PRESUPPOSITION IN OLD NORSE COMPARATIVE CONSTRUCTIONS*

By Thomas Krisch

1. Gradable adjectives function within quality dimensions such as age, speed, cleverness, beauty, responsibility, etc. Only in connection with some property/norm which may be overtly indicated by a noun do adjectives determine a quality dimension. A standard example is the difference between:

(1) Old man – old friend

In the first instance *old* refers to the age of the person, whereas in the second case *old* can mean not only age but also may suggest the period of time which a relationship (expressed by the noun *friend*) has lasted.

The positive degree of gradable adjectives expresses that the degree exceeds the average of the dimension with regard to a norm.¹ This norm has to be stated explicitly or it has to be present implicitly.²

(2) John is a tall man; John is tall

On the other hand, the comparative does not need any information about the average of the dimension. In:

(3) John is taller than Richard (is)

neither John nor Richard have to be tall – that is ‘taller than the average’. Example (3) merely expresses the fact that John’s degree of tallness exceeds Richard’s. In order to find out what it is that actually expresses the difference in height between John and Richard one has to look at the functions of the particle *than* and the morpheme *-er*. Lars Hellan in his 1981 monograph on comparatives, which is written within the framework of $\lambda$-calculus and X’-theory, decides, correctly in my opinion, that the notion of ‘difference of degree’ in English is expressed by the morpheme *-er* whereas the particle *than*
functions as an indicator for the fact that the noun phrase or sentence following the particle has some degree of the quality dimension in question. However, as we have already mentioned before, this degree is not fixed in English.

2. In languages like Russian, Latin, and Greek 'than' can be expressed in two ways: either, as in English, with a particle or with a special case-marker. Consider the following Old Latin examples (4) and (5), taken from comedies by Plautus. In (4) Jupiter in his appearance as a god says to Amphitruo:

(4) (example with particle) Plaut. Amph. 1131 ff.:
Bono animo es, adsum auxilio, Amphitruo, tibi et tuis: nihil est quod timeas; hariolos, haruspices mitte omnis; quae futura et quae facta eloquar, multo adeo melius quam illi, quom sum Iuppiter.

'Be confident, I will help you and your family, Amphitruo. There is nothing for you to fear. Get rid of soothsayers and haruspices. I can tell you much better (melius) than (quam) those (illi) what will happen in the future and what has happened in the past, because I am Jupiter.'

(5) (example with ablative case-marker) Plaut. Aul. 808 f.:
Di immortales, quibus et quantis me donatis gaudis! quadrilibrem aulam auro onustam habeo. quis me est ditior?

'Immortal gods, which and how many enjoyments you have given me as presents! I have a pot, weighing four pounds, filled with gold. Who (quis) is (est) richer (ditior) than me (me; ablative)_CREATED_?

In a penetrating article, Panagl (1975) has shown that in the Old Latin data the functional difference between the two constructions can be explained in an elegant, uniform fashion. If one takes the formula:

(6) A is Adj-er than B

the Old Latin material suggests that 'B' is in the ablative case only if it is presupposed that 'B' already possesses the quality of the adjective
to a high degree, much higher than the average of the dimension. If this is not the case, the particle construction is chosen. Example (5) shows this well: it is clear from the preceding context that the speaker is very rich. Panagl's theory about Old Latin is confirmed by the extensive data analysis by Schöfl (1979).

Panagl's results fit in with what was previously said about the function of the English particle than in contrast to the comparative suffix -er. As mentioned above, the -er morpheme indicates the notion of difference inside the quality-dimension between the members 'A' and 'B' of the comparison, whereas the particle than is used to express that the following NP or S - our 'B' - has some degree of the quality dimension. It is, therefore, natural that if a language has two options for marking 'B' (particle or case-marker) this relates to the degree of the quality dimension of 'B'. We have seen that for comparisons it is not necessary to fix this degree but, of course, it is possible. Thus, in Old Latin the two constructions differed in the following way: if one uses the case-marker on 'B' (restricted to NPs), the degree to which 'B' possesses the quality of the adjective is defined as being 'much more than average', whereas 'particle construction + B' does not define the degree.

