Chapter 7 H&Q Unit 7

This unit covers a grammatical concept that, at first blush, is going to be non-intuitive in English. It also treats as a separate grammatical concept something that is largely superfluous as a separate grammatical concept. This unit is going to be confusing and irritating and you're going to want to throw Hardy and Gerry's lovely orange book across the room.

Tough.

The good news is, there's also a grammatical concept that requires all of one line to explain. So you've got that going for you. Which is nice. And, truthfully, even for the confusing stuff, it fits relatively neatly into the framework you should already have from Units 1-6. So, if you've been doing the work, then Unit 7 should only require as much work as you've already put in for all six units.

I'm kidding. Sort of.

In all seriousness, folks, the grammar has been important up to now, but those have been the basics. What we're getting into now are intermediate concepts that you will need to be solid on moving forward, so do not cheat this stuff because somebody tells you that you'll never see it or because it'll be obvious when you do see it. Wrong on both counts. So, stay sharp, stay focused, keep carrying around your hundreds of flash cards in your cargo shorts.

Learn the middle voice for your own benefit

Up to this point, we've been working with subjects, verbs, and objects that have had a relationship that can be clearly expressed in English. Active voice, where you've got a subject performing the action of the verb on the direct object, and passive voice, where the subject is *receiving* the action of the verb, perhaps with an expressed agent. Nice and simple, right?

Okay, hope you enjoyed that; welcome to the middle voice, which has a function so non-intuitive in English that it's almost impossible to *describe* in English what it means. "…the action somehow returns to the subject, that the subject has a special interest in the action of the verb." I know what you're thinking, believe me – *seriously, guys? "a special interest in the action of the verb"? What does that even* mean?

Well, believe it or not, that's one of the better ways to describe it. Part of the problem here is that English, as a Germanic language, expresses the meanings the Greek middle voice expresses in an entirely different way. We use terms like "reflexive", which Greek's middle voice *can* be, but is not necessarily, and "intransitive", which again Greek's middle voice *can* be but doesn't *have* to be, and then instead of a specific verb form we have separate phrases by which we express the idea that we're doing something for our own benefit – phrases like "for our own benefit", for example. And we don't change the voice of the verb "to release" to form the word "to ransom", either; we just have a separate verb "to ransom".

That said, there are verbs in English that can be used to convey some sliver of a sense of the middle voice – "The pie bakes in the oven." The pie is baking, yes; it is performing the action expressed by the verb. Still, you probably don't suddenly have an image of a pie with a rolling pin, a bowl of dough, and a smaller oven nested inside the bigger oven. No, your image is of a pie that's sitting there on the center rack, getting all hot and brown and bubbly and juicy. Maybe it's an apple pie.

Mmmm. Freshly-baked apple pie.

Sorry, what was I saying?

Oh, right, the middle voice. Okay, so the point is that the pie is baking; grammatically, it is performing the action of the verb. However, it is doing so in a very receptive fashion, since it's also the pie that is *being baked* in the oven.

"I drove myself to the store" is another one. I didn't literally drive myself; I didn't whip my own back until I got to the store in a timely fashion. Rather, we understand that sentence as *I drove (a car) myself (that is, with me sitting in the car that I was driving) to the store*. I am performing the action; I am also the recipient of the benefit of the action; I may or may not be performing the action *reflexively* (doing something to myself) but I am the beneficiary regardless.

My wife, it must be said (and she's a brilliant Germanic grammarian in her own right), doesn't like any of these explanations. The pie example doesn't work, she says, because that's just a verb being used intransitively – there's no mystical voodoo "middle voice" implied, whatever in the Sam Hill that actually is. The driving example doesn't work because it's just a reflexive. And so on.

These objections just prove the point that the middle voice is completely unintuitive in English. But, as my first Greek teacher put it, that's an English problem and not a Greek problem. Your choices are – A) learn the forms, learn the possible translations, and work through examples using all the possible translations until it starts to become intuitive from context, or B) close the book and go home.

I recommend A), but if you choose B), I strongly suggest you drive yourself home, and think about just what it meant that you did that. By morning you'll have driven yourself nuts trying to identify middle voice in English, and you'll come crawling back to the mean and nasty orange book, sobbing and apologizing and begging it to take you back.

