

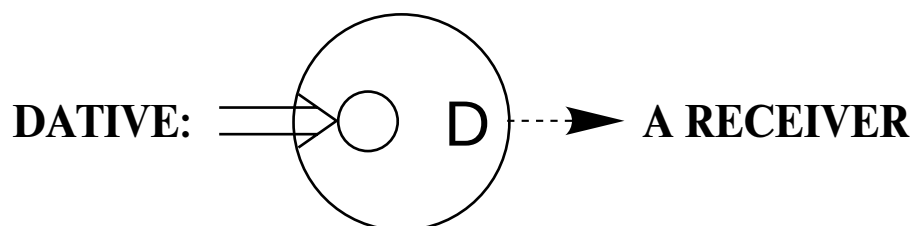
DATIVE FORMS

| Various Pronouns          |       | Adjectives |        | Nouns |             |
|---------------------------|-------|------------|--------|-------|-------------|
| 'all, every' 'this, that' |       | HARD       | SOFT   | HARD  | SOFT OTHERS |
|                           |       | singular   |        |       |             |
| N                         | všemu | tomu       | našemu | mému  |             |
| A                         | všemu | tomu       | našemu | mému  |             |
| M                         | všemu | tomu       | našemu | mému  |             |
| F                         | vší   | té         | naší   | mé    |             |
|                           |       | plural     |        |       |             |
| N                         | všem  | těm        | naším  | mým   |             |
| A                         | všem  | těm        | naším  | mým   |             |
| M                         | všem  | těm        | naším  | mým   |             |
| F                         | všem  | těm        | naším  | mým   |             |

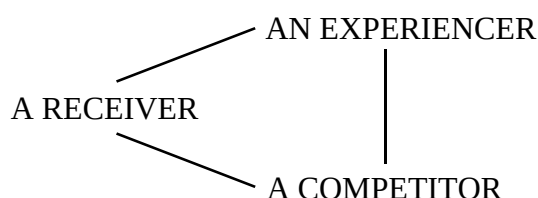
| Interrogative Pronouns |                 | Personal Pronouns |            |
|------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|------------|
| 'who'                  | 'what'          | 'I'               | 'you' (sg) |
| komu                   | čemu            | mi (mně)          | ti (tobě)  |
|                        |                 | 'we'              | 'you' (pl) |
|                        |                 | nám               | vám        |
|                        |                 | 'he/she/it'       | 'they'     |
| N                      | mu, jemu (němu) | jím (ním)         |            |
| A                      | mu, jemu (němu) | jím (ním)         |            |
| M                      | mu, jemu (němu) | jím (ním)         |            |
| F                      | jí (ní)         | jím (ním)         |            |

| Numerals |         | KEY: |                     |
|----------|---------|------|---------------------|
| 'one'    | 'two'   | N    | neuter              |
| N        | jednomu | A    | animate masculine   |
| A        | jednomu | M    | inanimate masculine |
| M        | jednomu | F    | feminine            |
| F        | jedné   |      |                     |

|         |        |        |
|---------|--------|--------|
| 'three' | 'four' | 'five' |
| třem    | čtyřem | pěti   |



The dative network:



## PROLOGUE

Imagine for a moment that you are playing Mad Libs, and you are asked to supply some words, so you suggest *flowerpot*, *mud puddle*, and *refrigerator*. Then the leader of the game reads the story: “Philanthropists are people who like to help flowerpots. Some of them are very gullible and will believe every mud puddle they meet. These do-gooders will even give a refrigerator their last dime.” Although they are all grammatically correct, these sentences are not representative of the ordinary repertoire of English. The fun of this game in fact consists in creating nonsensical sentences such as these. The three Mad Libs sentences created here are strange because there is a clash between the expectations of constructions containing *help*, *believe*, and *give* and words like *flowerpot*, *mud puddle*, and *refrigerator* which fail to meet these expectations. All three constructions presume that the object is most likely to be a human being. Help is meaningless to a flowerpot because it cannot appreciate the benefit it receives. A mud puddle doesn’t have a story to tell and cannot inspire belief. A refrigerator cannot do anything with money, so there is no point in giving it any. The reason that inanimate objects don’t work in these contexts is that they are incapable of serving as the subjects of further action. If you were to play this round of Mad Libs in Czech, you would put all three words in the dative case because the verbs *pomáhat* ‘help’, *věřit* ‘believe’, and *dát* ‘give’ would require you to do so, but they still wouldn’t make any more sense in Czech than in English. The dative case shows that all three contexts have something in common, and as we saw above, they all share the expectation that the dative item is capable of being a subject. This doesn’t mean that all dative items are going to be human or even animate, but it does mean that when you are dealing with a dative item, it is likely to be able to react or at least to exert forces of its own.

The dative pronoun *si* ‘for/to oneself’ is very prominent in Czech, and given the fundamental expectation that an item marked with the dative case is capable of serving as a subject, it is easy to see why. The inherent meaning of the pronoun and the case meaning of the dative are very compatible: inherently this pronoun refers always to the subject of the sentence it is

A dative item is one that can react or exert forces of its own.

The dative pronoun *si* ‘to/for oneself’ plays a special role in Czech.

An overview of  
the dative case.

in, which means that it is always referring to an item that has already proven its potential to be a subject, and is therefore an ideal candidate for the dative case. In fact, *si* is used in Czech very frequently, far more than most grammar books let on. You can use *si* in a sentence any time an action affects the subject, or is done for the subject, particularly if it is done for the subject's enjoyment. Perhaps because it is such a little word, *si* sneaks into many sentences that wouldn't normally contain 'for oneself' or the equivalent in English, giving its behavior a rather "phantom" flavor from our perspective. The special role of *si* will be noted repeatedly in this chapter.

