

Ancient Greek: Basic Grammatical Concepts

Article & Noun

attributive position: article precedes words that modify noun

ὁ ἐν τῇ νήσῳ ἄνθρωπος: the islander

ὁ ἄνθρωπος ὁ ἐν τῇ νήσῳ: the island man

ἄνθρωπος ὁ ἐν τῇ νήσῳ: the man, the one on the island

predicate position: article precedes noun, creates nominal sentence

ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐν τῇ νήσῳ: The man is on the island.

ἐν τῇ νήσῳ ὁ ἄνθρωπος: The man is on *the island*.

The pronoun/article/intensive αὐτός

Attributive: "the same"

ὁ αὐτὸς ποιητής "the same poet"

Predicate or Unaccompanied Nominative: "-self"

ὁ ποιητὴς αὐτὸς "the poet himself"

αὐτὸς τὸν βιβλίον ἔγραψε. "He himself wrote the book."

Unaccompanied Oblique Cases: personal pronoun

αὐτοῖς αἴγας ἐπέμψαμεν. "We sent the goats to them."

Accumulation of Negatives [Smyth 2760-1]

simple negative (οὐ or μή) follows neg with same verb: **additive**:

οὐ διὰ τὸ μὴ ἀκοντίζειν οὐκ ἔβαλον αὐτόν.

'It was not because they did not throw that they did not hit him.'

compound negative(s) (οὐδέ, μηδέ, etc) follows neg with same verb: **intensive**

οὐδεὶς οὐδὲν πενία δράσει.

'No one will do anything because of want.'

Sequence of Moods

	main verb: indicative	dependent verb
primary sequence	present future (& future perfect) perfect	subjunctive tense shows aspect
secondary sequence	imperfect aorist pluperfect	optative tense shows aspect

Purpose Clauses

πέμπομεν δῶρα ἵνα/ὥς/ὅπως λύητε/λύσητε τοὺς ἀδελφούς.

We send gifts so that you may release the brothers.

ἐπέμπομεν δῶρα ἵνα λύοιτε/λύσαιτε τοὺς ἀδελφούς.

We were sending gifts so that you might release the brothers.

οὐ ἐπέμψαμεν δῶρα ἵνα μὴ λύσαιτε τοὺς ἀδελφούς.

We did not send gifts so that you might not release the brothers.

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Conditions

μή is the negative for all protases, *οὐ* for all apodoses.

Future More Vivid: "does / will do"

έάν + subjunctive

future indicative

έάν τοὺς ἀδελφούς παιδεύωσι

δῶρα πέμψομεν

If they teach the brothers

we shall send gifts.

The apodosis can alternatively be expressed with independent subjunctive (hortatory, prohibitive, or deliberative).

έάν τοὺς ἀδελφούς παιδεύσωσι

δῶρα πέμψωμεν

If they teach the brothers

let us send gifts.

Future Less Vivid: "should do / would do"

εί + optative

optative + ἄν

εί τοὺς ἀδελφούς παιδεύοιεν

δῶρα πέμψαιμεν ἄν

If they should teach the brothers

we would send gifts.

Note: the protasis of a future less vivid condition is equivalent to an optative of wish, the apodosis to a potential optative.

Present General: "does / does"

έάν + subjunctive

present indicative

έάν τοὺς ἀδελφούς παιδεύωσι

δῶρα πέμπομεν

If (when) they teach the brothers

we send gifts

Past General: "did / did"

εί + optative

imperfect indicative

εί τοὺς ἀδελφούς παιδεύοιεν

δῶρα ἐπέμπομεν

If (when) they taught the brothers

we used to send gifts.

Present Contrafactual: "were doing / would be doing"

εί + imperfect indicative

imperfect indicative + ἄν

εί τοὺς ἀδελφούς ἐπαιδεύον

δῶρα ἐπέμπομεν ἄν

If they were teaching the brothers

we would be sending gifts.

