Ex. (367) comes from a longer text of the ruler Iri-kagina. It is from a section that describes the effects of the ruler's edicts. The first sentence explains the second one by providing information on the state of affairs that had existed before the edict was issued. The first sentence is athetic sentence.

(367) Iri-kagina 3 3:20'-24' (RIME 1.9.9.3) (Lagash, 24th. c) (P222610)

munus ud-bi-ta-ke<sub>4</sub>-ne nita 2-ta

munus ud=bi=ta=ak=ene=e nita 2=ta=∅

woman day=DEM=ABL=PL=ERG man 2=ABL=ABS

i<sub>3</sub>-tuku-am<sub>3</sub>

<sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S11</sub>in-<sub>S12</sub>tuku-<sub>S14</sub>∅=∅=am-∅

FIN-3SG.A-have-3SG.P=ABS=COP-3NH.S

munus ud-da-e-ne za-aš<sub>2</sub>-da-bi i<sub>3</sub>-šub

munus uda=ene=ra zašda=bi=∅ <sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S11</sub>n-<sub>S12</sub>šub-<sub>S14</sub>∅

woman today=PL=L3.H crime=DEM=ABS FIN-3SG.L3-fall-3NH.S

“It was (the case) that the women of former days were married to two men each, (but) today's women have been made to give up this misdeed.”

The text Iri-kagina 1, from which the above discussed exx. (363) and (364) also come, contains a 118 line long section describing the deplorable conditions that had prevailed before the ruler was ordered by the god Ningirsu to change them. This section starts with the phrase **ud ul-le<sub>2</sub>-a-ta** “since the beginning of time” in 3:2 (familiar from exx. [365] and [366] above). In this lengthy section all verbal forms with a stative meaning use athetic construction (see exx. [368]-[372] below), while the verbal forms with a dynamic meaning do not.<sup>145</sup> Note also, that none of the corresponding senten-

<sup>145</sup> The only exception is the verbal form **i<sub>3</sub>-guru<sub>3</sub>-am<sub>3</sub>** (**i<sub>3</sub>-n-<sub>S1</sub>guru-<sub>S14</sub>∅ = FIN-3SG.A-carry-3NH.P**)

ces from the second part of the text, which describes the effects of the ruler's edicts, use a thetic construction.

Being a royal inscription that uses a high register, Iri-kagina 1 may use the thetic sentences as a kind of deliberate rhetorical device to emphasize the distinction between past, the background and the present.

(368) Iri-kagina 1 4:13-18 (RIME 1.9.9.1) (Lagash, 24th. c) (P222607-9)

ašag sag<sub>9</sub>-ga, diŋir-re<sub>2</sub>-ne-ka, ki šum<sub>2</sub>-ma,  
ašag sag-'a diŋir=ene=ak='a ki šum=ak  
field good-PT god=PL=GEN=L1 place onion=GEN

ki ukuš<sub>2</sub>, ensi<sub>2</sub>-ka, e-ŋal<sub>2</sub>-lam  
ki ukuš=ak ensik=ak=∅ <sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S10</sub>n-<sub>S12</sub>ŋal-<sub>S14</sub>∅=∅=am-∅

place cucumber=GEN ruler=GEN=ABS FIN-L1.SYN-exist-3NH.S=ABS=COP-3NH.S

"It was (the case) that on the best fields of the gods were the ruler's onion and cucumber plots."

(369) Iri-kagina 1 4:21-22 (RIME 1.9.9.1) (Lagash, 24th. c) (P222607-9)

aŋše sur<sub>x</sub>(ERIN<sub>2</sub>)-ra, gud du<sub>7</sub>-du<sub>7</sub>,  
aŋše sur=ak gud dudu-∅=∅  
donkey team=GEN ox suitable~PL-TL=ABS

saŋŋa-saŋŋa-ne e-ne-keše<sub>2</sub>-ra<sub>2</sub>-am<sub>6</sub>  
saŋŋasaŋŋa=ene=ra <sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S6</sub>nne-<sub>S7</sub>a-<sub>S12</sub>kešed-<sub>S14</sub>∅=∅=am-∅

official~PL=PL=DAT.H FIN-3PL-DAT-bind-3NH.S=ABS=COP-3NH.S

"It was (the case) that the team donkeys and the unblemished oxen were harnessed for the temple administrators."

(370) Iri-kagina 1 6:28-7:1 (RIME 1.9.9.1) (Lagash, 24th. c) (P222607-9)

ŋeš-kiŋ<sub>2</sub>-ti, ninda šu-il<sub>2</sub>-la, i<sub>3</sub>-tuku-am<sub>6</sub>  
ŋeškiŋti=e ninda šuila=ak=∅ <sub>S1</sub>i-<sub>S11</sub>n-<sub>S12</sub>tuku-<sub>S14</sub>∅=∅=am-∅

craftsman=ERG bread prayer=GEN=ABS FIN-3SG.A-have-3NH.P=ABS=COP-3NH.S

"It was (the case) that the craftsmen had the bread of the *shu-ila* prayer."

(371) Iri-kagina 1 7:2-7:4 (RIME 1.9.9.1) (Lagash, 24th. c) (P222607-9)

ŋuruš min-me  
gurus=∅ min=∅=me-eš  
man=ABS two=ABS=COP-3.PL.S

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in l. 5:21, which appears to be a transitive verb with an Agent as its subject in the sentence "As *dupsik*-tax all the temple administrators delivered (a number of various items)."

addir<sub>x</sub>(PAD.DUG.GIŠ.SI)      a-bul<sub>5</sub>-la,      i<sub>3</sub>-tuku-am<sub>6</sub>  
 addir      abul=ak=∅      i<sub>s1</sub>-n<sub>s11</sub>-tuku<sub>s14</sub>∅=∅=am-∅  
 toll      PN<sub>4</sub>=GEN=ABS      FIN-3SG.A-have-3NH.P=ABS=COP-3NH.S  
 “It was (the case) that the ‘two men’<sup>7</sup> had the toll through the gate (of the nether-world).”

(372) Iri-kagina 1 7:5-7:11 (RIME 1.9.9.1) (Lagash, 24th. c) (P222607-9)

e<sub>2</sub>      ensi<sub>2</sub>-ka      ašag      ensi<sub>2</sub>-ka-ke<sub>4</sub>,      e<sub>2</sub>      e<sub>2</sub>-mi<sub>2</sub>,  
 e      ensik=ak      ašag      ensik=ak=e      e      emi=ak  
 house      ruler=GEN      field      ruler=GEN=L3.NH      house      harem=GEN  
 ašag      e<sub>2</sub>-mi<sub>2</sub>-ke<sub>4</sub>      e<sub>2</sub>      nam      dumu      ašag      nam      dumu-ke<sub>4</sub>,  
 ašag      emi=ak=e      e      nam      dumu      ašag      nam      dumu=ak=e  
 field      harem=GEN=L3.NH      house      many      child      field      many      child=GEN=L3.NH  
 zag      i<sub>3</sub>-us<sub>2</sub>-us<sub>2</sub>-am<sub>6</sub>  
 zag=∅      i<sub>s2</sub>-b<sub>s11</sub>-us<sub>s12</sub>-us<sub>s14</sub>∅=∅=am-∅  
 side=ABS      FIN-3NH.L3-next.to~PL-3NH.S=ABS=COP-3NH.S  
 “It was (the case) that the ruler’s households and fields, the households and fields of the female (members’ of the ruler’s family), the households and fields of the (ruler’s) children, each one of them was adjoining the other.”

The lengthy section of Iri-kagina 1 describing the conditons before the then current times ends with ex. (373) below. In this example, however, the COP attached to the subordinate clause functions to express polarity focus, the subject of the next section.

(373) Iri-kagina 1 7:26-28 (RIME 1.9.9.1) (Lagash, 24th. c) (P222607-9)

bi<sub>3</sub>-lu<sub>5</sub>-da      ud-bi-ta      e-me-am<sub>6</sub>  
 biluda      ud=bi=ta=ak=∅      i<sub>s2</sub>-me<sub>s12</sub>-∅=∅=am-∅  
 rule      day=DEM=ABL=ABS      FIN-COP-3NH.S=ABS=COP-3NH.S  
 “These were indeed the customs of the former days.”

Exx. (374) and (375) may belong to the category “Existential statements” in Sasse’s typical contexts of thetic sentences; see Table 6.1 above. Each one is the very first sentence stated by a messenger appearing before the addressee of the message he is delivering. By uttering these sentences the messenger introduces himself to the addressee. The oddity of the sentences stems from the situation in which the messenger is introduced not by a narrator in 3rd person but by *himself*.<sup>146</sup>

<sup>146</sup> In a sense this situation is the thetic context par excellence, if one takes Lambrecht’s (2000, pp. 623-624) characterization literally: “In a SF [= sentence focus] sentence, the subject referent is not conceptualized as actively involved in some situation but as appearing on the ‘scene’ of the discourse.”

(374) Enmerkar and the lord of Aratta 176 (ETCSL 1.8.2.3)

a-a-zu                      lugal- $\eta u_{10}$   
 aya=zu                    lugal= $\eta u=e$   
 father=2SG.POSS      king=1SG.POSS=ERG  
 mu-e-ši-in-gi<sub>4</sub>-in-nam  
 $s_4$ mu- $s_6$ e- $s_9$ ši- $s_{11}$ n- $s_{12}$ gi- $s_{14}$ en- $s_{15}$ 'a=ø=am-ø  
 VEN-2SG-TERM-3SG.A-send-1SG.P-SUB=ABS-COP-3NH.S  
 “Your father, my master, has sent me to you.”

