Introduction to the Lessons

The following lessons are designed to help you master step-by-step the essentials of Hittite morphology and syntax. Each lesson begins with references to the sections of the grammar where you will find descriptions and illustrations of the grammatical categories being introduced. When you have read this material and memorized the necessary paradigms, you may test your knowledge by working through the translation exercises from Hittite to English. Footnotes give help with special problems or points not yet treated systematically. The vocabulary lists for each lesson give the new words introduced. Words from previous lessons may conveniently be found in the comprehensive vocabulary.

Before beginning lesson 1, you should familiarize yourself with the basics of the Hittite writing system in §§1.1–1.7 and 1.17–1.18 in the grammar and of the phonology in §§1.52–1.54 (vowels) and §§1.103–104 (consonants). Unless you have strong linguistic interests, for purposes of learning the language it is best to learn the details of orthography and phonology as they become relevant in the lessons. It will be helpful to read also §§32.12–32.14 on the conventions for use of superscript in transliterating and transcribing Hittite.

In the vocabularies provided below information is sometimes given as to the grammatical gender of the Hittite word known to underlie Sumerograms or Akkadograms. These notations refer *not* to the grammatical gender of the Sumerian or Akkadian words themselves but rather to the Hittite words for which they stand in Hittite contexts.

Many of the exercise sentences, particularly those in later lessons, are drawn from actual Hittite texts. Those drawn directly from texts, without alteration, are marked with ♦. Those drawn from texts but reproduced here with minor modifications are marked with ◊. The absence of either symbol indicates a sentence was created by the authors.

Lesson 1

Grammar

All Hittite nouns and adjectives are inflected with essentially the same set of endings. For both nouns/adjectives and verbs there are several ways of forming the stems to which the endings are added. This lesson introduces the largest class of nouns and adjectives, those with stems in -*a*-. For an overview, see the table of nominal endings in §3.1, but concentrate on learning how these endings appear with *a*-stem nouns and adjectives by reading §4.1 and memorizing the paradigms for *atta*- 'father' (§4.2), *pēda*- 'place' (§4.6) and *kunna*- 'right-hand' (§4.10). The use of the nominal cases in Hittite resembles that in other case languages: the nominative marks the subject as well as the predicate with "linking verbs" like 'to be', the accusative marks the direct object, the genitive marks possession or appurtenance, the dative-locative marks the indirect object or place where or to which, the ablative marks place from which and the instrumental marks means or accompaniment. The Old Hittite allative marks only place to which. For further details, see chapter 16.

There are two types of Hittite verbs, the so-called *mi*- and *ḫi*-conjugations, whose inflection differs in the singular but not in the plural. This lesson introduces the present indicative of two classes of *mi*-conjugation verbs. Examine just the **present tense** endings of the *mi*-conjugation in the table in §11.6 (avoid being distracted by variants in parentheses and footnotes). This lesson introduces consonantal root stems and stems with the suffix -*nu*-.

I. Some consonantal root stems simply add the endings to an invariant stem. Look at and memorize the **present tense** portion of the paradigm for *karp*- 'to lift' in §12.8. Note in particular the spelling patterns for this and other verbs ending in two consonants.

Other consonantal root stems show an alternation between *e* and *a*. Read §12.2 and learn only the **present tense** portion of the paradigms for *ēpp*- 'seize' and *ēd*- 'to eat' (§12.3), noting the special features of the latter.

Other verbs show an alternation between *e* and zero. Read §12.5 and learn only the **present tense** portion of the paradigm for *kuen*- 'strike; kill' (§12.6).

II. The stem of verbs in -*nu*- does not change. Look at and learn only the **present tense** portion of the paradigm for *waḫnu*- 'to turn (tr.)' (§12.44). But note the special change of the ending -*(nu)weni* to -*(nu)meni* (see §1.133).

