

The use of the so-called ablativus qualitatis in the
function Praedicativum

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1. The so-called ablativus qualitatis is used in our Latin grammars as a label for three distinct construction types of noun phrases in the ablative. The following examples illustrate these three construction types:

- (1) sed ut Aristoteles, vir *summo ingenio, scientia, copia* ... dicere docere etiam coepit adulescentes ... ('but just as Aristotle, a man of supreme genius, knowledge and fertility of speech began like him to teach the young to speak', Cic. *Tusc.* 1, 7)
- (2) (a) (Britanni) *capilloque sunt promisso* ('the Britons wear long hair', Caes. *Gal.* 5, 14, 3)
(b) nuntiant se ... eum ... cognovisse *paratissimo animo* ut ... ('they announce that they recognized that he was most ready to ...', Cic. *Phil.* 13, 13).
- (3) (a) *eodem* (scil.: *vultu*) semper se vidisse exeuntem illum domo et revertentem ('Xanthippe said she saw him going out and returning home with his countenance always unchanged', *Tusc.* 3, 31)
(b) nescioquis eum incedit *ornatu quidem thalassico* ('someone or other is striding up - and in sailor's togs!', Plt. *Mi.* 1282).

More examples in K.-St. I, 454-7; Sz. 70; 119; Bennett (1914: 317-25); Edwards (1900); Vandvik (1942); Weihermajer (1891: 9-10). In (1) the ablative noun phrase *summo ingenio, scientia, copia* has the function of Attribute with respect to its Head *vir*. In (2, a) the ablative noun phrase (hence NP) functions as a Subject Complement¹⁾, in (2, b) as an Object Complement. The construction type exemplified by (3) is the one that I will discuss in this paper. It differs from the examples in (2) because the NP in the ablative is an optional constituent ('satellite') in the sentence, that is if it is omitted, the remaining sentence is still grammatical. The NP's in (2), on the other hand, are obligatory constituents (on the notions 'optional', 'obligatory' cf. Happ (1976)

and Pinkster (1972: 71-82)).

By way of comparison I like to call attention to the so-called genitivus qualitatis that occurs in the same range of constructions: word group level (4), copulative and related constructions (5) and sentences with other predicates (6).

- (4) triumph litterarum homo ('five letter man', Plt. *Aul.* 325)
- (5) dulcem et facetum festivique sermonis ... Socratem accepimus ('history tells us, Socrates was fascinating and witty, a genial conversationalist', Cic. *Off.* 1, 108)
- (6) (a) cum annorum octoginta ... in Aegyptum iisset ('he came to Egypt when he was 80 years old', Nepos *Ages* 8, 2)
(b) redis mutatae frontis ('back you come ... with altered brow', Hor. *Sat.* 2, 8, 84).

It is not my intention to deal with the relationship between the genitive and the ablative in these construction types in general (see Sz., l.c. and Vandvik (1942)). The NP's in the genitive in (6) are relevant to this paper because they resemble the ones in the ablative in (3) in that they are optional constituents.

Our grammars seem to overlook the distinction made here between (2, a) and (3). K.-St. mention my example (3, a) as an instance of the occasional use of the ablativus qualitatis 'mit anderen Verben' (: I, 456) by the side of (2, b). Similarly Sz., who hints at examples like (3, b)²⁾ in his paragraph on the ablativus absolutus (: 138), mentions as examples of the occasional use of the ablativus qualitatis 'bei anderen Verben' only verbs of type (2, b).

The treatment of the examples of the genitive in (6) is not very clear either. K.-St. (I, 457) mention both examples as an instance of the genitivus qualitatis in relation with an unexpressed Agent ('auf das im Verbum liegende Subjekt bezogen'). Sz. (: 70) mentions (6, a; b) as examples of a genitivus qualitatis without an explicit Head ('ohne Beziehungswort'). However, these instances of the genitive differ from the illustrations in Sz. (: 119) of the use of the ablativus qualitatis 'ohne Beziehungswort'. The latter are, in fact, instances of so-called substantival use:

- (7) non iuniores modo sed *emeritis etiam stipendiis* ... ad nomina danda praesto fuere ('not only the juniors, but also men who had served their time presented themselves for enrolment', Liv. 3, 57, 9)

Both *iuniores* and *emeritis etiam stipendiis* function as Subject of *praesto fuere*. An example of an ablativus qualitatis in the function Object is offered by Vit. 8, 3, 14³⁾. That is, there is some confusion about the difference between type (1) and (3 (= 6)) as well.

