

## LESSON 16

# Reported Thoughts, Hopes, Promises and Oaths

### 16.1. Reported Thoughts

The usual construction with verbs of thinking is an Infinitive phrase. Where the Subject of the reported thought is different to the Subject of the verb of thinking, it appears in the Accusative Case. Where the Subject of the reported thought is the same as the Subject of the verb of thinking, it is usually omitted. In this construction, an attribute or Complement of the Subject of the reported thought appears in the Nominative Case. For comparison or contrast the Subject of the Infinitive is sometimes expressed in the Accusative, even when it is the same as the Subject of the leading verb. The Infinitive preserves the Aspect of the direct form of thought. An Infinitive with ἄν represents a direct form of thought with ἄν and potential Indicative or Optative. The usual negative is οὐ. The negative may precede the leading verb, rather than be attached to the Infinitive (cf. Lesson 14.5).

οἱ γὰρ βάρβαροι ... ἐς τὸ πλεον οὐκέτ' ἐπηκολούθουν, **νομίζοντες**  
καὶ ἐν μεθορίοις **εἶναι αὐτούς** ἤδη καὶ **διαπεφευγέναι**.  
(Th.4.128.2.)

*For the foreigners ... for the most part no longer pursued, **thinking both that they were on the borders by now and that they had escaped.***

Direct form: ἐν μεθορίοις εἰσὶν ἤδη καὶ διαπεφεύγασι, 'They are on the borders by now and have escaped'. αὐτούς (Acc.) shows that 'they' are not the 'foreigners'. διαπεφευγέναι preserves the Aspect of διαπεφεύγασι.

**οὐ γὰρ ἱκανοὶ ἐνόμιζον εἶναι** ἔν τε τῷ ἰσθμῷ φρουρεῖν καὶ ἐς τὴν Παλλήνην διαβάντες τειχίζειν ... (Th. 1.64.1.)

*For **they thought that they were not competent to keep watch on the isthmus and to cross over to Pallene and build a wall ...***

Direct form: οὐχ ἱκανοὶ ἔσμεν ... φρουρεῖν καὶ ... διαβάντες τειχίζειν, 'We are not competent to keep watch ... and ... to cross over and build a wall'. In the reported form, the Subject of the Infinitives is omitted, since it is the same as the Subject of ἐνόμιζον; and the Complement ἱκανοὶ and the circumstantial Participle διαβάντες remain in the Nominative Case. The negative οὐ precedes ἐνόμιζον (as does the Complement ἱκανοὶ in this instance).

καὶ σχεδόν τι οἶμαι ἐμέ πλείω χρήματα εἰργάσθαι ἢ ἄλλους σύνδου οὐστινας βούλη τῶν σοφιστῶν. (Pl.Hp.Ma. 282 E.)

*And I just about think that I have made more money than any other two together of the sophists whom you wish <to name>.*

Direct form: ἐγὼ πλείω χρήματα εἰργασμαι ἢ ἄλλοι σύνδου, 'I have made more money than any other two together'. For comparison of 'I' with 'any other two', the Subject (ἐμέ) of the Infin. εἰργάσθαι is expressed in the Accusative Case, although it is the same as the Subject of the leading verb (οἶμαι).

... καὶ λαμπρότερόν τ' ἂν φανῆναι τὸ ἔργον τῆς θήρας καὶ ἱερείων ἂν πολλὴν ἀφθονίαν ἐνόμιζε γενέσθαι. (X.Cyr. 1.4.17.)

*... and he thought that the action of the hunt would appear more illustrious and that there would turn out to be a great abundance of animals for slaughter.*

Direct form: λαμπρότερόν τ' ἂν φανείη τὸ ἔργον ... καὶ ... ἂν πολλὴ ἀφθονία γένοιτο, 'The action ... would appear more illustrious and there would turn out to be a great abundance'. ἂν used with the potential Optative in the direct form is retained with the Infinitive in the reported form.

ὡς ἐγὼ ἀκούω τινῶν ἐπαινουμένων, ὅτι νόμιμοι ἄνδρες εἰσίν, οἶμαι μὴ ἂν δικαίως τούτου τυχεῖν τοῦ ἐπαίνου τὸν μὴ εἰδότα, τί ἐστι νόμος. (X.Mem. 1.2.41.)

*For, when I hear some people assigning praise, because men are law-abiding, I think that the <man>, who does not know what a law is, would not justly obtain this praise.*

In this sentence, μή with ἄν and the Infinitive may be influenced by the Subject of the Infinitive, τὸν μὴ εἰδότες, where μή is generic, referring to ‘anyone who does not know’. (For the coordinating use of ὡς and ἐπεὶ, see Lesson 23.4.)

## 16.2. Reported Hopes and Promises

In most respects, expressions of hoping (or expecting) and promising follow the pattern of reported thoughts (§16.1). Because of their meaning, hopes and promises are most often used with an Intentive (‘Fut.’) Infinitive.