Translate the Hittite present tense with an English simple present (e.g., 'goe<u>s</u>'), present progressive ('<u>is</u> go<u>ing</u>'), or future ('<u>will</u> go'), according to what seems most

natural for a given sentence. Read §§22.1 and 22.7–22.9 for more on the most common uses of the present tense. Since the verbal endings show person and number of the subject, Hittite, like most such languages, does not use overt personal pronouns for the subject except in cases of emphasis or contrast.

These lessons, with few exceptions, use the most common Hittite word order. Read §§30.1–30.3 for the basic principles of word order. Deviations from the basic order are extremely frequent in actual Hittite, but the conditions for them are best learned gradually. NB that the multiple ambiguity of the ending *-aš* in *a*-stems in particular means that one must pay close attention to the rule of Hittite word order that genitive modifiers **precede** their head noun (exceptions will be avoided in the early lessons).

One important feature of Hittite is that many grammatical morphemes, such as conjunctions, pronouns and "particles," are not independent words but "enclitics" that carry no accent and appear only attached to full words. These are marked in transcription (not in transliteration) with the symbol ⸗.

Since Hittite scribes did not provide punctuation marks, one of the more difficult tasks in learning Hittite is determining the boundaries of clauses. Certain features of word order provide clues. (1) The conjunctions *nu*, *ta* and *šu*, when they are present, always mark the beginning of a clause. (2) The enclitic personal pronouns such as *-mu* 'me', *-tta* 'you' and *-an* 'him, her, it', the quotative *-wa(r)*, and the reflexive particle *-za* are always attached to **the first word in a clause**, and the local particles such as *-kan*, *-ašta*, *-šan* regularly appear there. (3) If the clause begins with a phrase based upon Akkadian or Sumerian words (*ANA* LUGAL), these particles will be attached to the final word in that short phrase (e.g., *ANA* LUGAL KUR ᵁᴿᵁ*Ḫatti⸗wa⸗kan*). (4) The finite verb normally stands at the end of its clause. In some cases it stands instead at the very beginning for emphasis, but it almost never occurs in the middle of a clause. A combination of features 2, 3 and 4 places the clause boundary in the following sequence of words where marked with #: LÚ.KÚR-*aš⸗za walleškezzi* # *INA* KUR ᵁᴿᵁ*Almina⸗war⸗an⸗kan kattanda ŪL kuwatqa tarnummeni* 'The enemy boasts: "We will not at all allow him down into the land of Almina"'. Beginners have a strong tendency to try to take the words before enclitic elements with the preceding clause; this must be resisted.

Translation Exercise

1.1. *annaš* NINDA-*an* GÍR-*it kuerzi*

1.2. *nu* NINDA-*an atti* ZAG-*it* ŠU-*it*[1] *parā ēpzi*

1.3. *attaš annašš⸗a* NINDA-*an adanzi* GEŠTIN⸗*ya*[2] *akuanzi*

1.4. *attaš⸗za*[3] DUMU.MUNUS⸗*ŠU* ŠU.MEŠ-*it karpzi*

1.5. LÚ.MEŠ-*eš* MUNUS.MEŠ⸗*ya takšan ašanzi*[4]

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1. When context makes it clear that a noun phrase belongs to the subject, Hittite may omit any possessive marker. Sentences 1.1–1.3 are meant to go together.

2. Read as GEŠTIN-*ann⸗a*, and see note 219 to §1.148.

3. See §28.26.

4. We intend *ašanzi* here to be a form of *eš-/aš-* 'to reside', as in the Laws §53. Sentences 1.4 and 1.5 illustrate the fact that Sumerograms without phonetic complements are not marked for nominative and accusative. One must use word order and the overall content to determine their syntactic role.

