

Are all
agglutinative languages
related to one another?

BY

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The following volumes of Prof. Tóth were published electronically by Mikes International:

1. TÓTH, Alfréd: ETYMOLOGICAL DICTIONARY OF HUNGARIAN (in English) (792 p.)
2. TÓTH, Alfréd: HUNGARIAN, SUMERIAN AND EGYPTIAN. — HUNGARIAN, SUMERIAN AND HEBREW. Two Addenda to 'Etymological Dictionary of Hungarian' (EDH) (in English) (113 p.)
3. TÓTH, Alfréd: HUNGARIAN, SUMERIAN AND PENUTIAN — Second Addendum to 'Etymological Dictionary of Hungarian' (EDH) (in English) (37 p.)
4. TÓTH, Alfréd: HUNGARIAN, SUMERIAN AND INDO-EUROPEAN — Third Addendum to 'Etymological Dictionary of Hungarian' (EDH) (in English) (118 p.)
5. TÓTH, Alfréd: IS THE TURANIAN LANGUAGE FAMILY A PHANTOM? (in English) (36 p.)
6. TÓTH, Alfréd: HUNGARO-RAETICA (in English) (39 p.)
7. TÓTH, Alfréd: HUNGARO-RAETICA II. (in English) (38 p.)
8. TÓTH, Alfréd: SUMERIAN, HUNGARIAN AND MONGOLIAN (INCLUDING AVARIC) (in English) (89 p.)
9. TÓTH, Alfréd & BRUNNER, Linus: RAETIC — An Extinct Semitic Language in Central Europe (in English) (167 p.)
10. TÓTH, Alfréd: HUNGARIAN-MESOPOTAMIAN DICTIONARY (HMD) (in English) (152 p.)
11. TÓTH, Alfréd: HUNNIC-HUNGARIAN ETYMOLOGICAL WORD LIST (based on the editions of the Isfahan codex by Dr. Csaba Detre and Imre Pető) (in English) (66 p.)

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1. Introduction¹

In linguistics, languages can be compared to one another either by genetic or by typological classifications. Genetic relationship means that all the languages compared are (supposed to be) genetically related to one another like the members of a family. An example is the Germanic language family, which contains amongst other languages German, Dutch, English, Danish, Swedish, the two Norwegians, Icelandic, Färöic etc. Typological relationship means that certain languages – that are not or not necessarily genetically related to one another – share certain (mostly syntactic) features. Examples are Biblical Latin, Korean, Chinese and Vietnamese because they are all topic-prominent (Tóth 1992).

Genetic classification of languages goes back to Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767-1835) and his successors who became founders of comparative historical linguistics of the Indo-European languages. But already von Humboldt, August Schleicher (1821-1868) and others introduced early typological classifications of languages and suggested that typologically similar languages may also be genetically related. This was the basic reason why already very early Indo-European and Semitic were compared to one another – because they are the only two big flecional (flexive) language families, and it was thought that this could not be by chance. Nowadays, one differentiates at least 4 (mostly overlapping and partially contradicting) sorts of typological classifications:

1. Morphological: analytic (ex.: English) – isolating (ex.: Chinese) – synthetic (ex.: most Indo-European languages) – fusional (ex.: Indo-European, Semitic) – agglutinative (ex.: Uralic, Altaic) – polysynthetic (ex.: Eskimo, Ainu) – oligosynthetic (ex.: Nahuatl)
2. Morphosyntactic: nominative-accusative languages (ex.: Indo-European, Semitic) – absolutive-ergative languages (ex.: Basque, Eskimo-Aleut)
3. Syntactic: according to word order (Subject-Verb-Object, i.e. SVO and all possible combinations)
4. Pragmatic: subject-predicate languages (Indo-European, Semitic) – topic-comment languages (Chinese, Vietnamese) or both (Korean, Hungarian)

Because these categories are both overlapping and partially contradictory, some classifications turn out very odd. So is, e.g., Tibetan agglutinative but has Ablaut (apophony) like fusional languages (ex.: Engl. sing – sang – sung), but unlike fusional languages, Tibetan is ergative-absolutive. Verb-initial word order structures (e.g., VSO) are typical for Semitic languages (yet except Akkadian and Rhaetic), but Old Irish (Indo-European) also follows this type (and clearly not under Semitic influence). Most ergative languages are agglutinative and thus do not belong to the Indo-European languages, but Hindi, Punjabi, Kurdish and Ossetic are ergative and nevertheless Indo-European, although they are also characterized by fusion. On the other side, the “hyperflexive” Caucasian languages are not fusional, but agglutinative, etc.

Common sense in comparative linguistics is still that there is no need for typologically related languages to be also genetically related and vice versa. The basic reason is the assumption that languages may change their typological structure: “Wir neigen also zur Annahme, dass der indogermanische Sprachbau auf dem Wege der Überwindung eines primitiven flektierenden Typus entstanden ist, ohne jedoch den höher entwickelten agglutinierenden Typus erreicht zu haben/We thus

¹ For providing me with articles or whole books that were not accessible to me I mention thankfully for their help: Prof. Dr. Václav Blažek (University of Brno), Prof. Dr. László Marác (University of Amsterdam), Prof. Dr. Michael Noonan (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee), Prof. Dr. Frans Plank (University of Konstanz), Dr. Irmgard Pult (Ermatingen), PD Dr. Johannes Reckel (University of Göttingen), Frau Ute Rieger (University of Jena), Dr. Paul Sidwell (University of Melbourne) and Prof. Dr. George van Driem (University of Leiden).

tend to assume that the structure of the Indo-European languages originated in overcoming a primitive flective type, but without ever having reached the more highly developed agglutinative type” (Trubetzkoy 1939, p. 89).