(375) Inana and Enki Segment H 43 (ETCSL 1.3.1)

nin- $\eta u_{10}$                     a-a-zu                              za-a-še<sub>3</sub>  
 nin= $\eta u$                       aya=zu=e                          za=še  
 lady=1SG.POSS      father=2SG.POSS=ERG      2SG.PR=TERM  
 mu-e-ši-in-gi<sub>4</sub>-in-nam  
 $s_4$ mu- $s_6$ e- $s_9$ ši- $s_{11}$ n- $s_{12}$ gi- $s_{14}$ en- $s_{15}$ 'a=ø=am-ø  
 VEN-2SG-TERM-3SG.A-send-1SG.P-SUB=ABS-COP-3NH.S  
 “My lady, your father has sent me to you.”

In conclusion, this subsection has demonstrated that constructions in which a 3rd ps. sg. enclitic COP is attached to a subordinate clause may function asthetic sentences in Sumerian. These constructions function to introduce new entities, the main characters of the ensuing text, into the discourse, and/or to provide a background or setting to the events described in the ensuing or main part of the text by providing information on the state of affairs preceding the time of the main events described in the text.

Similarly to other languages, the distribution of sentences formally marked asthetic is also restricted in Sumerian: the subject's semantic role in the thetic sentences cannot be that of Agent.

### 6.3 Sentences with Polarity Focus

The examples discussed in this subsection are structurally the same as the examples discussed in the previous subsection. They are constructions in which a 3rd ps. sg. enclitic COP is attached to a subordinate clause. They differ, however, from the previous examples in their function. These constructions are used to emphasize the speaker's belief in the truth or factualness of the proposition expressed by the clause, contrasting it with its implicit negation. The scope of the focus is therefore the polarity of the clause. In contrast, the scope of the focus was the whole sentence in the thetic sentences discussed in the previous subsection.

Cross-linguistically polarity focus may be expressed in various ways. In the German example (376) below, which may be a reaction to the statement “I wonder

whether Carl has finished his book”, the stress on the auxiliary indicates polarity focus. In English polarity focus is expressed by do insertion.<sup>147</sup>

(376) Karl HAT sein Buch beendet.

(377) Carl did finish his book.

The Sumerian construction is a fairly iconic grammatical device to express polarity focus. The subordinate clause functions as the PC of a matrix, a type (Aii) CC whose S is a “dummy” S without any semantic content, so the construction may be paraphrased as “it is (the case/true) that CLAUSE”.

An instructive example of this construction is the first line of ex. (378) below:

(378) NG 214 rev. 1:10-11 (Umma 21st c.) (P131761)

ki	dam	a-ne-a-ti-ka	i <sub>3</sub> -du <sub>2</sub> -ru-ne <sub>2</sub> -ša-am <sub>3</sub>
ki	dam	aneati=ak='a	s <sub>2</sub> i <sub>10</sub> n <sub>12</sub> -durun <sub>14</sub> eš <sub>15</sub> 'a=ø=am-ø
place	wife	PN <sub>1</sub> =GEN=L1	FIN-L1.SYN-sit.PL-3PL.S-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S
dam	a-ne-a-ti	u <sub>3</sub>	mes-du gi-ne <sub>2</sub> -dam
dam	aneati=ak	u	mesdu=e gin-ed=ø=am-ø
wife	PN <sub>1</sub> =GEN	and	PN <sub>2</sub> =ERG confirm-PF=ABS=COP-3NH.S

“Aneati’s wife and Mesdu are to confirm that they (= the six slaves in question) did indeed live at the place of Aneati’s wife.”

This example comes from a legal text. Its second line uses the verb **gin** “to confirm”, which draws attention to a very important characteristic of polarity focus, namely that “[p]olarity focus is not canonically licensed in out-of-the-blue contexts” (Goldstein, 2012, p. 6). Sentences including verum focus are responsive in nature; they respond to the possibility that the proposition expressed by the clause may be in doubt.

In ex. (378) above the verb of the matrix clause makes explicit the responsive character: Aneati’s wife and Mesdu have to confirm, i.e., emphatically assert the truth of the statement that six slaves in question lived at the place of Aneati’s wife. The scope of the focus is the polarity of the proposition and not, for example, the verbal lexeme. What is presupposed and now confirmed by Aneati’s wife and Mesdu is that the six persons in question lived at the place of Aneati’s wife, and not that they, for example, ate at her place. In case of the latter, a counter assertive focus would be on the verbal lexeme, correcting the wrong presupposition that the persons in question ate at the place of Aneati’s wife.

<sup>147</sup> Cf. Gutzmann and Castroviejo Miró (2011, pp. 143-144).

In the sumerological literature, the construction is usually thought to emphasize the sentence as a whole.<sup>148</sup> This characterization is inaccurate as the construction relates not to the sentence, but to the truth or factualness of its proposition.

As polarity focus is dependent on the physical or textual context, it is not always easy to interpret a given example from an extinct language. The interpretation of the examples depends on the reconstruction of presupposed information, which cannot but make the endeavour somehow subjective. In the following four examples, which come from legal texts and from an administrative letter, the context fortunately makes clear that the function of the COP must be the assertion of the proposition's factualness.

In ex. (379) below (= [110], repeated here for convenience), Kuli-sag takes an affirmatory oath that the events described in four consecutive subordinate clause are indeed true. We know nothing about the case apart from what is in this document, but it is likely that Ama-shuhalbi was found with Itaea, and she had a very different story about how she had got there. Kuli-sag had to take an oath in a temple to prove that the events happened the way he described. By taking an oath he insists on the factualness of his version of the events in response to an alternative version probably created by Ama-shuhalbi.

(379) NG 123 1-8 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P111431)

ku-li-sag <sub>9</sub> -ke <sub>4</sub> ,	<sup>m</sup> ama-šu-hal-bi	geme <sub>2</sub>	i <sub>3</sub> -me-a,
kulisag=e	amašuhālbi=∅	geme=∅	s <sub>2</sub> i <sub>-s12</sub> me <sub>-s14</sub> ∅ <sub>-s15</sub> 'a
PN <sub>1</sub> =ERG	PN <sub>2</sub> =ABS	maiden=ABS	FIN-COP-3SG.S-SUB
na-ba-ra-sa <sub>10</sub> -a,		i-ta-e <sub>3</sub> -a,	nu-na-šum <sub>2</sub> -ma,
s <sub>1</sub> nu <sub>-s5</sub> ba <sub>-s9</sub> ta <sub>-s11</sub> n <sub>-s12</sub> sa <sub>-s14</sub> ∅ <sub>-s15</sub> 'a		itaea=ra	s <sub>1</sub> nu <sub>-s6</sub> nn <sub>-s7</sub> a <sub>-s11</sub> n <sub>-s12</sub> šum <sub>-s14</sub> ∅ <sub>-s15</sub> 'a
NEG-3NH-ABL-3SG.A-buy-3SG.P-SUB	PN <sub>3</sub> =DAT.H		NEG-3SG-DAT-3SG.A-give-3SG.P-SUB
ba-da-ṛzah <sub>3</sub> <sup>1</sup> -a-kam,			e <sub>2</sub>
s <sub>5</sub> ba <sub>-s8</sub> da <sub>-s12</sub> zah <sub>-s14</sub> ∅ <sub>-s15</sub> 'a=ak=am-∅			e
3NH-COM-disappear-3SG.S-SUB=GEN=COP-3NH.S			ninmar=ak='a
		house	GN=GEN=L1

**148** Thomsen (1984, p. 277): "When the enclitic copula occurs after a finite verb it possibly emphasizes the whole sentence." Gragg (1968, p. 99): "[in these constructions] the enclitic copula might be described as emphasizing the sentence as a whole." Delnero (2006, p. 323): "... the copula may have the function of emphasizing the entire clause in these constructions." Attinger (1993, p. 313): "proposition dans sons entire focalisée".

Rubio (2007, p. 1366) has a different view on the function of these constructions: "... the enclitic copula is attached to a finite verbal form in order to topicalize the verb itself or a syntactical argument with concord in the verbal form". He then translates our ex. (395) as follows: "on that very day, Gudea (himself) saw his master, the lord Ningirsu, in a dream."

Rubio's description overlooks the fact that the enclitic COP is attached not to the finite verb, but to the subordinate clause in these constructions.



nam-erim<sub>2</sub>-bi                      in-kud  
 namerim=bi=∅                      i<sub>s2</sub>-n<sub>s11</sub>-n<sub>s12</sub>-kud<sub>s14</sub>-∅  
 oath=3NH.POSS=ABS              FIN-3SG.A-cut-3NH.P

“In the temple of Ninmarki, Kuli-sag took the affirmatory oath that Ama-shuhalbi was a female slave, that he did not sell her, that he did not gave her to Itaea, and that she did run away.”

The grammar of the construction used in ex. (379) is also worth discussing in some detail. The four subordinate clauses function as the left-dislocated possessor of the word **namerim** “oath”: the last of the subordinate clauses is in the genitive case (in bold), and there is a resumptive enclitic possessive **=/bi/** attached to the word **namerim** “oath”. The COP occurs here attached to a left-dislocated possessor, in a structural position in which no COP functioning as a copular verb may occur. In other words, the COP is used here only in its capacity to mark polarity focus in a context where it otherwise could not be used. A similar construction occurs in ex. (380) below:

(380) NG 75 9 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P200598)

arad<sub>2</sub>-da              ama-gi<sub>4</sub><sup>si8</sup>-ni                      ba-<sup>na2</sup>ḡar<sup>ar</sup>-kam  
 arad=ak              amargi=ani=∅                      s<sub>5</sub>ba<sub>s12</sub>-ḡar<sub>s14</sub>-∅<sub>s15</sub> 'a=ak=am-∅  
 slave=GEN              freedom=3SG.H.POSS=ABS              MID-put-3NH.S-SUB=GEN=COP-3NH.S

“(A number of persons swore the assertory oath that Ur-saguba called 7 persons [to attest]) that the slave (= Ur-saguba) was indeed freed.”