Past Contrafactual: "had done / would have done"

εί + aorist indicative

aorist indicative + ἄν

εί τοὺς ἀδελφούς ἐπαιδευσαν

δῶρα ἐπέμψαμεν ἄν

If they had taught the brothers

we would have sent gifts.

conditional sentences with relative protases have the same classification and structure as the "basic" conditions; these sentences feature forms of the relative pronoun (ὅς, ἥ, ὅν) introduce the protasis, and replace *έάν* or *εί*. Thus for instance the future less vivid,

αἵ τοὺς ἀδελφούς παιδεύοιεν δῶρα πέμψαιμεν ἄν

Whichever women/Whoever should teach the brothers, [to them]we would send gifts.

or present general

οὓς ἀδελφούς παιδεύωσι δῶρα πέμπομεν

Whichever brothers they teach, [to them] we send gifts.

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conditional temporal clauses that refer to prior or simultaneous action (those referring to later action, “until, as long as” are introduced by μέχρι, πριν, έως) have classifications and structure similar to the conditions. In place of εάν or ει, these sentences feature temporal conjunctions: επει, επειδη, or επειδαν when the apodosis refers to prior action, οταν or οτε when it refers to simultaneous action.

Past Definite Temporal Clause: prior = επει, επειδη, simultaneous = οτε + [ου] past indic + [ου] past indic
επει/επειδη τους αδελφους επαιδευσαν, δωρα επεμψαμεν. After they taught the brothers, we sent gifts.
οτε τους αδελφους επαιδευσαν, δωρα επεμψαμεν. When they taught the citizens, we sent gifts.

Present General Temporal Clause: prior = επειδαν, simultaneous = οταν + [μη] subv + [ου] pres indic
επειδαν τους αδελφους παιδεύωσι, δωρα πέμπομεν. After they teach the brothers, we send gifts.
οταν τους αδελφους παιδεύωσι, δωρα πέμπομεν. When(ever) they teach the citizens, we send gifts.

Past General Temporal Clause: prior = επει, επειδη, simultaneous = οτε + [μη] optative + [ου] imperfect indic
επει/επειδη τους αδελφους παιδεύοιεν, δωρα επεμψομεν.
Whenever they taught the brothers, we used to send gifts.
οτε τους αδελφους παιδεύοιεν, δωρα επεμψομεν. Whenever they were teaching the bros, we sent gifts.

Future More Vivid: prior = επειδαν, simultaneous = επει, επειδη + [μη] pres/aor subjv + [ου] fut indic
επειδαν τους αδελφους παιδεύωσι, δωρα πέμψομεν. After/when they teach the brothers, we shall send gifts.
οταν τους αδελφους παιδεύωσι, δωρα πέμψομεν. When they are the brothers, we shall send gifts.

	Case forms denoting time
genitive: time within which	During the day we taught the young men. ἐξ ἡμερῶν τοὺς νεανίας διδάξαμεν. Within 6 days we will teach the young men.
dative: time at which	τῇ πρώτῃ ἡμέρᾳ τοὺς νεανίας ἐδιδάξαμεν. On the first day we taught the young men.
accusative: extent of time	πέντε ἡμέρας τοὺς νεανίας ἐδιδάξαμεν For 5 days we taught the young men.

Independent Uses of Subjunctive & Optative

subjunctive (see also future more vivid conditions)

hortatory: 1st sing/pl, pr or aor. “let me/us”. tense shows aspect. negative μή.
παύωμεν τὴν μάχην. Let us be stopping the battle.
παύσω τὴν μάχην. Let me stop the battle.
μὴ παύσωμεν τὴν μάχην. Let’s not stop the battle.

deliberative: 1st sing/pl, pr or aor. “am I/are we to?”. tense shows aspect. negative μή.
παύωμεν τὴν μάχην; Are we to be stopping the battle?
παύσω τὴν μάχην; Am I to stop the battle?
μὴ παύσωμεν τὴν μάχην; Are we not to stop the battle?

prohibitive: 2nd sing/pl, aor only. “don’t!” tense shows aspect. negative μή.
μὴ παύσετε τὴν μάχην. Don’t (y’all) stop the battle.

optative

wish: “if only, would that, I wish that”. --/εἰ γὰρ/εἴθε + any tense of optative; neg μή; NO ἄν.
--/εἰ γὰρ/εἴθε τὰ ζῷα θύοιτο. “Would that the animals were being sacrificed”

potential: “may/might/would/could”. no introductory particle; neg οὐ; WITH ἄν.
τὰ ζῷα θύσαιτο. “The animals may be sacrificed.”

