



Intensive Greek 1

Introduction to Greek

The Greek alphabet

Basic grammar and syntax

The Greek alphabet

- Α α, Β β, Γ γ, Δ δ, Ε ε, Ζ ζ, Η η, Θ θ, Ι ι, Κ κ, Λ λ, Μ μ, Ν ν, Ξ ξ, Ο ο, Π π, Ρ ρ, Σ σ ς (end sigma), Υ υ, Φ φ, Χ χ, Ψ ψ, Ω ω
- Diphtongs:
 - αι, αυ, οι, υι
- Digraphs:
 - ει
 - ευ
- Combinations with gamma: γγ, γκ, γχ, γξ, γμ

Breathings

- In words that begin with a vowel, Greek signals whether that vowel is preceded by a “h” sound or not:
- ´ above an initial vowel tells us there is no “h” sound
- ῀ above an initial vowel tells us there is a “h” sound
- When writing with capital letters, breathings are placed before the vowel:
- When writing in lower-case, breathings are placed above the initial vowel: ἐγώ
 - If the initial vowel is part of a diphthong or digraph, the breathing is put above the second letter: οὖν
- ...and note that the ρ also gets a harsh breathing!

Accents: a very brief introduction (cf. RG 344)

- You will also see other diacritic signs in your Greek text, like:
 - ἐμπόριον
 - τήν γῆν
 - Δεῦρο
- These are, as you might recognise from modern languages, to do with stress/pitch
- At this stage, we focus on how the accent behaves in three types of words: nouns, adjectives, and verbs
- For nouns and adjectives, the accent is persistent: it tends to stay where it is in the dictionary forms – although it can be affected by the place of a word in a sentence
 - ὁ ῥαψωδός compared to ἡ ἀκρόπολις
 - This means it is important to learn the accentuation as you add nouns and adjectives to your active vocabulary
- For verbs, the final syllable determines where the accent goes:
 - If it is short, the accent can at most go to the third syllable from the end of the word (ἐμπόριον)
 - If it is long, or a diphthong or digraph, the accent can go at most to the second syllable from the end of the word (ἀκούω)
 - Note that the circumflex can only sit on the two final syllables in the word, and can't be used if the final syllable is long
- Verb accents help us determine between different verb forms: we will see this when we start working with contract verbs in 1E and 1F
- ...and accents on pronouns are quite significant, too: note the learning vocabulary IB: τίς (who, what?) with an acute accent



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Language and grammar terminology

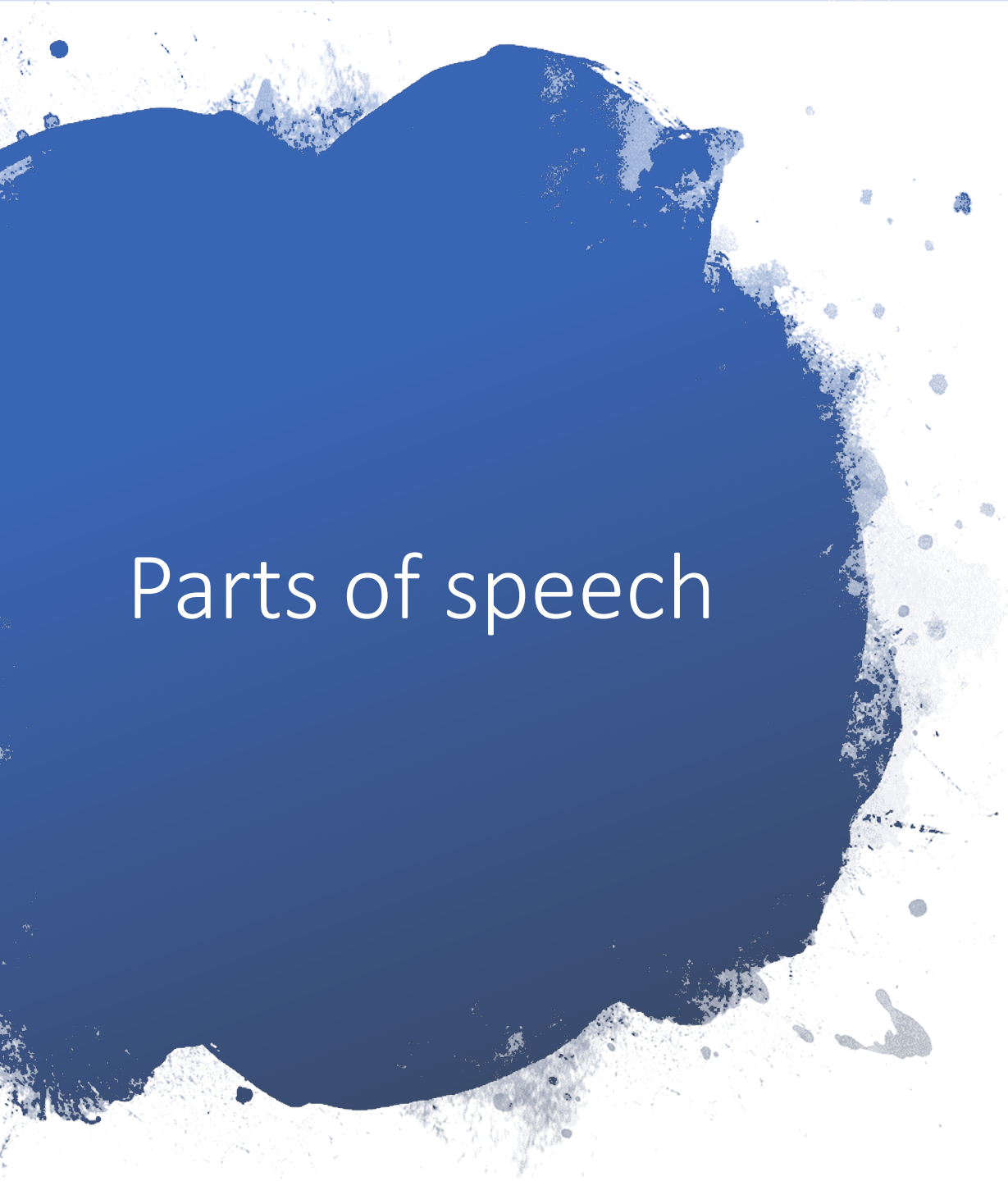
In order to be able to discuss words in a Greek sentence and in order to understand their behaviour, we need to know grammatical and syntactical terms