In exx. (381)-(382) below the context makes it likely that the COP functions as a marker of polarity focus, as there is an event to be confirmed in both examples.

(381) FaoS 19, Ad 8 12 (Adab, 24th c.) (P217470)

lu<sub>2</sub>-ḡu<sub>10</sub>                      igi              im-mi-du<sub>8</sub>-am<sub>3</sub>  
 lu=ḡu=e                      igi=∅              i<sub>s2</sub>-m<sub>s4</sub>-b<sub>s5</sub>-i<sub>s10</sub>-n<sub>s11</sub>-du<sub>s12</sub>-∅<sub>s14</sub>-∅<sub>s15</sub> 'a=∅=am-∅  
 man=1SG.POSS=ERG              eye=ABS              FIN-VEN-3NH-L2-3SG.A-open-3NH.P-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S

“(In Kibabbar, in the house of Bazizi, there is a two-wheeled cart.) My man has indeed seen it.”<sup>149</sup>

(382) AOAT 25, p. 445, 9 2:4-6 (P101751)

u<sub>3</sub>              lu<sub>2</sub>-<sup>d</sup>er<sub>3</sub>-ra              niḡir-e,  
 u              luerrak              niḡir=e  
 and              PN<sub>1</sub>              herald=ERG

<sup>149</sup> Cf. the translation and comment of Kienast and Volk (1995, pp. 48-49): “Dies hat mein Mann tatsächlich gesehen”; “Wörtlich (wie heute in der Sprache mancher Politiker): ‘Es ist (doch wohl so), dass .....’; wir geben die enklitische Kopula hier mit ‘tatsächlich’ wieder.”

ud e-ki-sag<sub>9</sub> ba-ba-al-la-a, a-bu-ni  
 ud ekisag=∅<sub>S5</sub> ba-bal-∅=<sub>S14</sub>'a='a<sub>S15</sub> abuni=∅  
 day PN<sub>2</sub>=ABS MID-dig-3SG.S=SUB=L1 PN<sub>3</sub>=ABS  
 kaskal-a mu-til<sub>3</sub>-la-am<sub>3</sub> bi<sub>2</sub>-dug<sub>4</sub>  
 kaskal='a<sub>S4</sub> mu-<sub>S10</sub>n-<sub>S11</sub>til-<sub>S14</sub>∅-<sub>S15</sub>'a=∅=am-∅<sub>S5</sub> b-<sub>S10</sub>i-<sub>S11</sub>n-<sub>S12</sub>dug-<sub>S14</sub>∅  
 road=L1 VEN-L1.SYN-live-3SG.S-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S 3NH-L2-3SG.A-speak-3NH.P  
 “And Lu-Erra, the herald, declared that at the time when E-kisag was found Abuni was indeed on a journey.”

Exx. (383)-(385) come from legal texts, particularly trial records made for the central administration. They record the presence of certain persons at the trial documented by the text. In exx. (383)-(384) these persons are relatives of one of the litigants. The insistence of the factualness of these statements may be related to the fact that the presence of these persons was recorded for a purpose, namely, in order to prevent them from contesting the decision of the court at a later date.<sup>150</sup>

(383) NG 34 rev. 6-7 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P110981)

ur-saṇ-ub<sub>3</sub><sup>ki</sup> šeš a-hu-ma,  
 ursanubak šeš ahum=ak=∅  
 PN<sub>1</sub> brother PN<sub>2</sub>=GEN=ABS  
 ki di-da-ka i<sub>3</sub>-gub-am<sub>3</sub>  
 ki did=ak='a<sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S10</sub>n-<sub>S12</sub>gub-<sub>S14</sub>∅-<sub>S15</sub>'a=∅=am-∅  
 place case=ak=L1 FIN-L1.SYN-stand-3SG.S-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S  
 “Ur-saguba, the brother of Ahum, was indeed present at the place of the litigation.”

(384) NG 126 obv. 14-rev. 3 (Lagash, 21st c.) (P128448)

siki-tur-tur dam ur-<sup>a</sup>ba-u<sub>2</sub> a-zu, u<sub>3</sub> gu<sub>4</sub>-a<sub>2</sub>-huš dumu-ni  
 sikiturtur dam urbau azu=ak u guahuš dumu=ani=∅  
 PN<sub>1</sub> wife PN<sub>2</sub> doctor=GEN and PN<sub>3</sub> child=3SG.POSS=ABS  
 ki di dab<sub>5</sub>-ba u<sub>3</sub> nam-erim<sub>2</sub> kud-a-ba  
 ki did=∅ dab='a u namerim=∅ kud='a=bi='a  
 place case=ABS take-PT and oath=ABS cut=PT=3NH.POSS=L2.NH  
 i-ib<sub>2</sub>-šū<sub>4</sub>-ge-eš-am<sub>3</sub>  
 i-<sub>S2</sub>b-<sub>S5</sub>∅-<sub>S10</sub>šug-<sub>S14</sub>eš-<sub>S15</sub>'a=∅=am-∅  
 FIN-3NH-L2.SYN-stand.PL=3PL.S-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S  
 “Siki-turtur, the wife of Ur-Bau, the doctor, and her child Gu-ahush, were indeed present at the place where the case was decided and the affirmatory oath was taken.”

<sup>150</sup> See Falkenstein (1956a, p. 55, p. 80).

(385) NG 209 rev. 2:1-2 (Nippur 21st. c) (P134582)

[ki nam]-<sup>1</sup>erim<sub>2</sub>-ka nu-ub-š<sub>u</sub><sub>4</sub>-ge-ša-am<sub>3</sub>  
 ki namerim=ak='a <sub>s1</sub>nu-<sub>s2</sub>i-<sub>s5</sub>b-<sub>s10</sub>ø-<sub>s12</sub>šug-<sub>s14</sub>eš-<sub>s15</sub>'a=ø=am-ø  
 place oath=GEN=L2.NH NEG-FIN-3NH-L2.SYN-stand.PL-3PL.S-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S  
 “(Three persons, who were witnesses,) were in fact not present at the place of the  
 affirmatory oath.”

Exx. (386)-(389) below come from a 102 line long literary text, a hymnic self-praise of king Shulgi, in which Shulgi portrays himself as both mighty and devout. The composition abounds with verbal forms using the modal prefix /**ha**/-, which is one of the exponents of polarity focus in Sumerian (see also subsection 3.3.1 above). It contains 52 verbal forms with the prefix /**ha**/- and 3 forms with the prefix /**bara**/-, the negative counterpart of /**ha**/-. In fact, almost all finite verbs in the composition are marked for polarity focus with either /**ha**/- or /**bara**/-.

The verbal forms expressing polarity focus appear to be used as a rhetorical device in this composition, eliciting the involvement of the audience.

The insistence on the factualness of all qualities and events depicted in the composition is made explicit in l. 88 (= ex. [389] below) in which Shulgi declares: “Truly I am not boasting!”.

(386) Shulgi A 23-24 (ETCSL 2.4.2.01)<sup>151</sup>

ni<sub>η</sub><sub>2</sub>-si-sa<sub>2</sub>-e ki ha-ba-a<sub>η</sub><sub>2</sub>-ηa<sub>2</sub>-am<sub>3</sub>  
 ni<sub>η</sub>sisae ki=ø <sub>s1</sub>ha-<sub>s5</sub>b-<sub>s7</sub>a-<sub>s11</sub>y-<sub>s12</sub>a<sub>η</sub>-<sub>s14</sub>ø-<sub>s15</sub>'a=ø=am-ø  
 justice=DAT.NH place=ABS MOD-3NH-DAT-1SG.A-measure-3NH.P-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S  
 ni<sub>η</sub><sub>2</sub>-erim<sub>2</sub>-e ki la-ba-ra-a<sub>η</sub><sub>2</sub>-ηa<sub>2</sub>-am<sub>3</sub>  
 ni<sub>η</sub>erime ki=ø <sub>s1</sub>nu-<sub>s5</sub>b-<sub>s7</sub>a-<sub>s9</sub>ta-<sub>s11</sub>y-<sub>s12</sub>a<sub>η</sub>-<sub>s14</sub>ø-<sub>s15</sub>'a=ø=am-ø  
 evil=DAT.NH place=ABS NEG-3NH-DAT-ABL-1SG.A-measure-3NH.P-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S  
 “I do cherish righteousness, and I do not tolerate wickedness.”

(387) (= ex. [259] above) Shulgi A 79-80 (ETCSL 2.4.2.01)

šeš gu<sub>5</sub>-li-ηu<sub>10</sub> šul <sup>d</sup>utu-am<sub>3</sub>  
 šeš guli=ηu=ø šul utu=ø=am-ø  
 brother friend=1SG.POSS=ABS youth DN=ABS=COP-3SG.S  
 e<sub>2</sub>-gal an-ne<sub>2</sub> ki ηar-ra-am<sub>3</sub>  
 egal an=e ki=ø ηar-'a=ø=am-ø  
 palace DN=ERG place=ABS put=PT=ABS=COP-3NH.S

<sup>151</sup> A score edition of all mss. of Shulgi A can be found in Delnero (2006, pp. 1865-1910). Note, however, that Delnero's edition uses a line numbering different from ETCSL's, the one used here. The composition was one in the group of ten literary compositions, called Decad in Assyriology, used in training apprentice scribes at an advanced stage in the first part of the 2nd millennium BC (Veldhuis, 1997; Tinney, 1999).

kaš hu-mu-un-di-ni-naŋ  
 kaš=∅ <sub>s1</sub>ha-<sub>s4</sub>mu-<sub>s6</sub>nn-<sub>s8</sub>da-<sub>s10</sub>ni-<sub>s11</sub>y-<sub>s12</sub>naŋ-<sub>s14</sub>∅  
 beer=ABS MOD-VEN-3SG-COM-L1-1SG.A-drink-3NH.P

“My brother and friend is the hero Utu. I have indeed drunk beer with him in the palace founded by An.”