And you know what? It will. Because Greek will always be there.

But then, even once you get past that conceptual hurdle, you've got to deal with the fact that sometimes the middle voice creates a different meaning for the verb altogether. Usually this meaning is somehow *causative*; to give an example already alluded to, λύω "to untie, to release" in the middle voice becomes λύομαι "to ransom" – that is, *to cause to be released*. It doesn't always work this way; ἄρχω "to rule" becomes ἄρχομαι "to begin", for example – hey, now, don't slam the book on the ground. We've been through this already. Anyway, these different meanings just have to be learned; you're not going to have the most fruitful of times just trying to intuit them. Add a line to your flashcard for that word. What, you think you're too good to do that? Don't walk away from me – I'm talking to you! When I was your age I didn't have flashcards, I had to scavenge for used scraps of toilet paper that I then had to write on in blood! That's what we had to do, and we *liked* it! You don't know how good you have it! Punk kid get off my lawn!

So, uh, anyway, the other annoying thing about the middle voice is the set of forms. The forms are identical to the passive forms, except for when the form of the verb uses the aorist or future stem. Some of the aorist forms are reasonably easy to identify; if you see an aorist stem, α as the *thematic vowel* (remember that we talked about those?), and a personal ending that looks passive, then you've probably got the middle voice. Aorist subjunctive breaks this intuitive pattern, but what can you do? Oh, that's right – you can sit down and learn the forms anyway.

Bottom line: cause yourself to learn the middle voice for your own benefit.

The non-existent "second aorist"

Oh, good Lord. There is no such thing as the "second aorist". This is just bad grammatical categorization, period; there is no difference in meaning, no difference in syntax,

strictly a difference in morphology. This section of the unit can be summed up as "some verbs have aorist stems that take different sets of personal endings that you already know rather than the ones we learned earlier for the equally non-existent 'first aorist'". Big whoop. The point is – there is just an aorist. No "first" and "second" categorization required, just learning that there are two sets of endings, and you have to learn which verb takes which endings. This should not exactly be the most taxing thing you have to learn when taking on ancient Greek.

This message has been brought to you by the verb system

Hardy and Gerry now take a moment to give you a two page spread of hot, lonely Ithacan housewives – er, no, sorry, that's something I'm writing for a very different audience – I mean to say, they now spend two pages reviewing the verb system as you know it up to this point. It's not a bad thing to make sure is intuitive to you at this point; it's also not the last time they'll do it. Anyway, take advantage of the commercial break to make sure you're on the same page with them (and me).

"If only we could learn potential optatives!" "We may yet learn them, don't worry."

We talked about independent uses of the subjunctive mood in the last unit; hortatory/jussive, deliberative, and prohibitive. The optative also gets some independent love; there is the "optative of wish", which expresses a desire you're pretty sure won't be fulfilled. These are sentences you might start with "If only…" or "Would that…" or, most simply, "I wish that…" I personally don't like "I wish that…" as a translation of optative of wish simply from the standpoint that "I wish that…" in English sets up what's called *indirect discourse*, and that's something we've got a ways before we cover. "If only" accounts for the εἰ in εἴθε and εἰ γὰρ, at least.

A *potential optative* is marked with ἄν, and it's really just the apodosis of a future less vivid conditional sentence used independently. Would/could/may/might are the ways you, uh, *might* translate it, depending on context; you will have to decide as the person reading the sentence which way makes the most sense.

The two things I will point out: as I've stated many times up to this point (say it with me if you can), outside of the indicative mood, all tense conveys is the *aspect* of the action, and doesn't tell anybody anything about time. These are potential *optatives*, meaning we're outside the indicative mood, so you know nothing about *when* these actions may/might/could/would be performed. If you had to give the syntax for εἴθε χωρεύσοιμεν, you would say "aorist to show simple aspect, optative for optative of wish"; you would *not* say "aorist to show past time and simple aspect", because you would further not give "If only we danced!" as an acceptable translation for εἴθε χωρεύσοιμεν, because you *know* what the consequences will be if you do.