3. One also has two options in Old Norse: particle or case-form (dative case) as exemplified by (7) and (8):

(7) Háv.36: pótt tvær geitr eigi oc
even if two goats has (subjunctive) and
taugreptan sal, pat er pó betra en
with ropes cottage that is nevertheless better than
bæn(n) 
begging

'Even if one has (only) two goats and a poor cottage, that is nevertheless better than (the state of) begging.'

(8) Háv.51: Eldi heíari brennr ....... fríðr
fire (dative) hotter burns ...... love

'Love burns hotter than fire.'

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The question is whether the Old Norse comparative construction behaves in the same way as the Old Latin data, which would be, as we have seen, also theoretically a very reasonable way of behaving. My corpus consists of the complete Edda (Kuhn 1962), the older parts of the Skaldic poetry (roughly the first volume of Jónsson (Jónsson 1973)), the complete prose Völsunga saga (Finch 1965), parts of the Old Icelandic homilies (Wisén 1872 and Larsson 1891) and various random data from prose.

Old Norse of course always uses the particle construction where there is no formal possibility of having a dative case form for ‘B’ because ‘B’ is not an NP:

(9) ‘B’ = infinitival group:
HHv.34 þér er þærma sverð at riða
you (dative) is more apt sword to reddan
enn frið gefa fiándom þínom
than peace give enemies (dative) your (dative)

‘It is more apt for you to reddan your sword than to give peace to your enemies.’

(10) ‘B’ = whole sentence:
Grm.35: Askr Yggdrasils drýgir erfjö, meira,
Ash-tree Yggdrasils suffers hardship more
enn menn vito
than men know (subjunctive)

‘The ash-tree Yggdrasils suffers hardship, more than men know of.’

(11) ‘B’ = adverb:
Grp.19: scal-a fremr
shall (3 Sg., impersonal)-(negation) farther
en svá fregna Grípi
than so ask Grípi

‘One shall not ask Grípi farther than so.’

(12) ‘B’ = prepositional phrase:
HHII 51: verða oflgari allirá
become stronger all in

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In other cases it seems to me correct to postulate for the Edda and the older Skaldic poems a state which is comparable to Panagl’s observations for Old Latin: when the dative form is used on ‘B’ this means one presupposes that ‘B’ or some members of ‘B’ possess the quality of the adjective to a much higher degree than the average. This holds for examples where the presupposition is fulfilled inside the same sentence, e.g. when one compares something with a (positive or negative) totality, which subsumes, of course, also items with a high degree of the respective quality:

(13)

Sg.15: *Ein er mér Brynhildr òllom*
alone (fem.) is (dative) Brynhild all (dative)

*betrí, um borín Buðla,*
better (meaningless particle) born (fem.) Buðli (dative)

*hon er bragr qvenna*
she is best women (genitive)

‘Brynhild alone is in my opinion better than all. She, the daughter of Buðli, is the best of women.’

(14) Skj.B,275; Óttarr, Lv.2 (11th century); cf. also Kock 1946:141:

*Svá skal kveðja konung Dana,*

so shall (1 Sg.) address king Danes (genitive)

*Ira ok Engla*

Irishmen (genitive) and Englishmen (genitive)

*ok Eybúa, at hans fari*

and Islanders (genitive) that his go (subjunctive)

*með himinkrøptum þondum òllum*

with heaven-strengths countries (dative) all (dative)
lof víðara
fame wider

'In such a way I shall address the King of the Danes, of the Irishmen, of the Englishmen and of the inhabitants of the Islands that his fame shall go farther than all countries with the powers of heaven.'

Hókon, vitum hvergi........ fremra
Hokon know (pl.) nowhere ....... farther in front (accus.)
jarl und ferli ........ per mána
earl under track (dative)... you (DATIVE) moon (genitive)
'Hókon, nowhere under the track of the moon do we know an earl who is farther in front than you.'

The presupposition is also fulfilled when one compares something with an item which inherently has a high degree of the quality in question:

(16) = (8) Háv.51: Eldi heitari
fire (DATIVE) hotter (NOMINATIVE MASC.)
brennr....... friðr
burns ...... love (NOMINATIVE MASC.)
'Love burns hotter than fire.'