(388) Shulgi A 82-83 (ETCSL 2.4.2.01)

nitalam-ŋu<sub>10</sub> ki-sikil <sup>a</sup>inana nin hi-li an ki-a,  
 nitalam=ŋu kisikil inana nin hili an ki=ak=∅  
 spouse=1SG.POSS nubile DN lady joy sky earth=GEN=ABS  
 gu<sub>7</sub> naŋ-bi-a  
 gu-∅ naŋ-∅=bi=’a  
 eat=TL drink-TL=3NH.POSS=L1

hu-mu-da-an-tuš-am<sub>3</sub>  
<sub>s1</sub>ha-<sub>s4</sub>mu-<sub>s6</sub>y-<sub>s8</sub>da-<sub>s11</sub>n-<sub>s12</sub>tuš-<sub>s14</sub>∅-<sub>s15</sub>’a=∅=am-∅  
 MOD-VEN-1SG-COM-L1.SYN-sit-3SG.S-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S

“My spouse, the maiden Inana, the lady, the joy of heaven and earth, indeed sat next to me at the banquet.”

(389) (= ex. [280] above) Shulgi A 88 (ETCSL 2.4.2.01)

ni<sub>2</sub>-ŋu<sub>10</sub> silim-eš<sub>2</sub>-am<sub>3</sub> ba-ra-dug<sub>4</sub>  
 ni=ŋu=∅ silim=eš=am-∅ bara-y-dug-∅  
 self=1SG.POSS=ABS praise=ADV=COP-3NH.S MOD-1SG.A-speak-3NH.P  
 “Truly I am not boasting!” (= Lit. “I definitely do not speak of myself vaingloriously”)

The composition contains 9 subordinate clauses followed by a 3rd ps. sg. enclitic COP: ll. 21-22, 23-24 (= ex. [386] above), 25, 77, 83 (= ex. [388] above), 88.<sup>152</sup> In 8 of the 9 occurrences, the verbal form also contains the /**ha**/- prefix. The only exception is l. 24, the second line of ex. (386), which contains a negated verbal form.

The constructions in which both the /**ha**/- prefix and the enclitic COP are present appear to be hypercharacterized forms with regard to polarity focus.<sup>153</sup> The subordinate clause with the COP and the /**ha**/- prefix both fulfill the same function in these constructions. The motivation behind these pleonastic forms is most probably to lend extra emphasis. It may be no accident that these hypercharacterized forms occur in literary texts.

<sup>152</sup> The verbal form of l. 88 is **ha-ba-dab<sub>5</sub>-ba** in the ETCSL edition. It has to be emended to **ha-ba-dab<sub>5</sub>-am<sub>3</sub>**, on the basis of the mss. in Delnero’s edition (2006, 1904, l. 85).

<sup>153</sup> See Lehmann (2005) on hypercharacterization.

Two similar examples are shown below. One comes from another composition of Shulgi, ex. (390), and one from a commemorative inscription of Ur-Namma, the father of Shulgi, ex. (391).

(390) Shulgi C 124 (ETCSL 2.4.2.03)

'eme<sup>1</sup>      elam      ni<sub>n</sub><sub>2</sub>      eme-gi-ra-gin<sub>7</sub>  
eme      elam      ni<sub>n</sub>      emegir=ak=gin  
tongue      GN      thing      Sumerian=GEN=EQU  
he<sub>2</sub>-en<sub>3</sub>-ga-zu-am<sub>3</sub>  
<sub>s1</sub>ha-<sub>s2</sub>i-<sub>s3</sub>nga-<sub>s11</sub>n-<sub>s12</sub>zu-<sub>s14</sub>ø-<sub>s15</sub>'a=ø=am-ø  
MOD-FIN-COOR-3SG.A-know-3NH.P-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S

"I also do know the Elamite language as well as I do Sumerian."

(391) Ur-Namma 19 1:9-2:2 (RIME 3/2.1.1.19) (Ur, 21st c.)

sug      peš      du<sub>3</sub>-a  
<sub>s</sub>[sug      peš      du-'a=ø]  
<sub>s</sub>[swamp      seedling      plant-PT=ABS]  
sug      he<sub>2</sub>-me-am<sub>3</sub>  
<sub>pc</sub>[sug=ø]      <sub>s1</sub>ha-<sub>s2</sub>i-<sub>s12</sub>me-<sub>s14</sub>ø-<sub>s15</sub>'a=am-ø  
<sub>pc</sub>[swamp=ABS]      MOD-FIN-COP-3NH.S-SUB=COP-3NH.S  
a-šag<sub>4</sub>-bi      1(šargal)gal      gana<sub>2</sub>-am<sub>3</sub>  
<sub>s</sub>[ašag=bi=ø]      <sub>pc</sub>[šargal      gana=ø]=am-ø  
<sub>s</sub>[area=3NH.POSS=ABS]      <sub>pc</sub>[unit      field=ABS]=COP-3NH.S  
a-ta      ha-mu-na-ta-ed<sub>3</sub>(<DU<sub>6</sub>>.DU)  
a=ta      <sub>s1</sub>ha-<sub>s4</sub>mu-<sub>s6</sub>nn-<sub>s7</sub>a-<sub>s9</sub>ta-<sub>s11</sub>n-<sub>s12</sub>ed-<sub>s14</sub>ø  
a=ABL      MOD-VEN-3SG-DAT-ABL-3SG.A-ascend-3NH.P

"(For the god Nanna, Ur-Namma ...) drained a swamp planted with date palm seedlings, which was truly a swamp, with an area of 233.28 km<sup>2</sup>."

In ex. (391) the COP occurs attached to CC of an attributive CBC, in a structural position in which no COP functioning as a copular verb may occur. The COP is used here only in its capacity to mark polarity focus in a context where it otherwise could not be used.

Ex. (392) comes from a long literary text attributed to Ur-Namma. It comes from the beginning of a lament in which he bewails his own death. The text emphasizes his devoutness with the use of polarity focus to highlight the injustice he suffered by his untimely death.

(392) Ur-Namma A 157 (ETCSL 2.4.1.1)

dinir-re-e-ne-er      mu-ne-gub-bu-nam  
dinir=ene=ra      <sub>s4</sub>mu-<sub>s6</sub>nne-<sub>s7</sub>a-<sub>s13</sub>gub-<sub>s14</sub>en-<sub>s15</sub>'a-ø=am-ø  
god=PL=DAT.H      VEN-3PL-DAT-stand-1SG.S-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S  
"(I, who have been treated like this,) did serve the gods."

Ex. (393) below comes from a dialogue in a literary text. The polarity focus in the god Enlil's answer marks his insistence on the factualness of the proposition, as a condition of the fulfillment his promises.

(393) Enki and Ninhursaga 226 (ETCSL 1.1.1)

za-e	<sup>d</sup> nin-hur-sa <sub>2</sub> -ŋa <sub>2</sub>	mu-e-tum <sub>2</sub> -mu-un-nam
ze=e	ninhursagak=∅	<sub>s4</sub> mu- <sub>s10</sub> e- <sub>s12</sub> tum- <sub>s14</sub> en- <sub>s15</sub> 'a=∅=am-∅
2SG.PR=ERG	DN=ABS	VEN-L2-bring-2SG.A-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S

“(‘If I bring Ninhursaga to you, what will be my reward?’ Enlil answered the fox:) ‘If you do bring the goddess Ninhursaga to me, (I will let you erect two birch (?) trees for you in my city and you will be renowned.’)”

Ex. (394) below is from a statue inscription of Gudea, ruler of Lagash, and it also comes from a kind of dialogue. In this part of the text Gudea entrusts his statue with a message to the tutelary god of his city, Ningirsu. The content of these clauses are in contrast with everyday expectations: slave girls are as a rule not equal to their mistresses. The use of polarity focus is to be explained by Gudea's insistence on the factualness of what he is saying.

(394) Gudea Statue B 7:31-35 (cf. also Gudea Cyl. B 17:20-18:1) (Lagash, 22nd c.) (P232275)

geme <sub>2</sub>	nin-a-ni	mu-da-sa <sub>2</sub> -am <sub>3</sub> ,
geme=∅	nin=ani=da	<sub>s4</sub> mu- <sub>s7</sub> nn- <sub>s7</sub> da- <sub>s12</sub> sa- <sub>s14</sub> ∅- <sub>s15</sub> 'a=∅=am-∅
maiden=ABS	lady=3SG.POSS=COM	VEN-3SG-COM-equal-3SG.S-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S
arad <sub>2</sub> -de <sub>3</sub> ,	lugal-ni	zag
arad=e	lugal=ani=da	zag=∅
slave=ERG	king=3SG.POSS=COM	side=ABS
mu-da-ša <sub>4</sub> -am <sub>3</sub> ,		iri-ŋa <sub>2</sub>
<sub>s4</sub> mu- <sub>s7</sub> nn- <sub>s7</sub> da- <sub>s11</sub> n- <sub>s12</sub> ša- <sub>s14</sub> ∅- <sub>s15</sub> 'a=∅=am-∅		iri=ŋu=ak
VEN-3SG-COM-3SG.A-do-3NH.P-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S		citi=1SG.POSS=GEN
u <sub>2</sub> -sig-ni,	zag-ba	mu-da-nu <sub>2</sub> -am <sub>3</sub>
usigni=∅	zag=bi='a	<sub>s4</sub> mu- <sub>s7</sub> nn- <sub>s7</sub> da- <sub>s11</sub> n- <sub>s12</sub> nu- <sub>s14</sub> ∅- <sub>s15</sub> 'a=∅=am-∅
unclean=ABS	side=3NH.POSS=L1	VEN-3SG-COM-L1.SYN-lie-3SG.S-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S

“(For seven days, no grain was ground,) the slave girl was equal to her mistress, and slave and master were peers. The ritually unclean was allowed to sleep only outside my city.”