There are three basic meanings to the dative, all of which involve the dative's capacity to interact with its surroundings. The first two meanings are relatively passive, involving receiving or losing objects (DATIVE: A RECEIVER) and absorbing experiences (DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER), whereas the third one is relatively active, involving exerting equal, superior, or lesser strength in relation to something else (DATIVE: A COMPETITOR). These three meanings are not entirely separate and discrete. Instead they overlap in significant ways because they are so closely related to each other. It might be easier to understand the relationships between the meanings if we remember how our own English word *give* behaves: we can give something to someone (like DATIVE: A RECEIVER), we can give someone all our love or give them a hard time (like DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER), and we can also give someone a challenge or just give in to them (like DATIVE: A COMPETITOR). As you read through this chapter, notice how many of the Czech words associated with the dative case can be translated or paraphrased using English *give*.

## DATIVE: A RECEIVER 1 — The indirect object

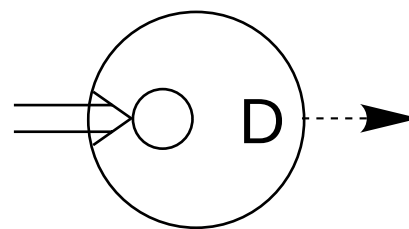
DATIVE: A  
RECEIVER  
expresses the  
indirect object.

DATIVE: A RECEIVER involves the transfer of an object from one thing or person to another, as in *Sally gave the book to John*. The thing or person on the receiving end (John) is marked with the dative. You might recognize this as the indirect object (the direct object, of course, is the book, marked in the accusative). As we will see, Czech has a lot of ways to extend the idea of the indirect object. For example, you can sometimes have an indirect object (DATIVE: A RECEIVER) without an obvious direct object (ACCUSATIVE: A DESTINATION). And you can even run the transaction in reverse and mark the loser as an indirect object (with DATIVE: A RECEIVER) in the same way that you mark the recipient. But let's start with some straightforward examples.

DATIVE: A  
RECEIVER in the  
context of  
giving.

Giving is a universal experience of human interaction, and it serves as the logical starting point for the meanings of the dative. The Czech verb for 'give' is *dát/dávat* (which can take many prefixes), and the following example illustrates its use with the dative:

- (1) "Dám **ti** půlku svých peněz, když **mi** dáš tu roli v novém filmu," usmála se hvězdička.  
[“Give **you-DAT** half-ACC own money-GEN, when **me-DAT** give that role-ACC in new film-LOC,” smiled self-ACC star-NOM.]  
“I’ll give **you** half my money if you give **me** that role in the new film,” smiled the star.



A force (arrow) brings an item (small circle) to a DATIVE: A RECEIVER (circle labeled D), which has the potential to exert a force (dotted arrow)

This example contains two instances of giving, as outlined here:

| Subject    | Verb  | Indirect Object      | Direct Object |
|------------|-------|----------------------|---------------|
| movie star | gives | <b>to director</b>   | money         |
| director   | gives | <b>to movie star</b> | the role      |

You can also see that both the director and the movie star are much more than passive destinations for the money and the role. In both instances we presume that they are going to do something with what they have received: the director can buy something with the money, and the movie star will be able to play the role and advance her career. Even if they fail to do anything, the fact that they could do something is crucial here.

Giving need not involve tangible objects. In English we can offer more abstract, metaphorical “gifts”, such as power and humor, and the same goes for Czech:

The indirect object can act as the subject for a further action.

DATIVE: A RECEIVER in the context of metaphorical giving.

- F**  
**M**
- (2) Hrajeme hru, že politici jsou profesionálové, **kterým** dáme moc, a oni už vše zařídí. [Play game-ACC, that politicians-NOM are professionals-NOM, **whom-DAT** give power-ACC, and they-NOM already everything-ACC manage.]  
We’re playing a game that politicians are professionals **to whom** we give power, and then they take care of everything.

- F**  
**M**
- (3) Pán Bůh **mi** dal dost značný dar humoru. [Lord God-NOM **me-DAT** gave enough considerable gift-ACC humor-GEN.]  
The Lord God gave **me** a considerable gift of humor.

The verb *dát/dávat* ‘give’ + DATIVE: A RECEIVER participates in numerous idioms motivated as extensions of the meanings of ‘give’ and the dative case. For example, if someone is bothering you, you can say *Dej **mi** pokoj!* [Give **me-DAT** peace-ACC!] ‘Leave **me** alone (literally: Give **me** peace)!’. If they still don’t get the message, you might need to take the advice of the phrase *dát **někomu** najevo, že...* [give **someone-DAT** clear, that...] ‘make it clear **to someone** that...’, and insist on no uncertain terms that you don’t want to be disturbed. A person who is puzzled might say: *Nedává **mi** to žádný smysl* [Not-gives **me-DAT** that-NOM any sense-ACC] ‘That doesn’t make any sense **to me**’. The Czech equivalent of our English idiom *give credence to something* is *dávat **něčemu** váhu*, literally ‘give weight **to something**’. A hypothesis can be introduced by saying *Dejme **tomu**, že...* [Give **that-DAT**, that...] ‘Let’s assume that...’. Caution can be suggested by using the idiom *dát **si** pozor* [give **self-DAT** attention-ACC] ‘watch out, be careful’. Finally *dát **si*** ‘have, order (food) (literally: give **oneself**)’ is used when one is ordering or requesting food or drink. Here are a couple of examples of idiomatic uses of *dát/dávat*.

