

EYSTEIN DAHL

Early Vedic

Morphosyntactic structures – Part 4: Case morphosyntax

Roadmap

- Overview of the Early Vedic case system
- Outline of the use of the cases
- Some examples of object alternation

Case Categories	Canonical Functions
Nominative	Grammatical Subject, Subject predicative
Vocative	Addressee
Accusative	Direct Object, Goal
Dative	Indirect Object, Benefactive, Recipient, Agent phrase
Genitive	Partitive, Possessor
Instrumental	Instrument, Sociative, Path, Agent phrase
Locative	Location, Goal
Ablative	Cause, Origin

Two types of functions

- Argument realization
- Local, adverbial or adnominal functions

The nominative

- Used to express the subject of transitive and intransitive verbs

áhan *vṛtrám* *vṛtratáram* (...)

smite:IPF.3SG Vṛtrá:ACC great.obstacle:ACC

índro *vájreṇa* *mahatā* *vadhéna* (RV I 32.5)

Indra:NOM mace:INS great:INS weapon:INS

índraś *ca* *yád* *yuyudháte* *áhiś* (RV I 32.13)

Indra:NOM and when fight:PRF.MID.3DU dragon:NOM

- Subject predicative

tvám *hí* *ratnadhā* *ási* (RV I 15.3)

you:NOM for bestower.of.treasure:NOM be:PRS.2SG

The vocative

- Addressee
- With imperative forms

índra sómam̃ (...) píba imám (RV III 32.1)
Indra:VOC soma:ACC drink:PRS.IMP this:ACC

- With other second person verb forms

ásvyo vāro ab^havas tād indra (RV I 32.12)
of.horse hair:NOM become:IPF.2SG Indra:VOC

- With second person pronominal forms

ákāri ta indra gótameb^hir bráhmāṇi (RV I 63.9)
make:AOR.PASS you:DAT Indra:VOC Gotama:INS.PL song.of.praise:ACC.PL

The accusative

- Direct object

apād *ahastó* *apṛtanyad* *índram* (RV I 32.7)
footless:NOM handless:NOM fight:IPF.3SG Indra:ACC

- Goal phrase of motion verbs

yamáṁ *ha* *yajñó* *gacc^hati* (RV X 14.13)
Yama:ACC PTC sacrifice:NOM come:PRS.3SG

The dative

- Indirect object/recipient

dadāti dāśúṣe vāsūni (RV VII 27.3)
give:PRS.3SG pious:DAT goods:ACC

- Beneficiary

śivā sák^hib^hya utá máhyam āsīt (RV X 34.2)
gracious:NOM companion:DAT.PL and I:DAT be:IPF.3SG

- Second argument of certain two-place verbs

tád asmai mádhv íc cacch^hadyāt (RV X 73.9)
that:NOM he:DAT mead:NOM PTC seem:PRF.OPT.3SG

- Expression of agent

yá stotṛ^ḥbhyo hávyo ásti (RV I 33.2)
who:NOM praiser:DAT.PL invoke:GER be:PRS.3SG

The genitive

- Possessor

índrasya nú vīryāṇi prá vocaṃ (RV I 32.1)
Indra:GEN now strength:ACC.PL PRV praise:AOR.INJ.1SG

- Partitive

g^hṛtāsya stokám̐ sakṛd áhna āśnāṃ
ghee:GEN.SG drop:ACC.SG once day:GEN.SG eat:IPF.1SG
(RV X 95.16)

yát^hā śāryāté ápibaḥ sutāsya (RV III 51.7)
like Śāryāta:LOC drink:IPF.2SG juice:GEN

The instrumental

- Sociative

devó devéb^hir á gamat (RV I 1.5)
god:NOM god:INS.PL PRV come:AOR.INJ.3SG

- Instrument

vájreṇa vajrī ní jag^hāna śúṣṇam (RV V 32.4)
mace:INS mace.bearer:NOM PRV smite:PRF.3SG Śúṣṇa:ACC

- Path

divā yānti marúto (RV I 161.14)
heaven:INS travel:PRS.3PL Maruts:NOM

- Agent in passive constructions

agníḥ púrveb^hir řṣib^hir íḍyo (RV I 1.2)
Agni:NOM earlier:INS sages:INS.PL invoke:GER

The locative

- Place

átriḥ sūryasya diví cákṣur ád^hāt (RV V 40.8)
Atri:NOM sun:GEN heaven:LOC eye:ACC place:AOR.3SG

- Group amongst

tvám devéṣu prat^hamám^ṁ havāmahe (RV I 102.9)
you:ACC god:LOC.PL first:ACC call:PRS.1PL

- Absolute locative

índraṃ prātár havāmaha índraṃ prayaty
Indra:ACC at.dawn call:PRS.1PL Indra:ACC proceeding:LOC
àd^hvaré (RV I 16.3)
sacrifice:LOC

The locative

- Rarely used in argument realization

vísve devā havīṣi mādayad^hvam (RV VI 52.17)
all:voc gods:voc oblation:LOC enjoy:PRS.IMP.MID.2PL

The ablative

- Origin

devānāṃ pūrvyé yugé 'sataḥ sád
god:GEN.PL first:LOC age:LOC not.being:ABL being:NOM
ajāyata (RV X 72.2)
be.born:IPF.3SG

- Cause

mā nas tásmād énaso deva rīṣaḥ (RV VII 89.5)
NEG we:ACC this:ABL sin:ABL god:VOC harm:AOR.INJ.2SG

- Rarely used in argument realization

índrasya vájrād abib^hed (RV X 138.5)
Indra:GEN mace:ABL be.afraid:IPF.3SG

Argument alternation: Ingestion verbs

índra *sómaṃ* *píba* (RV I 15.1)
Indra:VOC soma:ACC.SG drink:PRS.IMP.2SG

sómasya *somapāḥ* *píba* (RV I 4.2)
soma:GEN.SG somadrinker:VOC.SG drink:PRS.IMP.2SG

Argument alternation: ŚRAV^I- ‘hear’

- Accusative

vísve devāḥ śṛṇutá imám hávam me
all:VOC gods:VOC hear:PRS.IMP this:ACC invocation:ACC I:GEN
(RV VI 52.13)

- Genitive

śyāvāśuvasya sunvatás tát^hā śṛṇu
Śyāvāśuva:GEN extracting:GEN thus hear:PRS.IMP
yát^hā áśṛṇor átreḥ kármāṇi kṛṇvatáh
like listen:IPF Atri:GEN sacred.deeds:ACC performing:GEN
(RV VIII 36.7)

बहवो धन्यवादाः
Thank you for your attention!