Trubetzkoy thus assumes (contradicting most other linguists) that flexive languages are not the crown of creation, but an initial or intermediate stadium on the way to agglutination. Already Brunner (1969: 4) assumed that Proto-Indo-European was agglutinative – an assumption that was recently shared by Lehmann (2002). And looking at Tibetan that seems to have conserved its Sumerian heritage at least what concerns its grammar best of all languages rooting in Sumerian, is agglutinative with Ablaut like Sumerian was. Therefore, Trubetzkoy may be right despite the fact that nobody followed him: Ablaut is the basic feature for flexional languages, but flexion alone can also be expressed by agglutination. So, Sumerian was kind of hyper-characterized (as Tibetan still is), thus leading on one side into language families that concentrated on Ablaut and thus became flexive, and on the other side to language families that concentrated on flexion and thus became agglutinative.

From this standpoint, isolating languages in which particles fulfil the functions of affixes seem to be even a step further – this assumption also being in contradiction with most linguists. And it is surely not by chance that the isolating Malayo-Polynesian language family could be proven related to the flexive Semitic and Indo-European families (Brunner 1982).

Generally, the suspect arises that languages in a very early stadium were hyper-characterized also what concerns the other typological features: Since in ergative languages the object in an intransitive clause is marked by the same case as the subject in a transitive clause, the syntactic role subject, the semantic role agents and the pragmatic role topic do not coincide as they do in accusative languages. Thus, the accusative languages seem to show a certain linguistic economy that is typical for more developed languages, but not for early ones. The same seems to be true for topic-prominent languages, since topics can fulfill any syntactic and semantic function, even settings can be topic (e.g., the beginning of the famous Lili Marleen song), while in subject-prominent languages the subject is mostly identical with the topic or has otherwise to be marked by special markers or syntactic structures.

It is therefore not plausible at all to assume that the older a language – the simpler its structure. From our theoretical considerations as well as from the oldest testified language – Sumerian – it follows clearly that very early languages had all the possibilities together that have become differentiated in later stages of these languages following strategies of linguistic economy and leading to the known typologically differentiated languages and language families. And this seems to be true for all 4 typological structures mentioned above.

Relatively recently, few linguists resumed the question if there may be certain chances of genetic-typological relationships: Hakola compared Finnish, Japanese, Mongolian, Quechua and Tamil and came to the following conclusion: “Examination of accidental CVC and CV correspondences among languages representing 5 large families of agglutinative languages found that comparison pairs had much more singularity between basic 100-word vocabularies than would have been possible by mere chance, supporting the hypothesis that those 5 language families were mutually related” (1989, p. 394). Anttila stated: “In this way typology is hierarchically superior to genetic linguistics” (1989, p. 318).

Anttila’s statement is of particular interest. It means that languages can change, but only in the frame of their typological constraints. It follows that typological structures are inheritable. This insight has huge consequences, since up to Anttila, e.g., the agglutinative structure of Indo-European languages like Tocharian, Ossetic or Kurdish was explained either via substrate or adstrate effect: Tocharian, e.g., was allegedly agglutinative only because its neighboring languages (Uighur, Old Chinese) were agglutinative. The same was assumed for Kurdish (influence of agglutinative Turkish) and Ossetic (via agglutinative Caucasian languages), but since agglutination is inheritable, nothing stops us from assuming that Ossetic may have inherited its agglutinative structure from its also agglutinating ancestor-languages Scythian, Sarmatian, Alanian, Scian and Massagetian.

It can be shown that the distribution of many typological features of languages is not random but geographically (relatively) restricted. E.g., ergative-absolutive languages show up basically in the Caucasus, in North America, Mesoamerica, Australia: Basque, Berber, Dyrbal, Eskimo-Aleut, Kurdish,

Mayan, Mixe-Zoque, Samoan, Tagalog and many other Austronesian languages, Sumerian, Tibetan, Caucasian without Kartvelian. Since agglutination is inheritable, we may thus ask if the agglutinative languages are also concentrated in certain regions of the world. Unfortunately, since there is no complete list of agglutinative languages (but cf. Shibatani/Bynon 1999), the following overview may be incomplete:

- Uralic (Collinder 1957)
- Altaic (Turkic, Mongolian, Manchu, Korean, Japanese) (Ramstedt 1966; Poppe 1960; Sohn 2001; Miller 1971 [with review Menges 1974])
- Eskimo-Aleut (Mithun 1999)
- Paleo-Siberian (Chukotko-Kamchatkan, Yukaghir, Yeniseian, Gilyak) (Comrie 1981)
- Ainu (Tamura 2000)
- Tibeto-Burman (van Driem 2001; also some Chinese languages like Wu; Old Chinese? Clauson?)
- Basque (Hualde/Ortiz de Urbino 2003)
- Caucasian Languages (Klimov 1980)
- Punjabi (Bhatia 1993)
- Ossetic (Thordarson 1989)
- Kurdish (Wurzel 1997)
- Cushitic Languages (Saeed 1993)
- Bantu Languages (Guthrie 1971)
- Dravidian (Kirshnamurti 2003)
- North American Indian Languages (von Sadovszky 1996; Kroeber 1999)
- Mesoamerican Indian Languages (Campbell 1997)
- South American Indian Languages (Derbyshire/Pullum 1986)
- Malaysian (Lynch/Ross/Crowley 2002)

