

Dative alternation and dative case syncretism in Greek: the use of dative, accusative and prepositional phrases in documentary papyri ¹

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Abstract

This article explores the evidence for dative case syncretism with personal pronouns in post-Classical Greek based on documentary papyri (300BCE-800CE). Three alternative encodings are examined for the animate goal of transfer verbs: the prepositions *prós* and *eis* (with accusative) and the bare accusative case. It is shown that the dative case and the preposition *prós* are in complementary distribution dependent on the animacy of the object and the conceptualization of the event. The preposition *eis* is only used for animate goals in the specialized meaning ‘on account of’. The bare accusative case is occasionally found as a replacement for the dative case, but not in the same constructions in which the prepositions are attested. Therefore, based on the encoding of the animate goal in Greek papyrus letters, there is no reason to assume that a change in the use of these prepositions led to the merger of dative and accusative cases.

Keywords Greek linguistics, Greek papyrology, dative, accusative, prepositions, case syncretism, dative alternation, goal, recipient

1. INTRODUCTION

The loss of the morphological marking of the dative case between Classical and Modern Greek reduced the case system to nominative, accusative, and genitive. The functions of the morphological dative are taken over by the genitive and accusative cases and prepositional phrases (with accusative). The documentary papyri, dating from the third century BCE until the eighth century CE, provide an important source for the study of the post-Classical Greek language. The language from this period is generally thought to predate dative case syncretism,² but signs of variation may be found in the encoding of the dative functions; compare the following examples of the verb *apostéllō* ‘to send’ with a dative (1), accusative (2) and prepositional (3) animate goal.³

(1) ἀπέσταλκά σοι ἐλαίου | φακὸν πλήρη⁴

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² The decline of the dative case is considered to be complete by the ninth-tenth century CE, cf. Humbert (1930: 199-200); Browning (1983: 37); Horrocks (2010: 284-285), the selection between the genitive and the accusative is established during the Medieval period (Lendari and Manolessou 2003).

³ The semantic extension of the genitive from the role of possessor towards prospective possessor/goal in the papyri has been examined in Stolk (2015a).

⁴ The Greek text is taken from the *Papyrological Navigator* (PN; www.papyri.info) and checked against the *editio princeps* and the *Berichtigungsliste der griechischen Papyrusurkunden aus Ägypten*. Text between square brackets is not preserved on the papyrus but supplemented by the editor and a dot under a letter signifies an uncertain reading. Transliteration, basic glosses and translation are provided for every example; translations are

ἀπέστειλά σοι ελαίου | φηκὸν πλήρει
 sent you-DAT oil flask full
 ‘I sent you a full flask of oil’
 (P.Münch. III 57, 12-13; Egypt, II BCE) ⁵

(2) εἰν εὐθὺς ὀψόνιον λάβωμεν ἀποστελῶ σε ἄνω
 eàn euthùs opsónion lábōmen apostelō se ánō
 if soon pay receive send you-ACC up
 ‘if we receive our pay soon, I will send (it) up to you’
 (P.Oxy. IV 744, 7-8; Alexandria, 17.06.01 BCE)

(3) ἀπέστειλα πρὸς σέ ὃν π[ρ]οέδοκας μοι | φρουρὸν μόνον
 apésteila pròs sé ὃn p[r]oédōkás moi | phrourown mónon
 sent to you-ACC whom gave before me guard single
 ‘I sent back to you one guard whom you had previously sent to me’
 (P.Vind.Sijp. 27, 3-4; Arsinoites, III-IV CE)

Semantic overlap between the dative and accusative cases (1)-(2) and prepositional phrases, such as *pròs* (3), can easily be found in the directionality of the goal-oriented roles denoting the “endpoint of transfer” (Luraghi 2003: 39). Goal-marking morphemes are often polysemous and several extension paths are attested cross-linguistically (Rice & Kabata 2007).

The exact developments leading to replacement of the personal dative in Greek are unclear, as Adams (2013: 287) notes: “there is a lack of clarity about the chronology of the loss of dative forms in Greek, and a lack of detailed accounts of the use of the inflected indirect-object forms versus prepositional syntagms in Greek texts and papyri from later antiquity.” Jannaris (1897: 341-342) described the developments as follows:

“Generally speaking, the personal dative, that is the dative which indicates a person (or thing conceived as a person), may be replaced by the preposition πρὸς or εἰς, sometimes also μετά [...] This prepositional alternative, though not extensively used in A [Classical Attic, 500-300 BCE], gains popularity in the course of P [post-Classical, 300 BCE-600 CE] and particularly in G [Graeco-Roman, 150-300 CE] times, notably in connexion with εἰς [...]. With the opening of the T [transitional period, 300-600 CE], the preposition εἰς (or rather ϛ) begins to be dropped, and the simple accusative appears henceforward as a frequent substitute for the former personal dative”

Jannaris suggests that the personal dative was first replaced by prepositional phrases (*pròs*, *eis*) in the post-Classical period (III BCE-VI CE) and only subsequently by bare accusatives. This explanation remains valid according to the diachronic quantitative analysis of Sipetzis (2005: 200), who assumes that prepositional replacement of the personal dative precedes the

my own but may be based the edition. Editorial regularizations are left out in order to put emphasis on the language as preserved on the papyrus; the glosses and translation should be able to clarify any ambiguities.

⁵ Papyrus editions are cited according to the *Checklist of Greek, Latin, Demotic and Coptic Papyri, Ostraca and Tablets*, edited by John F. Oates, Roger S. Bagnall, Sarah J. Clackson, Alexandra A. O'Brien, Joshua D. Sosin, Terry G. Wilfong, and Klaas A. Worp, <http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/papyrus/texts/clist.html>, January, 2015; metadata are based on the information available in *Trismegistos* and the *Heidelberger Gesamtverzeichnis der griechischen Papyrusurkunden Ägyptens* (both accessible through the PN).

replacement by the bare accusative. Some studies on New Testament Greek also connect the increase of prepositional phrases in the New Testament to the subsequent loss of the dative case (Robertson 1915: 451; Moulton-Turner 1963: 251; Caragounis 2014: 72-73). On the other hand, Georgakopoulos (2014: 56) claims that the extension of *eis* to the role of recipient occurred centuries after dative case syncretism. Apart from describing the merger of *en*, *prós*, *epí* and *eis* in Medieval Greek (Bortone 2010: 208-210), Bortone (2010: 180) warns against the presumed correlation between case loss and prepositional increase. Accounts based on case interchange in the papyri usually do not consider prepositional alternatives for the personal dative (Humbert 1930; Browning 1983; Cooper & Geogala 2012), although Horrocks (2010: 284-285) concludes that the dative was replaced by bare accusatives and genitives (with pronouns and full noun phrases) and also by prepositions, such as *eis*, starting with full noun phrases.

The interpretation of the diachronic developments depends on the synchronic understanding of the variation between the alternative encodings. An overview of the use of prepositions and cases in the Ptolemaic papyri (III-I BCE) is provided by Mayser (1934). The studies of Danove (2007; 2009) clarify the distribution of the dative case and the prepositions *prós* and *eis* as complements of motion and transfer verbs in the New Testament (I CE). The use of prepositions in the Roman (I-III) and Byzantine papyri (IV-VIII CE) has not been studied and many new papyri have been published since the last study of dative replacement in the papyri (Humbert 1930). This means that conclusions about the language of this period are often based on comparison of two sources: a small selection of examples of dative by accusative replacement in the papyri and the general increase in the usage of prepositions in the New Testament. The question remains whether the goal-oriented roles of the personal dative could be expressed by prepositional phrases in the papyri as well and how this development is related to the replacement of the dative by the bare accusative case. Which alternative encoding strategies for the goal-oriented roles of the personal dative developed over time? Are the possible alternatives found simultaneously or could a relative chronological order be established?

In this article, I will address those questions and attempt to account for the distribution of the encoding strategies based on the attestations of the dative and accusative pronouns in the papyrus letters dated between the third century BCE and the fourth century CE. I will show that a verb-sensitive approach to the attested argument realization patterns may explain the distribution of dative, accusative and prepositional phrases and could help us to interpret the process of dative-accusative merger in more detail.

The article is organized as follows: the first section defines the verb classes for which the argument realization patterns will be studied (2). Thereafter, I will introduce the empirical basis of this study and show the quantitative results of the variation (3). In the following sections, I will closely examine the exceptions to the main encoding patterns, including the preposition *eis* (4), the preposition *prós* (5) and the bare accusative case (6). Diachronic and synchronic comparison of the established patterns will lead to a conclusion regarding the encoding of the animate goal in Greek papyri (7).

2. A VERB-SENSITIVE APPROACH

For the purpose of this article, all arguments denoting the ‘endpoint of movement’ - in a concrete or more abstract sense - are understood as the ‘goal’ argument. This goal argument is comparable to the recipient-like argument in the definition of ditransitive constructions as formulated in the typological study by Malchukov et al. (2010): “a construction consisting of a (ditransitive) verb, an agent argument (A), a recipient-like argument (R) and a theme argument (T)”. The goal argument can be found in various more specific semantic roles, depending on the lexical-semantic properties of the verb, e.g. goal of sending and bringing, addressee of writing and speaking, and recipient of giving. Therefore, I will discuss the possible variation in argument structures starting from a division of the goal-oriented verbs in lexical-semantic verb classes (Malchukov et al. 2010: 48-56).

Studies into the meaning of Greek prepositions and cases do not always take a verb-sensitive approach (e.g. Luraghi 2003; Bortone 2010; Georgakopoulos 2014). However, the verb and event type can have an impact on the options for argument realization (Rappaport Hovav & Levin 2008) and need to be considered in order to determine and explain the possible alternations. Greek grammars and dictionaries might refer to the type of verbs occurring with a certain preposition (e.g. Bauer 1979; Mayser 1934), but they do not cover the relation between the different patterns of argument realization. The studies of Danove (2009; 2015) for New Testament Greek and Adams & De Melo (2016) on Late Latin illustrate the results to be gained from comparing verb classes and their arguments.