Idioms with *dát/dávat* ‘give’ + DATIVE: A RECEIVER.

- F**  
**M**
- (4) Nedávám **anketám** velikou váhu: přitahují lidi snadnějšího názoru, jimž se chce odpovídat. (LCz)  
[Not-give **surveys-DAT** great weight-ACC: attract people-acc simpler opinion-GEN, who-DAT self-ACC wants answer.]  
I don’t give **surveys** much credence: they attract people with simple opinions who feel like answering.



- (5) Dal **ti** snad toto své přání nějakou formou najevo?  
 [Gave **you-DAT** perhaps that own wish-ACC some form-INST clear?]  
 ‘Did he make his wishes clear **to you** somehow?’

Words meaning  
 ‘transfer’ or  
 ‘make available’  
 trigger DATIVE: A  
 RECEIVER.

Acts of transferring objects from one party to another are fairly widespread; in English, for example we can *send*, *offer*, *supply*, and *deliver* things to other people. We can even extend this idea of making something available to someone to words like *buy* (*She bought **me** a ticket*) and *show* (*He showed **me** his report card*). These words aren’t exact synonyms of *give*, but they share the same basic conceptual structure, and it is no surprise that in Czech words like these will also have dative indirect objects, as we see in the following table and examples:

### Synonyms and Near Synonyms of *dát/dávat* ‘give’

|                                                           |                                                         |                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| ‘address’<br><i>adresovat</i>                             | ‘dictate’<br><i>na-diktovat</i>                         | ‘wish’<br><i>po-přát; přání</i>                     |
| ‘shove at, force upon’<br><i>cpát (CCz)</i>               | ‘propose’<br><i>navrhnout/navrhovat</i>                 | ‘provide’<br><i>poskytnout/poskytovat</i>           |
| ‘give as a gift; gift’<br><i>darovat; dárek</i>           | ‘give (hint, suggestion)’<br><i>naznačit/naznačovat</i> | ‘send’<br><i>poslat/posílat</i>                     |
| ‘dedicate’<br><i>dedikovat</i>                            | ‘leave (for)’<br><i>nechat/nechávat</i>                 | ‘pass, submit’<br><i>postoupit/postupovat</i>       |
| ‘add, deliver; delivery’<br><i>dodat/dodávat; dodávka</i> | ‘sacrifice to/for; sacrifice’<br><i>obětovat; oběť</i>  | ‘present’<br><i>prezentovat</i>                     |
| ‘recommend’<br><i>doporučit/doporučovat</i>               | ‘explain, make clear’<br><i>objasnit/objasňovat</i>     | ‘sell’<br><i>prodat/prodávát</i>                    |
| ‘grant, give’<br><i>dopřát/dopřávat</i>                   | ‘find, obtain, get (for)’<br><i>obstarat/obstarávat</i> | ‘render, do for’<br><i>prokázat/prokazovat</i>      |
| ‘deliver’<br><i>doručit/doručovat</i>                     | ‘hand in’<br><i>odevzdat/odevzdávat</i>                 | ‘hand over’<br><i>předat/předávat</i>               |
| ‘throw’<br><i>hodit/házet</i>                             | ‘bequeath, will’<br><i>odkázat/odkazovat</i>            | ‘prescribe, order’<br><i>předepsat/předepisovat</i> |
| ‘buy’<br><i>koupit/kupovat</i>                            | ‘take to’<br><i>odnést/odnášet</i>                      | ‘present’<br><i>předložit/předkládat</i>            |
| ‘offer’<br><i>nabídnout/nabízet; nabídka</i>              | ‘obtain, get (for)’<br><i>opatřit/opatřovat</i>         | ‘leave, entrust to’<br><i>přenechat/přenechávat</i> |
| ‘bestow’<br><i>nadělit/nadělovat</i>                      | ‘hand, serve’<br><i>podat/podávat</i>                   | ‘pass (in sports)’<br><i>přihrát/přihrávat</i>      |

Synonyms and Near Synonyms of *dát/dávat* 'give' (cont.)

|                                                                 |                                            |                                                          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| 'assign (a task)<br><i>přikázat/přikazovat</i>                  | 'entrust<br><i>svěřit/svěřovat</i>         | 'surrender<br><i>vydat/vydávat</i>                       |
| 'bring<br><i>přinést/přinášet</i>                               | 'bestow<br><i>udělit/udělovat</i>          | 'interpret, explain<br><i>vyložit/vykládat</i>           |
| 'remind (someone of something)<br><i>připomenout/připomínat</i> | 'show<br><i>ukázat/ukazovat</i>            | 'give compensation for<br><i>vynahradit/vynahrazovat</i> |
| 'give (credit), attribute<br><i>připsat/připisovat</i>          | 'give (a task, charge)<br><i>uložit</i>    | 'issue (a document)<br><i>vystavit/vystavovat</i>        |
| 'promise (to give)<br><i>přislíbit/přislíbovat</i>              | 'make possible<br><i>umožnit/umožňovat</i> | 'explain<br><i>vysvětlit/vysvětlovat</i>                 |
| 'cause, inflict<br><i>přivodit/přivozovat</i>                   | 'give as a gift<br><i>věnovat</i>          | 'arrange<br><i>zařít/zařizovat</i>                       |
| 'lend; loan<br><i>půjčit/půjčovat; půjčka</i>                   | 'force upon<br><i>v-nutit</i>              | 'dedicate, donate<br><i>zasvětit/zasvěcovat</i>          |
| 'get<br><i>sehnat/shánět</i>                                    | 'return<br><i>vrátit/vracet</i>            | 'cause<br><i>způsobit/způsobovat</i>                     |
| 'suggest<br><i>v-sugerovat</i>                                  | 'choose<br><i>vybrat/vybírat</i>           |                                                          |



- (6) Jeden Američan **mu** za kytaru nabídl tisíc dolarů.  
[One American-NOM **him-DAT** for guitar-ACC offered thousand-ACC dollars-GEN.]  
An American offered **him** a thousand dollars for his guitar.