The following ancient languages were also agglutinative:

- Pre-Indo-European (Lehmann 2002; Greenberg 2000)
- Proto-Indo-European (Brunner 1969)
- Etruscan (Pfiffig 1969)
- Tocharian (Krause/Thomas 1960)
- Sumerian (Thomsen 1984; Edzard 2003)
- Elamite (Khačikjan 1998)
- Hurrian (Wegner 2000)
- Urartian (Diakonoff 1971)
- Hattic (Girbal 1986)
- Kassite (Balkan 1954)
- Gutian (Hallo 1957)
- Lullubi (Speiser 1931)

From this brief list, we can conclude:

1. All known Mesopotamian languages (excluded the later Semitic languages like Akkadian, Rhaetic, Amoritic, Ugaritic, etc.) were agglutinative.
2. The geographical distribution of the agglutinative languages is more or less identical with the languages that have been suspected in the past to be related to Hungarian and thus have been researched in my “Etymological Dictionary of Hungarian” (Tóth 2007b): Roughly speaking, they extend from the Ice Sea to the Southern Seas leaving huge “gaps” only in certain parts of India (e.g., no member of the Mon-Khmer family is according to my knowledge agglutinative).

Therefore, agglutination is not only inheritable, but agglutinative languages seem to cover a more or less coherent territory with a huge extension both in space and in time. Although not all languages are sufficiently documented, it is possible to show the genetic relationship of typologically related languages with Bouda’s concept of “Brückensprachen” (“bridging languages”) (cf. Bouda 1963). These are languages that connect both genetically and typologically related languages that are geographically (nowadays) distant. The concept of bridging languages is the more useful because, as already stated, languages can change their typological structure during their evolution. E.g., Old Chinese was agglutinative (as, e.g., Wu Chinese still is), while it is now isolating. The same may be true for the Mon-Khmer languages (cf. Shorto/Sidwell/ Bauer 2006, p. 590ss.). The special problem with India is that many of the hundreds of languages are not even researched yet.

All the facts mentioned point strongly in favor of our suspect that all agglutinative languages are genetically related.

In order to prove this hypothesis, I will proceed in two steps. First, I have collected all serious etymological studies that concern the genetic interrelationships between the above listed languages and counted the number of established word equations. From that, there can be no doubt that the phonetic proof that all these languages are related, has already been done. Second, I will apply Fokos-Fuchs’ (1962) catalogue of 25 syntactic and morpho-syntactic features that he used to prove syntactically the genetic relationship of the Uralic and Altaic languages, in order to demonstrate that Sumerian, Hungarian and the Dravidian languages share all features of Fokos-Fuchs’ catalogue.

As representative of Dravidian I chose Kannada (Jensen 1969). The reason why I did not choose any other agglutinative language, is because most linguists believe since McAlpin (1981) that the Dravidian language originates in Elamite, although McAlpin brings only 81 word-equations while there are many hundreds of Sumerian-Dravidian cognates. Now, Elamite is besides Sumerian the only sufficiently documented ancient agglutinative Mesopotamian language. Thus, if we succeed in proving that the Dravidian languages are also syntactically related to Sumerian, we will be allowed to assume that all agglutinative languages may be related to one another on the simple reason because they all go back to Sumerian.

2. Overview of the phonetic proof

The following classifications overlap with one another. Since each language comparison is listed only once, one has to look up all the classifications in order, e.g., to find to which other language Hungarian has been compared phonetically. The following list assembles only the most important comparisons and is thus by no means complete.

2.1. Uralic/Ural-Altaic

2.1.1. General

Hungarian and FU (Lakó and Rédei 1967/78): 677 word-equations

Uralic (Rédei 1992): 720 word-equations, from which 140 Samoyed

Sumerian and Hungarian (Gostony 1975): 1042 word-equations; Tóth (2007a): 1317 word-equations

Hungarian and Hunnic (Tóth 2007c): 450 word-equations

2.1.2. Ural-Altaic and Dravidian

Burrow (1943/46): 72 word-equations only from the semantic field “body”

Bouda (1953b): 167 word-equations

Bouda (1955/56): 167 word-equations

Tyler (1968): 153 word-equations

2.2. Altaic

2.2.1. General

Altaic (Turkic, Mongolian, Manchu, Korean; Starostin/Dybo/Mudrak 2003): 2800 word-equations

Turkish and Hungarian: 577 (Tóth 2007b, ch. 15)