(17) Skj.B 39. Arinbjarnarkviða 9 (10th cent.):
en sú gið golli betri
and this grant (fem.) gold (DATIVE) better
hróðugs konungs of
glorious (genitive) king (genitive) (meaningless particle)
heitin was
called (fem.) was

'And this grant of the famous king was said to be better than gold.'
(18) Rp.29: *brún biartari brióst liósara, / háls*
   brow lighter  breast lighter  neck

   *hvítari hreinni  miðlo*
   whiter clean (DATIVE) snow (DATIVE)

   'The brow (was) lighter, the breast more brilliant, the
   neck whiter than the clean snow.'

With (18) compare also (19), where the inherent high quality of
whiteness of snow is expressed by a compound:

(19) Alv.7: *miallhvít* (acc. sg. neutr.) ‘snow-white’

Sometimes the presupposition can only be determined by taking into
account a wider context:

(20) Hym.30:
   *Drep við  haus*
   throw against head (accusative masc.)

   *Hymis!  Hann er harðari,*
   Hymir (genitive)! He  is harder

   *kostmóðs  iðtuns;*
   being weary after the meal (genitive) giant (genitive)

   *kálki  hveriom*
   cup (DATIVE) each (DATIVE)

   'Throw (it; the cup) at the head of Hymir! It (the head) of the
giant, who is weary after the meal, is harder than any cup.'

Now, even in their totality, cups are not normally supposed to be the
embodiment of hardness. But the context makes it clear that this
special cup (which of course is included in the expression ‘any cup’)
is extremely hard. The god Thor is engaged in a competition of
strength with the giant Hymir. Hymir wants him to break a certain
cup. Before our example (20) there is a passage showing and proving
the extreme hardness of this particular cup: Thor throws it against a
pillar and the pillar is destroyed by the blow whereas the cup
remains undamaged. After that the giant’s sweetheart gives Thor the
advice in (20).

Another noteworthy example is:

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(21) Vsp.31:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{stóð} & \quad \text{um} \quad \text{vaxinn}, \\
\text{voîlom} & \quad \text{hæri}, \quad \text{miór} \quad \text{oc} \quad \text{mióc} \\
\text{plains (DATIVE)} & \quad \text{higher (NOMINATIVE MASC.)} \quad \text{slim} \quad \text{and very} \\
\text{fagr,} & \quad \text{mistleleinn} \\
\text{beautiful mistletoe (NOMINATIVE MASC.)} \\
\end{align*}
\]

'It stood, grown up, higher than the plains, slim and very beautiful, the mistletoe.'

To fulfil the presupposition the plains have to be high, which seems to contradict the common knowledge about plains. But this sentence here is uttered after the description of the creation of the world, which is seen as a lifting out of a gap, an abyss:

(22) Vsp.3–4:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{iðrō} & \quad \text{fann-z} \quad \text{æva} \quad \text{nē} \quad \text{upphiminn}, \\
\text{gap} & \quad \text{vas} \quad \text{ginnunga}, \quad \text{enn} \quad \text{gras} \\
\text{abyss was gaps (genitive) (?)} & \quad \text{and grass} \\
\text{hvergi}. \quad \text{Ádr} \quad \text{Burs} \quad \text{synir} \\
\text{nowhere. Sometime Bur's sons (nominative plural masc.)} \\
\text{biððom} & \quad \text{um} \quad \text{ypbo}, \\
\text{lands (meaningless particle) lifted} \\
\text{peir} \\
\text{(demonstrative pronoun, nominative plural masc.)} \\
\text{er} & \quad \text{miðgarð,} \quad \text{mæran}, \\
\text{(relative particle) world (accusative) great (accusative)} \\
\text{scópo} & \quad \text{created} \\
\end{align*}
\]

'Never earth was to be found and not the upper sky, there was a yawning abyss, and grass nowhere. Sometime the sons of Bur lifted up the lands when they created Midgard (= the world) the great one.'

So even the plains are high compared to the earlier condition of the world.
All examples of the Edda and the older Skaldic poets with the dative of comparison show – without exception – presuppositions of the type just described. There are some cases, however, where the particle *en* seems to appear in situations where there is a presupposition, e.g.:

(23) Hāv.6: *pvían óbrigðra vín fær maðr*
    since more reliable friend gets man
    *aldregi enn manvit mikit*
    never than wit great

    ‘For man (will) never have a more reliable friend than great wit.’

