

Sumerian word order patterns  
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- (1) nam-lugal-bi unug<sup>ki</sup>-še<sub>3</sub> ba-de<sub>6</sub>  
 nam-lugal<kingship>-3POSS unug<Unug>-TERM PASS-de<sub>6</sub><bring>  
 Trans.: its/their kingship was brought to Unug  
 (nam-lugal = "ship-king", <sup>ki</sup> = determinative meaning "place")

Table 1. Word order information on five SOV languages

	BWO	Adpos	Dem/N	Num/N	Adj/N	G/N	Pro/N	Rel/N
Akkadian	<b>SOV</b>	prep	<b>NDem</b>	NumN	<b>NAdj</b>	<b>NG</b>	<b>NPro</b>	<b>NRel</b>
Basque	<b>SOV</b>	post	<b>NDem</b>	NumN (b)	<b>NAdj (b)</b>	GN	ProN	RelN (b)
Japanese	<b>SOV</b>	post	DemN	NumN (b)	AdjN	GN	ProN	RelN
Sumerian	<b>SOV</b>	<b>(post)</b>	<b>NDem</b>	<b>both</b>	<b>NAdj</b>	<b>NG</b>	<b>NPro</b>	<b>NRel</b>
Turkish	<b>SOV</b>	post	DemN	NumN	AdjN	GN	both	RelN

- (2) dün ben gör-düm bir filim  
 Gloss: yesterday I.NOM see-Past.1SG one film

Sanders (1978:72-74):

- U.9 All languages have sentences with sentence-initial adverbial constructions.
- U.10 All languages have sentences with non-initial adverbial constructions.
- U.11 For the most if not all adverbial constructions in all languages, the most "normal", most prosaic, and implicationaly most unmarked ordering for such constructions is in a non-sentence-initial position — following either the superficial subject or the superficial object or both.
- U.12 If a language has S(O)V orderings but not SVO orderings, then it will have S(O)ADV V orderings, but no S(O)V ADV orderings.

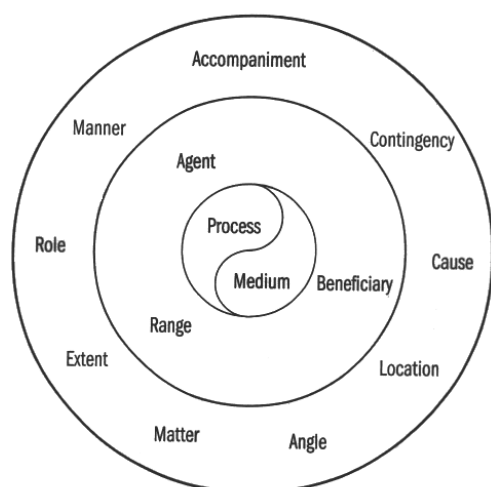
Sumerian word order patterns

Major patterns: S V, S O V, S A V, S A O V

Minor patterns: O S V, S O A V

Marginal patterns: (S) V O, V S O (in literary texts only)

- (3) a-a (water-GEN/LOC?)



- A = Agent
- B = Beneficiary (Recipient or Client)
- L = Location (usually motion from or to a place)
- M = Medium (Actor or Goal depending on the valency of the verb)
- P = Process (verb)

Figure 1. Clause nucleus of Process + Medium, inner ring of Agent, Beneficiary and Range and outer ring of circumstances (Halliday 2004:296)

- (4) **M L P** : lugal- $\tilde{g}u_{10}$  keš<sup>ki</sup>-še<sub>3</sub> na- $\tilde{g}en$   
king-1SG.POSS Kec-TERM MDL-go  
Trans.: My king went to Kec
- (5) **A L M L P**: ensi<sub>2</sub>-ke<sub>4</sub> kisal di $\tilde{g}ir$  sirara<sub>6</sub>-ta-ka sa $\tilde{g}$  an-še<sub>3</sub> mi-ni-il<sub>2</sub>  
ruler-ERG courtyard deity Sirara-ABL-GEN:LOC head heaven-TERM CISLOC-  
LOC-raise  
Trans.: The ruler raised (his) head towards heaven in the courtyard  
of the deity from Sirara
- (6) **L P**: eridug<sup>ki</sup>-še<sub>3</sub> ba- $\tilde{g}en$   
Eridug-TERM 3SG/PL.NHUM:DAT-go  
Trans.: went to Eridug
- (7) **L P-png**: nibru<sup>ki</sup>-še<sub>3</sub> ba-du-un  
Nibru-TERM 3SG/PL.NHUM:DAT-go-1/2SG.HUM  
Trans.: I am/You are going to Nibru