2.2.2. Altaic and Japanese

Japanese-Uralic (Kazár 1980): 594 word-equations

2.2.3. Altaic and Mayan

Wikander (1967, 1970, 1970/71): over 100 word-equations

2.2.4. Manchu and Quechua

Bouda (1961a): 120 word-equations

Bouda (1964b): 21 word-equations

2.2.5. Turkish and Nubian

Czermak (1921/22): morphologic and syntactic parallels

2.2.6. Mongolian and Hungarian

Szentkatolnai (1877), ca. 2000 word-equations

2.3. Ainu

2.3.1. Ainu and Altaic

Rahder (1956-62): several thousands of word-equations

Patrie (1982): 140 word-equations

2.3.2. Ainu, Altaic and Chinese

Rahder (1961, 1963): several hundreds of word-equations

2.3.3. Ainu and Austroasiatic

Bengtson/Blažek (2000): 82 word-equations

2.3.4. Ainu and Malayo-Polynesian

Gjerdman (1926): over 70 word-equations

2.4. Eskimo-Aleut

2.4.1. General

Fortescue/Jacobson/Kaplan (1994): over thousand word-equations

2.4.2. Eskimo-Aleut and Yukaghir

Fortescue (1988, 1998, 2000): over hundred word-equations

2.4.3. Eskimo(-Aleut) and Hungarian

Wøldike (1746a, 1746b): 86 word-equations

Tóth (2007d): 1080 word-equations

2.5. Paleo-Siberian

2.5.1. Gilyak and Uralic

Bouda (1960): 367 word-equations

Bouda (1968): 95 word-equations

2.5.2. Chukchi and Finno-Ugric/Uralic

Bouda (1941): 40 word-equations

Bouda (1954/55): 267 word-equations

Bouda (1961d): 179 word-equations

Bouda (1969): 33 word-equations

Bouda (1970): 76 word-equations

Bouda (1980): 19 word-equations

2.5.3. Gilyak, Chukchi and Uralic

Bouda (1976): 86 word-equations

2.5.4. Gilyak and Caucasian

Bouda (1960): 88 word-equations

2.5.5. Chukchi and Eskimo

Bouda (1941): 32 word-equations

2.5.6. Yenissean and Indo-Chinese

Bouda (1957): 170 word-equations

2.5.7. Yenissean and Tibetan

Bouda (1936): 27 word-equations

2.6. Tibeto-Burman/Sino-Tibetan

2.6.1. General

Sino-Tibetan (Chinese, Tibetan, Burman, Jingpo, Lushai; Peiros/Starostin 1996): 2637 word-equations

Sumerian and Tibeto-Burman (Bouda 1938): 87 word-equations

Sumerian and Tibeto-Burman (Braun 2001, 2004): 341 word-equations

2.6.2. Tibetan and Chinese

Simon (1929): 338 word-equations

2.6.3. Tibetan and Hungarian

Tóth (2007b, ch. 10): 232 word-equations

2.6.4. Chinese and Hungarian

Podhorszky (1877): ca. 2000 word-equations

2.6.5. Tibeto-Burman and Nepalese (Newari)

Shafer (1952a): ca. 250 word-equations

2.6.6. Tibetan and Caucasian

Bouda (1949): 206 word-equations

Bouda (1956): 162 word-equations

2.6.7. Tibeto-Burman and Paleo-Siberian

Bouda (1956): 48 word-equations

2.6.8. Tibeto-Burman and Vietnamese

Shafer (1942): 26 word-equations

2.6.9. Sino-Tibetan and Uzo-Aztecan

Shafer (1964): ca. 20 word-equations

2.6.10. Sino-Tibetan and Athapaskan

Shafer (1952b, 1957): ca. 100 word-equations

2.7. Caucasian (partially together with Basque)

2.7.1. Georgian/Kartvelian and Sumerian

Tseretheli (1916): 260 word-equations

Fährnich (1981): 198 word-equations

2.7.2. Caucasian and Uralic

Bouda (1965): 36 word-equations

Samoyed and Caucasian: Bouda (1960): 18 word-equations

2.7.3. Caucasian and Mesoamerican

Mixe-Zoque: (Bouda 1963): 195 word-equations

Maya: (Bouda 1964): 268 word-equations (from which 42 together with Burushaski)

Mayan: Bouda (1965): 144 word-equations

2.7.4. Caucasian and Tasmanian

Bouda (1953a): 45 word-equations

2.8. Burushaski

2.8.1. Burushaski and Caucasian

Bouda (1950): 112 word-equations

Bouda (1954): 42 word-equations

Bouda (1964c): 54 word-equations

2.8.2. Burushaski and Tibetan

Bouda (1964c): 19 word-equations

2.8.3. Burushaski and Uralian

Bouda (1964c): 11 word-equations

2.8.4. Burushaski and Paleo-Siberian

Yenissean: Bouda (1957): 11 word-equations

Chukchi: Bouda (1950): 61 word-equations

2.8.5. Burushaski and Indochinese

Bouda (1950): 86 word-equations

2.9. Indo-European

2.9.1. Indo-European and Sumerian

Frayne (1993): 50 word-equations

2.9.2. Indo-European and Semitic

Brunner (1969): 1030 word-equations

2.9.3. Indo-European and Finno-Ugric

Jacobsohn (1922): ca. 2000 word-equations

2.9.4. Indo-European, Semitic and Polynesian

Brunner (1982): 958 word-equations

2.9.5. Indo-European and Hungarian

Szabédi (1974), over 1000 word-equations

Tóth (2007a, EDH-IV): 607 word-equations, from which 203 Indo-European = Semitic

2.10. Semitic

2.10.1. Hungarian and Hebrew

Kiss (1839): ca. 1600 word-equations

2.11. Egyptian

2.11.1. Egyptian and Hungarian

Poukka (1979): 1046 word-equations

2.12. Etruscan

2.12.1. Etruscan and Hungarian

Tóth (2007a, ch. 9): 280 word-equations

2.13. Bantu

2.13.1. Bantu and Sumerian

Drexel (1919/20); Wanger (1935): 138 word-equations

2.14. Dravidian

2.14.1. Dravidian and Elamite

McAlpin (1981): 81 word-equations

2.14.2. Dravidian and Sumerian

Muttarayan (1975); Fane (1980): over 100 word-equations

2.14.3. Dravidian and “Negro-African” (Bantu and other languages)

Upadhyaya/Upadhyaya (1983): ca. 300 word-equations, morphologic and syntactic features