Here, without question, the ‘B’ *manvit mikit* has the presupposition of being a highly reliable friend. But if one looks at the context of (23) this counter-example can be shown to be irrelevant: it reappears in Hāv.10 and 11, but this time ‘B’ is expressed in the form of a full sentence and in this case, as is shown by (10), the particle *en* is the only possible means of expressing ‘B’:

(24) Hāv.10 = 11 (formulaic verse):
    *Byrði betri berr-at maðr*
    burden better carries-(negation) man
    *brauto at, enn sé manvit mikit*
    way on than is (subjunctive) wit great

    ‘Man does not carry a better burden on (his) way than great wit is (a burden).’

I think it to be a reasonable hypothesis that there is a gapping of the verb ‘to be’ in our example (23) – Hāv.6 – and that we are allowed to treat (23) like the examples in (24) in which ‘B’ is a sentence.

Another example for a gapped verb is:

(25) Grp.22:
    *Mann veit ec engi*
    man (accusative masc.) know I no one
    *fyr mold ofan, þann*
    ‘in front of’ earth over (demonstrative pronoun, nominative singular masc.)
er fleira sé
(relative particle) further (ADVERB) sees (subjunctive)
fram en þú, Grípir
forward than you Grípir
'I do not know a man on earth who can see further into the nature than you (see), Grípir.'

In examples where the sentence reading might be understood but
where the dative is used, as e.g. in (16) and (21) and where there is no
equivalent sentence attested the non-sentential character of 'B' is
suggested by gender and number concord of the comparative ad­
jective with 'A'. Thus, in (16) the reading 'Love burns hotter than fire
burns' and the reading 'stood grown up higher than the plains stood
grown up' in (21) are improbable. In contrast to these examples
compare example (25) with the gapped verb 'to see' where the com­
parative is expressed in the form of an adverb (fleira), which lacks
gender and number concord.

Thus, the Eddic examples show a clear-cut distinction: dative is
used for 'B' with presupposition, otherwise – and under no other
circumstances – the particle en(n) is used. Presupposition thus is a
sufficient condition for dative. This might also hold for the older
Skaldic examples. Unfortunately this is an argumentum ex silentio.14

This regularity is independent of metrical considerations. The
Eddic alliteration metres, the fornyrðislag and the ljóðahatr, have
much looser regularities than the classical Greek, Latin, and Sanskrit
metres. Nevertheless, they are still worth considering.15 There are
several cases of dative constructions which could easily have been
formally replaced by a particle construction without violating the
metre, e.g. Hym.30 (= example (20)); HH II, 38; Rp.29 (= example
(18)) (these are cases where the particle en(n) would be an 'upbeat'
before the hófuðstafr in the second half-line, which is perfectly
possible). These cases, where the dative is used independently of the
metre, are of course subject to our presupposition-condition.

The interesting cases are the particle constructions which could
have been formally expressed by datives. If there is metrical freedom
to use the particle construction or the dative of comparison then
there is no impact of metre on the choice.16 Let us look at Háv.36

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(example (7)) where no formal restriction (cf. our examples (9)–(12) and note 11) would block the dative of comparison. There is also no metrical reason for having the particle construction in the full-line of the ljóðahatri. So the sentence *pat er þó betra en bæn (n)* could also have been: *þat er þó betra bæn (n)* or *þat er þó bæn (n) betra.*

Since *betra* and *bæn (n)* belong to the ‘same’ word-class (cf. Von See 1967: 19) and both alliterate there is no problem with alliteration.

Especially interesting is Sg.55 (fornyrðislag):

(26) *sú mun hvítiari enn inn heiði dagr,* /  
    she will whiter than the clear day,  
    Svanhildr, vera, sólar    geisl í  
    Svanhild, be sun (genitive) ray (dative)  

    ‘She, Svanhild, will be whiter than the clear day, (even whiter)  
    than the ray of the sun.’

