

LESSON 40

Dative Case 1

40.1. Introduction

The Dative Case covers two basic functions: denoting the persons whose *interests* are affected by an action or situation, and indicating *accompaniment* in the broadest sense. Lesson 40 treats the Dative of Interest and the Dative of Accompaniment in general. Lesson 41 will treat two further and particular categories of accompaniment: location in place or time, and means or instrument. The functions of the Dative Case are predominantly *adverbial*. However, nouns and adjectives, which are related to verbs, may also take a Dative construction. For example, the verb ἐὺνοεῖν and the adjective εὖνους used with εἶναι both mean ‘to be well disposed (to)’ and take a Dative.

40.2. Dative of Interest

40.2.1. Interest in General

A wide range of verbs and related nouns or adjectives take a Dative denoting the persons to or for whom an action is done.

πενθεῖν μὲν, εἴ τι **δεσπόταισι** τυγχάνει,
συγγνωστόν· (E.Alc. 138–139.)

*<It is> pardonable to lament, if something happens
to one's masters.*

Dative of Interest modifying verb τυγχάνει.

(Grammatically: ‘To lament [Subject] <is> pardonable [Complement]’.)

σύνηθες αἰεὶ ταῦτα βαστάζειν **ἐμοί**. (E.Alc. 40.)

<It is> customary **for me** to carry this constantly.

Dative of Interest modifying adjective σύνηθες.

(Grammatically: 'To carry this constantly [Subject] <is> customary [Complement] for me'.)

40.2.2. Indirect Object

Verbs of saying, giving, etc. commonly take a direct Object in the Accusative and an indirect Object in the Dative.

... δίκας δὲ δώσεις **σοῖσι κηδεσταῖς** ἔτι. (E.Alc. 731.)

... and you will yet give recompense **to your wife's-relatives**.

40.2.3. Possessive

The Possessive Dative is used with verbs meaning 'to be' or 'to become', where the Subject (concrete or abstract) is or becomes the possession of the person designated by the Dative. A paraphrase with the verbs meaning 'to have' or 'to get' is often used, and the Subject in Greek then becomes the Object in English.

σοὶ δ' ἔστι μὲν νοῦς λεπτός. (E.Med. 529.)

And **you** do have a subtle mind.

Lit. 'And there exists for you a subtle mind'.

40.2.4. Agent

In classical Greek, the Agent of a Passive verb is usually expressed by ὑπό with Genitive. However, a Dative of Interest is frequently used with Passive verbs in the Perfect Aspect (and rarely with other Tenses). The Dative of Agent is also the normal construction with verbal adjectives ending in -τος and -τέος (Lessons 7.3 and 8.2).

τὰ δὲ χρήματα ἦν ταῦτα μεγάλα, ὡς δεδήλωταί **μοι** ἐν τῷ πρώτῳ τῶν λόγων. (Hdt. 5.36.4.)

And this treasure was great, as has been made clear **by me** in the first of the books.

40.2.5. Similarity

A Dative of Interest is used with adjectives and adverbs expressing similarity, including ὁ αὐτός meaning ‘the same (as)’.

ἄνακτ’ **ἀνακτι** ταῦθ’ ὁρῶντ’ ἐπίσταμαι
 μάλιστα **Φοίβω** Τειρεσίαν, ... (S.OT 284–285.)

I know that lord Tiresias generally sees the same things as lord Phoebus, ...

40.2.6. Person Judging (or Reference)

The Dative denotes the person, from whose point of view something is valid. The Dative term may be a Participle only. The usage is common with topographical directions.

πρὸς τὰς μεγίστας δ’ οὖν καὶ ἐλαχίστας ναῦς τὸ μέσον
σκοποῦντι οὐ πολλοὶ φαίνονται ἐλθόντες, ... (Th. 1.10.5.)

But at any rate for someone examining the midpoint [OR: average] in relation to the largest and the smallest ships, it is clear that not many <men> went, ...

40.2.7. Purpose

The Dative, especially of abstract nouns, may be used to express the Purpose for which an action is performed.