The construction types in which the ablativus qualitatis occurs may be visualized in the following way:

fig. 1: syntactic environment of so-called ablativi qualitatis

level		syntactic function	example
wordgroup		Attribute	1
		Head	7
sentence	obligatory	Subject/Object	
		Subject/Object Complement	2
	optional	?	3

I will try to show that the ablativi qualitatis in ex. (3) fulfil the syntactic function Praedicativum.

2. Our grammars deal with individual examples like (3) in various ways. They seem to be unanimous in deriving the ablativus qualitatis diachronically from the Instrumental of attendant circumstances (cf. Löfstedt 1942: 153 ff.; Sz.: 117). They are also unanimous in stressing the difficulty to decide with respect to individual cases of a noun phrase what label to put on it: ablativus qualitatis, ablativus modi, ablativus of attendant

circumstances or ablativus absolutus (cf., for example, Kroll 1962: 51-2; Sz.: 115; 117; 138). A few examples:

- (8) *operto capitulo* calidum bibunt, tristes atque ebrioli incedunt ('muffling their wretched heads and taking hot drinks, then stalking along grave of face and half seas over', Plt. *Circ.* 293-4)
- (9) *invocat deos immortales ut sibi auxilium ferant manibus puris capite operto* ('she called on the immortal gods to help her with clean washed hands and covered head', *Amph.* 1093-4)
- (10) *amborum uxores noctu Troiad exhibant capitibus opertis flentes ambae abeuntes lacrimis cum multis* ('the wives of both were passing out from Troy by night; their heads were veiled and both were weeping many tears, as they went away', Naev. *Pun.* 5-7 W.)

operto capitulo in (8) is called an abl. qual. by Bennett (19319)⁴). *operto capite* in (9) is called an abl. absolutus by Bennett (: 368) and Sz. (: 137-8). K.-St. (:I, 771) mention (10) in the context of the abl. absolutus. Notice that Bennett (: 303) calls *manibus puris* in (9) an ablative of attendant circumstance although it is juxtaposed by the side of *capite operto*. The NP's with the lexeme *caput* all refer to a temporary characteristic of the Subject constituents in the sentence. I see no reason why they should be labeled differently. As for the different treatment of *manibus puris* and the other NP's, this might be explained by assuming that *manus* are some sort of accessory element in the action of *invocare* (cf. Liv. 35, 31, 13, but also Plt. *Amph.* 25: *velatis manibus orant*). In the context, however, it is *puris* that is really important, just as in the cases with *caput* the Attributes are essential⁵). Whatever the merit of individual explanations, it is clear, firstly, that all explanations imply that the ablativus qualitatis of the type under discussion as far as its syntactic function is concerned is regarded as one out of a range of Adverbials (or: Adjuncts) and, secondly, that criteria are lacking. I will come back to the syntactic function of these constituents shortly. By way of illustration of the lack of criteria I confine myself to one passage in Caesar, *Gal.*

(11) nostri primo *integris viribus* fortiter repugnare ... sed hoc superari quod diuturnitate pugnae hostes defessi proelio excedebant, alii *integris viribus* succedebant ('at first the Roman troops repelled them gallantly with strength unimpaired ... but they were at a disadvantage, because when any of the enemy, wearied by the long continuance of the battle, retired from the fighting line, others with strength unimpaired would step into their places', Caes. *Gal.* 3, 4, 2-3)

Meusel (a.l.) observes ''solange ihre Kräfte noch Frisch waren'. Dagegen Par. 3 derselbe Ausdruck ablativus qualitatis'. The reason for Meusel's translation of the first *integris viribus* may be that the validity of *integris viribus* is restricted by *primo*; the second occurrence of *integris viribus* is perhaps regarded as an abl. qualitatis on account of its parallellism with *defessi* in the preceding clause. However, we can only guess. (It is, of course, not my intention to suggest that identical noun phrases necessarily fulfil the same syntactic and/or semantic function in the sentence (the meaning of the predicate and other constituents in the sentence are also important⁶)), but only that if differences are postulated, they should be based on the application of clear criteria.)

3. The common element of the ablativus qualitatis in its different syntactic functions and the reason why these different uses are dealt with together in our grammars is, of course, its meaning. The ablativus qualitatis is said to denote the mental or physical condition or state⁷) of the constituent to which it belongs, for example the Head constituent of the NP in which the ablativus functions as Attribute (*vir* in ex. (1)) or the Subject of the sentence (*nescioquis* in (3, b)).

