RENDERING THE GERMAN DATIVE CASE INTO ARABIC

Dr. Ali Jamal Arafeh (Ph.D. in Linguistics)
Department of Foreign Languages, University of Nizwa
SULTANATE OF OMAN

ABSTRACT

The dative case is a unique grammatical form that does not exist in many languages. It is used extensively in German, and it rarely exists in English and Arabic. The function of the dative case is to show the case of the recipient of the action. In this meaning, it is close in Arabic to the object as a grammatical element. The dative case is used in German in various grammatical situations and it serves different grammatical functions such as object of a transitive verb or object of an adjective and so on. In Arabic these grammatical functions are sometimes rendered into similar forms to those in German and sometimes into different grammatical forms such as using a verb rather than an object of an adjective.

Keywords: Rendering, objet, prepositional phrase, recipient.

METHODOLOGY

This study in based on analyzing the various grammatical situations where the dative case is used in German and rendering these situations into Arabic. The dative case in all these situations is translated into Arabic using the standard Arabic rather than dialects. The examples are translated into Arabic and the comparison is made to see how Arabic conveys the dative case. The Arabic examples are transliterated into English using a standard system shown in the table in the appendix of the study.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Learners of a new language find it easy when there are similarities between their language and the new language. On the other hand, the new language becomes difficult when there are differences and difficulties increase when difference become more and more. One of the features of German language is the extensive use of the Dative case. This case is not common in Arabic as it is in German. Hence, German learners of Arabic and Arab Learner of German find challenges when the matter comes to the Dative case.

FUNCTIONS OF THE DATIVE CASE IN GERMAN

Unlike English, German is a highly inflectional language. In this respect, it is similar to Arabic. There are, for example, find four cases for the noun in German: Nominative, Accusative, Dative, and Genitive. All these cases are inflected for gender, number, tense and position in the sentence. The case which poses sometimes confusion for Arab learners of German is the Dative case because Arabic utilizes other structures to express the dative case in German.

Generally, the dative case in German is used to indicate the action that is addressed to the recepient "*Der Dativ drückt häufig aus, dass die Handlung an einen Adressaten gerichtet ist.*" (Hering et al, 2013). The literal meaning of "Dative" is the noun in the position of

accusativeness (naṣeb case). But this does not mean that Arabic uses every time the accusativeness to express the dative case. There are other structures that Arabic uses to render the dative in German.

The Dative case serves several functions in German. These are represented in the following examples (*Noun Cases in German: The dative case, 2004*):

1- Indirect Object
Wir backen <u>euch</u> einen Kuchen. (We bake you a cake)
2- Object of a Dative Verb:
Der Hund folgte <u>dem Kind</u> nach Hause. (The dog followed the child to the house)
3- Object of a Dative Preposition:
Wir fahren mit <u>der Bahn</u>. (We travel by the train)
4- Predicate of an Adjective:
<u>Mir</u> ist kalt. (I am feeling cold)
5- Indicating the Possessive Case *http://*
www.canoo.net/services/OnlineGrammar/Wort/Nomen/Kasus/Dativ.html:
Die Mutter putzt <u>dem Kind</u> die Nase (= die Nase des Kindes). (The mother cleans the nose of the child)
6- Apposition:
Das Fahrrad gehört Franz, <u>dem Sohn</u> der Nachbarn. (The bicycle belongs to Franz, the son of the   neighbors)

Analysis of the Functions

When these sentences are translated into Arabic, one finds that not all of them are considered in the position of accusativeness (naṣeb case). There will be various grammatical structures to express that dative case in these sentences.

1. Indirect Object
a) Wir backen **euch** einen Kuchen. (We bake you a cake)
naḥnu nakhbizu **lakuma** kꞌakatan.
نحنُ نَخْبِزُ لكُمَا كَعْكَة
The word "**lakuma**" consists of a preposition and a prepositional complement that function as an agent (doer) of the patient (object) "**kꞌakatan**". The prepositional phrase functions as a first object (patient) for the verb "**nakhbizu**" in Arabic. The second object is **kꞌakatan**
b) Ich habe **dem Mann** meine Telefonnummer gegeben (I gave my telephone number to the man).
أَعْطَيْتُ رقمَ هاتِفِي إلى الرَّجُلِ
aꞌaṭaytu raqama hātifī **'ila alrajuli.**
The dative case "**dem Mann**" in German is rendered into Arabic through the prepositional phrase **'ila alrajuli**. The word **'ila** is a preposition and the word "**alrajuli"** is the prepositional complement.
The sentence in German can also be translated into Arabic as:
أَعْطَيْتُ الرَّجُلَ رقمَ هاتِفِي
aꞌaṭaytu **alrajula** raqama hātifī**.**
In this sentence, the verb in Arabic (aꞌaṭaytu) takes two objects (patients): the first one is **alrajula** and the second is **raqama hātifī.**

To sum up, these two examples show the Indirect Object dative in German is translated into Arabic through either a prepositional phrase consisting of a preposition and a prepositional complement or a first object for a transitive verb that takes two objects.