2.15. Austro-Asiatic

2.15.1. Austro-Asiatic and Japanese

Matsumoto (1928): 113 word equations

2.15.2. Munda and Indonesian

Kuiper (1948): ca. 250 word equations

2.15.3. Munda (Santali) and Hungarian

von Hevesy (1932): 1134 word equations

2.15.4. Vietnamese and Hungarian

Tóth (2007e): 51 word equations

2.16. North American Indian/Canadian

2.16.1. General

Sumerian and Dene-Caucasian (= Sino-Caucasian: Basque, Caucasian, Burushaski, Sino-Tibetan, Yenislean + Na Dene; Blažek/Bengtson 1995): 219 word-equations

2.16.2. Penutian and Hungarian

von Sadovzsky (1996): ca. 2000 word-equations

2.17. Mesoamerican Indian

2.17.1. Misikito/Sumo and Caucasian

Bouda (1962): 199 word-equations

2.17.2. Miskito/Sumo and Uralic

Bouda (1962): 55 word-equations

2.17.3. Miskito/Sumo and Indo-Chinese

Bouda (1962): 36 word-equations

2.17.4. Miskito/Sumo and Polynesian

Bouda (1962): 27 word-equations

2.18. South American Indian

2.18.1. Sumerian and (Meso-, South American)

Stucken (1927): over 100 word-equations

2.18.2. Aymara and Caucasian

Bouda (1961b, 1961c): 258 word-equations

2.18.3. Chimu and Uralic

Bouda (1961b): 85 word-equations, from which 16 Hungarian

2.18.4. Mayan and Hungarian

Tóth (2007b, ch. 17): 111 word-equations

2.19. (Malayo-)Polynesian

2.19.1. Polynesian and Sumerian

Rivet (1929): ca. 200 word-equations

Stucken (1927): over 100 word-equations

2.19.2. Malayo-Polynesisch and Indo-Chinese

Wulff (1942): 145 word-equations

2.19.3. Malayo-Polynesian and Thai

Benedict (1975): between 1500 and 2000 word-equations

2.19.4. Malayo-Polynesian, Thai and Japanese

Benedict (1990), more than 500 word-equations

2.19.5. Malayo-Polynesian and Japanese

Krippes (1992): 38 word-equations

2.19.6. Maori, Munda and Hungarian

Uxbond (1928): several hundreds

3. The syntactic and morpho-syntactic proof

Since Fokos-Fuchs (1962) has already demonstrated that all of his 25 features apply to all members of the Uralic and Altaic families, we will show here only the correspondences between Hungarian, Dravidian and Sumerian. In order to accommodate to my non-linguistic readers, I will use a very simplified kind of interlinear-version to show the structures of the non-Hungarian examples.

3.1. Nominal clause

Like the Uralic and Altaic clause, also the Sumerian and the Dravidian clauses are nominal, i.e. the predicate was originally a noun or a verbal noun:

Hungarian	ez nehéz “this difficult” = “this is difficult”
Kannada	nīnu pravādi “you prophet” = “you are a prophet” (Jensen § 231)
Sumerian	ĝá-e-me-en “I-ERGATIVE MARKER-it-is” = “it is me” (Thomsen § 97)
	za-e-me-en “thou-ERGATIVE MARKER-it-is” = “it is you” (Thomsen § 97)

3.2. Attributive adjective

The attributive adjective precedes the noun it refers to, i.e. it follows the general principal rectum before regens (cf. 3.8.):

Hungarian	jó napot “good day-accusative” = “good day”
Kannada	dodda ūru “big city” = “a big city” (Jensen § 239)
Sumerian	kug D-Inanna “holy Inanna” (*D-Inanna kug, while adjective normally follow their nouns; Thomsen § 79)

3.3. Numerus absolutus

After numerals bigger than 1 that are simply expressing a quantity, the nouns to which they refer, appear in the singular or rather in the numerus absolutus:

Hungarian	három fiú “three boy” = “three boys”
Kannada	bahu janaru “many human” = “many humans” (Jensen § 151)
Sumerian	kug gín iá-am6 e-ĝá-ĝá-ne “silver shekel 5-do pay-they” = “they pay 5 shekels of silver” (Thomsen § 140: “The plural suffix /-ene/ never occurs after a numeral”).

3.4. “half; half part” in one of the body parts in pairs

Body parts that appear in pairs are considered to be unities. Therefore, if one part of these pairs has to be expressed, it appears as “a half (of)”:

Hungarian	fél szemmel “half eye-with” = “with one eye”
Kannada	okkanna (< omdu kanna) “one/half eyed” = “with one eye” (omdu means both “one” and “half”, cf. Burrow/Emeneau 1984, no. 990)
Sumerian	sur3-ra šu bar-ra “half-DATIVE hand outside-DATIVE” = “with one hand outside”

3.5. Noun as adjectival attribute

Nouns appear as attributes without prepositions or the like:

Hungarian	egy csöpp méz “one drop honey” = “one drop of honey”
Kannada	svalpa huḷi “a bit sour-dough” = “a bit of sour-dough” (Jensen § 154)
Sumerian	diš sa2-du11 kas “one offering beer” = “one offering of beer” (PSD)

3.6. Copulative and tautological compounds

With copulative and especially with tautological compounds the same meaning of a noun (or also a verb) is expressed twice:

