

Table 6.3. *The 'basic' vocabulary of Proto-Indo-European and its attestation in the major Indo-European groups*

Word	PIE	Ct	It	Gm	Bt	Sl	Al	Grk	Arm	An	Ir	Ind	Toch	Total
I	*h ₁ eǵ	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	12
You	*túh _x	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	12
We	*wéi	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	12
This	*so	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	12
That	*k ^h ís	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	8
Who	*k ^w ós	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	11
What	*k ^w íd	0	+	0	0	+	0	0	+	+	+	+	0	6
Not	*ne	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	+	+	+	+	9
All	*wi ^h -	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	4
Many	*pélh ₁ us	+	+	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	+	0	6
One	*h ₁ oin-	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	+	+	+	0	9
Two	*dwéh ₃ (u)	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	?	+	+	+	12?
Big	*megh _a -	+	+	+	0	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	10
long	*d _l h ₁ ghós	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	0	9
Small	*pau-	0	+	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	3
Woman	*g ^w énh _a	+	0	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	10
Man	*h ₁ nér	+	+	0	0	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	8
Person	*dhǵhm-ón-	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Fish	*dhǵhuh _x -	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	3
Bird	*h _a ewei-	+	+	0	0	0	+	+	+	0	+	+	0	7
Dog	*k ^h (u)wōn	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	11
Louse	*lu-	+	0	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	5
Tree	*dóru	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	11
Seed	*seh ₁ men-	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Leaf	*bhel-	0	+	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	4
Root	*wr(h _a)d-	+	+	+	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	5
Bark	*lóubho/eh _a -	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Skin	*péln-	0	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	0	0	+	0	7
Flesh	*(s)kwéh _x tis	+	+	+	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	6
Blood	*h ₁ ésh ₂ r	0	+	0	+	0	0	+	+	+	0	+	+	7
Bone	*h ₂ óst	+	+	0	0	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	9
Grease	*sélpes-	0	0	+	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	+	+	5
Egg	*h _a ō(w)iom	+	+	+	0	+	0	+	0	0	+	0	0	6
Horn	*k ^h er-	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	11
Tail	*puk(eh _a)-	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	3
Feather	*pet(e)r-	+	+	+	0	0	0	+	+	+	0	0	0	6
Hair	*k ^h ripo-	0	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	+	+	0	4
Head	*k ^h rréh ₂	0	+	+	0	0	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	8

(Cont'd.)

Table 6.3. (Cont'd)

Word	PIE	Ct	It	Gm	Bt	Sl	Al	Grk	Arm	An	Ir	Ind	Toch	Total
Ear	* <i>h_aóus-</i>	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	0	0	9
Eye	* <i>h₃ok^w</i>	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	0	+	+	+	10
Nose	* <i>h_xnáss</i>	0	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	6
Mouth	* <i>h_{1/4} óh₁(e)s-</i>	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	0	5
Tooth	* <i>h₁dónt-</i>	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	0	+	+	0	9
Tongue	* <i>dn̥ghuh_a-</i>	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	+	0	+	+	+	9
Claw	* <i>h₃nogh(w)-</i>	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	0	0	+	+	+	9
Foot	* <i>péds</i>	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	12
Knee	* <i>gónu</i>	+	+	+	0	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	10
Hand	* <i>ghes-r-</i>	0	+	0	?	0	+	+	+	+	0	0	+	7?
Belly	* <i>udero-</i>	0	+	0	+	0	0	+	0	0	+	+	0	5
Neck	* <i>moni-</i>	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	4
Breasts	* <i>psténos/speno-</i>	+	0	+	+	0	0	+	+	0	+	+	+	8
Heart	* <i>kérđ</i>	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	11
Liver	* <i>yék^wr̥(t)</i>	0	+	0	+	0	0	+	0	0	+	+	0	5
Drink	* <i>peh₃(i)-</i>	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	10
Eat	* <i>h₁édmi</i>	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	11
Bite	* <i>denk̂-</i>	0	0	+	0	0	+	+	0	0	+	+	+	6
See	* <i>derk̂-</i>	+	0	+	0	0	+	+	0	0	+	+	0	6
Hear	* <i>k̂leu-</i>	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	11
Know	* <i>weid-</i>	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	0	+	+	0	9
Sleep	* <i>swep-</i>	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	12
Die	* <i>mer-</i>	0	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	+	0	9
Kill	* <i>nek̂-</i>	+	+	+	0	0	0	+	0	+	+	+	+	8
Swim	* <i>pleu-</i>	+	+	+	0	+	0	+	+	0	+	+	+	9
Fly	* <i>pet-</i>	+	+	0	+	0	0	+	+	0	+	+	0	7
Walk	* <i>h₁ei-</i>	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	0	+	+	+	+	10
Come	* <i>g^wem-</i>	0	+	+	+	0	0	+	0	0	+	+	+	7
Lie	* <i>k̂ei-</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	+	+	0	4
Sit	* <i>sed-</i>	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	0	+	+	0	9
Stand	* <i>(s)teh₂-</i>	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	11
Give	* <i>deh₃-</i>	0	+	0	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	+	0	8
Say	* <i>wek^w-</i>	+	+	+	+	0	0	+	+	0	+	+	+	9
Sun	* <i>séh_aul</i>	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	0	10
Moon	* <i>méh₁nōt</i>	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	11
Star	* <i>h₂stér</i>	+	+	+	0	0	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	9
Water	* <i>wód̥r̥</i>	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	12
Rain	* <i>h₁wers-</i>	+	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	+	+	0	5
Stone	* <i>h₄ék̂mōn</i>	0	0	0	+	+	0	+	0	+	+	+	0	6