The use of these terms transfers easily to other languages and will help you improve both your current languages and the ones you might start learning in the future

Tip: There is a glossary of grammatical terms at the beginning of *RG Grammar and Exercises* (p. 4-7)

Grammar & Syntax

- In a sense, 'grammar' might be used to describe the rules and patterns that set out the behaviour and forms of each individual word, and 'syntax' the rules and systems that apply to putting words together.
 - E.g. knowing how to recognise/create individual forms of a word is grammar...
 - ..but knowing what an individual form might mean in the context of a sentence is to do with syntax
- Even before they are put in a sentence, individual words can be categorised according to type.
 - The English term 'parts of speech' might be confusing: other modern languages call this 'types of words' (*nature* in French, *Wortart* in German, *ordklass* in Swedish, but *parti del discorso* in Italian and μέρη του λόγου in modern Greek)



Parts of speech

- **Verb: “action words”**
- **Noun: names things/people**
- **Adjective: describes qualities of nouns**
- Pronoun: noun stand-ins, e.g. ‘it’ instead of ‘noun’
- Adverb: describes how a verb is performed, e.g. ‘it grows quickly’
- Preposition: words describing position linked to a noun, e.g. in, outside, from, during, of, between...
- Conjunction: links clauses and sentences together, e.g. because..., although..., for...
- Interjection: exclamations, e.g. ‘ecce!’ ‘heus!’

Nouns

- In Greek, nouns are divided between three grammatical genders: masculine, feminine, and neuter
 - Make sure you learn the gender of the noun as you learn new vocab
- Each gender has a distinct definite article:
 - ὁ, ἡ, το
- Greek uses the definite article extensively and it helps us recognise how words go together in a sentence – far more so than in modern languages, even German or French

The Greek definite article

Case	Masculine (s)	Feminine (s)	Neuter (s)	Masculine (pl)	Feminine (pl)	Neuter (pl)
Nominative	ὁ	ἡ	τό	οἱ	αἱ	τά
Accusative	τον	την	τό	τούς	τάς	τά
Genitive	τοῦ	τῆς	τοῦ	τῶν	τῶν	τῶν
Dative	τω	τη	τω	τοῖς	ταῖς	τοῖς

Case (nouns and adjectives, *for now*)

- Different forms ('word shapes') also help determine the function of a word within a sentence
- In addition to gender and number (singular or plural, one or many)...
- ...for nouns and adjectives, Greek has five different cases:
 - **Nominative**: for words that are or describe the subject of a sentence
 - **Accusative**: for words that are or describe the direct object
 - (or words that are governed by a preposition followed by accusative: more on this later!)
 - Genitive
 - Dative
 - **Vocative**: only used in direct address "o, slave!" etc
- We will work initially with the nominative and the accusative

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The endings used for the definite article will, for nouns following three declension patterns (1a, 2a, 2b), correspond to the noun endings. Cf. RG 354 and 355, and 1G. For now, you may use the article as a guide to determine case and number.