1.6. *mān≠mu*[5] NINDA-*an zanuši n≠an*[6] *ēdmi*

1.7. LÚ.KÚR-*aš≠kan antuḫšuš* GÍR-*it kuenzi*

1.8. NINDA-*an ēzzazzi*[7] GEŠTIN-*an≠ma ŪL ekuzzi*

1.9. *attaš* DUMU-*lan* ᴳᴵˢGIDRU-*it walḫzi*

1.10. ᴸᵁMUḪALDIM-*aš* ŠAḪ-*an* IZI-*it zanuzzi*

1.11. LÚ.MEŠ-*eš natta ēšteni*[8]

1.12. DUMU.MEŠ É.GAL MUNUS.LUGAL-*aš padān*[9] ᴳᴵˢGÌR.GUB *karpanzi*

1.13. LÚ.MEŠ KÚR-*uš≠kan*[10] *kiššeruš* GÍR-*az arḫa kuermi*

1.14. GUD (or GU₄)-*aš* ZAG-*an* ᵁᶻᵁZAG.LU-*an* IZI-*it zanumeni n≠an*[6] *adueni*

1.15. *mān* NINDA≠*YA ēzši MÊ≠YA≠ya ekušši nu≠za* ÌR≠*YA ēšši*[11]

1.16. UR.MAḪ-*aš* LÚ-*an naḫšarnuzzi*

1.17. *šumeš* DINGIR.MEŠ-*eš* ḪUR.SAG.MEŠ-*uš* GIŠ.ḪI.A-*it warḫunutteni*

1.18. LÚ KÚR-*i pēran*[12] A.ŠA.ḪI.A-*uš paḫḫašnumeni*

Vocabulary

-a (conj. and focus part.) (geminating preceding consonant)/*-ya* (after vowel) 'and; also' (cf. Latin *-que*)[13]

-a (conj. and focus part.) (non-geminating)/*-ma* (cf. Greek δέ); may mean 'but' (adversative)[14]

anna- (AMA-*(n)a-*) (comm.) 'mother'

antuḫša- (UN-*(š)a-*/LÚ.U₁₉.LU-*a-*) (comm.) 'man, human being'[15]

arḫa 'away, off' (preverb), with some verbs (like *warnu-* 'burn') it denotes completeness ('burn up').

atta- (*ABU/ABI*) (comm.) 'father' (for the Akkadian case endings, see §32.20)

eku-/aku- 'to drink' (see paradigm in §12.3 and note 3 there)

ēpp-/app- 'to take, seize, grasp, hold; *parā ēpp-* 'to hold out (toward someone)'

ēš-/aš- A 'to be'

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5. *-mu* is 'for me' (dat.).

6. *-an* is 'it' (acc. sg. comm.), referring back to the common gender noun in the preceding clause.

7. For the special rule that produces the unexpected phonetic sequence expressed by this spelling, see §1.132.

8. The syllabic writing of *natta* (rather than its more common Akkadographic spelling *ŪL/UL*) and the absence of the particle *-za* illustrate features of Old Hittite. See §28.37 and contrast the last clause of sentence 1.15, which shows the New Hittite grammar.

9. This form is Old Hittite (§3.15). A genitive normally precedes the noun on which it depends (§16.51). This genitive marks purpose (§16.40) and is best translated as 'for'.

10. For the construction of LÚ.MEŠ KÚR-*uš kiššeruš*, see §16.19. For the meaning of ablative GÍR-*az*, see §16.90. These two features are specifically New Hittite. For the use of *-kkan*, see §28.101, end.

11. For the use of *-za*, see the refs. in note 8 immediately above.

12. Instead of prepositions Hittite has postpositions, place words that follow the nouns they modify (§20.15). Thus LÚ.KÚR-*i pēran* 'before/in the face of the enemy'.

13. For the uses of the conjunction in this lesson, see §§29.27 and 29.39. The focus particle will be identified when it occurs.

14. For the use of the particle in sentence 1.8, see §28.155, end. Its extremely complex use and difference vs. the conjunction will be introduced as examples warrant.

15. As is clear from the paradigm in §4.2, in older Hittite this noun has a complicated allomorphy, but in NH it is regular *a*-stem *antuḫša-*.

