PIE Language Divergence and Syntax

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1   The Exception to All Rules: Anatolian

The general differences between Anatolian and the rest of IE:

- Anatolian has an animate-inanimate gender distinction while the rest of IE divide animate into masculine and feminine.

- While most IE languages have primarily thematic verbs with a few old athematics, Antolian has *all* athematic verbs.

- Anatolian has many of the archaic -r/-n stems, which are extremely rare in other languages.

- Anatolian lack many inflectional categories, such as the perfect/stative, the subjunctive/future, the aorist, the optative.

- Anatolian has no trace of duals.

- Anatolian has an (apparently new) ergative ending for inanimate nominals *-enti*, which may be related to the PIE *-nt- participle (which otherwise doesn't exist in Anatolian).

- Hittite has two conjugations a *-mi* conjugation and a *-hi* conjugation (named after the endings of their first singular forms). The *-hi* conjugation *seems* resemble the PIE stative/perfect.

2   Syntax

The syntax of reconstructed PIE and that of its earliest daughter languages is pretty nutty. It's worth touching on the basics.

1. Indo-European languages scramble, I mean *really* scramble.

2. Early IE have no clear pre- or postpositions. There clearly are reconstructable sentential modifiers and they became one or the other in the daughter families, but in PIE and the earliest languages (Homeric Greek and Rig Vedan Sanskrit) we see only 'adverbial' adpositions (also added to verbs).

3. *Heavy* use of second-position phenomenon. There is a panoply of second position clitics in all families (Latin, *autem, vero, enim*, Greek *gar, de*) , Hittie clitic chains.

4. Topicalization possible in CPs and PPs (i.e. the topicalized element appears in spec before the clausal head).

5. Absolute constructions, see handout.

6. Impersonal modals

7. Relative clauses are deitic and quasi-paratactic in nature (nearly any relative pronoun can be glossed as 'whoever'). PIE was just like Pirahã. 'Relative' clauses were often of the equation 'To whomever does X, that one do I Y.' Therefore, relative clauses were correlative (and usually presentential).