Cases: English

- In modern English, we don't really separate words in different cases as the word forms coincide
- However, when we use pronouns we do take case into account and use it to signal syntactical function:
 - I see James => I see him [not: I see he]
 - I see Jim and Roy => I see them [not: I see they]

Cases: Greek (basic sentences)

- In Greek, case is far more important than word order in determining how words in a sentence fit together
- ὁ ἄνθρωπος (nom., sg., masc.) can only function as the subject
- τόν ἄνθρωπον (acc., sg., masc.) can be an accusative object or governed by a preposition that takes the accusative... ...but this form cannot be the subject of a sentence
- An adjective must agree in case, number, and gender with the noun it describes

Syntax: Words within a sentence



- The dog licks his nose
 - What happens, what is the action?: someone **licks** something = Verb (1)
 - The syntax term is 'predicate'
 - Who (1) someone something?: The dog = **Subject (2)**
 - What does (2) (1)?: his nose = **Accusative object**
- The good dog licks his nose
 - => The adjective 'good' must be in the nominative as it describes the subject
 - What number should 'dog' and 'nose' be?

Adjective declension: **καλ** ός η ον

Case	Masc., sg.	Fem., sg.	Neut., sg.	Masc., pl.	Fem., pl.	Neut., pl.
Nom	καλός	καλή	καλόν	καλοί	καλαί	καλά
Acc	καλόν	καλήν	καλόν	καλούς	καλάς	καλά
Gen	καλοῦ	καλῆς	καλοῦ	καλῶν	καλῶν	καλῶν
Dat	καλῷ	καλῇ	καλῷ	καλοῖς	καλαῖς	καλοῖς
Voc	καλέ	καλή	καλόν	καλοί	καλαί	καλά

Adjective and noun declension: practice

- The beautiful ship sails [toward Athens]
 - cf. RG T&V 1A 6
 - toward Athens: πρὸς τὰς Ἀθίνας - you can recognise an accusative form here: it depends on the preposition πρὸς
- What happens, what is the action?
 - Something sails: sails is the main verb/predicate
- Who/what sails?
 - The beautiful ship sails: the beautiful ship is the subject
 - => One ship, so singular both for the noun and the adjective
 - => The ship is the subject, so nominative for both the noun and the adjective
 - => τὸ καλόν πλοῖον
- The verb sails must also agree in number with the subject noun – let's look at the Greek verb before putting it in place

Verbs: present indicative active

- It will not surprise an English-speaker that verbs have different endings depending on who performs the action:
 - I am vs they are: we do too, and of course French, Spanish, and German as well!
- Verb endings depend on person and number
 - 1st: I (sg.), we (pl.)
 - 2nd: you (sg.), you (pl.)
 - 3rd: he/she/it (sg.), they (pl.)

Person & Number	Verb	Ending
1 st per sg	βαίνω	-ω
2 nd per sg	βαίνεις	-εις
3 rd per sg	βαίνει	-ει
1 st per pl	βαίνομεν	-ομεν
2 nd per pl	βαίνετε	-ετε
3 rd per pl	βαίνουνσι(ν)	-ουσι(ν)

Understanding the Greek verb

- We will be dealing with the following categories:
 - Tense (so far: present – Greek has seven tenses)
 - Mood (so far: indicative, next imperative - Greek has four/six)
 - Voice (so far: active – Greek has three)
- Please continue by reading through the *RG G&E* introduction to verb forms (p. 15-17) independently to firm up your knowledge of the Greek verb
- Imperative mood
- Imperative is used for direct commands
- The present imperative active forms are:
 - 2nd person singular: βαῖν-ε
 - 2nd person plural: βαίν-ετε
- ...please note that negative imperatives go with μή



So...

- We have the alphabet and basic Greek pronunciation
 - Breathings and accents
- We have established some basic grammar and syntax
 - Parts of speech
 - Basic syntactical analysis: predicate, subject, accusative object
 - Case
- We have added patterns for:
 - The definite article
 - The adjective καλός
 - The verb βαίνω
- Continue with:
 - Exercises 1A-B 2 (p. 12-13)
 - Exercises 1C-D 1 and 2 (p. 16)
 - ...and of course our weekly assignment!