Ex. (395) below comes from the beginning of a long literary text narrating Gudea's building of Ningirsu's temple. The part preceding ex. (395) relates how the god Enlil comes to the decision that Ningirsu's temple must be built and the builder of the temple will be Gudea. Ex. (395) asserts emphatically that on the same day Ningirsu did appear before Gudea in a dream, an often used channel of communication between the divine and human spheres in Mesopotamia. Ningirsu's occurrence in a

Gudea's dream is understood as a sign of the divine decision, so the insistence on the factualness of the signifier (= the occurrence), implies the reality of the signified (= the decision).

(395) Gudea Cyl. A 1:17-18 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232300)

lugal-ni-ir	ud	ne	maš- <sub>6</sub> ni- <sub>6</sub> -ka,	gu <sub>3</sub> -de <sub>2</sub> -a
lugal=ani=ra	ud	ne	maš <sub>6</sub> nik='a	gudea=e
king=3SG.POSS=L2.H	day	that	vision=L1	RN=ERG
en	<sup>d</sup> nin-nir <sub>2</sub> -su <sub>2</sub> -ra	igi	mu-ni-du <sub>8</sub> -am <sub>3</sub>	
en	nin <sub>6</sub> nirsuk=ra	igi=∅	<sub>S4</sub> mu- <sub>S6</sub> nn- <sub>S10</sub> i- <sub>S11</sub> n- <sub>S12</sub> du- <sub>S14</sub> ∅- <sub>S15</sub> 'a=∅=am-∅	
lord	DN=L2.H	eye=ABS	VEN-3SG-L2-3SG.A-open-3NH.S-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S	

"On that day, in a nocturnal vision Gudea indeed saw his master, Lord Ningirsu."

Ex. (396) below comes from the same composition as ex. (395). In this example polarity focus indicates the narrator's insistence on the factualness of the proposition. As in exx. (386) and (388) above, the emphasis on the truth of the proposition is a rhetorical device that helps to elicit the involvement of the audience.

(396) Gudea Cyl. B 13:5 (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232301)

<sup>d</sup> suen-e	me-bi	an	ki-a
suen=e	me=bi=∅	an	ki='a
DN=ERG	essence=3NH.POSS=ABS	sky	earth=L2.NH
im-mi-dirig-ga-am <sub>3</sub>			

<sub>S2</sub>i-<sub>S4</sub>m-<sub>S5</sub>b-<sub>S10</sub>i-<sub>S11</sub>n-<sub>S12</sub>dirig-<sub>S14</sub>∅-<sub>S15</sub>'a=∅=am-∅

FIN-VEN-3NH-L2-3SG.A-exceed-3NH.P-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S

"(The true lord with a pure heart,) the god Suen, made indeed its (= the temple's) powers surpass heaven and earth."

In ex. (397) below the narrator emphasizes that Gudea's plea to the god was indeed accepted.

(397) Gudea Cyl. A 2:20 (= 3:29) (Lagash, 22nd c.) (ETCSL 2.1.7) (P232300)

gu <sub>3</sub> -de <sub>2</sub> -a-ni	niš	ba-tuku-am <sub>3</sub>
gudea=ani=e	niš=∅	<sub>S5</sub> ba- <sub>S11</sub> b- <sub>S12</sub> tuku- <sub>S14</sub> ∅- <sub>S15</sub> 'a=∅=am-∅
call=3SG.POSS=L3.NH	tree=ABS	MID-3NH.L3-have-3NH.S-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S

"His plea has indeed been heard."

Exx. (398) and (399) below come from commemorative royal inscriptions. In both examples the speaker insists on the factualness of the event described in the sentence. In both cases the speaker is not a neutral narrator, but one of the actors of the narrative: the god Ningirsu in the former, the ruler Iri-kagina in the latter. The

polarity focus indicates their emotional involvement in the events, and is part of the rhetoric.<sup>154</sup>

(398) En-ana-tum I 2 10:1-2 (RIME 1.9.4.2) (Lagash, 25th c.) (P222496)

e<sub>2</sub>-šag<sub>4</sub>      ni<sub>2</sub>-ŋa<sub>2</sub>-še<sub>3</sub>,      mu-še<sub>3</sub>-ŋen-na-am<sub>6</sub>  
 ešag      ni=ŋu=ak=še<sub>3</sub>      <sub>S4</sub>mu<sub>S6</sub>-<sub>S9</sub>y<sub>S9</sub>-še<sub>S12</sub>ŋen<sub>S14</sub>-<sub>S15</sub>Ø-<sub>S15</sub>'a=Ø=am-Ø  
 inner.room    self=1SG.POSS=GEN=TERM    VEN-1SG-TERM-go-3SG.S-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S  
 “(Ur-Lumma, ruler of Umma declared: ‘Anta-sura is mine’,) and he indeed came to my own personal quarters.”

(399) Iri-kagina 5 rev. 3:1-4 (RIME 1.9.9.5) (Lagash, 24th c.) (P222618)

nam-tag<sub>2</sub>,    <sup>d</sup>nin-ŋir<sub>2</sub>-su-da,    e-da-ak-ka-am<sub>6</sub>,  
 namtag=Ø    ninŋirsuk=da    <sub>S2</sub>e<sub>S6</sub>-nn<sub>S8</sub>-da<sub>S10</sub>-n<sub>S12</sub>-ak<sub>S14</sub>-<sub>S15</sub>Ø-<sub>S15</sub>'a=Ø=am-Ø  
 sin=ABS    DN=COM    FIN-3SG-COM-3SG.A-do-3NH.P-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S  
 šu      in-ši-de<sub>6</sub>-a-am<sub>6</sub>  
 šu=Ø      <sub>S2</sub>i<sub>S6</sub>-nn<sub>S9</sub>-<sub>S11</sub>ši<sub>S11</sub>-n<sub>S12</sub>-de<sub>S14</sub>-<sub>S15</sub>Ø-<sub>S15</sub>'a=Ø=am-Ø  
 hand=ABS    FIN-3SG-TERM-3SG.A-bring-3NH.P-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S  
 “(Having raided Lagash, the leader of Umma) surely committed a sin against Ningirsu! He surely raised a hand against him, ([and that hand] must be cut off!)”

Ex. (400) below is from an incantation against a disease called *samana*. It comes from the concluding part, in which the god Enki justifies the destruction of the disease by emphasizing its dangerous nature.

(400) AO 11276 29 (Finkel 1998, no. 1) (21st c.) (P101856)

nu-bar-re      nam-nu-bar-ra-na      ba-ni-de<sub>6</sub>-a  
 nubar=e      namnubar=ani='a      <sub>S1</sub>ba<sub>S10</sub>-ni<sub>S11</sub>-n<sub>S12</sub>-de<sub>S14</sub>-<sub>S15</sub>Ø-<sub>S15</sub>'a=Ø  
 priestess=ERG    priesthood=3SG.POSS=L1    MID-L1-3SG.A-carry-3NH.P-SUB=ABS  
 i<sub>3</sub>-me-a-ke<sub>4</sub>-eš  
<sub>S2</sub>i<sub>S12</sub>-<sub>S14</sub>me<sub>S14</sub>-<sub>S15</sub>Ø-<sub>S15</sub>'a=ak=eš  
 FIN-COP-3NH.S-SUB=GEN=ADV

“Because the cultic prostitute did contract (lit. carried it off for herself) it (= the *samana*-illness) at her vocation, ....”

<sup>154</sup> Note that Attinger (1993, p. 313) would like to translate ex. (399) with an identificational focus: “C’est l’homme d’Umma qui, après que Lagaš a été détruite, a commis une faute contre Ningirsu!”. He then remarks (note 948) that “Traduire par ‘a vraiment commis une faute’ (focalization du prédicat) conduirait à un truisme!” I disagree with him on two accounts. First, I think that the construction discussed in this subsection cannot express argument focus in Sumerian. Second, Attinger, in my view, does not take into account the rhetorical function of polarity focus. My interpretation of ex. (399) may sound like a truism, but these are the words of a ruler depicted as being in great distress.



The COP occurs here in its independent form, because the whole construction is subordinate to another construction ([**mu**] CLAUSE=GEN=ADV), whose meaning is that of a ‘because CLAUSE’ (cf. subsection 2.2 above). Ex. (400) indicates that the COP retains its verbal morphosyntactic properties in this construction; for another example of this phenomenon, see ex. (288) above.

Forms expressing polarity focus are also attested in polar questions and in their answers in Bantu languages, which is not unexpected since polar questions relate to the truth of the proposition expressed by the sentence.<sup>155</sup> Polar questions are, as a rule, difficult to identify in the Sumerian text corpus. An unambiguous example is ex. (401) below, which consists of a polar question and the answer to it. Both clauses use the construction expressing polarity focus in Sumerian.