... χρῆ ... θαρσοῦντας ἰέναι ... ἐς τὸν πόλεμον ... τῆς ἄλλης
 Ἑλλάδος ἀπάσης ξυναγωνιουμένης τὰ μὲν φόβω τὰ δὲ **ὠφελία**.
 (Th. 1.123.1.)

... <we> should ... with high courage go ... into the war ... since all the rest of Greece will join in the struggle partly because of fear and partly for advantage.

(In the context ὠφελία denotes the Purpose of obtaining help or advantage, not the Purpose of helping someone else.)

According to Smyth (1956, §1473), ‘For the dative of purpose (*to what end?*), common in Latin with a second dative (*dono dare*), Greek uses a predicate noun: ἡ χώρα δῶρον ἐδόθη *the country was given to him as a*

gift (X.HG 3.1.6.). In this Greek example, the ‘predicate noun’ (δῶρον) is used in the Nominative Case with a Passive verb. But a double Dative may also be used with a Greek Passive verb. In Latin grammars, the ‘second dative’ is designated ‘predicative dative’.

δόσει δέδοται **μοι** ἐπὶ τῷ μισθῷ. (*Tobit* 2.14 Septuagint.)
It has been given to me as a gift in addition to my pay.

40.2.8. Ethic

The Dative of the personal pronouns (sg. or pl.) is used to express the interest of the first person or to catch the attention of the second person. (The idiom seldom occurs with the third person.) A paraphrase such as ‘please’ (1st pers.) or ‘I tell you’ (2nd pers.) is often appropriate. Typically, the pronoun appears near the beginning of a Main clause and, therefore, tends to ‘modify’ the whole clause. However, it could sometimes be regarded as modifying the verb of a Main clause, especially an Imperative.

... ἀλλ’ ἐμμείνατέ **μοι** οἷς ἐδεήθην ὑμῶν ... (Pl.Ap. 30 C.)
 ... but **please** abide by what I asked of you ...

οἷς = ἐκείνοις ᾗ.

40.3. Dative of Accompaniment (or Sociative Dative)

The Dative of Accompaniment in the narrower sense expresses simple accompaniment, attendant circumstances and (with an abstract noun) Manner.

40.3.1. Simple Accompaniment

The Dative may simply express the accompaniment of persons, without any particular nuance.

ἔρρων νυν, αὐτὸς χῆ ξυνοικήσασά **σοι**,
 ἄπαιδε παιδὸς ὄντος, ὥσπερ ἄξιοι,
 γηράσκει(ε). (E.Alc. 734–736.)

*Begone then, you yourself and she who came to live with you,
 and grow old childless, as you deserve, although you have
 a child.*

40.3.2. Attendant Circumstances

Parallel to the expression of personal accompaniment, the Dative may be used to denote attendant circumstances with things both concrete and abstract.

... ἔνταῦθα ἤδη πολλῶ ἔτι **πλέονι βοῇ** τεθαρσηκότες οἱ ψιλοὶ ἐπέκειντο· (Th. 4.35.2.)

... *then straight away **with** even much **more shouting** having taken heart the light-armed troops pressed hard upon <them>.*

40.3.3. Dative of αὐτός with Noun

The Dative of αὐτός in agreement with a noun emphasises the inclusion of the Dative phrase in the action of its clause. The Dative phrase may be related to the Subject or the Object of the clause. The Dative of αὐτός usually agrees with a plural noun, and always precedes it in early and classical Greek.

ἄρ' ἂν δυναίμην τὰς Κιθαιρῶνος πτυχὰς
αὐταῖσι βάκχαις τοῖς ἐμοῖς ὤμοις φέρειν; (E.Ba. 945–946.)

*Would I be able to carry the mountain-valleys
of Cithaeron on my shoulders, **Bacchants and all?***

Dative phrase related to Object, 'the mountain-valleys'.

40.3.4. Military Accompaniment

The Dative of Military Accompaniment is merely a particular application of the simple Dative of Accompaniment. It denotes military forces and equipment.