- (7) Hodili jsme **mu** hrst dolarů, aby nás nechal na pokoji.  
[Threw AUX **him-DAT** handful-ACC dollars-GEN, so-that-AUX us-ACC left on peace-LOC.]  
We threw **him** a handful of dollars so that he would leave us alone.



- (8) Dostal jsem stipendium, které tehdy poskytovala francouzská vláda **kosovským studentům**.  
[Got AUX stipend-ACC, which-ACC then provided French government-NOM **Kosovo students-DAT**.]  
I got a stipend which the French government was providing **for students from Kosovo** at the time.

DATIVE: A  
RECEIVER in the  
context of  
metaphorical  
transfer.

Dative  
pronoun *si*  
with synonyms  
of 'give'.

- (9) Jestliže nevíte, co koupit **svému dítěti** pod stromeček, pak pro vás připravily Lidové noviny malý výběr z dětských vánočních dárků, které jsou letos nejprodávanější na předvánočním trhu.

[If not-know, what-ACC buy **own child-DAT** under tree-ACC, then for you-ACC prepared Lidové noviny small selection-ACC from children's Christmas presents-GEN, which-NOM are this-year most-sold on pre-Christmas market-LOC.]

If you don't know what to buy **your child** for Christmas, Lidové noviny has prepared a sampling of the hottest selling children's Christmas gifts on the market.

F  
M

Transfer of objects with a variety of verbs also lends itself to abstract, metaphorical usage. Acts like giving a person a new identity, adding picturesque beauty, and sacrificing one's private life involve a transfer that is more fictive than actual, but still the connection with giving is clear:

- (10) Armáda **mi** obstarala úplně novou totožnost, stal jsem se příslušníkem francouzského zpravodajského týmu.

[Army-NOM **me-DAT** got completely new identity-ACC, became AUX self-ACC member-INST French press team-GEN.]

The army got **me** a completely new identity, I became a member of the French press team.

F  
M

- (11) Jarní slunce dodává **chaloupce** malebnost.

[Spring sun-NOM adds **farmhouse-DAT** picturesqueness-ACC.]

The spring sun adds picturesqueness **to the farmhouse**.

F  
M

- (12) Ona ale **sportu** obětovala celý svůj soukromý život.

[She-NOM however **sport-DAT** sacrificed whole own private life-ACC.]

She however sacrificed the whole of her private life **to sport**.

F  
M

Several of these verbs can be used when a subject obtains items for itself, occasioning the use of the Czech dative pronoun *si*, which is particularly frequent with the following verbs, as the examples below attest:

- (13) Vítěz **si** odnese finanční odměnu a láhev šampanského.

[Champion-NOM **self-DAT** takes financial reward-ACC and bottle-ACC champagne-GEN.]

The victor will take home a financial reward and a bottle of champagne.

F  
M

- (14) Podle průzkumu na pražských středních školách **si** jedenáct procent experimentujících opatřuje drogu přímo ve škole.

[According study-GEN on Prague high schools-LOC **self-DAT** eleven-NOM percent-GEN experimenting-GEN get drug-ACC directly in school-LOC.]

According to a study in Prague high schools, eleven percent of those who experiment with drugs get their drugs right in school.

F  
M

Verbs with *si* meaning ‘obtain’ or ‘desire’ for oneself

|                                                                      |                                                                         |                                                                             |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ‘obtain’<br><i>dobýt/dobývat si</i>                                  | ‘obtain, get <b>oneself</b> ’<br><i>opatřit/opatřovat si</i>            | ‘choose <b>for oneself</b> ’<br><i>vybrat/vybírat si</i>                    |
| ‘allow <b>oneself</b> , dare’<br><i>dovolit/dovolovat si</i>         | ‘wish, want <b>for oneself</b> ’<br><i>po-přát si</i>                   | ‘explain <b>to oneself</b> ; understand’<br><i>vysvětlit/vysvětlovat si</i> |
| ‘buy <b>oneself</b> ’<br><i>koupit/kupovat si</i>                    | ‘acquire’<br><i>pořídit/pořizovat si</i>                                | ‘arrange <b>for oneself</b> ’<br><i>zařítit/zařizovat si</i>                |
| ‘find, obtain, get <b>oneself</b> ’<br><i>obstarat/obstarávat si</i> | ‘bring upon <b>oneself</b> , contract’<br><i>přivodit/přivozovat si</i> |                                                                             |
| ‘take home’<br><i>odnést/odnášet si</i>                              | ‘get <b>oneself</b> ’<br><i>sehnat/shánět si</i>                        |                                                                             |

- F**  
**M**
- (15) Jak **si** vysvětlujete to, že se vrací například zájem o hudbu z osmdesátých let?  
[How **self-DAT** explain that-ACC, that self-ACC returns for-example interest-NOM about music-ACC from eighty years-GEN?]  
How do you make sense of the fact that for example interest in eighties’ music is coming back in?