Hungarian	adás-vétel “selling-buying” = “business” (copulative)
Kannada	sōnemaḷe “fine rain (sōne)-rain (maḷe)” = “persistent rain” (Jensen § 83)
Sumerian	su7-nu “bird-mosquito” = “a little bird” (PSD) (> Hung. szúnyog, cf. Tóth 2007a, p. 123)
Hungarian	ámulni-bámulni “to be astonished-to be astonished” = “to be astonished” (taut.)
Kannada	piṭil-giṭil “violin-violin” = “violins and other instruments” (Jensen § 85)
Sumerian	šeg10-ad “to cry-to cry” = “to make noise” (PSD) (> Hung. zakatolni, cf. Tóth 2007a, p. 146)

3.7. Possessive personal suffixes

Instead of possessive pronouns like in many languages (e.g., my house, your house), possessive personal suffixes are used:

Hungarian	házam, házad, háza, házunk, házatok, házuk “house-my, house-thy, house-his/her/its, etc.” = “my, thy, his/her/its ... house”
Kannada	nanna, ninna, avana (m.), avala (f.), namma, nimma, avara (m., f.) mane “my, thy, his, her, our, ... house”. Kann. uses personal pronouns in the genitive instead of possessive pronouns, but also the Uralic and Altaic possessive suffixes originate from personal pronouns (Szinneyi 1910, p. 114).
Sumerian	-ĝu10, -zu, -(a)ni/-bi, -me, -zu-ne-ne, -(a)ne-ne

3.8. Possessive Relation

Possessive relation is expressed only in the nomen possessivi by aid of personal suffixes:

Hungarian	az apa háza “the father house-his” = “the house of the father/the father’s house”, with rectum before regens, but also with regens before rectum: a háza apának “the house-his father-to-him” = “the house of the father”
Kannada	nanna tamdeya mane-y-alli “of-me (= my) father-of house-his-in” = “in the house of my father” (Jensen § 241)
Sumerian	lugal-la é-a-ni “king-GENITIVE house-his” (“anticipatory genitive”, Thomsen 1984 § 164) é-a(-k) lugal-bi “house-GENITIVE owner-its” = “the owner of the house” (PSD)

3.9. Possessive personal pronouns in determining function

Hungarian	a te hazád “the thou house-thy” = “thy (<i>your</i> , sing.) house (a not sb. else’s)”
Kannada	avaḷu nann-avaḷu “she of-me-she” = “she is mine” (Jensen § 112)
Sumerian	non real comparison, but cf. ĝá(-a)-kam “it is mine” (= [ez] az enyém), za(-a)-kam “it is yours (= [ez] a tiéd), Thomsen 1984, § 98 (“I” = Sum. ĝá-e, as possessive suffix -ĝu10; “thou” = Sum. za-e, as possessive suffix: -zu)

3.10. Possessive personal suffixes with pronouns and numerals

Hungarian	napjában háromszor “day-his-in three times” = “three times a/per day”
Kannada	Since there are no possessive suffixes in Kann. (cf. 3.7.), the construction does not exist, but cf. the following example where a possessive relation is expressed by the dative: divasakke mūru sāri “day-DATIVE time(s) change” = “three times a/per day”
Sumerian	mah-bi-šè “great-its-ADVERB SUFFIX” = “in a magnificent way” (Thomsen § 84ss.)

3.11. “habere”, “non habere”

Instead of using the “to have” or “to have not”, possession is expressed with “to be” or “to be not”:

Hungarian	jó lovam van “good horse-my is” = “I have a good horse”
Kannada	avugaḷige kaṇaja illa = “they (n., i.e. the ravens) barn not-is” = “they don’t have a barn” (Jensen § 258)
Sumerian	gu2 ḡeš mu-ḡal2 “gun tree being-be” = “I have a (wooden) gun” (PSD)

3.12. Postpositions

Agglutinative languages have postpositions instead of prepositions:

Hungarian	ház fölött “house above” = “above the house”
Kannada	bhūmiya mēle “earth-GENITIVE surface” = “on the earth” (Jensen § 74)
Sumerian	me-en-dè-na-an-na “without us” (-nanna “without”), Edzard (2003, p. 158)

3.13. Reflexive pronoun

Instead of a reflexive pronoun there appears often a noun together with possessive personal suffixes. As a noun, Hung. uses *mag* “seed”, Finn. *itse* “shadow, shadow-soul”, Turk. *öz* “heart, soul”, etc.:

Hungarian	magam, magad, maga, magunk, magatok, maguk “seed-my, seed-thy, seed-his, ...” = “I myself, thou thyself (you yourself), he himself, ...”
Kannada	tanna, tinna, tavana (m.), tavaḷa (f.), etc. “relative-of me (= my), relative-thy, relative-his, relative-her, ...”
Sumerian	ní-ḡu10, ní-zu, ní-te-a.ni etc. (ní “bird; fear; self”; Thomsen § 129)

3.14. Interrogative pronoun

The interrogative-indefinite pronoun “what; somewhat” can denote “or something/anything else”:

Hungarian	gombát mit evett “mushroom-accusative what ate (3. sing.)” = “he ate (only) mushrooms or something else”
Kannada	“In Kannada there no real indefinite pronouns. Instead of them the interrogative pronouns are used” (Jensen § 126): tinnuva padārtha ēn-ādarū nimag-umṭō “do you have any eatable food (or something else)”

Sumerian	lú na.me níg na.me ugu-na li-bí-in-tuku “no one might have any claim against him” (indefinite pronoun na.me < interrogative pronoun me-a, Thomson § 124ss.)
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3.15. Tripartite case system