For the current study, I include transfer verbs taking an animate goal. The verbs that are represented in the data can be broadly divided into three groups:

- (i) verbs of sending and bringing, e.g. *apostéllō* and *pémpō* ‘to send’, *phérō* ‘to carry’ and *komízō* ‘to bring’,
- (ii) verbs of communication, i.e. *gráphō* ‘to write’, *légō* ‘to speak’
- (iii) verbs of giving, e.g. *dídōmi* ‘to give’ and *parékhō* ‘to provide’.

The semantic differences between the verbs are related to the nature of the event schemas: verbs of sending and bringing can denote a change in location (event schema: caused motion), whereas the verbs of giving are typically related to a change in possession (event schema: caused possession), see Levin (2008: 285-287). The last class, the class of communication verbs, is closely related to the two groups mentioned here. Instead of a source-goal movement, the communication is characterized by a ‘transfer of a message’ towards an addressee/experiencer.

Argument realization options for event schemas show variation cross-linguistically (Levin 2008: 293), but also synchronically and diachronically within a language (Dabrowska 1997: 52-53). The semantic roles of the arguments do not only depend on the lexical-semantic class of the verb, but the meaning of the construction also relies on the realization of the arguments (Goldberg 1995). A different argument realization could reflect a different conceptualization of the event (Dabrowska 1997). Synchronic case alternation is attested for direct and indirect objects in Greek and often depends on transitivity features, such as animacy and affectedness (Mulder 1988; Luraghi 2010; Riaño 2014). Danove (2007; 2009) has shown that part of the synchronic alternation between prepositional phrases and the dative case is also governed by

the feature of animacy. Diachronically, Barðdal & Kulikov (2009:470) note that “case syncretism is typically preceded by a period of variation and alternation between case forms or argument structures, with the source forms being interchangeably employed in some usages with only some minor functional distinctions”. Adams (2013: 377) concludes that it is important to establish whether the case form and preposition are indeed semantically interchangeable before identifying the preposition as a diachronic alternative to the case form. Hence, synchronic semantic and pragmatic differences between alternative encodings have to be taken into account in order to establish potential changes in the encoding of arguments over time.

3. CORPUS AND RESULTS

The scholarly debate on dative case syncretism has focused on the replacement of the personal dative (see introduction). In his monograph on dative decline in various sources, Humbert (1930: 166) observed that the replacement of the personal dative by the genitive and accusative is mostly attested with personal pronouns in the papyri (see also Browning 1983: 37; Stolk 2015a). Humbert (1930: 179-181) found 15 examples of accusative for dative interchange in 13 papyri, of which no less than 14 concern first and second person singular pronouns. Due to the lack of linguistic annotation to the corpus of documentary papyri, the case forms used with common nouns cannot easily be analysed. Personal pronouns, on the other hand, are limited to a certain number of forms and easily be found by word-searches. Stolk & Nachtergaele (2016) have shown that the interchange between the dative and the accusative cases of personal pronouns is most common for the second person singular pronoun in private letters. The second person singular pronoun is often encountered in private papyrus letters as a complement of verbs of coming, sending, writing and giving. Therefore, I select the second person singular pronoun in papyrus letters as the basis of this study.

The empirical data for this study are collected by means of the *Papyrological Navigator* (PN; www.papyri.info). All attestations of the second person singular pronoun in the dative (*soi*) and accusative case (*se*) in papyri categorized as “Brief (privat)” in the HGV metadata were analysed.⁶ The letters originate from various places in Egypt (and occasionally outside of Egypt) and are mostly dated between the third century BCE and the fourth century CE. In total, 1636 texts contained the accusative pronoun $\sigma\epsilon$ and 1490 the dative pronoun $\sigma\omicron\iota$. The attestations, however, are more numerous, since pronouns often occur more than once in a private letter. When the uncertain attestations are left out, just over 2000 attestations remain for the accusative and the dative case each. Table 1 shows the number of attestations of variant realizations of the second person pronoun for each of the verb classes.

Table 1: variant realization of animate goal (2sg) according to verb class

The dative case is most common with all verb classes, almost no alternatives to the dative case are attested for the expression of goal with verbs of giving (iii) and writing (ii). More variation is found with verbs for sending (i), especially between the dative and the preposition *prós*, but also with the other prepositions and the bare accusative case.

⁶ Searches for the accusative pronoun were carried out in April 2014 and for the dative pronoun in September 2014. The corpus contains around 3450 papyrus letters with transcription in the PN.

As the above quantitative analysis shows that most of the alternative encodings are relatively infrequent, only qualitative analysis may be able to explain the occurrence of these examples. The distribution of the patterns is examined in the following sections, exploring the semantic and pragmatic characteristics of these variants as well as the chronological and geographical distribution. Additional data from the papyri and other sources are provided for comparison. Especially with regard to the most infrequent encodings, the palaeographical and scribal contexts have to be taken into consideration in order to interpret these potential attestations of language change appropriately.

4. THE PREPOSITION *EIS*

The preposition *eis* is used for inanimate goals in Classical and Hellenistic-Roman times (Luraghi 2003: 293-294; Mayser 1934: 408; Danove 2009). Jannaris (1897: 341-342) assumed that especially this preposition gained popularity in the course of the post-Classical period (300 BCE-600 CE) to be dropped again during the transitional period (300-600 CE), leaving the bare accusative as a substitute for the personal dative. More recently, a similar scenario has been proposed by Sipez (2004: 213) who divided the replacement of the dative in several steps, including a prepositional phase (up to the 10th century) and a gradual dropping of the use of the prepositions in personal functions afterwards (from the 10th century onwards). On the other hand, Georgakopoulos (2014: 55) argues that the preposition *eis* does not seem to occur systematically in the recipient function before the 16th century. This puts the extension of the preposition *eis* from (inanimate) goal to recipient of verbs of giving well after the period under review here and possibly even after the disappearance of the dative case (Georgakopoulos 2014; cf. Lendari & Manolessou 2003).

Georgakopoulos' observations are confirmed by the data for personal pronouns in Greek papyrus letters, since *eis* rarely occurs with motion and transfer verbs with a second person singular pronominal goal. Still, Mayser (1934: 356-357) sums up various examples in which the preposition *eis* is found with animate nouns and pronouns in the papyri as "Dativersatz" (see also Blass-Debrunner-Rehkopf 1976: 168-169). Mayser (1934: 356n. 1) noted the following about the meaning of this personal use of the preposition *eis* in the papyri:

"It should be noted explicitly that the phrase with *eis* is often not completely synonymous with the real dative: the periphrasis often signifies rather "intended for someone or something", while the pure dative [...] actually expresses a direct relationship between predicate and object. Cf. "give someone money" and "give money for someone". [my translation]

This use of *eis* for the expression of purpose (LSJ *s.v.* V.2; Robertson 1915: 594-595) often co-occurs with verbs of giving 'for a certain purpose' or paying of expenses 'on account of something/someone' (Deissmann 1901: 117-118; 194-195). This more abstract type of giving does not require a direct act of transfer and the beneficiary of the payment is not necessarily the same as the recipient. Although one would perhaps expect that the preposition *eis* is only used for inanimate purpose, as seems the case in the Septuagint and New Testament (Danove 2013: 388; 2015: 39), in the papyri *eis* is also found with expenses on account of persons (4).

- (4) ἔγραψά σοι ὃ δεῖ δοθῆναι εἰς | ἕκαστον ἀργοῦ καὶ
 égrapsá soi hò deî dothênai eis | hékaston argoû kai
 wrote you-DAT what needs be given to each raw and
 τὸ κάτεργον
 tò kátergon
 the labour
 ‘I wrote you how much raw material should be given on account of each and
 the labour costs’
 P.Petr. II 4 (2), 7-10 = C.Ptol.Sklav. 217 (business letter, Arsinoites, ca. 256
 - 255 BCE; Maysen 1934: 356)

Georgakopoulos (2014: 52) explains this example (4) as follows:

“the ditransitive verb *dothênai* describes the event of transfer of a thing (*hó*) to an animate entity (*hékaston*). That means that the complement of the preposition *eis* is a recipient. Thus, the construction <*eis* + accusative> could be considered as an alternative means for the expression of the RECIPIENT instead of the dative case. Based on the rarity of the attested examples, one cannot argue that the PP is a productive alternative means for the RECIPIENT.”

Although I agree with his conclusion, this is not how this construction should be interpreted in the documentary papyri. The letter is concerned with a dispute between Apollonios and the *dekatarchoi* at a stone quarry. The *dekatarchoi* did not deliver enough stone, because they did not employ enough workmen, while, on the other hand, they accuse Apollonios of not supplying enough tools (see interpretation in C.Ptol.Sklav. 217). The *dekatarchoi* have agreed to supply the work force and deliver the stone (ll. 5-6), so Apollonios sends a letter to Kleon to ask for more wedges to be distributed. The phrase referring to the ‘giving’ (*hò deî dothênai*) ‘of the raw material and the labor costs’ is probably not meant to denote a direct transfer to each of the *dekatarchoi* or the workmen, but as a calculation unit to determine how much is required for the full assignment. The preposition *eis* is used here in a distributive meaning ‘on account of each of them’. In the list at the end of the letter (ll. 10-18), the names of the individual recipients of each of the tools are put in the dative case.

In Homer, the more abstract meaning of *eis* as purpose was only found with abstract entities (Luraghi 2003: 110-111). When this meaning came to be used for concrete human referents as well, the overlap with the dative case became apparent (Luraghi 2003: 114). Although the semantic closeness of the preposition *eis* and the dative case may have contributed to the alternation in Modern Greek, the preposition *eis* is generally used in a specific meaning in accounts, to be distinguished from the dative as recipient used in the same texts. This specialized meaning developed from the abstract meaning expressing “a human landmark with respect to whom an action is performed” as attested in Classical Greek (Luraghi 2003: 114-117). Although this usage might have become more regularized in the numerous accounts and receipts preserved on papyrus, it is already attested in the Ptolemaic period and the specialized distributive meaning of the preposition does not need to be taken as a replacement of the dative case.