The other thing to point out is that, *contra* what the book says, the easiest way of distinguishing between uses of the potential optative is... you know what I'm going to say, don't you?... *learning the uses of the potential optative*. I mean, really. If you see εἰ, that should already by now set up the idea in your head that you'll be using "if" somewhere, and if you see ἄν plus an optative the sense of it should be second nature at this stage of the game. Shortcuts on the easy stuff won't help you. On bigger stuff they might/could/should/would.

That is a demonstrative pronoun

Hopefully this is a reasonably stress-free concept: ἐκείνος, declined according to the gender, number, and case of the noun it is modifying, plus the article, translates as "that" – "that" in a way that conveys significance, emphasis, distinction, and probably with some separation between the speaker and the referent. "Which steak do you want? This steak right here?" "No, I

want *that* steak over there." "I think it was *that* woman sitting across the restaurant who strangled her husband over his jokes, not this woman sitting next to us."

As I've demonstrated, it's that simple. [puts on sunglasses]

…..YEEEEEEEEAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAH

Whomever uses conditional sentences with relative protases will want to read this

This is legitimately a somewhat tricky concept. (And by "legitimately somewhat tricky" I mean that I had trouble with it when I first learned it.) I am of the opinion that the book *over*-explains it, and does so in a way that reduces rather than enhances clarity. It may very well be that I think that because I'm not that bright, but I'd nonetheless like to offer a slightly different way to explain it.

Normally, relative pronouns have an antecedent/referent in the sentence that's employing them. The man *whom I met at the store* just flew by in a spaceship. But what if you take out the referent? You're left with *whom I met at the store* just flew by in a spaceship. In this case, however, we understand "whom" not as a question word, but as a relative pronoun with an implied, if unknown, antecedent: *whomever it was I met at the store (and I don't know just who it was), he just flew by in a spaceship*. So in the same way that we've been talking about independent uses of the subjunctive and optative, we can look at this section as talking about *independent uses of the relative pronoun*.

The thing is, in Greek, as soon as you take the information being conveyed out of the realm of that which is immediately known to be factual, you're no longer in the indicative mood. Happily, the framework for figuring out just what verb forms to use in these kinds of situations is exactly the same for conditional sentences; you simply slot the "whoever", or whatever (see what

I did there?), into the place where the "if" would have gone. Here's a future less vivid example – the conditional sentence look like this:

If I should meet somebody at the store, he would fly by in a spaceship.

Replace the "if" (and the "somebody" placeholder) with your independent relative pronoun, and you've got it:

Whomever *I should meet at the store, he would fly by in a spaceship.*

To sum up: when relative pronouns are independent (that is, antecedent-free) in a sentence, they get translated with "-ever" being added to them, and then they follow the framework of a conditional sentence, with the relative clause as the protasis and the relative pronoun standing in for "if". Hopefully this makes sense; we'll get some practice with the exercises. Whoever needs help, well, whatever form that help might take, it's coming to whomever might find it handy.

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<*crickets chirping*>

Boy, this is a tough room.

Adverbs? Really?

Add –ως to the stem of any given adjective (generated the same way you get the stem of a noun, the genitive masculine singular without the ending) to make it an adverb.

Really. That's it. Now, go sit down before you fall down.

Right, break's over. Time for the exercises.

Unit VII exercises.

I. Notes as needed. Greek to English:

1. If only during the night and day those good guards, at least, would be on guard (continuously) against the thieves in order that they not steal the money of the people.

   There are a few things going on here; optative of wish, temporal clauses (genitive of time within which), middle voice of φυλάττω *which means "be on guard against" plus accusative of that which is being guarded against, plus a purpose clause. Here's how it breaks down:*

   εἰ γὰρ – *here's our marker that we've got an optative of wish coming.*

   νυκτός τε καὶ ἡμέρας – *genitive of time within which; "during the night and during the day"*

   ἐκεῖνοί γ᾽ οἱ ἀγαθοὶ φύλακες – *here's our subject, with a demonstrative pronoun, even. Don't forget to translate the particle* γε*; it's part of how you tell your teacher that you're paying attention.*

   εὖ -- *adverbial expression, "well", as in to do something well, not as in the cheaper liquor.*