Agglutinative languages are characterized by a tripartite local case system by use of locative (“where?”), ablative (“from where?”) and lative (“to where?”):

Hungarian	házban – házból – házba “house-in (location) – house-out of – house-in (direction)” = “in the house – from the house – into the house”
Kannada	mane-y-alli “house-in (locative)” - mane-y-imda house-with/from (instrumental-ablative) – mane-ge “house-to (dative-directional)” (Jensen § 260ss.)
Sumerian	dub-ban-na “in this tablet” – dub-ban-nit-ta “from this tablet” – dub-ba-ni-šè “to his tablet” (Edzard 2003, p. 34)

3.16. Lative constructions

Lative is not only used for expressing direction, but appears often with certain verbs which are combined in other languages with locative or at least with local and not with directional cases:

Hungarian	vízbe fúlni “water-into to suffocate” = “to drown in the water”
Kannada	nirage agur “water-DATIVE to drown” = “to drown in the water” (Burrow/Emeneau 1984, no. 167)
Sumerian	“The terminative postposition occurs with verbs denoting ‘to make into’, ‘to call, to name’ and the like” (Thomsen 1984, p. 102 with examples)

3.17. Ablative/adessive constructions in comparisons

Ablative or adessive are used in comparative constructions of the type “A is more x than Y” and the like:

Hungarian	öregebb az ampámtól/apámnál “older the father-my-from/-at” = he is older than my father
Kannada	nanna kuḍurege ninna kuḍure doḍḍu “of-you (= thy) horse-DATIVE of-we (= our) horse big” = “your horse is bigger than my horse” (Jensen § 274)
Sumerian	e2-ĝu10 e2-ninnu ĝe26-en kur-ra ab-dirig “house-to hold E-ninnu diadem mountain-DATIVE to-be-superior” = “my house, the E-ninnu, a crown, is bigger than the mountains” (from the collection of Sum. texts of the Univ. of Oxford). For “to be bigger than” Sum. uses “to be superior” + dative.

3.18. Accusative object with and without suffix

Hungarian	bocsásd meg bűnöm “let-it AORIST sin-my” = “pardon me my sin” vs. bocsád meg (a) bűnömöt “let-it AORIST (the) sin-my-ACCUSATIVE”
Kannada	“For the accusative the simple stem [mostly the nominative, A.T.] can be used, especially with things or abstract objects” (Jensen § 244): nimm-anna <u>unn</u> uttēne “of-you (pl.) (= your) rice (stem) I-eat” = “I eat your rice”. (On the Kannada ergative cf. Jensen’s “accusative subjects” § 167.)
Sumerian	Since Sum. is an ergative-absolutive and not a nominative-accusative language, the absolutive is the unmarked case (Thomsen 1984, p. 92). The unmarked accusative in Hung. may thus be another hint to the hypothesis that Hung. once was ergative and the question marker –e originally the ending of the Sum.-Hung. ergative (cf. 3.14. above and Tóth 2007f).

3.19. Figura etymologica

Figura etymologica, thematic infinitive and related constructions are very characteristic for agglutinative languages:

Hungarian	szépnek szép “beautiful-to beautiful” = “well, it is beautiful” kérve kérlek “begging beg-you-I” = “I beg you on my knees” vanni van “to give gives” = “there is (but only little)”
Kannada	svalpa-svalpa “small-small” = “very small” (Jensen § 87) hēḷi hēḷi sāk-āyitu “said said-having-had enough-was” = “I have said it many times (and thus enough)” (Jensen § 159)
Sumerian	Cf. Edzard (2003, p. 79ss.) for the several different types of “reduplication”, amongst them “to stress the durative or iterative character of the action”. Here are two examples for Sum. bar “to look at”: igi hé-mu-e-ši-bar-bar-re “may Utu – again and again – look on you” igi nam-bar-bar-re-en “to-be-supposed-to look-at-DATIVE-not” = “you are not supposed to stare at everything”

3.20. Verbal nouns as verbal forms

Verbal forms are to a big part originally verbal nouns to which personal endings were attached:

Hungarian	adott “he gave” vs. adott “given” várók “we awaited him” vs. várók “waiting ones”
Kannada	“The basis of verbal inflection are several verbal nouns” (Jensen § 45).

Sumerian “There is no way to tell by the form of the base alone whether we are faced with a noun, a verb, or some other part of speech” (Edzard 003, p. 24).

3.21. Use of verbal nouns

Hungarian nap lévő színöd “sun being face-thy” = “your face that shines like the sun”
szem-fájó ember “eye-hurting human” = “(sb.) whose eye hurts”

Kannada olle manuṣyan-āg-iddhāne “good human-being (āgu “to be”)-being (iru “id.”)”
= “this is a good human being” (Jensen § 194)

Sumerian “The enclitic copula is frequently added after the equative postposition” (Thomsen 1984, p. 109), the equative being used in the meaning “like”, cf. ab.ba-gin7 “like the sea” (ba “sea”):
ġá-nu Lugal.bàn.da-ġu10 inim šà-ga sè-ge ur5-gim-ma-àm “come, my Lugalbanda, place the word to the heart (“like the heart”), so it shall be”

3.22. Copulative connection of coordinate parts of speech

Hungarian guta-ütött “stroke-*hitten” = “hit by a stroke”
isten-adta “god-given-it” = “god given” = Latin (a) deo datus

Kannada pṛīti māḍu “love-to make” = “to make love” (Jensen § 168)
vāsa māḍu “apartment-make” = “to live, to dwell” (Jensen § 168). Dvandva is very common in Kannada (cf. Jensen § 58, 69, 83, 285)