5. THE PREPOSITION *PRÓS*

5.1 *The preposition prós with verbs of sending*

The preposition *prós* + accusative is commonly used to express an animate goal of motion and transfer, in contrast to *eis* with inanimate goals. Mayser (1934: 498) distinguishes two main groups of verbs that co-occur with *prós* + accusative in the papyri: (i) verbs of motion and (ii) verbs of sending. Danove (2007) has shown that the alternation between *prós* and dative with transfer verbs depends partly on the animacy of the theme (= object of transfer) in the New Testament. The dative case is used most often, both with animate (95) and inanimate (467) themes (Danove 2007: 59-62), whereas the preposition *prós* is almost exclusively used for the transfer of animate themes (55 vs. 1) in the New Testament (Danove 2007: 55-59). The distribution of the argument realizations of the most frequent verbs for sending in the papyri is shown in table 2. The alternation between the two main verbs for sending (*apostéllō* and *pémpō*) depends on their chronological distribution (Lee 2007).

Table 2: animacy theme of verbs of sending with 2sg.pn. goal

The distribution in the papyri confirms the pattern suggested for the New Testament by Danove (2007). While the dative is frequently used for sending of an inanimate theme, the prepositional phrase of *prós* with accusative is exclusively attested in the expression of the animate goal of sending of an animate theme.⁷ A difference in argument realization based on the animacy of the theme is also found in other languages. Levin (2008: 303-305) shows that both in Russian and Hebrew the argument realization of caused possession events is only used for the sending of an inanimate theme. In the papyrus letters, the dative case (associated with caused possession events) is generally used for the sending of inanimate themes as well. For the sending of persons, the caused motion schema is employed in the form of the preposition generally used for the animate goal of motion. The usage of *prós* as the animate goal of motion verbs is thereby extended to the animate goal of caused motion events. The connection between the two events schemas is illustrated in example (5).

- (5) a. ἔγραψα δὲ καὶ Σαραπάμμωνι ἐλθεῖν πάλιν πρὸς σ[έ]
 égra|psa dè kaì Sarapámmōni el|theîn pálin pròs s[é]
 wrote and also Sarapammon go again to you-ACC
 ‘and I also wrote to Sarapammon to go to you again’
- b. καὶ πρόην μὲν πάλιν | ἔπεμψα πρὸς σὲ Σαραπάμμωνα
 kaì próēn mèn pálin | épempsa pròs sè Sara|pámmōna
 and recently PART again sent to you-ACC Sarapammon
 ‘Just recently I sent Sarapammon to you again’
 (P.Oxy. XLI 2996, 38-40 and 3-5; Oxyrhynchus, II? CE)

The motion event in (5a) describes the going of Sarapammon to a second person singular animate goal (‘you’), which is denoted by a prepositional phrase with *prós*. The second event (5b) in which the author of the letter makes Sarapammon go to the addressee again is

⁷ This distribution is significant: $p = 2.2e-16$ for the combined results of ἀποστέλλω and πέμπω in Fisher’s exact test with a medium effect size (Cramer’s $V = 0.73$). Attestations for which the animacy of the theme is uncertain (e.g. in lacuna) are left out.

expressed with the same preposition *prós*. The choice for the extension of the motion schema to caused motion events might be understood by the fact that there is generally no possession relation between the animate theme (the person who is sent) and the addressee (Levin 2008: 301-303). Although the subject of an unergative intransitive motion verbs generally tends to be an animate agent (cf. Bauer 1979: 613-614 to *érkhomai* I.1.a), this cannot be said about all instances of motion verbs.⁸ The data presented above do show that the causativization only applies to animate subjects of motion events, resulting in animate themes of caused motion events. In other words, ‘sending’ in the sense of ‘causing someone to move’ is only possible when the theme is animate. The available expressions for the animate goal in Greek papyrus letters are summarized in table 3 for the relevant lexical semantic verb classes and their associated event schemas.

Table 3: realization of animate goal according to verb class

The distribution between *prós* and the dative case based on the animacy of the theme is attested in papyrus letters from the third century BCE until the fourth-fifth centuries CE as well as in the New Testament. It is striking that examples of this construction in Classical Greek often seem to involve an animate theme as well, e.g. implicitly in (6) and explicitly in (7).

- (6) οὔτε **πρὸς** τοὺς Λακεδαιμονίους ἔτι ἔπεμπον
 οὔτε **πρὸς** τοὺς Λακεδαιμονίους ἐτι ἐπέμπον
 not **to** **the** Spartans-ACC anymore sent
 ‘they did not send (embassies) to the Spartans anymore’
 (Th. 2.65.2; Luraghi 2003: 294)

- (7) αὔριον **ὕμᾱς** ἔφη ὁ Ἡρακλείδης πρὶ ἄξομεν **πρὸς** αὐτούς
 aúrion **humâs** éphē ho Hērakleidēs prōi áksomen **pròs** autoús
 tomorrow **you** said the Herakleides before bring **to** **them-ACC**
 ‘tomorrow morning, Herakleides said, we will bring you to them’
 (X. An. 7.6.6; Kühner-Gerth 1898: 518)

Hence, the distribution of *prós* vs. dative based on the animacy of the theme might also hold for older stages of the Greek language. Thus, unless future study proves otherwise, there is no need to regard the use of the preposition *prós* in these contexts as a new replacement of the still more generally applicable dative case in the papyri.

5.2 Dative alternation with motion and caused motion verbs

In the previous section it was shown that the apparent alternation between the dative case and the preposition *prós* as animate goal of sending could be explained by a semantic difference. The preposition is used in caused motion events for the sending of animate themes, whereas the dative case can be used in caused possession (with inanimate theme) and caused motion events (with animate theme). This means that both the preposition and the dative can be used for the transfer of an animate theme. This situation in which two cases

⁸ In papyri, for example, *hē epistolē* ‘the letter’ is also sometimes attested as the subject of *érkhomai* ‘to go’ (cf. Mayser 1934: 244) and 5.2.

“can be employed interchangeably in corresponding contexts with no difference in meaning related to case semantics properly speaking” (Kulikov 2013: 54) is commonly described as ‘case alternation’. Alternation between a dative and a prepositional goal – called dative alternation – is found in many languages (cf. Anagnostopoulou 2005 for English and Modern Greek). The alternation between the dative and the preposition *prós* is also found with intransitive motion verbs in Greek papyri. Since the argument realization of the animate goal of motion and caused motion events seems closely related in Greek (see 5.1), I will first examine the alternation of the goal argument of motion events before returning to caused motion events.

The use of the preposition *prós* for goal of motion dates back to pre-Hellenistic times (Kühner-Gerth 1898: 418; 518-519; Schwyzer-Debrunner 1950: 142-143, 509-512). In Homer, the preposition *prós* + accusative is used for direction with inanimate landmarks, while *pará* + accusative is used for animate landmarks (Luraghi 2003: 135, 289). In Classical Greek the animacy distinction between *prós* and *pará* seems to have disappeared and *prós* + accusative can also occur with human referents (Luraghi 2003: 293). Later on, in the New Testament, the preposition *prós* becomes commonly employed for the animate goal of motion verbs (Bauer 1979: 1407; Blass-Debrunner-Rehkopf 1976: 190), besides the occasional dative case (Wallace 1996: 147-148). The preposition *pará* + accusative which previously marked animate goals is no longer used at all with animate referents in the New Testament and in the papyri (Schwyzer-Debrunner 1950: 494; Moulton-Turner 1963: 273).⁹ The result is that the preposition *prós* + accusative has become the standard expression for animate goal of motion in papyri from the Ptolemaic period onwards, originating in the Classical Greek usage.

The preposition *prós* + animate goal is attested 96 times with verbs of going in the corpus of papyrus letters (between the third century BCE until the fourth-fifth century CE), while the dative pronoun is found only 10 times.¹⁰ Three of the dative attestations contain the compound verb *prosérkhomai*, which is used with a dative animate goal in the meaning ‘to turn to someone, to go to someone’ (Preisigke 1925: 398; cf. Mayser 1934: 245; see also LSJ s.v. I.1). The remaining attestations (mostly from the Arsinoites, I-II CE) occur with the bare verb ἔρχομαι. Of course, the use of the dative pronoun in these few instances may have been accidental, perhaps through hypercorrection or by analogy to the dative commonly used to encode the animate goal of other verbs (e.g. *prosérkhomai supra*). On the other hand, it may also be related to the historical difference between dative and accusative (prepositional) goal, explained as follows for Homeric Greek (Luraghi 2003: 66):

“The dative mostly co-occurs with a small set of verbs ... which denote the states of affairs in which a landmark is usually reached by a trajector as the endpoint of a trajectory. The

⁹ In the papyri, *pará* + accusative is no longer used for an animate goal, but it frequently occurs with the dative case to express the location of human referents. The use of the preposition *pará* is much more frequent in the Ptolemaic papyri than in the New Testament, especially with the genitive case (Moulton-Turner 1963: 273-273; Mayser 1934: 482-487). In private letters, the use with the dative case is especially frequent. The dative generally expresses location (*pará soi* ‘at your place’), but this could be close to the expression of the goal of movement when used with motion verbs.

¹⁰ All motion verbs are counted, of which *anapléō*, *anérkhomai*, *gígnomai*, *exérkhomai*, *érkhomai*, *hēkō*, *katérkhomai*, *paragígnomai* and *speúō* occur more than once; most frequent is *érkhomai* (61 attestations).

accusative can also occur with the same verbs: in this case, the trajectory is profiled; the dative, on the other hand, profiles the endpoint.”