=> these independent uses of the optative can be remembered in terms of a future less vivid condition (which can be translated accurately enough as “would/would”):

protasis ~ wish: use of μή, εἰ, no ἄν; apodosis ~ potential: use of οὐ, ἄν, no εἰ

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Result Clauses

actual: ὥστε+any tense of indicative; neg οὐ

τοῖς θεοῖς θύουσιν ὥστε σωθήσονται.

"They are sacrificing to the gods with the result that they will (actually) be saved."

natural: ὥστε+any tense of infinitive; neg μή. inf. takes subject acc. often with adverb οὕτω(ς).

οὕτω δεινῶς τοῖς θεοῖς θύουσιν ὥστε σωθῆναι.

"So marvelously are they sacrificing to the gods (with the result) that they will (naturally) be saved."

οὕτω δεινῶς τοῖς θεοῖς θύουσιν ὥστε τοὺς φίλους σωθῆναι.

"So marvelously are they sacrificing to the gods that their friends will (naturally) be saved."

Fear Clauses

fear regarding SUBSEQUENT action:

verb of fearing + μή + subjunctive in 1° sequence, optative in 2° sequence. negative οὐ.

φοβοῦμαι μὴ λύσῃ τοὺς κακοὺς. I fear that he may / will free the bad men.

φοβοῦμαι μὴ οὐ λύσῃ τοὺς κακοὺς. I fear that he may / will not free the bad men.

ἐφοβούμην μὴ λύσειε τοὺς κακοὺς. I was afraid that he may / will free the bad men.

fear regarding CONTEMPORANEOUS or PRIOR action:

verb of fearing + μή + indicative; negative οὐ.

φοβοῦμαι μὴ λύει τοὺς κακοὺς. I fear that he is freeing the bad men.

φοβοῦμαι μὴ οὐκ ἔλυε τοὺς κακοὺς. I fear that he did not free the bad men.

ἐφοβούμην μὴ ἔλυσεν τοὺς κακοὺς. I was afraid that he freed the bad men.

Objective (Substantive) Effort Clauses

verb of striving + ὅπως + future indicative; negative μή

μηχανᾶται ὅπως ἄρξει τοῦ δήμου. He is contriving to (that he will) rule the people.

μηχανᾶνται ὅπως μὴ ἄρξει τοῦ δήμου. They are contriving that he will not rule the people.

[cf purpose clause: μηχανᾶται ταῦτα ὅπως ἄρξει τοῦ δήμου. He is contriving these things in order to (that he will) rule the people.]

Supplementary Use of Participle

completes meaning of verb; usually translate as gerund.

χαίρεις τοῦτο ποιῶν. You take pleasure doing this.

ἔπαυσας τοῦτο ποιῶν. You ceased doing this.

ἔπαυσας τοῦτο ποιοῦντα. You stopped him from doing this.

τυγχάνεις τοῦτο ποιοῦντα. You happen to be doing this.

τυγχάνεις τοῦτο ποιήσας. You happen to do / to have done this.

τοῦτο ποιῶν τοὺς φίλους λανθάνεις. Doing this, you escape the notice of / act secretly from your friends.

τοὺς φίλους φθάνεις τοῦτο ποιῶν. You anticipate / act before your friends in doing this.

τοὺς φίλους ἔφθης τοῦτο ποιῶν. You did this before your friends / "beat" your friends in doing this.