   φυλάττοιντο – *here's the optative of wish that was telegraphed with* εἰ γὰρ*; it's present tense, which means that the speaker is indicating that he/she wants this happening on an ongoing basis. Does tense have anything to do with time outside of the indicative mood? Well? Does it… punk?*

   τοὺς κλέπτας – *object of* φυλάττοιντο*; "be on guard against the thieves"*

   ὡς – *marker of a purpose clause! So, we've got another subjunctive mood verb coming up, you can bet on it.*

τὸ τοῦ δήμου ἀργύριον – *you're already thinking to yourself, "…in order that the money of the people…" and you're setting yourself up for a verb in the passive voice, aren't you? Resist that urge. It's neuter, so the form is ambiguous, and word order doesn't actually tell you what you're instinctively wanting it to.*

μὴ κλέψωσιν – *see? That's active, not passive, and the implied subject is* τοὺς κλέπτας *from the previous clause. "…in order that they, the thieves, not steal the money of the people."*

Make sense?

2. If only the other solders would not leave the bridge but hinder the enemies.
3. The evil men might steal the things of the citizens. Let us guard, then, those small houses.
4. Whoever is a slave to the body is not be a free man, let me tell you; but whomever the soul rules is both a wise and a free man.

   Don't let οὔτοι *fool you – it's not* οὗτοι*, "these", but rather the particle* τοι *combined with the negating* οὐ*, as mentioned very briefly on page 154 in the previous unit. On the whole, this is, in fact, a rather deceptive sentence; even once you figure out* οὔτοι*, your initial instinct, I'm sure, is to start reading it as "the free man who…" but that way lies madness.* ἐλεύθερος *is a predicate; the relative pronoun* ὃς *is telling you that we have a conditional sentence with a relative protasis – a present general, in fact (subjunctive +* ἄν *in the protasis, present indicative in the apodosis). Even once you've got that, you have to be mindful in the second sentence that* ἄρχῃ *takes the genitive case, which is our relative pronoun so that it's "whomever the soul rules", rather than something like "whosever soul rules" which will lead to an untranslatable sentence.*

5. Whoever is left behind on the island will not be freed.
6. Could we send that thing? Or are we to send the other thing?

   Anybody else feel like we're in The Princess Bride*? Anyway, context in a real text will tell you what we're talking about.*
7. Whoever used to work/was working in that house, they should be left behind.

   This is also a little tricky; it starts out making you think it's a present contrafactual conditional sentence with a relative protasis, but the second clause is an optative of wish rather than the apodosis you would expect.
8. Starting a battle without a leader is not a good thing, at least. And indeed, the soldiers refused to stop (themselves) in the plain but they are falling in order in battle. Let us persuade those (soldiers) to stop (themselves), then.

   Translating the middle voice of τάττω *as "fall in order in battle", particularly when you've got* εἰς μάχην *immediately following, doesn't exactly roll off the tongue – "fall in order in battle in battle"? It's kind of like "PIN number" or "ATM machine". Oh well. Translate it this way for now so that your teacher knows you're actually learning what the book is teaching.*
9. Whatever leader orders the hoplites well is good, in fact. For without a leader the soldiers do not fall in order in battle well.
10. Whoever, let me tell you, had shamefully stolen the gold (but nobody did), the citizens would (now) be indicting that person on a charge of theft (but they are not).
11. Those evil soldiers, at least, who left behind the weapons in the plain after the battle, have stolen the silver and the she-goats of Homer. We should indict those (soldiers), then, (on a charge) of theft.

12. We should obey the good teachers, at least. For they teach both the craft and the virtue by means of letters. In fact, without craft and virtue the young men do not fare well, let me tell you.
13. Let us teach for our own benefit, in fact, the five brothers the craft of the wise poet. For the citizens should send gifts, either crowns or gold, to the good poets.

    To say nothing of to the person writing this answer key…
14. The speaker, on the one hand, writes the long speeches; the other man, on the other hand, writes for himself/is indicted.

    The exact meaning of this would theoretically be clearer in context.
15. Let us stop (ourselves) in the shrine. For there we should sacrifice to the goddesses.
16. (The famous) Homer teaches (the men) on the one hand; on the other hand, he is teaching them for his own benefit.