The pronoun *si* can also be used with verbs meaning ‘give’ and their synonyms to indicate reciprocal giving — when two or more people give things to each other, as in this example:

Dative pronoun *si* can indicate reciprocal giving.

- F**  
**M**
- (16) Vždycky o Vánocích **si** posíláme dárky.  
[Always at Christmastime **self-DAT** send presents.]  
We always send **each other** presents at Christmastime.

In addition to the verbs that are related to ‘give’, quite a few verbs cannot have any indirect object other than *si*. These verbs have meanings like ‘want’, ‘keep’, ‘need’, ‘demand’ and the like that imply that someone is getting or trying to get something for themselves. The use of *si* is not always required for all of these verbs, but it is extremely common. The table on the next page and the following examples show how this works.

- F**  
**M**
- (17) Nehoda **si** vyžádala dva mrtvé a devět zraněných.  
[Accident-NOM **self-DAT** exacted two dead-ACC and nine-ACC wounded-GEN.]  
The accident exacted two dead and nine wounded.

- F**  
**M**
- (18) Mír se Sýrií je nemožný, pokud **si** Izrael ponechá Golany.  
[Peace-NOM with Syria-INST is impossible-NOM, as-long-as **self-DAT** Israel-NOM keeps Golan-Heights-ACC.]  
As long as Israel keeps the Golan Heights, peace with Syria is impossible.

Verbs with meanings ‘want’, ‘keep’, ‘need’, ‘demand’ with *si*

|                                                                           |                                                                                   |                                                               |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| ‘keep in good order <b>for oneself</b> ’<br><i>hledět si</i>              | ‘need’<br><i>potřebovat si</i>                                                    | ‘require, demand, take, exact’<br><i>vyžádat/vyžadovat si</i> |
| ‘want <b>for oneself</b> ’<br><i>chtít si</i>                             | ‘consider’<br><i>připustit/připouštět si</i>                                      | ‘deserve’<br><i>zasloužit/zasluhovat si</i>                   |
| ‘win (a person) over’<br><i>naklonit/naklánět si</i>                      | ‘imagine (lit. ‘set before <b>oneself</b> ’)<br><i>představit/představovat si</i> | ‘demand’<br><i>za-žádat si</i>                                |
| ‘acquire’<br><i>osvojit/osvojovat si</i>                                  | ‘adopt, take possession of’<br><i>přisvojit/přisvojovat si</i>                    | ‘get; win (a person) over’<br><i>získat/získávat si</i>       |
| ‘subjugate, capture <b>for oneself</b> ’<br><i>podmanit/podmaňovat si</i> | ‘take possession of’<br><i>přivlastnit/přivlastňovat si</i>                       |                                                               |
| ‘keep <b>for oneself</b> ’<br><i>po-nechat si</i>                         | ‘require, get by force’<br><i>vynutit/vynucovat si</i>                            |                                                               |

*Vzít/brát si* can mean both ‘take’ and ‘marry’.

As the last few batches of examples show, English translations often don’t have any equivalent for *si*, since it is obvious that the recipient is also the subject, and *si* isn’t really required for Czech, either, much of the time, but that doesn’t stop the Czechs from peppering their sentences with this pronoun at the slightest provocation.

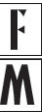
The verb *vzít/brát si* ‘take’ works the same way, but unlike the verbs just above, it can have indirect objects other than *si* (however, other indirect objects are the person or item that loses possession of something, not the one that receives it, as we will see in the section on taking verbs below). The use of *si* is very common with this verb, even in contexts where it would be extremely awkward to translate *si* into English. Here is a pair of examples:

- (19) Vzal **si** cigaretu a hned si ji zapálil.  
[Took **self-DAT** cigarette-ACC and immediately self-DAT it-ACC lit.]  
He took a cigarette and lit it immediately.
- (20) Vypil jsem několik litrů vody, vzal **si** pár acylpirinů a zalezl do postele.  
[Drank AUX several-ACC liters-GEN water-GEN, took **self-DAT** couple-ACC aspirins-GEN and crawled-in to bed-GEN.]  
I drank several liters of water, took a couple of aspirin and crawled into bed.

In addition, *vzít/brát si* is an idiom meaning ‘marry’ in Czech, similar in some ways to English *take unto oneself*, but vastly more common:

- (21) Chudák Ivana, ta si užije, jestli **si** ho vezme.  
[Poor-person-NOM Ivana-NOM, that-NOM self-DAT suffer, if **self-DAT** him-ACC takes.]  
Poor Ivana, she is going to suffer if she marries him.

Another way to give someone something is by creating the gift for the person. If I say *I’ll*



bake **you** a cake for your birthday, I'm promising to bring the cake into existence so that you will receive it; in Czech **you** would be marked DATIVE: A RECEIVER. All kinds of words involving making things can be recruited for this purpose, such as building, cooking, sewing, etc. Here's an example:



- (22) Celou cestu domů si říkal, že by měl **fence** vymyslet nějaké úplně jiné měkčí a mazlivější jméno.

[Whole way-ACC home self-DAT said, that AUX had **dog-DAT** think-up some-ACC completely different softer-ACC and cuddlier name-ACC.]

The whole way home he was saying to himself that he should think up some completely different, softer and cuddlier name **for the dog**.

Verbs of creation are used in the idiomatic construction *nechat/nechávat si* + verb of creation (*ušít* 'sew', *postavit* 'build', etc.) + item created (*šaty* 'clothes', *vilu* 'villa') with the meaning 'have something made **for oneself**', as in this example:



- (23) Sám **si** na ruku nechal vytetovat vlastní obraz.