Here both types, the particle construction and the case-constructi on, are present and both could be formally supplanted by the respective other construction. If the particle construction is sup- 
planted by a dative construction, ‘*sú mun inum heiða dagi hvítiari*’ would be metrically impossible but ‘*sú mun hvítiari inum heiða dagi*’ is possible. A reformulation of ‘*solar geisla*’ as ‘*en solar geisli* (nominative)’ is no metrical problem; the *en* being an ‘upbeat’. Here the difference between the two ‘B’s’ (standards) corresponds to our theory: the sun is thought to be the embodiment of whiteness (cf. the compound *sólhvíta* ‘white as the sun’ in Hāv.97) whereas the light of a clear day does not bear the presupposition ‘much whiter than the average’.

The question remains why the case marker strategy goes with a presupposition of high degree of the relevant quality and the particle with no presupposition and not vice versa. I will attempt a tentative answer.

Iconicity of syntax suggests that one expects the thematic/known parts of a sentence to appear nearer to its beginning. Presupposed material, as is conveyed by ‘B’ in the case construction, belongs to the already given material of a sentence. Only the case construction allows ‘B’ to appear in front of the adjective, that is, further in front of the sentence than the adjective (cf. notes 17 and 21 and e.g. examples...
(8) and (13)), never the particle construction. Perhaps this is one of the reasons why the case marker strategy goes with the presupposition.

In the prose texts this clear-cut difference between the case construction (presupposition as a sufficient condition) and the particle construction does not seem to hold. But, as far as can be seen, the dative can only be used, if there is a presupposition, e.g. (Guðrún tells a dream):

(27) Vols. saga, Chap. 27, pg. 46, line 6:
*Dýr-it pótti mér òllum*
deer-the seemed me (dative) all (DATIVE plural)
*hlutum betra*
affairs (DATIVE plural) better

'The deer seemed to me more precious than anything else.'

(28) Hom.40, 33–35:
*Honóm bar drótenn sílfr*
him (dative) bore Lord himself
*pat vitne at enge være honvm*
that testimony that no one was (subjunctive) him (DATIVE)
*betre mapr boren fra karle oc kone*
better man born from man and woman

'For him (= St. John the Baptist) the Lord himself testified that there was no better man born from man and woman than he.'

On the other hand, the particle construction can be used everywhere in prose, irrespective of presuppositions. Examples (29)–(31) all three show presuppositions and the particle *en*:

(a) comparison with a totality like (13) and (14):

(29) Hom.6, 8–9:
*En þó es ein heNar iarteín*
furthermore is one her token
*helgare oc eópre en allariarteíner*
more sacred and higher than all tokens
heilagra
saints' (genitive plural)

‘Furthermore, one of her (= Holy Mary) tokens is more sacred and higher than all the saints’ tokens (together).’

(30) Hkr.p.159, ll. 9–10:
Hann var inn mesti
He was the most
iprótt-maðr, meiri ok sterkari ok
talent-man greater and stronger and
fríðari, en hverr maðr
more handsome than each man (nominative singular)
annarra.....
other (genitive plural)

‘He was the greatest skilled man, greater, stronger and more handsome than each (follower-)man of the others’.

(b) explicit statement of the presupposition:

(31) Völs. saga, Chap. 26, p. 44, l. 12:
Buðli hét konungr. Hann var ríkari
Buðli was called king. He was more powerful
en Gjúki ok þó báðir
than Gjúki (conjunctive particle) though both
ríkir
powerful

‘There was a king named Buðli (= Bleda, Blödelin). He was more powerful than Gjúki, though both (were) powerful.’

If we consider that the Edda deals with old motifs, if we do not reject the ‘oral poetry theory’,22 if we recall that the older Skaldic poets at least do not provide counter examples to our theory, and if we accept Smirnickaja’s (1972) work on syntax and her conclusion concerning the higher age of Eddic impersonal constructions as against the saga impersonal constructions (Smirnickaja 1972: 85), we may hypothesize that the Eddic consistency of the treatment of dative construction and particle construction could represent not

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only poetic language but also (independent of metrics, as we have seen) an older stage of the language, older than the prose texts, including such early manuscripts as the homilies.

This would then be the type of data relevant for syntactic reconstruction. The case construction and the particle construction could for instance, like Old Latin, indirectly reflect older differences, perhaps those which were worked out between the original constructions with the comparative suffix *-yes/-yos- and those with suffix *-tero-.