The focus on the endpoint is related to the locative (stative) meaning of the dative case, which profiles the arrival of someone into someone’s personal sphere, while the accusative emphasizes the direction of movement or transfer (trajectory). A verb like *prosérkhomai* (see *supra*) has a telic meaning and is mainly attested with the dative case to indicate the endpoint rather than the trajectory. However, argument realization does not only depend on the lexical-semantics of the verb, but the meaning of the construction as a whole also relies on the semantic roles of the arguments (cf. Goldberg 1995). For other motion verbs, like *érkhomai*, various argument realization patterns are attested and they could reflect a different conceptualization of the event (cf. Dabrowska 1997). The options for a different event conceptualization based solely on the semantic roles of the arguments become more limited in post-Classical Greek. In Classical Greek motion verbs could co-occur with stative complements and stative verbs with motion complements (Skopeteas 2008: 58-60; Bortone 2010: 46-47; Georgakopoulos 2014: 49-50). In the New Testament, motion verbs still occur with dative and prepositional complements, but always in a directional sense according to Danove (2009: 114-122). Eventually, the encoding of spatial relations becomes entirely dependent on the lexical-semantics of verb, but during the Hellenistic-Roman period there is still some variation between the realization of spatial arguments (Skopeteas 2008: 62-64). The variation between the dative case and the preposition *prós* for the animate goal of *érkhomai* may indicate such a difference in event conceptualization. For example, the dative case in the papyri might have been used by some language users to put more focus on the arrival at the endpoint (8).

- (8) εὐθέως ἄν σοι | ἔλθῃ ἡ [ἐ]πιστολῇ εὐθέως παραγείνου
 euthéōs án soi | élthēi hē [e]pistolē euthéōs parageínou
 directly PART you-DAT comes the letter directly be near
 ‘as soon as the letter reaches you, come immediately’
 (SB VI 9121, 2-3; Arsinoites, ca. 31-64 CE)

Example (8) has ‘the letter’ as the subject of a verb for coming. The urgent command that follows (*euthéōs parageínou* ‘be with me immediately’) means that the focus of this expression can hardly be on the ‘coming’ of the letter, but only on the purpose of the sending of a letter: the moment of arrival, when the contents are revealed. Most of the phrases with a dative goal seem to focus on the reaching of the endpoint of motion. The location of the endpoint is specifically mentioned in (9).

- (9) οὐκ οἶδα ποῦ τὸ ὀφίκιον | ἔχεις εἶνα σοι ἐκεῖ ἔλθω
 ouk oída pou tò ofíkion | ékheis heína soi ekeî élthō
 not know where the office have so that you-DAT there come
 ‘I do not know where you have your office, so that I may visit you there.’
 (PSI VIII 943, 8-9; Egypt, II CE)

Maximus wants to know where Korbolonis is staying so that he would be able to meet him there (*ekeî*, l. 9, 15) on his visit. The dative pronoun expresses not just the goal of motion: the

purpose of the motion seems solely ‘to arrive at your place’. Let us compare these findings to an attestation of *pròs sé* as the goal of movement from the same period (10).

- (10) διὰ τὸ μὴ εὐρίσκειν μηδένα | πρὸς σὲ ἐρχόμενον
 dià tò mè heurískein mēdéna | pròs sè erkhómenon
 through the not find no one to you-ACC going
 ‘because I find no one going to you’
 (SB XIV 11584, 8-9; Philadelphèia, late II CE)

The construction of *érkhomai* with *pròs* (10) is closely related to the directional meaning of the preposition. The sender admits that he is slow in writing to Isidoros because he cannot find anyone ‘who is travelling your way’. Most likely, he was not looking for someone who was going to the addressee, but only for someone trustworthy who was travelling in the right direction. This attestation shows the other end of the continuum of ‘going in the direction of’ to ‘arriving at a certain location’, respectively denoted by the preposition and the dative case in the examples mentioned above. The difference between the dative case and *pròs* may be subtle, as comparison with one of the examples of *pròs* from the Oxyrhynchites shows (11).

- (11) τάχιον πρὸς σὲ ἥξω μετὰ τὸν Μεχειρ μῆνα
 tákhion pròs sè hēksō metà tòn Mekheir mēna
 quicker to you-ACC come after the Mecheir month
 ‘I shall come to you quicker after the month of Mecheir’
 (P.Oxy. III 531, 8; Oxyrhynchus, II CE)

In this letter, Cornelius gives some instructions to his son Hierax and lets him know that he will come to visit him soon. The focus of the message seems to be on the time of arrival of Cornelius, as is indicated by the time references ‘quicker’ and ‘after the month of Mecheir’. Still, the construal of the event may be more concerned with the trajectory than the arrival at the endpoint. Strictly speaking, Cornelius is not referring to his speedy arrival (as it is translated by Grenfell & Hunt in the *ed.pr.*), but rather to his departure soon after the month of Mecheir. He adds that he has no time to leave right now, because he has urgent affairs at hand (l. 9). This subtle contrast between argument realization patterns seems to be based on personal choices in the organization of the information structure. The relatively low frequency of occurrence of the dative as goal of motion verbs may indicate that this contrast was not used by everyone at all times.

It would be conceivable that the difference between a dative and a prepositional animate goal with verbs of sending of animate themes (see 5.1) is related to a similar difference. In these instances, it is the dative case that seems to be chosen by default. The dative complement may be syntactically required, but carries almost no meaning. This is illustrated in the following letter (12).

- (12) Ἀριστάρχου τῷ υἱοῦ καὶ | Μικκάλῃ τῇ θυγατρὶ χαίρειν
 Aristárkhou tōi huōi kai | Mikkálēi tēi thugatriti khaírein
 NN Aristarchos the son and Mikkale the daughter greet
 ἀπέσταλ[κ]ά σοι Φίλωνα | φέροντα ἐπιστολὴν περὶ
 apéstal[k]á soi Phílōna | phéronta epistolēn perí
 sent you-DAT Philon carrying letter about

‘NN to his son Aristarchos and his daughter Mikkale greetings. I sent you Philon who is carrying a letter about ...’
(P.Sorb. III 100, 1-4; Arsinoites, 250-238 BCE)

Although the letter is addressed to both the son and daughter of the sender, the goal of the delivery is formulated only in the singular (*soi* ‘you’). The variation between singular (ll. 3, 9) and plural (ll. 12, 16, 19) addressees in this letter could have been “hesitation” on part of the sender (cf. *ed.pr.* n. to l. 2). On the other hand, the addressee(s) of each of the messages in the letter may have been self-evident to both sender and recipient and did not need to be stressed. In most instances, the letter itself (and goods to be delivered) would have been handed over by the messenger mentioned in the letter. The sending of this person has the sole purpose of delivering or fetching something on arrival at the other’s place. When the preposition is used in similar situations, the situation is less predictable (13).

(13) κομίζεταιί μοι τὰ παρά [σ]ο[υ] γράμ[ματα]
 komízetaí moi tà pará [s]o[u] grám[mata]
 return me-DAT the from you letter
 [ἀπέσ]τ[α]λκα δὲ πρὸς σὲ Πετειαρμ[ῶτιν] | κομίζοντα
 [apés]t[a]lka dè pròs sè Petearm[ôtin] | komízonta
 sent and to you-ACC Petearmotis bringing
 ‘he returns to me the letter from you and I sent to you Petearmotis who is bringing ...’
 (PSI IV 387, 3-4; Arsinoites, 02.12.244 BCE)

In (13), the introduction of the messenger (Petearmotis) is preceded by some directions on how to send a letter back to Sisouchos. Then, Sisouchos switches from such a letter addressed to himself (dative *moi* ‘to me’) to the current delivery to Zenon (the addressee), marked by the particle *dé*. The topic switch does not only include a switch of agent and theme, but also a switch of direction of movement: ‘to me’ (dative) vs. ‘to you’ (preposition). Unfortunately, we do not have the words preceding *komízetai*, but the chosen formulation seems to stress the directional contrast. Comparatively, the use of *dé* connecting two dative goals in (14) does not mark a directional difference, but only a switch between agents and themes.

(14) δότω σοι δὲ Ὁρίων ὁ ἱερεὺς | ἀργύριον
 dótō soi dè Hōriōn ho hierēus | argúrion
 give you-DAT and Horion the priest money
 αὔριον δὲ σοι | Ἀχιλλᾶν πέμψο
 aúrion dé soi | Akhillân pémpso
 tomorrow and you-DAT Achilles send
 ‘let Horion the priest give you the money and tomorrow I will send you Achilles’
 (P.Sarap 81, 8-10; Hermopolis, 90-133 CE)

Sarapion tells his son Eutyichides that Horion will give him the money (to pay the workers) and he himself will send Achilles to him tomorrow. The recipient (Eutyichides) remains the same in both constructions and is constructed twice in the dative case.

A similar sort of emphasis on the direction of transfer may also have been required in the following example. In (15), Dionysios denies to Moschion all charges made against him by

Dorimachos. Moschion is thus unable to solve the dispute and, therefore, he sends Dionysios to the strategos to investigate the case further. The preceding genitive absolute phrase ('since Dionysios denied that any of the charges in the petition were founded', ll. 4-5) serves to explain why Moschion could not solve the issue himself and redirects Dionysios to Diophanes.

- (15) ἀπέσταλκα αὐτὸν πρὸς σὲ τῆις | τοῦ Φαρμοῦθι
 apéstalka autòn pròs sè têiς | toû Pharmou̐thi
 sent him to you-ACC the 6th the Pharmouthi
 'I directed him to you on the sixth of Pharmouthi'
 (P.Petr. II 2 (2), 5-6; Arsinoites, 20.05.222 BCE)

There is another, perhaps more important, reason to choose the preposition rather than a pronoun in the dative case in (15): the theme is already expressed by a personal pronoun. There seems to be a strong tendency to avoid using two personal pronouns for both theme and goal in the same predicate phrase. This can be illustrated in (16), where two acts of sending are described after each other.