However, hopes and promises may also be reported with an Imperfect Infinitive expressing continuous action or with an Aorist Infinitive expressing momentary action. Occasionally, the Aorist Infinitive reports a hope that something had previously happened. And sometimes manuscripts are divided in reading an Aorist or an Intentive Infinitive.

Frequently, in reported hopes, and regularly in reported promises, the negative used with the Infinitive is μή; but οὐ does also occur.

καὶ ἤλπιζον πάσας τὰς ναῦς ἀπολήψεσθαι. (Th. 2.90.4.)  
*and they were hoping that they would cut off all their ships.*

Direct form: ἀποληψόμεθα, ‘We shall cut off’. The Intentive (‘Fut.’) Infinitive of the reported form corresponds to the Future Indicative of the direct form.

καὶ νῦν ἐθέλομεν πίστιν δοῦναι, ἣτις ἐστὶ μέγιστη τοῖς ἀνθρώποις, μὴ ἔχειν τῶν Ἀριστοφάνους χρημάτων ... (Lys. 19.32.)

*and now we are willing to give a pledge, which is the most serious for human beings, that we do not hold <any parts> of the property of Aristophanes ...*

Direct form: οὐκ ἔχομεν, ‘We do not hold’. The Imperfect Infinitive and negative μή of the reported form correspond to the Present Indicative and negative οὐ of the direct form.

ὑπολείπεται τοίνυν αὐτῷ λέγειν ὡς ... ἀδύνατος κατέστη βοηθῆσαι εἰς τὸν Πειραιᾶ, ... ἐπαγγειλάμενος αὐτὸς ἢ χρήματ’ εἰσενεγκεῖν εἰς τὸ πλῆθος τὸ ὑμέτερον ἢ ὀπλίσαι τινὰς τῶν ἑαυτοῦ δημοτῶν ... (Lys. 31.15.)

*It remains, therefore, for him to state that ... he became incapable of helping at the Piraeus ... although **promising** either **to contribute** money himself to your community or **to arm** some of his fellow-citizens ...*

Direct form: εἰσεινέγκω ... ὀπλίσω, 'Let me contribute ... let me arm'. The hortatory Aorist Subjunctive could be postulated as the equivalent direct form. But at any rate the Aorist Infinitives εἰσεινεγκεῖν ... ὀπλίσαι as verbal nouns are the direct Objects of ἐπαγγειλάμενος. (Some scholars classify such Infinitives as 'not in indirect discourse'.) And the promise relates to action subsequent to the time at which it was made.

ἡ θήν **μιν** μάλα **ἔλπετο** θυμὸς ἐκάστου  
 χερσὶν ὑπ' Αἴαντος **θανέειν** Τελαμωνιάδαο. (Hom.II. 15.288–289.)

*Certainly the heart of each firmly **hoped**  
 that he had died under the hands of Ajax, son of Telamon.*

Direct form: εἰ γὰρ ἔθανε, 'If only he had died!' Such an unfulfilled wish for the past is perhaps the closest approximation to a direct form of this reported hope (cf. Lesson 11.2.1.2.). Unlike the previous example, the Aorist Infinitive here relates to action prior to the time at which the hope was reported.

**ἤλπιζε** γὰρ αὐτῶν **οὐ μενεῖν τὴν τάξιν** ... (Th. 2.84.2.)  
*For he **hoped** that their **battle-line would not remain** <intact> ...*

Here, the negative οὐ is used with the Infinitive μενεῖν, rather than the more usual μή as in Lys. 19.32 above.

## 16.3. Reported Oaths

Like hopes and promises, oaths about an intended action are most commonly reported with an Intensive ('Fut.') Infinitive, and oaths about a continuing action may be reported with an Imperfect Infinitive or oaths about an action viewed as momentary may be reported with an Aorist Infinitive. Again, the Aorist Infinitive may report an oath about an intended action (swear to do something) or an oath about a prior action (swear that one did something). An oath about completed action may also be reported with a Perfect Infinitive. As with reported thoughts, hopes and promises, ἄν is sometimes used to express potentiality.

**ὁμωμόκατε ψηφιεῖσθαι** κατὰ τοὺς νόμους καὶ τὰ ψηφίσματα τὰ τοῦ δήμου καὶ τῆς βουλῆς τῶν πεντακοσίων. (D. 19.179.)

*You have sworn that you will vote according to the laws and the decrees of the people and of the council of the five hundred.*

The Subject of the Intensive Infinitive is not expressed since it is the same as the Subject of the leading verb.

ὁ τε πατήρ ἡμῶν, ἐπειδὴ ἐγενόμεθα, εἰς τοὺς φράτορας ἡμᾶς εἰσήγαγεν, **ὁμόσας** κατὰ τοὺς νόμους τοὺς κειμένους ἢ μὴν ἐξ ἀστῆς καὶ ἐγγυητῆς γυναικὸς **εἰσάγειν**. (Is. 18.19.)