(401) Gilgamesh, Enkidu and the netherworld, Version A 254 (ETCSL 1.8.1.4)

lu <sub>2</sub>	dumu-ni	1-am <sub>3</sub> <sup>156</sup>
lu=∅	dumu=ani=∅	1=∅=am-∅
person=ABS	child=3SG.POSS=ABS	1=ABS=COP-3SG.S
igi	bi <sub>2</sub> -du <sub>8</sub> -am <sub>3</sub>	
igi=∅	s <sub>5</sub> b <sub>-s10</sub> i <sub>-s11</sub> e <sub>-s12</sub> du <sub>-s14</sub> ∅ <sub>-s15</sub> 'a=∅=am-∅	
eye=ABS	3NH-L2-2SG.A-open-3NH.P-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S	
igi	bi <sub>2</sub> -du <sub>8</sub> -am <sub>3</sub>	
igi=∅	s <sub>5</sub> b <sub>-s10</sub> i <sub>-s11</sub> y <sub>-s12</sub> du <sub>-s14</sub> ∅ <sub>-s15</sub> 'a=∅=am-∅	
eye=ABS	3NH-L2-1SG.A-open-3NH.P-SUB=ABS=COP-3NH.S	

“‘Did you see the person, him who had one son?’ ‘I did see him.’”

In conclusion, this subsection has demonstrated that constructions in which a 3rd ps. sg. enclitic COP is attached to a subordinate clause may function to express polarity focus in Sumerian. These constructions are used to emphasize the speaker’s belief in the truth or factualness of the proposition expressed by the clause, contrasting it with its implicit negation.

Literary and commemorative texts may also contain hypercharacterized forms in which polarity focus is expressed both by the modal prefix /**ha**/- and the enclitic COP. Note that polarity focus may also be expressed by prosodic prominence on the PC in CCs, as observed in subsection 3.3.1 above.

<sup>155</sup> Cf. Hyman and Watters (1984, pp. 242-244), Schwarz (2003, p. 60) and Güldemann (2010, p. 331).

<sup>156</sup> See subsection 4.5 above for the structure of this construction.

## 6.4 Summary and Conclusions

In this chapter I argued that constructions in which the COP is attached to a subordinate clause come in two main types in terms of their function. The first construction discussed is “presentational”, functioning to introduce new entities into the discourse. In this construction the scope of the focus is the sentence, and the COP may be interpreted as a focus marker marking the whole sentence as focus. In the second construction the scope of the focus is the proposition expressed by the clause, and the construction functions to express polarity focus.

The basis of both constructions is a predication, type (Aii) CC whose S is a “dummy” S without any semantic content. The subordinate clause functions as the PC of the matrix CC; the construction may be paraphrased as “it is (the case/true) that CLAUSE”.

In exx. (379), (380) and (391), examples of polarity focus, the COP of the construction occurs in a structural position in which no COP functioning as a copular verb may occur. This may indicate that the construction has become associated with some specific grammatical meaning, and also that the COP of these constructions may have undergone a semantic shift. Ex. (400) indicates that the COP retains its verbal morphosyntactic properties also in this construction.

The question arises as to whether the use of the COP as a marker of sentence focus and polarity focus may be related to its use as marker of identificational focus. This is a question that may not be answered on the basis of our evidence, and there are no Sumerians to be asked about their own intuitions.

Nevertheless, the phenomenon that the same morpheme may be used as a COP in CCs, and as marker of identificational, polarity and sentence focus is not unattested. In Kikuyu, a Bantu language spoken in Kenya, the particle /*ne*/ is described by Schwarz (2003, pp. 54-55, pp. 59-61, pp. 96-99; 2007, pp. 140-142, pp. 147-149) to have all the four uses ascribed to the COP in Sumerian in this work. This particle occurs in copular clauses, in ex-situ focus constructions before the focused phrase (which may also be an interrogative pronoun) and in sentences with polarity and sentence focus in an immediately preverbal position. Güldemann (2003, pp. 333-334) also claims that in Bantu languages of the zones J and E in Guthrie’s (1948) classification system, it is a widespread phenomenon that the particle related to the Kikuyu /*ne*/ is used as a COP, as the marker of identificational focus and as a verbal prefix marker of predication focus (which includes polarity focus) at the same time.<sup>157</sup> The focus system of Kikuyu indicates that the system reconstructed for Sumerian in this work is not implausible from a typological point of view.

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<sup>157</sup> Kikuyu is also a language belonging to zone E. Schwarz’s and Güldemann’s descriptions of the same phenomenon differ in some points; Schwarz, for example does not consider the particle /*ne*/ a copula, while Güldemann does.

## 7 Summary and Outlook

The present study set out to achieve two main objectives: i) to give a comprehensive description of Sumerian constructions involving a copula, and ii) to reconstruct the system of focus marking in Sumerian.

The first two chapters functioned to provide background to the main parts of the work, making it accessible for readers not familiar with the grammar of Sumerian and with the writing system used to record it. Chapter 1 gave a short introduction to the grammar of Sumerian, describing its nominal and verbal template, and its case system. It also provided a characterization of the text corpus used as linguistic evidence. Chapter 2 described the most important characteristics of Sumerian non-verbal predicates.

Chapter 3 gave a typology of Sumerian copular clauses. It started with an overview of the linguistic literature on copular clauses, introducing the semantic types of copular clauses that served as the basis of the subsequent description of Sumerian copular clauses. The main part of the chapter described the Sumerian copular clauses in terms of their semantic type and information structure. It established four basic types of copular clauses: type (A) clauses, in which the subject of the clause functions as a topic; type (B) clauses, in which the topic or one of the topics of the clause is a constituent other than the subject, most frequently the left-dislocated possessor of the predicate complement or the subject; type (C) clauses, which have no topic; and type (D) clauses, in which the order of the subject and the predicate complement is inverted. It was established that type (D) clauses were specificational copular clauses and their subjects functioned as identificational foci. A fifth type of construction, type (E) was also recognized: this type consists of biclausal constructions involving a type (D) and a type (A) copular clause, used to express exhaustive identification, corresponding functionally to English *it*-clefts. On the basis of this typology, it was concluded that Sumerian copular clauses had two particular structural positions to accommodate constituents functioning as topics and identificational foci, respectively. The topic position was situated in the left periphery of the clause, while foci occurred in a particular structural position immediately before the copula.

Chapters 4 and 5 discussed the copular biclausal constructions of Sumerian. These constructions consist of an initial copular clause followed as a rule by a clause with a finite, non-copular verb. The defining characteristic of copular biclausal constructions is that one of the participants of the initial copular clause and one of the participants of the other clause are coreferential; the shared participant may occur as an overt NP only in the initial copular clause, and be present only in the form of a pronominal affix on the verbal predicate in the second clause. Two main types of copular biclausal constructions were recognized: i) the *attributive*, in which the shared participant functions as the topic in the initial copular clause; and ii) the *specificational*, in which the shared participant functions as the identificational focus in the initial copular clause.

Chapter 4 discussed the *attributive* copular biclausal constructions. The analysis of these constructions showed that they were the manifestation of a rare relativization strategy labeled as paratactic by Kuteva and Comrie (2005): their initial unit is a paratactic relative clause whose head noun occurs within a relative clause that is formally fully identical to a non-subordinate copular clause involving an enclitic copula. The chapter demonstrated furthermore that the initial copular clause of attributive copular biclausal constructions overlapped functionally not only with relative clauses, but also with appositional constructions. Type (A) copular clauses with an affixed pronominal subject in particular were found to function as substitute constructions for appositional constructions with a pronominal anchor, which were ungrammatical in Sumerian. In many of the attributive copular biclausal constructions, the copular clause was found to function as a reason or concessive clause. Chapter 4 concluded with a section on attributive copular biclausal constructions in which the enclitic copula grammaticalized into a standard marker of similitive constructions.

The subject matter of Chapter 5 was the *specificational* copular biclausal construction, which functionally corresponds to a cleft construction in English. The first part of the chapter discussed the origin of the Sumerian construction, comparing its characteristics with those of English *it*-clefts. The main difference between the English and the Sumerian constructions is that the constituent corresponding to the relative-like constituent of the English *it*-cleft is a non-subordinate main clause in the Sumerian construction. It was argued that the Sumerian specificational copular biclausal construction developed on analogy with the construction labeled type (E) in Chapter 3, called a paratactic cleft in Chapter 5, and that the development was facilitated by the influence of the other important language spoken in the area, Semitic Akkadian, which had a construction similar in many ways to the Sumerian one.

The second part of Chapter 5 focused on the question as to whether the copula may be considered a “true” focus marker in these constructions. In particular, it examined the case-marking and the position of the focal constituent. The case-marking of the focal constituents suggested that the original copula underwent a semantic shift, and functioned no longer as the verbal copula of a copular clause in these constructions, but rather as a focus marker. This conclusion was also supported by the data on word order in specificational copular biclausal construction, as the evidence showed that the position of focal constituents followed by the copula was no longer restricted to sentence initial position.

Nevertheless, the copula functioning as focus marker retained its morphosyntactic properties as a verbal copula, as it showed agreement with the focal constituent, and in subordinate contexts it used its independent form. The Sumerian system was therefore found to correspond to what Heine and Reh (1984: 181) call a “weakly grammaticalized system” and represents an intermediate stage in the grammaticalization of a copula into a true focus particle.

The evidence collected and discussed in Chapters 3 and 5 also made it possible to reconstruct the Sumerian system of focus marking. Identificational focus could

be marked by two grammatical devices in Sumerian. Initially, it was associated with a particular structural position. This syntactic focus marking was almost certainly accompanied by prosodic prominence on the focal constituent as well. The other strategy was different but ultimately was also based on the syntactic device: identificational focus could also be expressed with a biclausal construction, a kind of cleft construction, in which the first clause was a specificational copular clause. In this copular clause the subject occupied a position immediately before the copula instead of its more usual clause initial position and functioned as identificational focus material. The biclausal construction with the initial specificational copular clause was the morphosyntactic context in which the copula underwent a semantic shift, and came to be reinterpreted as the marker of identificational focus. The reinterpretation of the copula as a focus marker had the consequence that the original biclausal, cleft-like character of the construction was blurred, and the inherently syntactic focus marking evolved into a morphological one. As a kind of morphological reinforcement, the copula functioning as a focus marker was occasionally also attached to constituents whose focality was already marked by their position. When Sumerian as a vernacular left the scene at the beginning of the 2nd millennium, it had a mixed system in which both syntactic and morphological focus marking played a role.