... ἐμέ δὲ τὸν πανάθλιον
ἔκοντα πλεύσανθ' **ἑπτὰ ναυσὶ** ναυβάτην
ἄτιμον ἔβαλον ... (S.Ph. 1026–1028.)

... *but me, completely wretched fellow,
a seaman having set sail willingly **with seven ships**,
they cast <out> dishonoured ...*

40.3.5. Manner

The Dative may denote in what Manner an action is performed. The Dative is typically an abstract noun, which is frequently qualified by an adjective.

οὐ χρῆ σκυθρωπὸν τοῖς ξένοις τὸν πρόσπολον
εἶναι, δέχεσθαι δ' **εὐπροσηγόρῳ φρενί**. (E.*Alc.* 774–775.)

*A servant should not be sullen towards guests,
but should receive them **with courteous attitude**.*

The definite articles (τοῖς, τόν) are used generically.

References

Smyth (1956), *Greek grammar*, §§1450–1502, 1521–1527, 1529, 1544–1545.

EXERCISE 40

Translate the following passages. For each passage, briefly indicate the general function (Interest or Accompaniment) and, where applicable, the particular function (e.g. Possessive or Manner) of the Dative phrases in **bold** type, and state which verb the phrase modifies or how it is otherwise related to its clause.

1. ... συγκαλέσας πάντας τοὺς ξυμμάχους ἀπεδίδου **Πλαταιεῦσι**
γῆν καὶ πόλιν τὴν σφετέραν ...

ἀποδιδόναι	<i>to give back</i> ; here the Imperf. Aspect implies 'proceeded to give back'
Πλαταιεῖς, -έων, οἱ	<i>Plataeans</i>

2. ἰδίᾳ δ' ἐκεῖ **Λακεδαιμονίοις** ξυγγίγνεται.

3. σὺ δ' ἄνδρ' ἑταῖρον δεσπότην παρόνθ' ὄρων
στυγνῶ προσώπῳ καὶ συνωφρυωμένῳ
δέχῃ ...

στυγνός, -ή, -όν	<i>sullen</i>
συνωφρυωμένος, -η, -ον	<i>frowning, scowling</i> (Perf. Pass. Partc.)

4. καὶ **τῇ** μὲν **πόλει** ἀπὸ τοῦ Γέλα ποταμοῦ τοῦνομα ἐγένετο ...

 Γέλας, (Gen.) Γέλα, ἡ (name of the ποταμός)

5. ... ὑμεῖς καὶ ἔφυτε ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ **ἡμῖν** καὶ ἐτράφητε ...

 τῇ αὐτῇ Understand χώρα.

6. Ἐπίδαμνός ἐστι πόλις ἐν δεξιᾷ **ἐσπλέοντι** τὸν Ἰόνιον κόλπον·

 κόλπος, -ου, ὁ *gulf*

7. καὶ **μοι** κάλει τούτων τοὺς μάρτυρας.
8. ὄν ποτ' ἐγὼ νύμφαν τ' ἐσίδοιμ'
αὐτοῖς μελάθροις διακναιομένους ...

 ὄν coordinating relative pronoun
 διακναίειν *to wear away; to destroy*

9. καὶ οἱ μὲν Ἀθηναῖοι ... **ἀτελεῖ τῇ νίκῃ** ἀπὸ τῆς Μιλήτου ἀνέστησαν ...
10. αἱ μὲν δὴ νῆες ἀφικνοῦνται ἐς τὴν Κέρκυραν, οἱ δὲ Κορίνθιοι, ἐπειδὴ **αὐτοῖς** παρεσκεύαστο, ἔπλεον ἐπὶ τὴν Κέρκυραν ναυσὶ πεντήκοντα καὶ ἑκατόν.

 μὲν δὴ ... δέ ... μὲν δὴ clause sums up preceding narrative, δέ clause carries narrative forward (Denniston, 1954, p. 258).
 ἀφικνοῦνται Hist. Pres.
 παρεσκεύαστο impersonal Pass.

This text is taken from *Intermediate Ancient Greek Language*,
by Darryl Palmer, published 2021 by ANU Press, The Australian
National University, Canberra, Australia.