*And our father, when we had been born, introduced us to the clansmen, swearing in accordance with the established customs, that assuredly he was introducing <children> from a married [and] Athenian woman.*

The Imperfect Infinitive expresses a continuing action.

**ᾧμωσε** δὲ πρὸς ἔμ' αὐτόν, ἀποσπένδων ἐνὶ οἴκῳ, **νῆα κατειρύσθαι** ... (Hom.Od. 14.331–332.)

*And he swore to me myself, as he poured a libation in his house, that the ship had been drawn down ...*

The Accusative and Perfect (Pass.) Infinitive expresses completed action.

ἀλλ' **ὄμοσον μὴ** μητρὶ φίλῃ τάδε **μυθήσασθαι** ... (Hom.Od. 2.372.)  
*But swear not to tell this to my dear mother ...*

The Aorist Infinitive expresses intended action.

ἵππων ἀψάμενος γαίηοχον ἐννοσίγαιον  
**ὄμνυθι μὴ** μὲν ἐκῶν τὸ ἐμὸν δόλω ἄρμα **πεδῆσαι**.  
(Hom.II. 23.584–585.)

*laying a hand on your horses, swear by the one who holds the earth <and> shakes the earth that you certainly did not intentionally impede my chariot by trickery.*

The Aorist Infinitive expresses prior action, with negative μή.

## References

Goodwin (1889), *Syntax of the moods and tenses of the Greek verb*, §§204–212, 683–686, 751–752.

Smyth (1956), *Greek grammar*, §§1845–1849, 1868, 2018, 2022–2024, 2580, 2692, 2722–2723, 2725–2726.

## EXERCISE 16

Translate the following passages.

1. ἴσως με οἴεσθε ... ἀπορία λόγων ἔαλωκένας τοιούτων οἷς ἂν ὑμᾶς ἔπεισα ...

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ἀπορία, -ας, ἡ	<i>lack</i>
οἴεσθαι	<i>to think</i> (Mid. with Aor. Pass.)
ἀλίσκεσθαι	<i>to be convicted</i> (Intr. Aor. and Perf. Act. forms have Pass. sense)

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2. ὄπλα μὲν οὖν ἔχοντες οἰόμεθα ἂν καὶ τῇ ἀρετῇ χρῆσθαι, παραδόντες δ' ἂν ταῦτα καὶ τῶν σωμάτων στερηθῆναι.

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παραδιδόναι	<i>to hand over, to surrender</i>
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3. εἴ τοι νομίζεις ἄνδρα συγγενῆ κακῶς δρῶν οὐχ ὑφέξειν τὴν δίκην, οὐκ εὖ φρονεῖς.

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ὑπέχειν	<i>to suffer</i>
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4. ἐξ ὧν ἐλπίζω, εἰ τὴν πρὸς ἐμὲ ὁδὸν τράπιοι, σφόδρ' ἂν σε τῶν καλῶν καὶ σεμνῶν ἐργάτην ἀγαθὸν γενέσθαι ...

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ἐξ ὧν	<i>And as a result of this</i> (ὧν: coordinating relative pronoun)
τρέπειν	<i>to turn</i>
σφόδρ(α)	<i>certainly</i>
σεμνός, -ή, -όν	<i>noble</i> (here neut., as also καλῶν)
ἀγαθός, -ή, -όν	<i>beneficial</i>

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5. καὶ αὐτοὺς ἀπέπεμψαν ἐπαινέσαντες τοὺς λόγους ... καὶ πρέσβεις ὑποσχόμενοι ἀποστελεῖν περὶ τῆς ξυμμαχίας ἐς Ἄργος.

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πρέσβεις, -εων, οἱ	<i>ambassadors</i> (here Acc.)
ἀποστέλλειν	<i>to send out</i>

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6. ὁμόσας ἀπάξειν οἴκαδ', ἐς Τροίαν μ' ἄγει·  
 7. οἶμαι δὲ καὶ ἐμὲ τῶν ἔτι πόρρωθεν ἀφεστηκότων εἶναι.

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πόρρωθεν	<i>far off</i> (no emphasis on -θεν here)
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8. But I think that I shall quickly make clear that we would not even be able to establish this sovereignty.

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<i>to make clear</i>	δηλοῦν
<i>to establish</i>	καθιστάσθαι (rarely Middle in this sense)
<i>sovereignty</i>	ἀρχή, -ῆς, ἡ

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9. But when he had arrived in Nemea, he delayed there, hoping that he would catch the Athenians as they were going past ...

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<i>Nemea</i>	Νεμέα, -ας, ἡ
<i>to arrive in</i>	γίγνεσθαι ἐν
<i>to delay</i>	διατρίβειν
<i>to catch</i>	λαμβάνειν
<i>to go past</i>	παριέναι

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