There has been some dispute whether the mental or physical state is a permanent or a temporary one. It has been argued that the genitivus qualitatis denotes permanent states, whereas the ablativus qualitatis is said to denote temporary states. However, as K.-St. (: I, 454-5) observe, the facts are more complicated. Sz. (: 117) remarks that the ablativus usually denotes a permanent state. This is obviously not true for examples like (3). The NP's in these examples, on the contrary, denote a condition of the Subject of the sentence which obtains at the same time

as the event denoted by the predicate. Thus, in (3, a) Xanthippe only commits herself to the statement that Socrates had the same countenance when going out or coming in. In (3, b) and (8) - (10) it is, of course, not implied that the Subjects of these sentences were always wearing the same coat, or always had their heads covered. It is interesting to notice that on the wordgroup level (ex. (1)) an *ablatus qualitatibus* normally will be understood as denoting a permanent state; the same holds for copulative and related constructions (ex. (2)). This can be proved to some extent by an examination of the types of NP's that are given in the literature as examples of an *ablatus qualitatibus* either in the function Subject Complement or occurring as a satellite.

It is useful for this purpose to make a distinction between *ablatus qualitatibus* that are related to constituents denoting human beings and *ablatus* related to non-human constituents. Generally speaking the latter category shows less restrictions with respect to the relationship between the ablative constituent and the constituent it belongs to⁸⁾. The Head-noun in an *ablatus qualitatibus* NP which is related to a human constituent denotes a quality that is 'inalienable', that is, the quality belongs to the person, whether he likes it or not, and the quality cannot be transferred to someone else. Examples are: age, descent, reputation (e.g. *laus*), parts of the body (e.g. *caput*), personal appearance (e.g. *vultus*), character (e.g. *animus*), personal attributes (e.g. *audacia*) and finally, clothes⁹⁾. As far as I know the only exception to this statement is the conjecture *patre* in Cic. *Cael.* 38, which Austin (a.l.) rightly rejects for other reasons.

With some of the types of Head-nouns mentioned the *ablatus qualitatibus* NP as a whole may be understood as denoting a temporary quality or condition of the constituent to which it belongs if the noun is modified by an adjective or another Attribute, for example *laeto animo, aperto capite*¹⁰⁾. As a consequence, such NP's can be found in the construction type under discussion. With other Head-nouns this is impossible, for example nouns denoting descent, age, or reputation. If NP's in the ablative with these nouns nonetheless occur in a sentence they can only be understood in a different way, for example, in the case of nouns denoting age, as a Time Adjunct:

- (12) C. Marius *summa senectute* ... senile corpus paludibus occultasse demersum ('how G. Marius ... in extreme old age hid his aged body beneath the waters of a marsh', Cic. *Sest.* 50)

I take the line that the ablativus qualitatis NP in examples like (3) do, indeed, denote a temporary quality of the Subject of the predicate of the sentence. The ablativus qualitatis in this respect resembles adjectives in the function Praedicativum which also denote the temporary state in which the Subject of the predicate is involved, for example (13)

- (13) ita maestus rediit ut ('he returned so sorrowful, that ...', Cic. *Phil.* 6, 10)

(cf. Pinkster 1981a: 29; 1981b)¹¹⁾.

4. I now come to the syntactic function of the ablativus qualitatis in cases like (3) (cf. fig. 1 on p. 249). A familiar way to establish the syntactic function of a constituent is to investigate by which more or less synonymous expression types it may be substituted and with which constituents it may be coordinated.

Consider out of many the following examples, which may be compared with ex. (3, b), (7) - (10):

- (14) nec satis *commode calceati et vestiti* id facere possent ('they could not conveniently do so in their shoes and outdoor dress', Cic. *Cael.* 62)
(15) (eum regem) *pilleatum capite raso obviam* ire legatis ('that this king was accustomed to meet envoys with his head shaved, while he wore a freedman's cap', Liv. 45, 44, 19)
(16) ut ego hodie raso capite *calvus* capiam pilleum ('so that I may shave my hair off this very day and stick my bald head in a freedman's cap', Plt. *Amph.* 462)

(Also compare (13) with (3, a))¹²⁾

The most frequent type of expression for non-permanent states of the Subject of the sentence is a participle or adjective in agreement with the Subject. This kind of substitution has, in

fact, been proposed by Happ (1976: 295) and Fugier (1978: 130). Notice, however, that they used the substitution test in order to prove that such adjectives are more or less equivalent to Manner Adjuncts. I have shown elsewhere (Pinkster 1981b) that it is not correct to put such adjectives on a par with adverbs¹³