    This could also be "on the other hand, he is causing them to be taught", but I have trouble imagining a context where that makes sense.
17. One man teaches some for his own benefit; another teaches others.

    Yes – do not miss the note about ἄλλος *at the top of page 180.*
18. Even the thieves might be saved by means of rhetoric, at least, (that is,) the craft concerning words, since, let me tell you, in the lawsuits they without judgment on the one hand are persuaded by means of words; the wise men on the other hand (are persuaded) by means of deeds.

    The second half of this is a bit confusing, trying to figure out what exactly is meant to go with what. In such cases, the best thing to do is read it in order a handful of times, seeing what makes the most sense. Eventually it will become clear.

19. Whoever (of you) should do shameful things, you would not cause (the men) to be taught poems of the house/(the men) of the house to be taught poems.

    Well, that's what it says. I have no idea what kind of situation it is actually describing.

20. The matters of the war are unclear, let me tell you. Let us consult the gods now, then, concerning (those matters). Are we to destroy the peace or not? For we ought persuade the citizens to leave the houses.

    τά, *"the things", particularly when used in relation to a particular situation or institution, can be rendered as "the matters" or "the affairs" or something like that. Don't forget that* θύω *in the middle voice means "consult the gods".*

21. If only we may sacrifice goats to the gods, (that is) the saviors of the citizens.
22. If you had not been stationed in the plain, you would have saved the brothers.

    But you didn't. Live with it.

23. The honor of the good poet is not small. And the price of that (good poet's) books in the marketplace is not small.

    Yes. Dual meaning (price/honor) of τιμή *forces you to think about this one a little bit.*

24. Let us stop (ourselves) there in order that we might stop the strangers.
25. The stones in the plain are visible to the soldiers, at least.

    Δόξα τῷ Θεῷ *for that!*

II. And English to Greek:

1. εἴθε/εἰ γὰρ τὰ ζῴα καὶ τὸ ἀργύριον πεμφθείη τῇ νήσῳ/ἐν τῇ νήσῳ ὑπὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐν τῇ ἄγωρᾳ. οἱ τῆς νήσου θύσαιντο τοῖς θεοῖς.

Do note that the person *of the verb* send *is singular in this case; there are plural subjects, yes, but they are* neuter *nouns. In the first sentence, the syntax of* πεμφθείη *is aorist to show simple aspect, optative because it is an optative of wish. In the second sentence, the syntax of* θύσαιντο *is that it is aorist for simple aspect, optative because it is a potential optative.*

2. εἴθε/εἰ γὰρ οἱ νεανίαι εὖ διδαχθεῖεν/διδαχθείησαν/παιδευθεῖεν/παιδευθείησαν τοῖς λόγοις τοῦ σοφοῦ ποιητοῦ. φυλάξαιντό γε τοῦς ἐχθρούς ἄν.

   Note the accentuation on φυλάξαιντό *due to the enclitic* γε *immediately following. Remember that* φυλάττω *in middle voice means "be on guard against", taking accusative of the thing being guarded against.*

3. εἴθε/εἰ γὰρ οἱ θεοὶ σῴσαιεν/σῴσειαν τὴν ἐκκλήσιάν τε καὶ τῆν βουλήν. μή λίπωμεν τοὺς στρατιώτας ἐν τῇ χώρᾳ.

   Note the accentuation on ἐκκλήσιάν *due to the enclitic* τε *immediately following. Here we have an optative of wish followed by a prohibitive subjunctive.*

5. οἱ αἶγες τῶν ἀνθρώπων τοῦ πεδίου κλαπεῖεν/κλαπείησαν ὑπὸ τοῦ ἐχθροῦ ἄν. μη κωλυσῃς/κωλύσητε τοὺς ἀνθρώπους τοῦ πεδίου φυλάξαι/φυλάττειν τῶν τὰ ζῴα.

   This is hopefully fairly straightforward at this point; potential optative followed by a prohibitive subjunctive.

Coming up next: participles, being that form of the verb having been made into an adjective, and changing your life with respect to the Greek language in every way possible.