[Self-NOM **him-DAT** on arm-ACC let tattoo own picture-ACC.]

He had his own picture tattooed on **his** arm.

Czech has an idiomatic expression meaning 'ask a question' that requires the person being addressed to be an indirect object marked DATIVE: A RECEIVER: *položít/klást otázku/otázky* (literally: lay question/questions). Here is an illustration of how this expression works:



- (24) Shlukovali se kolem ní a kladli **jí** nemožně naivní otázky.

[Clustered self-ACC around her-GEN and laid **her-DAT** impossibly naive questions-ACC.]

They clustered around her and asked **her** impossibly naive questions.

The force of the dative case is so strong that the role of DATIVE: A RECEIVER comes through loud and clear even when there is no verb at all, as in formulaic expressions like *Sláva Bohu!* [Glory-NOM **God-DAT**] 'Glory **to God!**' or the old communist greeting *Čest práci!* [Honor-NOM **work-DAT!**] 'Honor **to work!**'.

## DATIVE: A RECEIVER 2 — INDIRECT OBJECTS WITHOUT DIRECT OBJECTS

Some uses of the DATIVE: A RECEIVER submeaning are not indirect objects in the classic sense because they don't have any ACCUSATIVE: A DESTINATION direct objects. However, they do involve the transfer of something to a receiver, even if that something is not explicitly named in the accusative case, and for this reason we can think of these uses as being very close relatives to the indirect object. Usually the "missing" direct objects can be found in the meaning of the verb; for example, verbs of communication all involve the transfer of a signal to a receiver, and these verbs take the dative case. When you contribute to a worthy

DATIVE: A RECEIVER in the context of creation.

DATIVE: A RECEIVER in the absence of 'give' in formulaic expressions.

DATIVE: A RECEIVER can express the indirect object without a direct object.

“Missing” direct objects include signals, money and gifts, and the self.

DATIVE: A RECEIVER in the context of giving verbal messages.

cause, it is not necessary to specify that you gave money; we still understand the charitable organization as the receiver even when the money is not mentioned. It is also possible for something to bring itself to a receiver, in which case the “missing” direct object is the subject of the sentence. Each of these types of indirect objects will be taken up below.

There is quite a selection of words that express delivering signals to receivers. For convenience they can be broken down into two groups: those that involve talking and those that do not. In most instances you can easily recover the “missing” direct object by restating these words as ‘give a signal **to X**’, where signal is the direct object and **X** is the DATIVE: A RECEIVER. Because the signal is already implicit in the word, we can skip right over it and go directly to the receiver. The table on the next page contains some of the communication words associated with the dative that you are likely to encounter. The following three examples illustrate how communication words involving talking are used with the dative:

- (25) Někteří kritici vytýkají **prezidentovi**, že mluvil nekonkrétně.  
[Some critics-NOM reproach **president-DAT**, that spoke not-concretely.]  
Some critics reproach **the president** for speaking in abstractions. F  
M
- (26) Mám radost, že když náš Honza odjede do New Yorku, za dva dny **mi** zavolá jakoby nic.  
[Have joy-ACC, that when our Honza-NOM goes to New York-GEN, in two days-ACC **me-DAT** calls, like nothing-NOM.]  
I’m happy that when our Honza goes to New York, he calls **me** two days later as if it was no big deal. F  
M
- (27) Prezident Havel **sportovcům** pogrataloval a poděkoval **jim** za vzornou reprezentaci vlasti.  
[President Havel-NOM **athletes-DAT** congratulated and thanked **them-DAT** for exemplary representation-ACC country-GEN.]  
President Havel congratulated **the athletes** and thanked **them** for their exemplary representation of the country. F  
M

Many of these verbs can be used with the dative reflexive pronoun **si** in its reciprocal meaning, such as *tykat si/vykat si* ‘say ty/vy **to each other**’, *povídat si* ‘converse **with each other**’, and *vytýkat si* ‘reproach **each other**’.

Related words, such as *díky* ‘thanks to’ and *slib* ‘promise’, often require the dative just like the verbs in our table.

- (28) Díky **konstrukci** nabízí Mazda Demio uvnitř opravdu dostatek prostoru jak pro přepravu cestujících, tak třeba i atypického nákladu.  
[Thanks **construction-DAT** offers Mazda Demio inside really enough space-GEN both for transporting-ACC passengers-GEN, and perhaps even atypical load-GEN.]  
Thanks to **its construction**, the Mazda Demio really provides enough space both for transporting passengers and even for an atypical load. F  
M