The difference between the 'older' and the younger state in Old Icelandic is illustrated well by comparison of Edda Vsp. 64 with the comparable paragraph in the (later) prose Edda:

(32) Vsp. 64:
Sal sér hon standa sólo
Hall sees she stand (infinitive) sun (dative)
fegra, gulli þacpan, á Gimlé
more brilliant gold (dative) thatched at Gimlé

'She sees a hall standing, more brilliant than the sun, thatched with gold, at Gimlé.'

(33) Sn.E. p. 24, ll. 4–5:
Á sunnanverðum himinsenda
On southern heaven-end
er sá salr, er allra
is that hall (relative particle) all (genitive plural)
er fegrstr, ok bjartari en
is most beautiful and more brilliant than
sol-in, er Gimlé heitir
sun-the (relative particle) Gimlé is called

'On the southern side of the end of heaven is that hall which is the most beautiful of all and more brilliant than the sun and which is named Gimlé.'

In (33), the later text, the particle construction supplants the case construction of the older text (32). So, for later Old Icelandic, the presupposition condition for datives is necessary but no longer sufficient as it used to be in the older (poetic) Old Icelandic texts.
4. I want to conclude with a short survey of the attested history of the comparative constructions in Icelandic.

As for Modern Icelandic, I presented the data to an informant. I confronted her with the relevant questions. The result seems to be that the dative construction is, on the one hand, marginally lexicalized today. It is used obligatorily in comparisons with a totality like (13), (14), (27), and (31). On the other hand, there seems to be no feeling for any presupposition involved when using the dative construction, though my informant felt the dative construction as belonging more to literary language.

Thus, historically, there are three stages:

Stage 1, where the dative construction could only be used with a presupposition involved whereas the particle construction could only be used without presupposition. This stage is represented by the Edda and presumably by the older parts of Skaldic poetry.

Stage 2: The particle construction could be used for cases with and without presupposition whereas the dative construction still could only be used when a presupposition was involved. This stage is present in the prose texts (already present in the 12th century).

Stage 3: Free variation of particle- and case-construction but stylistic restrictions and marginal lexicalization of the case construction. This is the state of Modern Icelandic.

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Notes

* This is an extended version of a paper which I read at the VII International Conference for Historical Linguistics 1985 in Pavia. I would like to thank several participants of the congress for discussion, especially Kristján Árnason, Finn Hansen, Paul Hopper, and W. P. Lehmann. I also thank Oswald Panagl, Salzburg, for various suggestions, Deborah Fölsche-Forrow for checking the English of the manuscript and my Icelandic informant Guðrún Jónsdóttir. Last but not least I thank two anonymous readers of 'Language' and the referees of the 'Transactions' for many useful hints.

I should like to dedicate this paper to Professor Ingo Reiffenstein, Salzburg, on the occasion of his 60th birthday.
1. This is what Sapir (1968: 124 f.) calls 'implicit' grading.
2. Cf. also Kastovsky 1982: 131–2; in (2), of course, the norm is 'man' in both cases.

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4. I use the term 'presupposition' in an informal way here. For an attempt to subsume this notion under the principle of 'relevance' cf. Sperber and Wilson 1986: 202–17. They view presuppositions as analytic implications of the background of an utterance. The background of an utterance consists of all those things not held as 'relevant' by the speaker.

5. For finding the relevant data I made extensive use of Skard 1951.

6. Cf. (especially for (9) and (10)) also Andersen 1983: 128 f., who sees the origin of the particle construction in an original conjunction which connected two clauses.

7. Other examples are e.g.: Hom. 5, 3; Völs. saga Chap. 9, p. 17, ll. 3–4.

8. Other examples are e.g.: Völs. saga Chap. 30, p. 52, l. 23; Skj. B 3, Bragi Rdr. 10 (9th century). Modern generative theory underlines the difference between clausal and phrasal comparatives, cf. Rudin 1984.