2- Object of a Dative Verb

There are verbs in German that take objects only in the dative case such as antworten (answer), danken (thank), fehlen (be missing), folgen (follow), gefallen (be pleasing), gehören (belong to), glauben (believe), helfen (help), leid tun (be sorry), passieren (to happen to), verzeihen (forgive), wehtun (hurt). (*Frequently Used German Dative Verbs, 2016*)

a) Der Hund folgte **dem Kind** nach Hause. (The dog followed the child to the house)
تَبِعَ الكَلْبُ **الطِّفْلَ** إلى البَيْتِ
tabiʻa alkalbu **aṭifla** ʾila albayti.
The dative case in this sentence "**dem Hund**" is rendered into Arabic through the direct object (patient) "**aṭifla**". So the dative case in this sentence is an accusative case in Arabic.
b) Es gefällt **mir**. (I like it)
تُعْجِبُني
tʻujibunī
The dative case "mir" in the German sentence is expressed in Arabic as an object. The object in Arabic is the connected pronoun at the end of the word "tʻujibunī" (ي).
c) Was ist **dir** passiert? (What happened to you?)
ماذا حَدَثَ **مَعَكَ؟**
mādha ḥadatha **maʻaka**?
The verb "ḥadatha" is intransitive in this sentence and the word "**maʻaka**" is an adverb of place that functions as muḍāf and muḍāfʾileh (genitive).
In brief, verbs that take a dative object in German have their dative rendered into Arabic as a direct object. In few cases it is rendered as muḍāf and muḍāfʾileh (genitive) when the verb passieren (to happen to) is not considered a transitive verb in Arabic.

3- Object of a Dative Preposition

Some prepostions in German take only dative nouns. These prepositions include aus (from), außer (except for), bei (at, near), gegenüber (opposite), mit (with, by), nach (after, to), seit (since), von (by, from) and zu (at, to). (*Frequently Used German Dative Verbs, 2016*).

a) Wir fahren mit **der Bahn**. (We travel by the train)
نَحْنُ نُسَافِرُ **بالقِطَارِ**
naḥnu nusafiru **bilqiṭāri**
In this example, the preposition "**mit**" in German is followed by a dative object "**der Bahn**". In Arabic it is translated as "**bilqiṭāri**" consisting of a preposition "**bi**" and a prepositional complement "**alqiṭāri**".
b) Das Hotel ist gegenüber **dem Bahnhof** . (The hotel is opposite the train station.)
يَقَعُ الفُنْدُقُ قُبَالَةَ مَحَطَّةِ القِطَارِ
yaqaʻu alfunduqu qubālata **maḥaṭati alqiṭāri**
The preposition "gegenüber" is preceded by the dative noun "dem Bahnhof". In the Arabic sentence, the word "qubālata" is a gerund of the adverb of place "qabla" meaning in this case "in the other direction". The function of this gerundive adverb (qubālata) is a preposition and the phrase "**maḥaṭati alqiṭāri**" is the prepositional complement.

In both examples, the dative of prepositions in German is rendered into Arabic as a prepositional complement.

c) Meine ganze Familie spricht Deutsch außer **meiner Mutter**. (The whole of my family speak German except my mother.

تَتَكَلَّم كُلُّ عَائلتي اللُّغَةَ الألمانيةَ ما عدا **أمّي**

tatakallamu kullu ‹ā'ilatī allughata alalmaniyyata mā'ada **ummi**.

In this sentence the dative phrase "**meiner Mutter**" is translated into Arabic as an accusative object for the verb "**mā'ada**".

To recapitulate briefly, most prepositions in German that take dative objects are translated into Arabic through a prepositional and a prepositional phrase. However, there are exceptions that apply such as using the object with the preposition "außer" because in Arabic it is not a preposition but a transitive verb.

4- Predicate of an Adjective

A number of adjectives in German that describe a condition take a dative predicate. Some of the common adjectives that take a dative predicate are the following:

ähnlich (resemble), behilflich (helpful), bekannt (known), dankbar (grateful), egal (no preference), möglich (possible), recht (right), sympathisch (sympathetic), überlegen (superior) and unterlegen (inferior). (*Adjektive mit Dativ, 2014*)

a) <u>**Mir**</u> ist kalt. (I am feeling cold)

أَشْعُرُ بِالبَرْدِ

'ash‹uru bilbardi

In this example, the dative pronoun "**mir**" is rendered in Arabic as the present tense "**'ash‹uru".** The dative meaning is embedded in the meaning of the present tens verb itself. The phrase that follows (bilbardi) is a construction of a preposition and a prepositional complement.

b) Ich bin **meinem Lehrer** dankbar. (I am grateful to my teacher).

أنا مُمْتَنٌّ لِمُعلِّمي

'anā mumtannon **limu‹allimi**.

The dative complement of the adjective "denkbar" is rendered in Arabic as a preposition and a prepositional complement "**limu‹allimi".**

c) Er ist **seinem Bruder** sehr ähnlich. (He resembles his brother)

هوَ يُشْبِهُ **أخَاه**

huwa yushbihu **'akhahu.**

The adjective "**ähnlich**" takes a dative predicate "**seinem Bruder**", but it is rendered into Arabic as an object "**'akhahu**" for the transitive verb "**yushbihu**".