The last chapter of the work, Chapter 6, investigated constructions in which the copula was attached to a subordinate clause. Two main types of these constructions were recognized, which differed only in their function but not in their structure. The first type typically occurs at the beginning of administrative or legal texts, and in these sentences all participants are expressed with an overt lexical NP. It was argued that these constructions functioned to introduce new entities, the main characters of the ensuing text, into the discourse, and/or to provide a background or setting to the events described in the ensuing or main part of the text by providing information on the state of affairs preceding the time of the main events described in the text. The second type of these constructions functioned to express polarity focus in Sumerian. They were used to emphasize the speaker's belief in the truth or factualness of the proposition expressed by the clause, contrasting it with its implicit negation.

From the beginning, my aim was to write a study that is accessible to both linguists and sumerologists. Modern descriptive linguistic works refer to Sumerian only rarely, and if they do, then their authors often misunderstand the descriptions. The main reason for this state of affairs is that studies on Sumerian written by sumerologists typically use idiosyncratic terminology and hardly ever gloss their examples (an important exception is Jagersma 2010). The unique writing system used to record the language presents another obstacle for the linguist not trained as an assyriologist.

This is to be regretted, for the present work has shown that Sumerian has a number of unique and interesting characteristics that may add to our knowledge about patterns of linguistic variation across languages. The attributive copular biclausal construction discussed in Chapter 4 provides an interesting and well-documented example of an otherwise only scarcely attested relativization strategy. No

typological work on relative clauses may now be considered comprehensive without taking into account Sumerian paratactic relative clauses. The specificational copular biclausal construction described in Chapter 5 provides the oldest known and documented example of the path of grammaticalization that leads from a copula to a focus marker. The thetic construction discussed in Chapter 6 adds a brand new type to the range of constructions used to express sentence focus in the languages of the world, as described by Lambrecht (2000).

I also hope that this work may set a precedent for future studies on Sumerian grammar. It may demonstrate that using the terminology and findings of modern descriptive linguistics potentially results not only in describing something well-known in a more complicated and less comprehensible way, as assumed tacitly by some in my field, but can also further our understanding the Sumerian language and the texts which are written in it in substantially greater depth.

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# Index of Quoted Texts

## A

A shir-gida to Nuska 14 41  
AAICAB 1/2, pl. 104, Ashm. 1937-061 3 134  
Aleppo 469 obv. 6' 146  
Amar-Suena 3 3 7  
Amar-Suena 9 4-8 165  
Amar-Suena 10 1:11 23  
Amar-Suena 16 16-18 166  
Amar-Suena 20 1 23  
An adab to Bau for Luma 2, 5 124  
AO 11276 29 179  
AOAT 25, p. 445, 9 2:4-6 172  
AoF 36, p. 350-351, rev. 6-7 133  
ARET 5 20 i 5 32  
Asarluhi A 36 49  
ASJ 4, p. 141, no. 6 obv. 2 20, 63  
ASJ 6, p. 127 no. 1 rev. 2-3 134  
AuOr 17-18  
– p. 228, 40 5-7 68

## B

BM 22867 obv. 2-3 152  
BM 22867 rev. 2-4 162  
BM 23678 rev. 9 128  
BM 106427 obv. 1-5 161  
BM 106451 7 33  
BM 106466 14-15 126  
BM 106470 1-4 157  
BM 106540 obv. 3 33  
BM 107955 1-4 157  
BM 110171 obv. 9-10 124  
BM 111032 1-2 156  
BPOA 1  
– 495 1-3 157  
– 972 rev. 7 40, 91

## C

CBS 6894 rev. 20 143  
CT 50, 34 2:13 147  
CTNMC 4 4:19 95, 147  
CUSAS 11  
– 83 1-8 72

– 259 22-3 123  
CUSAS 17, 13  
– 2:1 16  
– 3:8 8

## D

DP  
– 122 1:16 147  
– 138 4:15 147  
Dumuzid and Geshtin-ana 23 47  
Dumuzid-Inana C 1 140

## E

E-ana-tum 1  
– rev. 1:33-34 86  
– rev. 10:23-25 25  
E-ana-tum 5  
– 5:10-17 89  
– 7:14-20 91  
En-ana-tum I 2  
– 8:5 19  
– 10:1-2 179  
En-ana-tum I 18 2:3-7 60  
Enki and Ninhursaga  
– 201 143  
– 224 143  
– 226 177  
Enki and Ninhursaga 201 26  
Enki and Ninmah  
– 130 138  
Enlil and Nam-zid-tara  
– 10-11 26, 34, 142  
– 23-24 25, 144  
Enlil and Ninlil 143 46  
Enmerkar and En-suhgir-ana  
– 121 139  
– 276 51, 103, 108, 145  
– 276-280 52  
– 278-280 35  
Enmerkar and the lord of Aratta  
– 176 169  
Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta  
– 200-202 128  
– 420 11  
En-metena 1  
– 3:25-27 130  
– 6:21-23 12

En-metena 3 1:9-2:3 50

En-metena 7

– 14-16 60

– 21-22 17, 44

En-metena 12 6:1-3 153

En-shakush-ana 2 1-5 124

## F

FaoS 17

– 12 8-11 71, 82

– 45 10 119

– 93 1-6 93

– 121 1-6 93

– 121 1-7 160

FaoS 19

– Ad 3:16-17 83

– Ad 8 12 172

– Gir 32 13-15 72, 84

Finkel 1998, no. 1 29 179

Fs. Greenfield

– p. 614, no. 4 obv. 2-3 152

– p. 614, no. 4 rev. 2-4 162

Fs. Kienast

– pp. 243-244 no. 3

– 3-8 164

– 21-22 118

Fs. Owen

– pp. 203-204 no. 2 1-4 157

– pp. 205-206 no. 3 14-15 126

– pp. 206-207 no. 4 obv. 9-10 124

Fs. Pettinato

– p. 183, no. 4 rev. 6-7 118

– p. 183, no. 4 rev. 9 128

Fs. Sigrist

– p. 135, no. 7 obv. 3 33

– p. 136, no. 9 obv. 1-5 161

## G

Gilgamesh and Huwawa A 11 42, 92

Gilgamesh, Enkidu and the netherworld

– 36-37 126

– Version A 254 180

Gudea 52 2:7 34

Gudea 56 3:3-4 130

Gudea Cyl. A

– 1:9 97

– 1:12 64

– 1:17-18 178

– 1:20-21 90

– 1:22-23 91

– 2:20 178

– 2:28 61

– 3:3-4 83

– 3:6 46

– 3:14-15 83

– 3:29 178

– 5:9 61

– 6:12-13 118

– 7:7-8 90

– 8:10 32, 57

– 8:11-12 77

– 9:4 139

– 11:13 14

– 12:14-15 61

– 13:2 52, 101, 121

– 13:26 32, 57

– 13:127 77

– 14:27 73

– 15:19 62

– 16:15-16 99

– 16:18-20 68

– 16:31 98

– 17:10-16 73

– 17:18 62

– 19:1 98

– 19:28 99

– 22:14 99

– 24:10 96

– 26:3-5 72

Gudea Cyl. B

– 1:8-9 96

– 2:5 76, 80, 108

– 5:2-3 106

– 13:5 178

– 17:20-18:1 177

Gudea Statue B

– 1:13-14 60

– 2:10-11 74

– 2:16-17 61

– 4:7-9 12

– 7:30 130

– 7:31-35 177

– 7:49-50 24

– 7:49-54 54

– 8:21-23 14

– 8:35-37 84

Gudea Statue C 3:18-4:1 78

## Gudea Statue E

- 2:1-4 61, 84
- 9:6-10 78

## H

- Hoe and Plough 147 119
- HS 1512 obv. 9-10 119, 151

## I

- Ibbi-Suen B Segment A 37 36
- Iddin-Dagan A 172 95
- Iddin-Dagan B 43 36
- Iddin-Dagan D 30 18
- Inana and Enki Segment H 43 169
- Inana and Gudam
  - Segment C 11 122
  - Segment C 13 122
- Inana and Gudam Segment
  - A 1 23
- Inana B 92 141
- Inana C 256 44
- Inana's descent to the netherworld
  - 240 143
  - 395 143
- Iri-kagina 1
  - 3:18 8
  - 4:13-18 153, 167
  - 4:21-22 167
  - 6:28-7:1 167
  - 7:2-7:4 167
  - 7:5-7:11 168
  - 7:12-16 164
  - 7:26-28 168
  - 8:10-12 15
  - 9:22-25 165
  - 12:4-5 99
- Iri-kagina 3
  - 2:15'-18' 131
  - 3:20'-24' 166
- Iri-kagina 5 rev. 3:1-4 179
- Iri-kagina 14h 23
- ISCT 1, 204 3 71, 85
- Ishbi-Erra C 32 41
- Ishme-Dagan A + V
  - 273 120
  - 316-317 118

## L

- Lament for Urim 369 100
- Letter from Ibbi-Suen to Puzur-Shulgi 19 62
- Letter from Inanaka to the goddess Nintinuga
  - 8 49
- Letter from Shu-Suen to Sharrum-bani 24 100, 137
- Letter from X to the god Nanna 16 48, 150
- Lipit-Eshtar A 35 68
- Lipit-Eshtar B
  - 42 49
  - 49 42
- Lugalbanda 106 20
- Lugal-zage-si 1
  - 2:46-3:2 14
  - 3:32-33 13