- (16) ἐὰν] σχολάζ[η] ὁ] ἀδε[λ]φὸς αὐ[τοῦ] πέμψον αὐτὸν πρὸς ἐμὲ
 eàn] skholáz[ēi] ho] ade[λ]phòs au[toû] pémpson autòn pròs emè
 if is free the brother his send him to me-ACC
 τάχα [ἵνα τὰ παιδία μ[ο]υ πέμψω σοι διὰ αὐτοῦ
 tákha [hína tà p]aidía m[o]u pémpsō soi dià autoû
 soon so that the children my send you-DAT through him
 κ[α]ὶ τὴν μητέρα αὐτῶν
 k[a]ì tèn mētéran autôn
 and the mother their
 'If his brother is at leisure, send him to me at once, so that I may send you my children and their mother through him.'
 (P.Mich. III 203, 25-26; destination Karanis, 114-116 CE)

The dispatch of the brother to the sender is described with a preposition (*pròs emé*), while his wife and children are send to the addressee (his mother) in the dative case (*soi*). Again, the preposition is favoured in the first construction because the object of the sending is a personal pronoun (*autón*). In this case, the difference between the prepositional and dative goal can also be understood in terms of direction (trajectory) and location (endpoint). The brother should be sent in his direction just to take over his wife and children from him, whereas his family is going to his mother to stay at her place. Thus, the preposition profiles the direction of the sending, whereas the second event emphasizes the transfer and arrival of the animate theme into someone's personal sphere, as generally expressed by the dative case.

Although there seem to be some clear patterns, the reasons for a different argument realization remain sometimes obscure to us due to the poor preservation of the papyrus or our lack of knowledge of the context. Especially in letters from the early Byzantine period (III-V centuries), the difference between the prepositional goal and the dative case is not always easily distinguishable. In fact, the eventual loss of the semantic and pragmatic distinction between the dative case and the prepositional goal could be part of the process of the decline of the dative case.

In Latin, we also find variation between the dative and a preposition (*ad* + accusative) with transfer verbs. In Classical Latin, the dative is the default, i.e. unmarked, option, but this situation changes in such a way that the preposition becomes the unmarked form in Late Latin (Schøsler 2011: 250-263). A similar situation of variational markedness (for a definition of the term see Norgård-Sørensen, Heltoft & Schøsler 2011: 36-39) could be proposed for the dative and prepositional constructions in Greek. The dative case seems the unmarked pattern for the expression of caused motion and caused possession events. Between Homer and Classical Greek, the use of the preposition *prós* gets extended to human referents and it becomes the main argument realization pattern for verbs of motion to an animate goal in post-Classical Greek. By extension from motion to caused motion events the preposition also appears with verbs of sending with an animate theme from Classical Greek onwards. As shown in this section, the preposition is marked in comparison to the use of the dative case in similar situations. In the course of the Byzantine period, however, this markedness relation might have been reversed and the preposition may become used as the default pattern for sending of people. The dative case becomes stylistically marked and especially employed by writers with higher ambitions in the later Byzantine period (cf. Wahlgren 2014).

The loss of the semantic distinction between dative and prepositional goal that led to the reversal of the markedness relation could have been enforced by bilingual writers to whom the prepositional goal would have been the most natural one, compare the following Christian letter of recommendation in (17).

- (17) ἔπεμψα πρ[ὸ]ς σὲ τὸν σὸν δοῦ|λον Ἑορτάσιον
 épenpsa pr[ò]s sè tòn sòn doû|lon Heortásion
 sent to you-ACC the your slave Heortasios
 ‘I sent to you your slave Heortasios’
 (P.Oxy. XLIII 3149, 6-8; Oxyrhynchus, V CE)

Although not identified as such in the edition, the “unfamiliar beginning” (*ed.pr.*) with *egð graphō soi, ápa Théōn, Hēras* ‘I write to you, apa Theon, Heras’ (ll. 1-3) of this letter reminds of the opening of Coptic letters *ANOK N.N. EISHAI N/E-N.N.* ‘(it is) I, N.N., writing to N.N.’. The handwriting “in capitals of a book type, large and drawn predominantly with thick strokes by means of a pen with a very flexible point” (*ed.pr.*) is also reminiscent of Coptic hands. The description of the act of sending directly follows the opening greetings and no further explanation of the event is given. There seems to be no particular reason to want to stress the trajectory or direction of the goal of sending, unless we are unaware of some special circumstances leading up to the sending of this particular Heortasios. It has to be noted that the overlap between dative and preposition and the possible reversal of markedness in the later Roman and Byzantine period is specifically found for sending of an animate Theme to an animate goal. In all other situations, the dative case is still preferred at that time.

5.3 The preposition *prós* with verbs of writing and speaking

Whereas the directional use of *prós* + accusative with verbs of going and sending may be found before the Hellenistic period, the extension of the preposition to the goal of writing and speaking is often considered to be a feature of Koine Greek (see e.g. Moulton & Turner 1963:

274). Does this mean that the use of the preposition with motion verbs was extended even further than transfer verbs, namely to verbs of communication?

The extension of *prós* as a complement of verbs of writing is not unexpected, since the preposition is already able to denote goal, beneficiary as well as purpose in Classical Greek (Luraghi 2003: 293-297) and it occasionally occurs in these meanings in the New Testament (cf. Robertson 1915: 626; Blass-Debrunner-Rehkopf 1976: 190). In the papyri, *prós* + accusative can be used to denote the addressee of a letter or the other party in a loan contract (Mayser 1934: 501). This usage of the preposition can be distinguished from the dative case denoting the recipient of the letter.

(18) ὅπως ἄν αὐτῷ δοῖς ἐπιστολὴν πρὸς Ἑρμᾶφιλον
 hópōs ἄn autōi doīs epistolēn pròs Her|máphilon
 in order that PART him-DAT give letter to Hermaphilos-ACC
 ‘in order that you may give him a letter to Hermaphilos’
 (P.Cair.Zen. III 59496, 8-9; letter, Krokodilopolis, 248-241 BCE)

(19) ἀπέστειλα δέ σοι γράμματα πρὸς Ὁρείωνα
 apésteila dé soi grámmata pròs Hōreíōna
 sent and you-DAT letter to Horion-ACC
 ‘and I sent you a letter to Horion’
 (P.Flor. II 127, 16; letter, Theodelpheia, 17.01.266 CE)

In (18), Petobastis has been arrested by Hermaphilos and needs a letter from Zenon in order to get him free. Therefore, he sends a messenger to fetch the letter for him. The messenger is expressed as the recipient of the requested letter in the dative (*autōi*), but the letter itself is addressed to Hermaphilos (*pròs Hermáphilon*). This is comparable to the combination of ‘to give’ with the preposition *ad* in Ciceronian Latin (Adams 2013: 279-280). A similar situation is found in (19), where Alypius tells his steward that he sent him (dative) a letter addressed to (*prós*) Horion. This use of the preposition is also found with verbs of writing, cf. (20)-(21).

(20) ἠξίωσεν ἡμᾶς Μένανδρος | ... γράψαι σοι
 ēksíōsen hēmâs Ménandros | ... grápsai soi
 asked us Menandros write you
 ‘Menandros asked us ... to write you’
 (P.Cair.Zen. I 59046, 4-5; Alexandria?, 257 BCE)

(21) γεγράφαμεν δὲ καὶ πρὸς Ἀπολλῶ[νιον]
 gegráphamen dè kai pròs Apollō[nion]
 have written and also to Apollonios-[ACC]
 ‘and we have also written to Apollonios’
 (P.Cair.Zen. I 59045, 2; Alexandria?, before 26.03.257 BCE)

The recommendation letters in (20) and (21) were sent by Amyntas in the same year to Apollonios (20) and Zenon (21). In (21), Amyntas asks Zenon to recommend Zopyros to Apollonios to whom he has already written a recommendation letter. The addressee of that letter is marked by a preposition (*prós Apollō[nion]*), similarly to the use of the preposition to mark the addressee of the letters in (18)-(19). Rather than saying ‘we wrote Apollonios’, he says ‘we have written (a letter addressed) to Apollonios’. It is likely that Zopyros was in fact

also carrying this other letter (20) around on his mission to get an additional recommendation by Zenon (21). Again, this relates to a different conceptualization of the event. The use of the preposition *prós* emphasizes directionality, the fact that a letter with a particular goal has been written, rather than referring explicitly to the (future) arrival of the letter at that goal.

The same situation lies at the basis of the occurrences of the preposition with a second person singular pronoun. Out of the 342 attestations of the verb *gráphō* with a second person singular pronoun in papyrus letters, only four mark the addressee of writing with the preposition *prós*. Three out of the four attestations of this prepositional addressee occur in papyri from the third century BCE, the same period as the attestations (18)-(21) mentioned above. Strikingly, all three letters refer explicitly to a person handing over the letter in question, cf. *Mētrodōrou tou apodidóntos [so]i tēn [e]pistolēn* ‘Metrodoros, the one who gives you this letter’ (22).¹¹

(22) προσῆλθόν τ[ιν]εσ ἡμῖν τῶν γνωρίμων | ὑπὲρ Μητροδώρου τοῦ
 prosēlthón t[in]es hēmîn tōn gnōrímōn | hupèr Mētrodōrou tou
 came some us the acquaintances for Metrodoros the
 ἀποδιδόντος [σο]ι τὴν [ἐ]πιστολὴν ἀξιοῦντες γράψαι | πρὸς σέ
 apodidóntos [so]i tēn [e]pistolēn aksiōúntes grápsai | pròs sé
 giving you the letter requesting write to you-ACC
 ‘Some of my acquaintances came to me on behalf of Metrodoros, the one who gives
 you this letter, requesting me to write to you.’
 (P. Col. III 41, 1-3; Arsinoites, ca. 254 BCE)

On request, a letter has been written addressed to a specific person, namely the same person to whom the recipient of the letter is going. The letter will be transported and ultimately handed over to the addressee by the recommended person. This is why the writer expresses the addressee of the letter with a prepositional phrase (‘to write a letter addressed to you’), instead of formulating his action as writing or sending a letter to the addressee directly (see for a similar difference in Latin between ‘to write’ with dative or preposition Baños Baños 2000: 12–13). The immediate recipient of the letter is the messenger (dative), whereas the preposition expresses the addressee of the message.