Table 2. Processes where Medium = Actor

Pattern	Frequency
M L P	35
L P	30
L P-png	16
L M P	5
Total	86

- (8) **L M P**: kul-aba<sub>4</sub><sup>ki</sup>-še<sub>3</sub>  $\tilde{g}e_{26}$ -e ga- $\tilde{g}en$   
Kulaba-TERM 1SG.HUM MDL-go  
Trans.: I will go to Kulaba
- (9) **L M P**: unug<sup>ki</sup>-ta <sup>d</sup>inana ba-da-an-kar  
Unug-ABL Inana 3.NHUM-ABL-LOC-flee  
Trans.: From Unug Inana fled

Table 3. Processes where Medium = Goal

Pattern	Frequency
M L P	28
A L M P	5
L M P	4
M P L	2
L P L	1
Total	38

- (10) **M L P**: nam-lugal-bi a-ga-de<sub>3</sub><sup>ki</sup>-še<sub>3</sub> ba-de<sub>6</sub>  
kingship-3SG/PL.POSS Agade-TERM PASS-bring  
Trans.: Its/Their kingship was brought to Agade
- (11) **M L P**: nam-lugal-bi  $\tilde{h}a$ -ma-zi<sub>2</sub><sup>ki</sup>-še<sub>3</sub> ba-de<sub>6</sub>  
kingship-3SG/PL.POSS Hamazi-TERM PASS-bring  
Trans.: Its/Their kingship was brought to Hamazi
- (12) **M L P**: ni $\tilde{g}$ <sub>2</sub> asil<sub>3</sub>-la<sub>2</sub> lagaš<sup>ki</sup>-ta u<sub>3</sub>-um-de<sub>6</sub>  
thing joy-GEN Lagac-ABL CONN-CISLOC-bring  
Trans.: and then brought thing of joy from Lagac
- (13) **M L P-png**: sig-sig a-ga-de<sub>3</sub><sup>ki</sup>-še<sub>3</sub> i<sub>3</sub>-gi<sub>4</sub>-in  
wind Agade-TERM FFM-turn-1/2SG.HUM  
Trans.: I/You turned the wind to(wards) Agade