Sumerian di kud.r “claim-decide” = “judge”
gaba šu ġar “breast-hand-place” = “to place the hand (on) the breast” = “adversary” (Thomsen 1984, p. 55)

3.23. Parataxis and verbal adverb instead of hypotaxis

Hungarian Fáradva Péter elaludt = “tired-being Peter fell asleep” (1 subject)
Pál menvén, Péter elaludt = “Paul going, Peter fall asleep” (2 different subjects)

Kannada “Hypotactic (subordinative) connection of sentences or clauses like in the Indo-European languages does not exist in Kannada” (Jensen § 284):
avaru mātāḍalu avanu haḍagadalli ēridanu “they (m.) to-speak he ship-in to-enter” = “while they were speaking, he entered the ship” (Jensen § 293)

Sumerian Since hypotaxis does not exist in Sum., non-finite forms are the rule (Thomsen 1984, p. 254ss.):
ur.saġ é-a-na ku4-ku4-da-ni ud mè-šè KA ġá-ġar-àm “when the hero enters his house he is (like) the storm calling for fight” (1 subject)

BIR.HUR.TUR-ra abul-la è-da-ni ká-abul-la-ka mu-ni-in-dab5-bé-eš “As B. goes out of the gate they catch him in the gateway” (2 different subjects)

3.24. Yes-no-questions and answering strategies

Typical are question-markers in yes-no-questions and answers that consists either of the full verbal phrase to which the question markers was added or only of the pre-verb:

Hungarian	Jó-e a kenyér? = “Good-QUESTION MARKER the bread?” = “Is the bread good?” Elállt-e már az eső? – Elállt/El. = “away-stood-question marker already the rain?” – “Away-stood/Away” = “Did the rain already stop? – It did/yes (, it did).
Kannada	avaḷ-ā bamdaḷu? “she-QUESTION MARKER arrived?” (Jensen § 350) nimage tīḷiyal-illa-v-ē? “you-DATIVE known-not-to-be-QUESTION MARKER” = do you not know her?” (Jensen § 350). Although Jensen does not give any examples for the respective answers, from Burrow/Emeneau (1984, no. 333) the answer is the positive (āgu, cf. Jensen § 193) or negative verb of existence (illa, cf. Jensen § 213).
Sumerian	No exact correspondence, but cf. from Thomsen (1984, p. 103): a.na-áš-àm Puzur4.Ha.ià mu še kur-ra-šè še eštub hé-na-sum “why has Puzur-Haya given him eštub-barley instead of kur-barley?” Here, the question-word is in addition marked by the copula –àm the works as question marker. This is not usual in sentences that contain question words: a.ba šeš-ġu10-gin7 “who brother-being-like” = “who is like my brother?” The Kannada question marker –ē/-ō/-ā (Jensen § 349) seems to be related to the Kannada focus marker –ē (Jensen § 340) and the Kannada vocative ending –ē (Jensen § 340) and thus related further to the Hung. and Sum. ergative marker –e (cf. Tóth 2007f).

3.25. Word order

“The most important rule of word order is: rectum before regens” (Fokos-Fuchs 1962, p. 112).” One could also say: The most important rule of word order is that focus elements immediately precede the (inflected) verb, while the rest of the comment and the topic can stand in any position whereby the rules are not governed by syntax, but by semantics and pragmatics. This is especially true for the negation, cf. in Hung. Van kenyér? = “Is there bread?” vs. Kenyér nincs (*Nincs kenyér) = “There is no bread”. Since these rules apply to all examples that Fokos-Fuchs presents, it follows that not only Hung., but all Uralic and Altaic languages are topic-prominent.

Hungarian	sokszor voltam nálatok “often was-I at-you” vs. nálatok voltam sokszor “at-you was-I often”
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Kannada	“What word order concerns, we can only give general rules here; they can be crossed for the purpose of expressing emphasis of special parts of speech. The regular word order is: subject, object, predicate” (Jensen § 342), thus S-O-V like in Sumerian.
Sumerian	“The word order of Sumerian is S-O-V, unless some part of speech is taken to the front for focus” (Edzard 2003, p. 2), thus topic-prominence.

4. Conclusions

From the word-equations in the works cited in chapter 2 and in HMD (Tóth 2007a) and EDH (Tóth 2007b) there can be no doubt that all agglutinative languages are phonetically related to Sumerian and thus to one another. Since both Sumerian and Kannada (as representative of the Dravidian languages) fulfill the syntactic and morpho-syntactic requirements of genetic relationship established for Uralic and Altaic by Fokos-Fuchs (1962), all agglutinative languages are also syntactically related to one another and thus must originate in Sumerian.

Especially, this is also true for the Dravidian languages whose Elamite origin was asserted by McAlpin (1981) and followed by many linguists. Our study proves, however, that the Dravidian languages, too, originate both phonetically and syntactically in Sumerian. The syntactic structure of Elamite is quite different from Sumerian (cf. the overview in Streck 2005) and has, e.g., markers for meaning-classes like the Bantu languages. Our main result that Dravidian and Elamite are not related confirms the etymological implications for an Afro-Elamite family established by Blažek (2002a, 2002b) and explains why Hungarian and Bantu share only 8% of cognates (Tóth 2007b, ch. 8) despite the attempts made by Meinhof (1914/15), Drexel (1919/20) and Wanger (1935) to connect African and Sumerian.

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