In the New Testament, *prós* + accusative is not found as the addressee of verbs of writing (Danove 2015: 195-197), but there is an alternation between dative and *prós* + accusative as the addressee of verbs of speaking (Danove 2015: 211-221).¹² This usage is often taken as a prime example of the prepositional replacement of the personal dative (e.g. Bauer 1979: 1407-1408; Moulton-Turner 1963: 236-237; Caragounis 2014: 81-83). Danove (2015) provides the argument realization patterns attested for communication verbs in the New Testament. The most frequent verbs of communication are *légō* and *laléō* ‘say, speak’ and they both show an interchange of dative and *prós* for the addressee of speech (1014 vs. 158 and 80 vs. 19 respectively). Verbs of speaking in Latin can be constructed with the preposition *ad* in order

¹¹ The other two attestations are PSI V 520, 4-6 (Philadelphēia, 250 BCE) and P.Petrie 2 2 (4), 4-5 (Arsinoites, 224-218 BCE). The last one is more fragmentary, but the person could be supplemented in l. 4 (cf. P.Petrie III 28d) and the interpretation proposed here would explain the occurrence of *prós* in l. 5. The fourth attestation of *prós sé* is found after the Ptolemaic period in P.Stras. VI 576, 2-3 (Egypt, ca. 325 - 330 CE).

¹² Although the distribution is not the same throughout the New Testament, e.g. the alternation between dative and *prós* + accusative seems absent altogether in the gospel of Matthew (Moulton-Turner 1963: 237), while it is relatively common in the gospels of Mark and Luke (Danove 2015: 211-221).

to conceptualize the utterance of the message as “haughtily ‘towards’ or ‘before’ the addressee, as if he were at a distance, rather than to him (dative) as a possible intimate” (Adams 2013: 281). This use of the preposition for formal address is already attested in Classical Latin, but seems especially common in biblical contexts where it corresponds to the Greek preposition *prós* (Adams & De Melo 2016).

Verbs of oral communication are not that frequent in papyri, since the documents are mostly concerned with written correspondence. However, a PN search for the verbs *légō* and *laléō* with *prós* in all papyri yields a few interesting examples, of which I will discuss one of the earliest here. The text in (23) is a fragment from the recordings of the dreams of Ptolemaios, an Egyptian Greek living in the sanctuary of Sarapis in Memphis (for a linguistic analysis of the archive see Bentein 2015). When two men approach Ptolemaios in order to address him for the first time (the present participle here takes almost the function of a future participle expressing purpose), the verb gets a prepositional complement (23a), whereas the dative is the default case form for pronouns that are used for the addressee of direct speech in this text (cf. *autēi*, *autois* in 23b).

- (23) a. παρέστησάν | μοι δύο ἄνθρωποι | λέγοντες πρὸς ἐμέ | ...
 paréstēsán | moi dúo ánthrōpoi | légontes pròs emé | ...
 approached me two men saying to me-ACC
 ‘Two men approached me to say to me: “...”’
- b. λέγουσai αὐτῇ | ... ἔλεγον αὐτοῖς ...
 légousei autēi | élegon autois ...
 say her-DAT said them-DAT
 ‘They tell her: “...” I told them: “...”’
 (UPZ I 77, II 4-6 and 14-16; dreams, Memphis, 21?.06.158 BCE)

The first speech event (23a) resembles the use of *prós* for formal address in the New Testament and *ad* in Latin literary texts. Ptolemaios is not acquainted with the two men approaching him and their message is profiled as directed to him with authority and projection of voice. This description contrasts with the later description of a conversation in which the participants are already known and the focus lies on the contents of the transferred message (23b). Attestations like these, however, remain scarce in documentary papyri throughout the centuries (cf. also Mayser 1934: 499-500).

Thus, the preposition *prós* can be used with verbs of writing and, to some extent, speaking in the papyri, although examples with a second person singular pronoun are rare. The preposition is specifically used to express the direction of transfer of a message (addressee) and needs to be distinguished from the dative, which continues to be used as the default addressee of speech and writing, denoting the endpoint of delivery of a message (comparable to a recipient). These semantic distinctions mean that the prepositions *prós* and *eis* cannot be seen as an outright replacement of the dative case in these functions. The close semantic proximity of these prepositions and the dative case may have led to a merger at a later stage, but in papyrus letters the prepositions are only used in a specific meaning, contrastive with the dative case, or they do not occur with personal pronouns at all. This makes it *a priori* unlikely that the replacement of the personal dative by the bare accusative case was a direct result of prepositional replacements during the post-Classical period, as claimed by Jannaris (1897).

6. THE ACCUSATIVE CASE

In his study of dative replacement in post-Classical Greek, Humbert (1930: 179-180) found 15 attestations of the replacement of the dative by the accusative case in papyri from the second century BCE until the fifth century CE. In total, 14 of these concern the interchange of personal pronouns, 7 instances with the first person singular and 7 with the second person singular. My analysis of argument realization patterns of transfer verbs yielded 11 instances of accusative second person singular pronouns (see table 1). These results are expanded to a total of 31 examples of case interchange with the ones indicated by editors in various papyrus editions (for the method of collecting linguistic comments from papyrus editions see Depauw & Stolk 2015).¹³ Table 4 shows these accusative pronouns used as complement with verbs of sending, communication and giving.¹⁴

Table 4: accusative pronouns used as animate goal according to verb class

The quantitative distribution is largely based on the contents of these texts, mostly occurring in letters (27 out of 31). Could the fact that the accusative case functioned as the default case for directional prepositions explain the usage of these accusative pronouns, as has been assumed in the literature (see introduction)? First of all, the fact that the accusative pronoun is attested with verbs from each of these three verb classes (table 4) suggests a potential parallel with the dative case which also commonly occurs with all three verb types (table 1), while the prepositions *eis* or *prós* have more limited range of application. In the preceding sections, I have shown how the use of the preposition *eis* and *prós* can often be distinguished from the dative case. I will now examine whether these accusative pronouns should be connected to the specific use of the prepositions or whether they are found in the same functions as the dative case. For this comparison, each of the verb classes will be examined separately.

6.1 The accusative case with verbs of sending

As established in section 5.1, the dative case would be the preferred option for transfer of an inanimate theme to an animate goal, while the preposition *prós* + accusative is only used for sending of animate themes. Analysis of the 13 examples of accusative singular pronouns shows that all of them are used for the sending of inanimate themes. The earliest example is found in the famous letter from Hilarion to his wife Alis (24).

(24)	ἐάν	εὐθὺς	ὀψώνιον	λάβωμεν	ἀποστελῶ	σε	ἄνω
	eàn	euthùs	opsónion	lábōmen	apostelô	se	ánō
	if	soon	salary	receive	send	you-ACC	up
	‘if we receive our pay soon, I will send (it) up to you’						
	(P.Oxy. IV 744, 7-8; Alexandria, 17.06.01 BCE; = example 2)						

The animate goal of sending in (24) is expressed by the personal pronoun *se* in the accusative case, while the implicit object of sending is inanimate (*opsónion* ‘salary’). This is not a

¹³ Trismegistos Text Irregularities, accessed at www.trismegistos.org/textirregularities/index.php, June 2015.

¹⁴ An overview of these and other examples of case interchange can be found in Stolk 2015b, Appendix B.

function for which a prepositional accusative would be used in contemporary texts. Thus, the examples of the accusative used as animate goal in Greek papyri show no evidence that this change went through an intermediary phase of replacement of the dative by a preposition such as *prós*.

If directional prepositions did not play an important part in this process, what else could explain the variation between plain dative and accusative cases as the goal of verbs of sending? Humbert (1930: 167-168, 178) already assumed that the examples of interchange of dative and accusative in the papyri were caused by phonetic similarity of the vowels of dative and accusative cases for the first and second person pronoun. However, since the interchange of <oi> (pronounced as [y] and later perhaps [i]) and <e> is not frequent in other contexts in Greek papyri, Gignac (1976: 274n. 1) concluded that the case interchange was probably motivated by semantic and syntactic changes instead. The letter in (24) contains only a few deviations, mostly caused by the omission of letters.¹⁵ The omission of *epsilon* in ll. 3-4 *en Aleksan|dréai 'smen* (for *en Aleksan|dréai ésmen* ‘we are in Alexandria’) could have been caused by vowel elision in pronunciation. The same could have happened to the case endings of clitic pronouns, such as the elision of <e> in *apostelô se ánō* (l. 8). The difference between the vowels [y] (or [i]) and [e] in the unstressed case ending of a clitic pronoun might have been very small in spoken language (Gignac 1976: 273-275). This would mean that the case ending had to be supplied in the written text based on previous knowledge.¹⁶ The preceding lines contain two more clitic pronouns in the accusative case (*erôtô se kai parakalô se*, l. 6). Perhaps, the writer just wrote an accusative pronoun (*se*) in analogy to the previous occurrences. The majority of the accusative attestations date after the third century CE. The increase in attestations in the Byzantine period might be due to the phonological merger of front vowels, such /e/ and /y/ with /i/, by that time (cf. Gignac 1976: 266-267; 273-275).

Although the phonetic similarity of the case endings could have played an important role in the case interchanges, the attestation of ἐμέναν in a later example from the fourth century CE (25) shows that the interchange of dative and accusative could not only be caused by the lack of distinction between in the pronunciation of case endings of clitic pronouns.

- (25) **ἐμέναν** δὲ οὐκ ὀλίγην ὕβριν προσηνέγκα|τε
eménan dè ouk olígēn húbrin prosēnéγκα|te
me-ACC and not little distress bring
‘you would bring me no little distress’
(P.Oxy. XLVIII 3407, 21-23 ; Oxyrhynchus, 330-385 CE)

The letter contains the instructions from a landlady to her bailiff and steward, probably written by someone else on her behalf (Bagnall and Cribiore 2006: 215). Apart from minor orthographic variations, the letter appears to be sophisticated. Bagnall and Cribiore (2006: 215) describe the language as “high-quality business prose”. The construction in (25) denotes

¹⁵ Clearly, Salenius’ description (1927: 22-23) as “dem durch grobe Fehler entstellten Briefe” goes too far.