The dative predicate of the adjectives in German is translated into Arabic through the embedded meaning of the verb in Arabic as in the first example or through a preposition and a prepositional complement as in the second example. In the third example, the dative is translated into a direct object for a transitive verb.

5- Dative Indicating the Genitive Case

Although German uses the genitive case in this type of dative, one can find the same structure with a dative noun and an accusative noun.

a) Die Mutter putzt **dem Kind** die Nase. (The mother cleans the nose of the child)

تُنَظِّفُ الأُمُّ أَنْفَ **الطِّفْل**

The dative in this type "**dem Kind**" conveys the meaning of genitive "the nose of the child". It is expressed in Arabic through the structure of muḍāf and muḍāf'ileh (genitive).

b) Ich will **ihm** den Kopf waschen. (I want to wash his head)

اريدُ أنْ أغْسِلُ دِماغَهُ

urīdu ʾan ʾaghsilu dimāgha**hu**

In this sentence the dative in the German sentence indicates the meaning of genitive "his head". It is also rendered in Arabic as genitive through a structure known as muḍāf and muḍāf'ileh (dimāgha**hu)**.

These two examples show that the dative indicating genitive case in German is expressed similarly in Arabic where the genitive case is expressed through the structure of muḍāf and muḍāf'ileh.

6- Apposition

Apposition in German follows the case of the preceded noun. In other words, if the preceded noun is accusative, the appositive noun will be accusative and if it is dative, the apposition will also be dative. Apposition is known in Arabic as "albadal" and it has different kinds and structures.

a) Das Fahrrad gehört Franz, **dem Sohn** der Nachbarn. (The bicycle belongs to Franz, the son of the neighbors)

الدَّراجَّةُ تَخُصُّ فرانتز **ابْنَ** الجيرَان

addarrajatu takhuṣu Franz **ibna** aljīran.

The apposition in the German sentence "**dem Sohn**" is rendered into Arabic as also apposition "**ibna**". It is treated in Arabic the same as the noun that precedes it. In other words, if the main noun that precedes it is in the nominative case, the apposition in Arabic will be nominative and so on. In this sentence the noun that precedes it (Franz) is in the accusative case, so the appositive noun (ibna) is also in the accusative case.

b) Ich war mit meinem Bruder, **dem Lehrer** (I was with my brother, the teacher).

كُنْتُ مع أخي المُعَلِّم

Kuntu mᶜa ʾakhī **almuᶜalimi**

The appositive "**dem Lehrer**" in the sentence in German is translated into "**almuᶜalimi**" in Arabic. The appositive word "**almuᶜalimi**" in Arabic follows the case of the noun that precedes it.

CONCLUSION

The Dative case is a basic grammatical feature in the German language that is used to the case of recipient towards an action. The Dative case is not always used in Arabic in the way that it is structured in German. It is rendered into Arabic as a preposition and a prepositional complement as in (1a, 3a, 4b) and as a first object for a transitive verb that takes two objects as in (1b). It is also rendered into an object as in (2a, 2b, 3c, 4c) and as an adverb functioning as muḍāf and muḍāf'ileh (genitive) as in (2c, 3b, 5a, 5b). In few cases, the dative is translated into a present tense verb as in (4a) or an apposition (albadal) as in (5a, 5b).

REFERENCES

- Hering, Axel; Matussek, Magdalena and Perlmann-Balme, Michaela (2013). *Übungsgrammatik für die Mittelstufe*. Ismaning, Deutschland: Hueber Verlag.

- *Noun Cases in German: The dative case*. (2004). Retrieved from http://www.vistawide.com/german/grammar/german_cases_dative.htm
- *Frequently Used German Dative Verbs*. (2016, August 9). Retrieved from http://german.about.com/od/onlinecourses/fl/German-Dative-Verbs.htm
- Jack, D. (2014 May 13). *Adjektive mit Dativ*. Retrieved from http://forum.wordreference.com/threads/adjektive-mit-dativ.2835965/
- الأنطاكي، محمد. *المنهاج في القواعد والإعراب*، بيروت- لبنان: مكتبة دار الشرق.

Pronunciation Guide

Letter	IPA	Translit.	Letter	IPA	Translit.
ء	ʔ	'	ض	ḍˤ	ḍ
أ	aː	ā	ط	tˤ	ṭ
ب	b	b	ظ	ðˤ~zˤ	ẓ
ت	t	t	ع	ʕ	'
ث	θ	th	غ	ɣ	gh
ج	d͡ʒ~g~ʒ	j	ف 5	fā'	f
ح	ħ	ḥ	ق 5	qāf	q
خ	x	kh	ك	kāf	k
د	d	d	ل	lām	l
ذ	ð	dh	م	mīm	m
ر	r	r	ن	nūn	n
ز	z	z	ه	hā'	h
س	s	s	و	wāw	w; ū
ش	ʃ	sh	ي 6	yā'	y; ī
ص	sˤ	ṣ			