## Verbs of Communication by Means of Talking

|                                                       |                                            |                                            |
|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| 'bless, eulogize'<br><i>dobrořečit</i>                | 'wish, greet'<br><i>po-přát</i>            | 'threaten'<br><i>vyhrožovat</i>            |
| 'give condolences'<br><i>kondolovat</i>               | 'advise; advice'<br><i>po-radit; rada</i>  | 'bawl out'<br><i>vyhubovat (CCz)</i>       |
| 'consent'<br><i>přisvědčit/přisvědčovat</i>           | 'command'<br><i>poručit/poroučet</i>       | 'say vy to'<br><i>vykat</i>                |
| 'scold, abuse'<br><i>nadat/nadávat</i>                | 'complain'<br><i>po-stěžovat si</i>        | 'insult'<br><i>vynadat</i>                 |
| 'command'<br><i>nařídit/nařizovat</i>                 | 'tell'<br><i>povědět/povídat</i>           | 'tell'<br><i>vyprávět/vypravovat</i>       |
| 'talk back to'<br><i>odmlouvat</i>                    | 'bless'<br><i>po-žehnat</i>                | 'reproach'<br><i>vytknout/vytýkat</i>      |
| 'answer, correspond to'<br><i>odpovědět/odpovídat</i> | 'tell, say'<br><i>pravit (LCz)</i>         | 'confess'<br><i>vy-zpovídat se</i>         |
| 'reply'<br><i>odvětit (LCz)</i>                       | 'forgive'<br><i>prominout/promíjet</i>     | 'lie'<br><i>zalhat/lhát</i>                |
| 'respond'<br><i>ozvat/ozývat se</i>                   | 'remind'<br><i>připomenout/ připomínat</i> | 'blaspheme'<br><i>rouhat se</i>            |
| 'congratulate'<br><i>po-blahopřát</i>                 | 'say yes'<br><i>přítakat/přítakávat</i>    | 'curse at'<br><i>spílat</i>                |
| 'thank'<br><i>po-děkovat</i>                          | 'second'<br><i>přizvukovat</i>             | 'say a toast to'<br><i>zavdat/zavdávat</i> |
| 'congratulate'<br><i>po-gratulovat</i>                | 'order'<br><i>rozkázat/rozkazovat</i>      | 'call, telephone'<br><i>za-volat</i>       |
| 'threaten'<br><i>po-hrozit</i>                        | 'say'<br><i>říci/říkat</i>                 | 'curse'<br><i>zlořečit</i>                 |
| 'fawn upon'<br><i>pochlebovat</i>                     | 'promise'<br><i>slíbit/slibovat; slib</i>  | 'complain'<br><i>žalovat</i>               |
| 'boast'<br><i>po-chlubit se</i>                       | 'say ty to'<br><i>tykat</i>                |                                            |
| 'flatter'<br><i>po-lichotit</i>                       | 'tell off'<br><i>vyčinit (CCz)</i>         |                                            |
| 'pray; prayer'<br><i>po-modlit se; modlitba</i>       |                                            |                                            |



The verb *říkat* can be used with DATIVE: A RECEIVER to indicate the use of names, as in *Říkají mu “Čmelák”* [Say **him-DAT** “Bumblebee”-NOM] ‘They call **him** “Bumblebee”, and in this example:

- (29) **Evropské komisi** se začíná stále častěji říkat “evropská vláda”.

[**European Commission-DAT** self-ACC begins continually more-often say “European Government”-NOM.]

People are beginning more and more often to call **the European Commission** the “European Government”.

DATIVE: A  
RECEIVER in the  
context of giving  
gestural, written,  
or electronic  
signals.

Communication through bodily gestures and electrical signals is likewise directed to DATIVE: A RECEIVER. Here is a table of common verbs followed by an example so you can see the parallel with verbs of verbal communication:

#### Verbs of Communication by Means of Messages and Signals

|                                                          |                                                        |                                                               |
|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| ‘applaud’<br><i>aplaudovat</i>                           | ‘make fun of, taunt’<br><i>posmívat se</i>             | ‘salute’<br><i>za-salutovat</i>                               |
| ‘phone’<br><i>brnkout</i> (CCz)                          | ‘nod’<br><i>přikývnout/přikyvovat</i>                  | ‘telephone’<br><i>za-telefonovat; telefonát</i>               |
| ‘write back; letter’<br><i>odepsat/odepisovat; dopis</i> | ‘drink to, toast’<br><i>připít/připítjet; přípítek</i> | ‘send telegram; telegram’<br><i>za-telegrafovat; telegram</i> |
| ‘wave’<br><i>mávnout/mávat</i>                           | ‘signal’<br><i>signalizovat; signál</i>                | ‘applaud’<br><i>za-tleskat</i>                                |
| ‘write’<br><i>napsat/psát</i>                            | ‘laugh at’<br><i>u-/za-smát se</i>                     |                                                               |
| ‘nod, wave’<br><i>po-kynout</i>                          | ‘ridicule, mock’<br><i>vysmát/vysmívat se</i>          |                                                               |

- (30) Posluchači v zcela zaplněném Národním divadle vstoje dlouho aplaudovali **mezzosopranistce Dagmar Peckové**.

[Listeners-NOM in entirely filled National Theater-LOC standing for-a-long-time applauded **mezzosopranist-DAT Dagmar Pecková-DAT**.]

The audience in the packed National Theater gave **mezzosopranist Dagmar Pecková** **a long standing ovation**.

Like the verbal communication verbs, these verbs often use *si* to mean ‘each other’, as in *dopisovat si* ‘correspond (write letters **to each other**)’.

In both Czech and English there are some verbs that mean ‘give money or goods’, such as *pay*, *reward* and *contribute to*. Because the idea that money or goods are involved is already part of the word, it doesn’t need to appear as an accusative direct object, just like the signals above. Here are some of the words you can expect to see with DATIVE: A RECEIVER, along with an example to illustrate:

DATIVE: A  
RECEIVER in the  
context of giving  
money or gifts.