As for coordination¹⁴), there are only few examples, which do, however, support a treatment of this type of ablativus qualitatis as Praedicativum¹⁵). One is (15) above. Other examples are (17) - (19):

- (17) *pura mente atque integra* Milonem, nullo scelere imbutum ...
Romam revertisse ('that Milo returned to Rome with mind
stainless and untarnished, with no taint of crime', Cic.
Mil. 61)
- (18) *te prodire involuto capite*, soleatum ('you were emerging
with a hood upon your head and slippers upon your feet',
Pis. 13)
- (19) *stare tristis, turbido vultu*, subductis cum superciliis¹⁶)
senes ('there the old men stood, sad, confused, with raised
eyebrows', Turpil. com. 169)

5. Conclusion.

In par. 3 I have paid attention to the semantic similarity of adjectives in the function Praedicativum and the type of ablativus qualitatis under discussion. Par. 4 is concerned with the syntactic similarity between these two types of expression. The reader will now realize that, if the empty slot in fig. 1 is filled in the way suggested above, that is, if it is assumed that the ablativus qualitatis fulfils the function Praedicativum there is a complete one-to-one correspondence between the functions an adjective may fulfil and certain types of Noun Phrases in the ablative.

1. For the term cf. Quirk, e.a. (1972: 37).
2. Sz. (: 115) also classifies NP's denoting someone's clothes as 'Abl. der äusseren Erscheinungsform'. I follow Bennett, Weißenmajer and others and regard them as not essentially different from other expressions denoting physical or mental state. See below.
3. Another example of a Subject constituent can be found in Tac. *H.* 2, 35, 1. Heubner (a.l.) rejects both the Tacitean and the Livian case as instances of 'substantival use'. It is, in fact, possible to interpret the Tacitean example as a parallel of my examples (3); I do not see how, in example (7), *emeritis ... stipendiis* could be taken as an Attribute of the following words *pars magna voluntariorum*. These words must be understood as an Apposition.
4. Strangely enough, he quotes this sentence as an instance of attributive use of the abl. qual.
5. This appears from the fact that *capitulo bibere*, etc. without an Attribute, are nonsensical (but see note 10).
6. Cf. Vester (forthcoming) on the role of the predicate in determining the function of a Noun Phrase of the types under discussion.
7. I will use the terms 'condition', 'state', etc. in a very general and non-technical sense.
8. This is not to say that any relationship whatsoever is acceptable. The number of instances is too low to be very positive. Nonetheless I doubt whether the accepted ms. reading *quod mihi summo dolore est* ('to my great sorrow ...', Cic. *Att.* 2, 19, 2) is acceptable (instead of *dolori*).
9. On the wordgroup level we find cases like *pedites levi armatura* (B. *Hisp.* 15; Liv. 33, 3, 10); *homines emeritis stipendiis* (Sall. *Jug.* 84, 2); *Mettellus ille honoratis quattuor filiis*, Cic. *Tusc.* 1, 85). Perhaps we should call these lexemes inalienable as well.
10. A noun may be acceptable without an Attribute if it occurs in Focus or Contrast. A good example is Cic. *Pis.* 23 *animo consulem esse oportet, consilio, fide, gravitate, vigilantia, cum ...*. For a genitivus qualitatis without an Attribute cf. Sz. (: 70) and Helander (1977: 108-9).
11. Adjectives in the function Praedicativum occur with Objects and other constituents as well. I have no examples of this type of the ablativus qualitatis. I leave this out of account.
12. In (11) *integri* might be substituted for *integrus viribus*.
13. K.-St. (: I, 234 ff.) and Sz. (: 171 ff.) also speak of 'adjectives instead of adverbs'.
14. For rules of coordination cf. Pinkster (1972: 108-33) and Dik (1980: 191-209).
15. Coordination of attributive ablativi qualitatis with adjectives is, as is well known, quite frequent. Cf. Sz. (: 118) and Sörböm (1935: 90).
16. Cf. Happ (1976: 302) for prepositional phrases in the function Praedicativum.

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Abbreviations:

- K.-St. = Kühner, R. & C. Stegmann (1912) *Ausführliche Grammatik der lateinischen Sprache II Satzlehre* (2 vols.)
- Sz. = Szantyr, A. (1965) *Lateinische Syntax und Stilistik*, München, Beck