9. Other examples are e.g. Völs. saga Chap. 9, p. 15, ll. 31 f.; Hom. 1, 11.

10. Other examples are Völs. saga Chap. 9, p. 15, l. 16; Hom. 1, 8–9.

11. There are of course other minor cases where no dative is formally possible, e.g. if the head of the NP in 'B' is gapped and only a modifier remains, e.g. Hom. 5, 2; or if various mechanisms of deletion processes happen to the sentence 'B' (= modified type (10)): e.g. Hom. 5, 6–7; Skj. B 613, PL. 26 (12th century); Skj. B 117, Einarr Helgason skálagnam Vell. 4 (10th century); Skj. B 83, Korm. Lv. 57 (10th century). Dative is also avoided if the predicate already demands a dative, e.g. Hom. 6, 23–25. Also sentences where a 'free' dative appears probably avoid the dative of comparison on formal grounds, cf. HHv. 8.

12. Further Skaldic examples: e.g. Skj. B 300, þloft 3, 1 (11th century); Skj. B 139, Eilifr Godrúnarson, þórsdrápa 2 (10th century); Skj. B 298, 3, Tódgdrápa (11th century). Examples (14), (16), (17), and (20) show, that the presupposition is not restricted to negative evaluation adjectives, nor to 'complex positive evaluation adjectives' nor to colour terms, nor to adjectives derived productively from concrete nouns nor to participles, all of which can be presuppositional lexically (cf. Kiefer 1978: 463 ff.).

13. Manvit is looked upon as a very important part of human life with positive connotation. It is described as a gift of Öðinn (Hdl. 3), as a welcome donation of the Æsir (Sd. 4) and its absence is deplored as a defect with bad consequences (Hm. 27).

An example which shows dative in a similar construction (with 'A' in the accusative as in (23)) is:

Gör.II,3: Unz mér fyrmundðo minir bræðr, at ec
till me (dative) envied my brothers that I
ættaververollomfremra
had (subjunctive) man (ACCUSATIVE) all (DATIVE) 'more forward'

'But then my brothers were envious towards me that I had a husband more outstanding than anyone.'

Thus, dative on 'B' is possible with an accusative on 'A' in comparisons.

14. The old examples with particle construction which I looked at seem to require the particle on formal grounds, cf. e.g. notes 8 and 11. I have discovered no clear examples where the en-construction unambiguously could have been in conflict with a dative construction. All the examples with datives in Skaldic poetry which I have looked at require the presupposition.
15. For my metrical analyses cf. mainly Von See 1967. For bibliographical hints concerning Eddic metre (which, of course, consisted of more items than just Von See 1967) I have to thank Kurt Schier, München.

16. Cf. Andersen 1983, who utilizes a similar method for word order problems in Indic. I treat two examples in more detail here, the other two would show the same: Hdl. 19 and Skm. 42.

17. The dative of comparison can be placed after the adjective, e.g. Rp. 29, HH II. 38; SG. 55 etc. or before the adjective, e.g. Vsp. 64; Hrbl. 18, Ls. 43 etc. or (if the NP in the dative contains an attributive expression) even ‘circumposition’ is possible: Sd. 13; Görl. I. 19 (this example is interpreted wrongly by W. P. Lehmann 1972: 324, who left out hverri (dat. sg. fem.)).

18. For a metrically identical second part of a full verse, cf. Háv. 34, 6:

\[ \text{firr farinn} \]
\[ \text{far gone} \]
\[ \text{‘gone far’} \]


20. There are several reasons for this: there is a tendency to have long ‘upbeats’ rather in the second half-line than in the first (Von See 1967: 26); the stress of the first half-line would have to be on heiða and on dagi (cf. Von See 1967: 19); the key alliteration (‘hófuðstafr’) must be the first stressed word of the second half line (which would be hvílari); there would then, however, have been no possibility for a second stress in the second half-line.

21. Putting en sólar geisli before the comparative would not be justifiable for Old Norse and also would be implausible from a typological point of view (cf. Andersen 1983: 129).


23. Cf. e.g. Puhvel 1973: 148 ff.; Berg 1958; Reiter 1979, § 60, 61, 66–68 critically. Of course, one would have to work out the Germanic state before going on too hastily to the other members of the Indo-European family. The data collection by Baldauf (1938) in addition to that of Small (1929) is probably useful for such an undertaking.

ABBREVIATIONS


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