## M

- MVN 3, 363 rev. 4-5 21
- MVN 6, 293 rev. 3:9' 130
- MVN 8, 221 5 11
- MVN 11, 168 3-5 137
- MVN 18, 505 1 157

## N

- Nam-mahni 6 2:6 15
- Nam-mahni 7 12 15
- Nam-mahni 11 9 23
- NATN
  - 131 obv. 13 72
  - 255 8-11 71, 75, 82
  - 571 obv. 12-rev. 1 134
  - 920 6-9 85
- NG
  - 2 2-5 159
  - 6 1-2 45, 158
  - 16 12-14 125
  - 20 7-8 133
  - 22 9-11 127
  - 28 5'-7' 70
  - 32 3 33
  - 32 10-12 123
  - 34 rev. 6-7 173
  - 70 9' 20, 158
  - 75 2 158
  - 75 8 129



– 83 obv. 2-3 158  
 – 83 obv. 9 117  
 – 99 11 125  
 – 99 36-42 87  
 – 101 13-14 22  
 – 106 10-11 117  
 – 113 1-2 66  
 – 113 25-27 122  
 – 120a 10-11 34  
 – 121 18-19 128  
 – 123 1-8 58, 171  
 – 126 obv. 14-rev. 3 173  
 – 127 1-5 117  
 – 137 7 63, 94  
 – 137 7-10 127  
 – 138 8-9 67  
 – 166 7 125  
 – 167 10-11 122  
 – 194 2-14 162  
 – 197 31'-33' 127  
 – 202 15-18 117  
 – 205 2:1-8 159  
 – 209 60-66 86  
 – 209 rev. 2:1-2 174  
 – 210 4:4-6 121  
 – 212 17 20  
 – 213 31 125  
 – 214 8 19  
 – 214 obv. 2:13 117  
 – 214 rev. 1:10-11 170  
 – 215 1-2 121  
 – 215 5 62  
 – 215 11-12 125  
 Ni 9944 3 71  
 NRVN 1, 2 rev. 2-3 133  
 Nungal A 75 19

## O

Ontario 2, 436 rev. 3 146  
 OSP 2  
 – 58 1-4 87  
 – 62 3:14-18 87

## P

Plautus, Mercator 758 105  
 Proverbs collection  
 – 2 + 6 Segment D 23 137

Proverbs collection 2 + 6  
 – 72 120  
 – 99 120  
 Proverbs collection 3  
 – Segment A 182 140  
 Proverbs collection 23, Segment B 19 143

## R

Rimush 18 9-13 67  
 RTC 290 obv. 7 146

## S

SANTAG 6, 154 1-9 157  
 SAT 3, 2005 8 132  
 Shulgi 86 24  
 Shulgi 2046 1'-3' 8  
 Shulgi A  
 – 23-24 174  
 – 57-58 123  
 – 79 50  
 – 79-80 123, 174  
 – 82-83 175  
 – 88 175  
 Shulgi B  
 – 132 48  
 – 148-149 124  
 – 327 142  
 Shulgi C  
 – 9 20  
 – 110-111 141  
 – 124 176  
 – Segment A 112 79  
 Shulgi D  
 – 14 138  
 – 15 140  
 Shulgi F 63 100  
 Shulgi G 8 138  
 Shul-pa-e A 12 35  
 Shu-Suen 1 4:44-46 39  
 SNAT 360 rev. 7-9 40  
 SRU  
 – 41 2:1-6 74  
 – 43 1:1-2:2 86  
 – 51 1-4 87  
 Sumerian King List 284 144

## T

- TCS 1
- 54 6 117
- 61 3-6 58, 71, 82
- 81 1-6 101, 118
- 95 3-6 128
- 121:10-12 134
- 121 rev. 2-5 137
- 128 6-7 119
- 131 3-6 131
- 143 8 146
- 148 3-8 164
- 148 21-22 118
- 177 rev. 2 19
- 216, 3-6 133
- 327 3-4 19
- The Exploits of Ninurta 661 146
- The Kesh Temple Hymn 20 138
- The Lament for Urim and Sumer A95 25
- The Law Collection of Ur-Namma 363-365 134
- The three ox-drivers form Adab 15 26, 140, 142
- The victory of Utu-hegal 29 13
- TRU 2 rev. 3 135

## U

- UET 2, 338 rev. 2:2 22
- Ur-Bau 13 8
- Ur-Bau 6 1:4-8 74
- Ur-Namma 19
- 1:9-2:2 176
- 2:7-8 39
- Ur-Namma 22 Frgm 1+2 9"-12" 75
- Ur-Namma 28 1:10-13 75, 88
- Ur-Namma A 157 176
- Ur-Namma C 62 48
- Ur-Namma D
- 28 44
- version of unknown provenance 2 138
- Ur-Ningirsu I 4:12-14 38
- Ur-Ningirsu II 6 2:4-5 79
- Ur-Ninurta A 89 129
- Ur-Ninurta C 34 41

## V

- VS 25, 69 10:13 23

# Index of Subjects

## A

- administrative letters 7
- Akkadian 4, 37, 67, 111
  - enclitic =/ma/ 48, 111, 119, 150
  - particle lū 37
  - phrase mannum kī PN/DN 145
  - preposition ana 36
  - preposition kīma 95
- Amele (Papua New Guinea) 63
- appositional constructions 47, 68, 69, 80, 92
  - attributive 70
  - with a pronominal anchor 76

## B

- Bambara 65
- Bantu languages 180, 181
- Boni (Eastern Cushitic) 110

## C

- case system 8
- categorical sentences 154
- cleft constructions 50, 102, 107, 109, 112
  - in Akkadian 111, 150
  - in English 50, 103
  - in French 105
  - in Latin 105
  - in Spanish 105
- comment 32
- composite dimensional prefix 13
- compound verbs 118, 139
- concessive clauses 84
- constituent questions 135
  - with a non-verbal predicate 25, 141
- contrastive topic 34, 43
- copula
  - independent 19
- copula dropping 22, 141, 142
- copular biclausal constructions 33
  - attributive 57
    - possessive 77
- copular clauses
  - negated 24

- predication 27
- specificational 28, 46, 103
- type (Ai) 32, 42, 50, 56, 66, 67, 70, 71, 72, 73, 76, 77, 80, 88, 96, 121, 130
- type (Aii) 33, 42, 46, 51, 52, 54, 56, 57, 67, 68, 71, 73, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 88, 102, 108, 109, 111, 152, 181
- type (Aiii) 34, 42, 52
- type (Bi) 38, 56, 75, 88, 89, 160
- type (Bii) 36, 41, 73
- type (Biii) 42, 92
- type (Biv) 42
- type (Bv) 44
- type (C) 45
- type (Di) 46, 47, 50, 56, 101, 102, 104, 108, 109, 111, 121
- type (Dii) 48, 56, 90, 92
- type (E) 50, 109
- correlative constructions 65

## D

- desemanticization 148, 181
- diagnostic cases 113

## E

- English 37, 50, 70, 103, 106, 155
  - it-cleft 29, 31, 49, 51, 56, 102, 103, 106, 109, 111, 150
  - presentational there-construction 165
- equative constructions 95
- equative enclitic =/gin/ 95, 100
- extension 149, 172

## F

- focus
  - identificational 29, 54, 181
  - of negation 127, 128, 129
  - polarity 36, 43, 170
    - in English 37, 170
    - in German 37, 170
    - in Hungarian 37
  - sentence 45, 154, 181
- focus proper 115
- French 105

**G**

genitive constructions 42  
 German 37  
 grammaticalization 148

**H**

Hungarian 34, 37, 65, 116, 132, 135  
 hypercharacterized forms 100, 149, 175, 180

**I**

imperatives 16  
 inalienable possession 18  
 interrogative pronouns 135, 136

**J**

Japanese 155

**K**

Kihungan (Bantu) 106  
 Kikuyu (Bantu) 145, 181  
 – particle /ne/ 181  
 Koyaga 65

**L**

Latin 105  
 left-dislocated possessor 30, 36, 38, 41, 48,  
 49, 88, 89, 172  
 legal texts 7, 156, 170, 173  
 literary texts 6, 174

**M**

modal prefixes 16  
 morpheme-per-morpheme intertranslatability 150

**N**

negation prefix /nu/- 60  
 nominal template 7  
 non-finite verbal forms 59  
 numerical expressions 116, 130, 132, 134

**O**

overlap model 149

**P**

paratactic clefts 109, 110, 111  
 paratactic relativization strategy 63  
 particle /=nanna/ 133  
 particle /nu/ 21, 24  
 phonetic reduction 149  
 polarity focus 168  
 polar questions 180  
 prefix /bara/- 174  
 prefix /ha/- 15, 37, 174, 175, 180  
 prefix /nu/- 15, 21, 24  
 presentational clauses 45, 154, 181  
 proper names 22

**R**

reason clauses 81  
 relative clause 59  
 – finite 59, 107  
 – non-finite 59  
 – paratactic 66, 67, 68, 69, 76, 80, 88, 89, 90,  
 92, 94, 107, 108  
 – subordinate 59  
 – with the copula 62, 94  
 replication of use patterns 111  
 royal inscriptions 6, 164  
 Russian 65

**S**

Sandhi writing 146  
 seal inscriptions 24  
 simulative constuctions 95  
 simple dimensional prefix 13  
 Spanish 105  
 stative verbs 161, 164  
 Sumerian-Akkadian bilingualism 4

**T**

thetic contexts 155, 161  
 thetic sentences 45, 154, 161, 169  
 – in Chinese 110  
 – in English 155

– in Japanese 155  
topic 31, 54  
topic denotation 39, 91  
truncated clefts 103

## **V**

verbal template 10  
verbal tense 13

## **W**

writing system 4  
– CV-VC sequence 5