ēš-/aš- B 'to sit, reside' (see §28.29 note 28).

ēd-/ad- 'to eat' (see paradigm in §12.3)

ḫaššuššara- (MUNUS.LUGAL-(*r*)*a*-) (comm.) 'queen' (see for the stem §2.39)

-kkan (see below sub *kuen*-)

karp- 'to lift, raise'

ke/iššara- (ŠU-(*r*)*a*-, *QATU*) (comm.) 'hand'

kuen-/kun- 'to strike' (without *-kkan*); 'kill' (with *-kkan*) (see §28.114)

kuer-/kur- 'to cut'

kunna- (ZAG-(*n*)*a*-) 'right-(hand)' (adj.)

mān 'if, whenever' (in Old Hittite also 'when')

naḫšarnu- 'to frighten, terrify, scare'

natta 'not' (usually written as *ŪL* or *UL*)

nu (conj.) (marks beginning of a clause; indicates progression of the action; usu-
   ally 'and (then)', but sometimes best left untranslated in English) (see §§29.14).
   nu appears as just *n-* before clitics beginning with a vowel (see §1.83)

paḫḫašnu-, *paḫšanu-* 'to protect, guard' (with d.-l. and *pēran* 'against . . .')

paltana- (^{UZU}ZAG.LU-(*n*)*a*-) (comm.) 'shoulder'

parā 'forth, out' (preverb)

pada- (GÌR-*a*-) (comm.) 'foot'

pēran 'before, in front of' (postposition)

pišena/i- (LÚ-(*n*)*a/i*-) (comm.) 'man, male person' (in NH, but see §4.73!)

šumeš 'you' (plural)

takšan 'together'

walḫ- (GUL-*aḫḫ*-) 'to strike, hit'

walwa/i- (UR.MAḪ-*a/i*-) (comm.) 'lion'

warḫunu- 'to make rough, bushy'

wiyana- (GEŠTIN-(*n*)*a*-) (comm.) 'wine'

-za (the "reflexive" particle) (its very broad range of uses will be introduced as they
   occur)

zanu- 'to cook (something)'

A.ŠÀ-*(n)a*- (comm.) 'field'

DINGIR.MEŠ 'gods'

DUMU-*(l)a*- (comm.) 'child; son'

DUMU.É.GAL-*i*- (comm.) 'palace official, courtier' (pl. DUMU.MEŠ É.GAL)

DUMU.MUNUS-*a*- (comm.) 'daughter'

^{GIŠ}GIDRU-*a*- (comm.) 'staff, stick'

GÍR-*a*- (neut.) 'knife'

^{GIŠ}GÌR.GUB 'stool'

GIŠ.ḪI.A 'trees'

GUD (or GU₄) 'bovine, cow, steer'

ḪI.A (pl. marker) (used almost exclusively with logograms, and then mostly with
   those referring to animals or inanimate objects)

ḪUR.SAG-(*r*)*a*- (comm.) 'mountain'

ÌR-*(n)a/i*- (comm.) '(male) servant, (male) slave'

IZI 'fire'

LÚ KÚR-(*n*)*a*- (comm.) 'enemy' (also used as an adj. 'hostile, enemy')

MEŠ (plural marker) (used almost exclusively with logograms (such as ŠU.MEŠ 'hands', MUNUS.MEŠ 'women'); sometimes inserted between components of a complex logogram, such as DUMU.MEŠ É.GAL or LÚ.MEŠ KÚR). See §1.18.

^{LÚ}MUḪALDIM-*a*- (comm.) 'cook'

MUNUS 'woman'

NINDA-*a*- (comm.) 'bread; food' (may stand for more than one Hittite word)

ŠAḪ-*a*- (comm.) 'pig'

MÊ 'water'

-*ŠU* 'his, her, its' (suffixed only to Sumerograms and Akkadian words, not to syllabically written Hittite words)

-*YA* 'my' (suffixed only to Sumerograms and Akkadian words)