- (14) **ALMP:** <sup>d</sup>en-ki-du lugal eg<sub>2</sub> pa<sub>5</sub>-ra-ke<sub>4</sub> urim<sup>ki</sup>-ta eg<sub>2</sub> pa<sub>5</sub> ba-da-an-kar  
 Enkidu king dyke canal-GEN-ERG Urim-ABL dyke canal 3.NUM-ABL-3SG.HUM-  
 take  
 Trans.: Enkidu, the king of dyke (and) canal, took away dyke (and)  
 canal from Urim
- (15) **LMP:** aratta<sup>ki</sup>-aš inim mu-un-bur<sub>2</sub>  
 Aratta-TERM word CISLOC-3SG.HUM-spread  
 Trans.: spread the word to Aratta
- (16) unug<sup>ki</sup>-ge ni<sup>g</sup><sub>2</sub>-gur<sub>11</sub> ni<sub>2</sub>-ba-ke<sub>4</sub> <sup>giš</sup>ma<sub>2</sub> he<sub>2</sub>-em-da-gid<sub>2</sub>-de<sub>3</sub>  
 Unug-ERG goods self-3SG/PL.NHUM.POSS -GEN:DIR boat MDL-CISLOC-COM-  
 sail-3.HUM  
**MP-png L:** <sup>giš</sup>ma<sub>2</sub> he<sub>2</sub>-em-da-la<sub>2</sub>-e e<sub>2</sub>-za-gin<sub>3</sub> aratta<sup>ki</sup>-še<sub>3</sub>  
 boat MDL-CISLOC-COM-bind-3.HUM Ezagin Aratta-TERM  
 sukkal an-sig<sub>7</sub>-ga-ri-a iri-na mu-ni-zig<sub>3</sub> KIŠI<sub>4</sub>-na mu-ni-šub  
 minister Ansigaria city-3SG.HUM.POSS:LOC CISLOC-LOC-rise ...  
 Trans.: Unug will be bringing goods on their own by boat. *They will*  
*bind [tow?] with (them) the boat to the Ezagin of Aratta.* Minister  
 Ansigaria rose in his city ...
- (17) **LP-png L:** gar<sub>3</sub>-gar<sub>3</sub> kur-ra-ke<sub>4</sub> he<sub>2</sub>-en-tum<sub>2</sub>-mu-de<sub>3</sub> kul-aba<sup>ki</sup>-še<sub>3</sub>  
 high\_place mountain-GEN-DIR MDL-3SG.HUM-bring-IMPF-3SG.HUM Kulaba-  
 TERM  
 Trans.: Over the high places of the mountain he was bringing him to  
 Kulaba
- (18) id<sub>2</sub> ma<sup>h</sup>-gin<sub>7</sub> mi-ni-ib-be<sub>2</sub> i<sub>3</sub>-ur<sub>4</sub>-ru gu<sub>2</sub>-erim<sub>2</sub>-še<sub>3</sub>  
 river mighty-EQT CISLOC-LOC-3SG/PL.NHUM-say FFM-gather-3.HUM enemy-  
 TERM  
 Trans.: river said [roared] like (being) great (--) it was gathering  
 towards enemies
- (19) na-ru<sub>2</sub>-a ud ul-la<sub>2</sub>-še<sub>3</sub> me-gub-bu-uš me-da ud-še<sub>3</sub>  
 stele day distant-GEN-TERM CISLOC-stand-3PL exist-COM day-TERM  
 Trans.: steles (which are) standing for future days, for days to come
- (20) me ki-en-gi-ra-ke<sub>4</sub> ki ud-ba ha-la-me-eš ud ul-li-še<sub>3</sub>  
 essence Kiengir-GEN-ERG place day-3SG/PL.NHUM.POSS:LOC distribute-  
 COP-3PL day distant-GEN-TERM  
 Trans.: ... the divine powers of Sumer, which at that time were  
 forgotten forever
- (21) ge<sub>26</sub>-e nu-mu-da-sa<sub>2</sub>-e-en ud da-ri<sub>2</sub>-še<sub>3</sub>  
 1SG.HUM NEG-CISLOC-COM-equal-1/2SG.HUM day side-distant-ALL  
 Trans.: I cannot equal you ever

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#### Sumerian word order patterns based on corpus analysis

Most frequent patterns: L V, S L V, O L V

Less frequent patterns: L S V, L O V, S L O V

Marked pattern(?): O V A (A = adverbial of time/space)

## Abbreviations

1, 2, 3 = 1st, 2nd, 3rd person  
ABL = ablative  
CISLOC = cislocative (the term ventive is often used by sumerologists)  
COP = copula  
DAT = dative  
DIR = directive ((motion+) arriving at place)  
EQT = equative  
ERG = ergative  
EXCL = exclamation  
FFM = finite form marker  
GEN = genitive  
HUM = human gender, including deities  
IMPF = imperfective  
LOC = locative  
MDL = modal (he2 - affirmative, ga - cohortative/volatile, na - affirmative+narrative)  
MID = middle marker  
NEG = negator/negative  
NHUM = non-human gender, including groups of people and slaves  
PASS = passive  
PL = plural  
PNG = person-number-gender marker  
SG = singular  
TERM = terminative (motion towards a place)  
TOP = topic

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