¹⁶ The writer might have had some difficulties with the usage of case forms in Greek, cf. the opening of the letter with *Hilaríōna* (accusative instead of nominative) for the sender and *Apollōnarin* (accusative instead of dative) for the addressee, but these names may also have been taken from another context without adapting the case form.

an abstract transfer to an animate goal denoted by the morphological form *emén(an)*¹⁷, approaching the Modern Greek oblique pronoun *eména* (cf. Gignac 1981: 162-163). Phonetic confusion of dative and accusative case endings seems unlikely for this full form of the pronoun.

6.2 The accusative case with verbs of writing and speaking

Based on a quantitative analysis of the argument realization of the indirect object after *légō* ‘to say’, Sipetzis (2005: 200) concludes that bare genitive and accusative substitution for the dative case only appeared after the prepositional alternatives:

“it is clear that Accusative substitutes of dative as indirect objects emerge quite late and suddenly (the tenth century AD). This also applies to genitival substitutes [...] since at the beginning only PPs can substitute for dative.”

This is a surprising conclusion, since Humbert (1930) already showed that genitive and accusative replacements of the personal dative can be found in papyri from the Roman and Byzantine periods. These accusative pronouns occur both with verbs of writing (7 times) and speaking (4 times). None are found in the contexts where the addressed person should be emphasized in any way, as would have been the common usage of the preposition *prós* (cf. 5.3). All are in the same position as a dative clitic pronoun and function as the default addressee of speech or writing in that situation. If the parallel to the use of *prós* is not very helpful, how else could one explain the variation between dative and accusative with communication verbs?

Witkowski (1911: 122) compared the use of an accusative pronoun with a verb of writing to the accusative goal of the verb of sending in example (24), but I think verbs of writing may be better understood in comparison to verbs of speaking, as shown in this letter of the boy Theon to his father which contains both kinds of verbs (26).

- (26) a. οὐ μὴ γράψω σε ἐπιστολήν
 ou mē grápsō se epistolén
 not not write **you-ACC** letter
 ‘I will not write you a letter’
- b. οὔτε λαλῶ σε οὔτε υἱγενῶ σε
 ou̯te lalō se ou̯te huigénō se
 nor speak **you-ACC** nor wish health **you-ACC**
 ‘nor speak to you nor wish you good health’
 (P.Oxy. I 119, 4-5; Oxyrhynchus, II-III)

Deissmann (1908: 132-133) characterizes the language of the young boy in this letter as “street and playground language” and explains the use of the accusatives in (26) as a “sign that the dative started to disappear in the vernacular” [my translation]. Salenius (1927: 22) argues against this interpretation by pointing to the possibility of analogical extension based on ditransitive verbs taking two accusative complements. However, this does not mean that the interchange of the cases due to analogy of the verbs of writing and speaking (which

¹⁷ The editors (n. to l. 21-23) reject the possibility to interpret ἐμὲν ἄν here in order to account for the irrealis sense of this phrase, because ἄν is not used elsewhere in this text and the word order would be peculiar.

usually take a dative addressee) with verbs of greeting and requesting (which take an accusative addressee) has to be caused by a ‘mistake’, as Salonius seems to suggest. The boy might not have written the letter according to the (conservative) norms of the standard language, but Theon is not the only one alternating between dative and accusative as addressee, see (27).

- (27) a. *περὶ τοῦ πειπέρεος καθὼς | σοὶ ἠρώτηκα καὶ Ἀντόνιν*
perì tou̅ peipéreos kathṓs | soi ērótēka kai Antónin
 about the pepper as **you-DAT** asked and **Antonis-ACC**
 ‘concerning the pepper, as I asked you and Antonius’
- b. *εἰ ἠγοράκατε πέμψα|τέ μοι φάσιν*
ei ēgōrákate pémpsa|té moi phásin
 if bought send **me-DAT** information
 ‘if you have bought any, send me a message’
- c. *καὶ ἄν τινος | χηρίζετε γράψατέ | με*
kai án tinos | khréizēte grápsaté | me
 and PART something need write **me-ACC**
 ‘and if you need anything, write me’
 (O.Did. 327, 3-6, 8-10; Didymoi, before ca.77-92 CE)

The language on the ostrakon in (27) is relatively standard for these texts, apart from the variation between the dative and accusative cases. Albucius writes a dative instead of an accusative pronoun with a verb of asking (27a), but he does use the accusative for the personal name *Antónin* in the same phrase. After that, he writes an accusative instead of a dative pronoun with a verb of writing (27c). Notice that he does not seem to have problems with the dative case with the verb for sending (27b).

Both the dative and the accusative case can function as the addressee of communication verbs in Greek. Based on their meaning and argument realization patterns, communication verbs in Greek papyri can roughly be divided into four groups:

- (i) Verbs of writing and speaking, e.g. *gráphō* ‘to write’, *légō* ‘to speak’, *dēlóō* ‘to inform’, *apangéllō* ‘to report’
- (ii) Verbs of ordering and thanking, e.g. *entéllō* ‘to order’, *eukharistéō* ‘to give thanks’
- (iii) Verbs of asking, e.g. *erōtáō*, *aksióō*, *(ap)aitéō* ‘to ask’, *parakaléō* ‘to beg’
- (iv) Verbs of greeting, e.g. *aspázomai* and *prosagoreúō* ‘to greet’

The first two groups generally take a dative addressee (i-ii), while the last two usually occur with an accusative addressee (iii-iv). Dabrowska (1997: 98) argues that in Polish the contrast between dative and accusative complements “reflects different ways of organizing the situation for expressive purposes”. The choice of a dative or an accusative ‘target’ of a communication event depends on “whether the verb profiles the agent’s action and the target’s affectedness as a single act of causation [accusative] or whether the agent’s action is seen as sparking off an autonomous process in another participant’s sphere of awareness [dative]” (Dabrowska 1997: 99). An act of communication directed to a dative addressee consists of an act of sending a message into the addressee’s personal sphere and possibly

secondary affectedness through this information, similarly to the verbs of speaking and writing which take a dative case in Greek. On the other hand, the agent of verbs of asking and begging is trying to affect the addressee directly and force the addressee to immediate action in the form of an answer or assistance (accusative). The success of the act of communication with verbs of ordering and thanking depends on the addressee being in the agent's sphere of influence (dative). Verbs of greeting do not evoke the dative's personal sphere of influence, as the act of communication is successful even if the target does not hear or understand the message. Even though the argument realization patterns for each of these verbs may be explained historically and perhaps also on semantic grounds, as attempted above, one has to admit that these verb classes remain very similar. Naturally, the lack of a clear distinction between the dative and accusative in these constructions has led to interchange in both directions in later Greek. Apart from the attested overlap between verbs of writing, speaking, wishing for health, as visible in (26), and writing and asking (27), one even finds the accusative with verbs of thanking (28).

- (28) καὶ πάντα[τε] εὐχαρισ|τό σε
 kai pánto[te] eukharis|tó se
 and always thank **you-ACC**
 'and I thank you always'
 (O.Did. 407, 4-5; Didymoi, before ca. 110-115 CE)

Ankyras writes to his father Horion and thanks him. The handwriting is known from other ostraca with different senders, so the letter was probably written for Ankyras by a semi-professional scribe from the area. Whether in pronunciation or writing, the difference between the cases used for semantically similar roles might have led to confusion or analogical extension of one or other pattern, such as the accusative with verbs of writing (26a, 27c), speaking (26b) and thanking (28). Not only does the accusative case occasionally appear with 'dative' verbs, as observed above, but also the dative is frequently attested as complement of verbs of asking (27a), begging and greeting (Stolk & Nachtergaele 2016). The alternation between dative and accusative as the addressee of communication verbs is also found with in post-Classical literary texts and the New Testament (see Moulton-Turner 1963: 236-238; Wong 1999: 146-153; Riaño 2006: 501-508; Caragounis 2014: 83-88; Danove 2015). Contrary to the course of events sketched by Jannaris (see 1. Introduction), the use of accusative complements with verbs of writing and speaking must have been part of the same phenomenon of case variation between the accusative and the dative addressees of all these communication verbs rather than being the result of the occasional attestation of a preposition to express the addressee of writing and speaking.

6.3 The accusative case with verbs of giving

Examples of the accusative as recipient of an act of giving are not frequent. The preposition *prós* is not attested with verbs of giving, so it is unlikely that this usage was caused by an extension and loss of the preposition *prós* based on the language in documentary papyri. The examples do not seem to be used in the special meaning ('on account of') of the preposition *eis* either. Therefore, it is more likely that the usage of the accusative pronoun as recipient is related to the variation between dative and accusative pronouns with verbs of sending (6.1)

and communication verbs (6.2), as observed above. The letter from Probus to Manatine (29) from the late fourth century CE is especially interesting in this respect.

- 29
- a. εἶρηκά σου ὅτι δὸς ἐμοὶ κέρμα
 eírēká sou hōti dōs emoi kērma
 said you-GEN that give me-DAT coin
 ‘I said to you: “give me a coin”’
- b. ἵνα ἀγοράσω ἐμαυτῷ ἓναν λέβητον
 hína agōrásō ematōi hénan lébitōn
 so that buy myself-DAT one pot
 “so that I can buy a pot for myself”’
- c. εἶπές | με ὅτι ἀλλ[λὰ] ἄρω τὰ ἀπ’ ἐσοῦ
 eípés | me hōti al[là] ārōn tà ap’ esou
 said me-ACC that but take the from you
 ‘you said me “take your own (money)”’
- d. καὶ | ἄρτι δέ σε δ[ίδ]ω
 kai | arti dé se d[id]ō
 and just also you-ACC give
 “and I will give (it) you later”’
 (P.Oxy. XIV 1683, 20-24; Oxyrhynchus, late IV CE)

Verbs of speaking (29c) and giving (29d) are constructed with an accusative pronoun, but also with genitive and dative pronouns respectively (29a). The language of this letter is non-standard with respect to orthography, morphology and morphosyntax. However, many of the features seem to reflect changes in the language, such as the merger of /o/ and /ō/ (e.g. *hōti* for *hōti*, 29a), monophthongization (e.g. *ematōi* for *emautōi*, 29b), merger of the third declension with the second declension (e.g. *lebitōn* for the second declension accusative *lebiton* instead of the original third declension accusative *lebēta*, 29b) and the analogical lengthening of the forms of the strong personal pronoun (*esou* for *sou*, 29c). Horrocks (2010: 184) cites this letter to illustrate the decline of the dative case in Greek:

“It is in any case clear that, though Probus (or his scribe) has been instructed to use the dative in writing, the case barely features in his normal spoken register, as evidenced in the non-formulaic parts of this letter. Note, for example, the random use of genitive and accusative pronouns in place of the dative as verbal complements.”

