

5.4: Genitive of separation; Dative of means; Dative of place/time

Greek, Latin, Sanscrit, and a number of other languages, spoken once in a vast area that extends from Iceland to India, are scions of an even earlier language, dubbed "Indo-European" to represent its geographic domain. This original language has not been preserved, but linguists have been able to reconstruct hypothetically many of its features. For instance, we know that it included eight cases, reduced in Latin to six and in classical Greek to five. Identifying the functions of these archaic cases allows us to recognize the varied functions of the surviving Greek cases.

INDOEUROPEAN CASES	FUNCTIONS	CASES IN GREEK		
NOMINATIVE	subject, pred. nominative	NOMINATIVE		
GENITIVE	noun modifier (= of)	GENITIVE a) =of;	b) denotes separation	
DATIVE	indirect object	DATIVE a) to / for;	b) by means of, with;	c) in, at
ACCUSATIVE	direct object	ACCUSATIVE		
VOCATIVE	direct address	VOCATIVE		
ABLATIVE	separation (away from)	ABLATIVE to Greek Genitive		
INSTRUMENTAL	= by means of, with	INSTRUMENTAL to Greek Dative		
LOCATIVE	place where / time when	LOCATIVE to Greek Dative		

EXAMPLES

a) **GENITIVE OF SEPARATION:** When does the genitive denote separation? In different contexts, sometimes with prepositions or adverbs, sometimes by itself, serving as verbal complement.

1) with a preposition meaning "away from" (ἀπό) or "out of" (ἐκ, ἐξ before a vowel) . These prepositions always govern the genitive.

ἀπὸ τῆς χώρας = away from the land; ἐκ τοῦ θησαυροῦ = out of the good treasury

2) as complement of a verb that expresses or implies separation, such as ἐκβαίνω τοῦ πλοίου = I disembark from the ship; ὁ νεανίας διαφέρει τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ = the young man differs from // his // brother.

b) **DATIVE OF MEANS (INSTRUMENTAL DATIVE)**: The dative by itself may tell *with what* an action is accomplished. Rule of thumb: when the translation "to, for" does not make sense, try this other meaning.

λίθοις βᾶλλουσι τοὺς πολεμίους *They hit the enemies with rocks.*

In English we say "with pleasure," "with confidence," etc., referring not to an actual means of the action but to its *manner*. In Greek too the dative of means may be applied to *manner*: χαρᾷ = with joy; πόνῳ = with toil.

c) **LOCATIVE DATIVE**. You are familiar already with ἐν + dative = in or at a location. The same prepositional phrase may refer to at a specific time. With nouns that mean a division of time, the preposition is not necessary: ἡμέρᾳ = in the daytime.