(Cont'd.)

Table 6.3. (Cont'd)

Word	PIE	Ct	It	Gm	Bt	Sl	Al	Grk	Arm	An	Ir	Ind	Toch	Total
Sand	?* <i>sam_h_xdhos</i>	0	+	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	3
Earth	* <i>dhéghōm</i>	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	10
Cloud	* <i>nébhes-</i>	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	0	+	+	+	0	9
Smoke	* <i>dhuh₂mós</i>	0	+	0	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	+	0	5
Fire	* <i>péh₂ur</i>	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	0	0	+	8
Ash	* <i>h₂éh_xōs</i>	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	+	0	5
Burn	* <i>dheg^wh-</i>	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	0	0	+	+	+	9
Path	* <i>póntōh₂s</i>	+	+	0	+	+	0	+	+	0	+	+	0	8
Mountain	* <i>g^worh_x-</i>	0	0	0	+	+	+	?	0	0	+	+	0	6
Red	* <i>h₁reudh-</i>	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	0	0	+	+	+	9
Green	* <i>k^hyeh₁-</i>	0	0	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	+	+	+	7
Yellow	* <i>ghel-</i>	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	0	0	+	+	0	8
White	* <i>h₄elbhós</i>	0	+	+	+	+	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	6
Black	* <i>k^wṛsnós</i>	0	0	0	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	4
Night	* <i>nek^wt-</i>	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	0	+	+	10
Hot	* <i>g^whermós</i>	0	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	0	+	+	0	8
Cold	* <i>gel-</i>	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Full	* <i>p_hh₁nós</i>	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	+	0	+	+	+	9
New	* <i>néwos</i>	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	0	+	+	+	+	10
Good	* <i>h₁(e)su-</i>	+	0	0	+	+	0	+	0	?	+	+	0	7?
Round	* <i>serk-</i>	0	+	0	0	0	+	+	0	+	0	0	+	5
Dry	* <i>saus-</i>	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	+	+	0	8
Name	* <i>h₁nóm_h</i>	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	12
Total		64	82	75	71	62	42	80	48	46	76	82	49	

with, was a far more reliable guide. But how can this task be accomplished? Generally, we find some form of triangulation based on the earliest attested Indo-European languages, i.e. Hittite, Mycenaean Greek, and Indo-Aryan, each of these positioned somewhere between *c.* 2000 and 1500 BC. Given the kind of changes linguists know to have occurred in the attested histories of Greek or Indo-Aryan, etc., the linguist compares the difference wrought by such changes with the degree of difference between the earliest attested Hittite, Mycenaean Greek, and Sanskrit and reconstructed Proto-Indo-European. The order of magnitude for these estimates (or guesstimates) tends to be something on the order of 1,500–2,000 years. In other words, employing some form of gut intuition (based on experience which is often grounded on the known separation of the Romance or Germanic languages), linguists tend to put Proto-Indo-European sometime around 3000 BC plus or minus a millennium.