The co-occurrence of genitive and accusative replacements of the dative in one text is rare and a system that suggests a ‘random’ choice of case forms does not need to reflect a working spoken language. That is, if the choice of case forms in this letter is indeed random, as Horrocks characterises it. As we have seen above (6.1), the case endings of the clitic pronouns were perhaps not always clearly distinguished in pronunciation. This would also explain the expected dative with the emphatic pronoun *emoi* in (29a) and the reflexive *ematōi* in (29b). If not clear in pronunciation, the choices made in writing specific case endings could be based on analogy, among other factors. For example, the genitive after speaking follows after several genitives (ll. 18-19), while the accusative pronoun with the verb meaning ‘to give’ follows after two accusative pronominal objects (ll. 21-23). The choice of these case forms could, therefore, have been influenced by the linguistic context. The underlying cognitive

processes that may cause this type of variation in case forms, such as analogy, anticipation and repetition, are described in more detail in Stolk (forthcoming). A different picture emerges in the following letter from Syria (30).

- (30) a.

πάνκαλα		ἄ	ἐποίησες	πρὸς	ἐμέ
ránkala		hà	epoíēses	pròs	emé
everything beautiful		what	did	to	me-ACC

‘everything beautiful what you did for me’
- b.

θεός	σε	ἀποδώσι			
theós	se	apodósi			
god	you-ACC	return			

‘god will return (it) to you’
- c.

ἄσπασόν	μοι	Σαδαλλαθην	τὸν	ἀδελφόν	μου
áspasón	moi	Sadal lathēn	tòn	adelphón	mou
greet	me-DAT	Sadallathes	the	brother	my-GEN

‘greet Sadallathes, my brother, for me’
- d.

μελησάτω	ὑμᾶς	πέμσε	Βιθιλαα	πρὸς	ἐμέ
melēsátō	humâs	pémse	Bithilaan	pròs	emé
take care	you-ACC	send	Bithilaa	to	me-ACC

‘take care to send Bithilaa to me’
- e.

ἔγραψα	ὑμᾶς	ἐπιστολὴν	ἀπὸ	Δυσάριος
égrapsa	humâs	epistolēn	apò	Dusários
wrote	you.pl-ACC	letter	from	Dusaris

‘I wrote you a letter from Dusaris’
- (P.Euphr. 17, 10-11 and 25-29; Beth Fouraia, Syria, mid III CE)

In this text, pronominal goals and recipients are in the accusative case, both for the second person singular (30b) and second person plural pronouns (30e). The accusative is also used in the impersonal construction with the verb *melēsátō* ‘to whom (dative) there is care for something’ (30d). The preposition *pròs* is used as goal with animate themes (30d), as is common in the Egyptian papyri (cf. 5.1), but also as the beneficiary of an action (30a). Only once, the scribe uses a dative pronoun to express the person on whose behalf greetings are sent (30c). The use of case forms in this text could be due to the scribe’s misunderstanding of the Greek case system, but the consequent replacement of the dative by the accusative as goal and by prepositions in the role of beneficiary may also indicate that the functions of the dative case had almost fully been taken over in Syria. However, papyrus letters from this area are rare in comparison to the letters preserved from Egypt and Greek literacy may have been limited (Charlesworth 2014). This makes it difficult to draw any conclusions based on this single letter, especially regarding similarities to the development of the Greek language in Egypt, which seems to have been much more conservative in respect to the use of prepositional phrases and the bare accusative case as a replacement of the personal dative.

7. CONCLUSION

In this article, I examined the variation in argument realization of the animate goal with several verb classes in documentary papyri from the Ptolemaic to Byzantine period (300 BC - 800 CE). I evaluated existing theories on the replacement of the dative case by the bare

accusative case and prepositional phrases and tested their conclusions on a corpus of the second person singular pronoun in Greek papyrus letters.

It was first established that the preposition *eis* is generally used with inanimate goals and does not function as a replacement of the personal dative case in Greek papyri. The preposition *eis* can occasionally be used with an animate pronominal goal, but only in the specific meaning expressing on account of whom a payment is made.

The preposition *prós* seems to be the most likely candidate for the replacement of the dative case, since the dative case and the preposition *prós* with accusative are both regularly used for the encoding of an animate goal. However, the preposition *prós* is only used with verbs of sending with an animate theme (caused motion), while the dative case is employed both with animate (caused motion) and inanimate themes (caused possession). Already in Classical Greek, the extension of the use of *prós* from motion to caused motion events and the use of the dative case with motion verbs led to dative alternation. In the papyri, the dative case is occasionally used with motion verbs when the focus is on the endpoint of motion rather than the trajectory. The preposition *prós*, on the other hand, is used with transfer verbs to profile the direction of the sending (trajectory), rather than the arrival at someone's place (endpoint). Only occasionally, the preposition is used with verbs of writing and speaking in Greek papyri. In these situations, the preposition is used in a special meaning focussing on the production and transfer of the message rather than on the point of arrival.

The bare accusative case is attested as an animate goal with various types of verbs in papyrus letters. With verbs of sending, the accusative goal is only attested with inanimate themes and should, therefore, not be related to the preposition *prós* which only occurs with the sending of animate themes. The interchange of the dative and accusative cases of clitic pronouns could have been caused by a lack of phonetic distinction between unstressed front vowels. Furthermore, the accusative occurs as addressee of communication verbs without special emphasis on the transfer of the message. Similarly, the dative case is used with communication verbs that usually take an accusative addressee. Case variation between the dative and accusative cases may be due to the semantic overlap between these types of verbs. The accusative case is even occasionally used as the recipient of verbs of giving, a function which is very uncommon for the prepositions *eis* and *pros* in the papyri. Based on the close similarity between the attestations of the bare dative and bare accusative as animate goal and the lack of an extension of prepositional usage with personal pronouns in the papyri, it seems unlikely that these occasional instances of replacement of the bare dative by the bare accusative are the result of an increase and disappearance of prepositions in Greek documentary papyri.

This does not mean that there was no increase in prepositions in Koine Greek altogether. Some prepositional phrases with accusative do seem to replace the prepositional dative and the (adverbial) functions of the bare dative case (Humbert 1930; Luraghi 2003; Gignac 2013: 416-417; cf. 5.2). However, this does not explain the first signs of extension of the accusative case to the functions of the personal dative. As this study was mainly based on personal pronouns, it is impossible to reach conclusions regarding the development of the replacement of the dative case with animate full noun phrases for which prepositional support might have been more common (Horrocks 2010: 284-285).

Thus, there are some examples of the replacement of the personal dative by the bare accusative case in papyrus letters, but these do not seem to correlate with a prepositional increase to express the functions of the personal dative. Generally, the argument realization patterns in the papyri seem fairly standardized and barely change throughout the centuries. Of course, one might wonder whether the written language was perhaps ‘too’ standardized to reveal any of the expected changes. However, the attestations mentioned in this article frequently co-occur with other, less standardized features in these private letters. Therefore, at least, the alternation between the dative case and prepositions must have been a feature of the language that did not lead to much confusion, not even among less experienced writers.

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Table 1: variant realization of animate goal (2sg) according to verb class

2sg goal	sending (i) ¹⁸	communication (ii) ¹⁹	giving (iii) ²⁰
dative	380	388	186
<i>pros</i> + acc	28	4	0
accusative	4	4	4

¹⁸ All verbs for sending are counted, including *apostéllō*, *anapémpō*, *apopémpō*, *aphíēmi*, *epistéllō*, *híēmi*, *diapémpō*, *pémpō*, most frequent are *apostéllō* (101 attestations) and *pémpō* (270 attestations).

¹⁹ Various verbs occur, some taking an accusative complement by default (asking, greeting), others generally taking a dative complement (writing, speaking). For reasons of clarity only the attestations of common verbs of the latter type are counted here, including *gráphō*, *légō*, *eípon*, *erō* and *lalō*; *gráphō* is most frequent (337 attestations).

²⁰ All verbs for giving (‘transfer of possession’) are counted, of which *anadídōmi*, *apodídōmi*, *dídōmi*, *metadídōmi*, *paradídōmi*, *paratíthēmi*, *parékhō*, *parístēmi*, *pisteúō*, *prosopheílō* and *khráō* occur more than once; *dídōmi* is most frequent (62 attestations).

Table 2: animacy theme of verbs of sending with 2sg.pn. goal

verbs of sending + goal	animate theme	inanimate theme
<i>apostéllō</i> + dative	7	71
<i>apostéllō</i> + <i>pros</i>	12	0
<i>pémpō</i> + dative	10	216
<i>pémpō</i> + <i>pros</i>	12	0

Table 3: realization of animate goal according to verb class

verb class	realization animate goal	event schema
go to	<i>pros</i> + accusative	motion
send (animate T)	<i>pros</i> + accusative	caused motion
send (inanimate T)	dative	caused motion/possession
give	dative	caused possession

Table 4: accusative pronouns used as animate goal according to verb class

	1sg. pronoun	2sg. pronoun
sending	10	3
communication	5	6
giving	1	7