## Verbs that Mean 'give money or goods'

|                                                       |                                                   |                                                                   |
|-------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 'contribute, make sacrifice to'<br><i>obětovat</i>    | 'requite'<br><i>odsloužit se</i>                  | 'contribute; contribution'<br><i>přispět/přispívat; příspěvek</i> |
| 'compensate, reward'<br><i>odměnit/odměňovat (se)</i> | 'return a favor'<br><i>odvděčit/odvděčovat se</i> | 'pay'<br><i>za-platit</i>                                         |
| 'repay'<br><i>odplatit/odplácet (se)</i>              | 'repay'<br><i>oplatit/oplácet</i>                 |                                                                   |



- (31) Rodiče **nám** přispěli na koupi nového bytu.  
[Parents-NOM **us-DAT** contributed for purchase-ACC new apartment-GEN.]  
Our parents made a contribution **to us** toward the purchase of a new apartment.



- (32) Za provedené služby **stavební firmě** zaplatte až po důkladné kontrole provedené práce.  
[For completed services-ACC **building company-DAT** pay only after thorough check-LOC completed work-GEN.]  
Pay **the building company** for services rendered only after the completed job has been checked thoroughly.

## DATIVE: A RECEIVER 3 — GIVING THE SELF

As an alternative to presenting something to a DATIVE: A RECEIVER, the subject can simply present itself, and this can impact the receiver in two ways. The subject can physically bring itself to the receiver, or it can bring itself merely to the perception of the receiver, usually with verbs meaning 'appear (in a dream)', 'seem', 'make an impression'. The table on the following page has some words that commonly indicate the giving of the self to a DATIVE: A RECEIVER and here are some examples.

DATIVE: A  
RECEIVER in the  
context of giving  
the self.



- (33) V červnu se **mi** narodila holčička.  
[In June-LOC self-ACC **me-DAT** was-born little-girl-NOM.]  
**I** had a baby girl in June (literally: In June a baby girl was born **unto me**).



- (34) Volný čas tráví sháněním originálních nahrávek, fotografií, informací — prostě všeho, co jim umožní přiblížit se **své rockové** či **popové hvězdě**.  
[Free time-ACC spend searching-for-INST original recordings-GEN, photographs-GEN, information-GEN — simply everything-GEN, what-NOM them-DAT enables get-close-to self-ACC **own rock-DAT** or **pop star-DAT**.]  
They spend their free time searching for original recordings, photographs, information — in short, everything that will enable them to get close **to their rock** or **pop star**.

## Words Meaning 'give self to'

|                                                          |                                                             |                                                                |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| 'be sufficient'<br><i>dostačit/dostačovat</i>            | 'introduce self'<br><i>představit/představovat se</i>       | 'show self to'<br><i>ukázat/ukazovat se</i>                    |
| 'be born'<br><i>na-rodit se</i>                          | 'happen'<br><i>přihodit se</i>                              | 'dedicate self'<br><i>věnovat se</i>                           |
| 'overtake, outrun'<br><i>nadběhnout/ nadbíhat</i>        | 'approach, get close to'<br><i>přiblížit/přibližovat se</i> | 'force self on'<br><i>vnutit/vnucovat se</i>                   |
| 'overtake, get there before'<br><i>nadejít/nadcházet</i> | 'accrue; happen; seem'<br><i>připadnout/připadat</i>        | 'be traitor, sell self'<br><i>zaprodat/zaprodávat se</i>       |
| 'be proper to, fall upon'<br><i>náležet (LCz)</i>        | 'be owed, belong to, pertain'<br><i>příslušet</i>           |                                                                |
| 'sacrifice self'<br><i>obětovat se</i>                   | 'be enough'<br><i>stačit</i>                                | 'dedicate oneself to'<br><i>zasvětit/zasvěcovat se</i>         |
| 'devote self'<br><i>oddat/oddávat se</i>                 | 'happen'<br><i>stát/stávat se</i>                           | 'be left for'<br><i>zbýt/zbývat</i>                            |
| 'belong'<br><i>patřit</i>                                | 'entrust self'<br><i>svěřit/svěřovat se</i>                 | 'seem'<br><i>zdát se</i>                                       |
| 'appear'<br><i>pro-jevit se</i>                          | 'happen to'<br><i>udát/dít se</i>                           | 'appear to (in a dream)'<br><i>zjevit/zjevovat se (ve snu)</i> |

- (35) Již několik let se v rámci svých nadací věnuje **handicapovaným dětem a dětem** z dětských domovů.

[Already several-ACC years-GEN self-ACC in framework-LOC own foundations-GEN dedicates **handicapped children-DAT** and **children-DAT** from children's homes-GEN.]

For several years already in connection with his foundations he has been dedicating himself **to handicapped children** and **children** from orphanages.

- (36) Od té chvíle se **myšlence** na emigraci oddal celou duší.

[From that time-GEN self-ACC **idea-DAT** on emigration-ACC devoted whole soul-INST.]

From that time on he devoted himself **to the idea** of emigration with all his soul.

A number of adjectives play off this same idea of giving the self. Here are some of them, along with illustrations of how they function in context:

- (37) Pokud text není srozumitelný **všem čtenářům**, pozbývá sdělnosti.

[If text-NOM is-not comprehensible-NOM **all readers-DAT**, reduces communicative-function-GEN.]

If a text is not comprehensible **to all readers**, its communicative function is reduced.



## Adjectives Relating to Giving the Self

‘accessible’  
*dostupný*‘accessible’  
*přístupný*‘conspicuous’  
*zjevný*‘clear’  
*jasný*‘comprehensible’  
*srozumitelný*‘familiar’  
*známý*

- (38) Cestovní kancelář Fischer se v letošním roce zaměřila na nabídku zájezdů cenově dostupných i **rodinám** s dětmi.

[Travel agency-NOM Fischer-NOM self-ACC in this year-LOC focused-attention on offer-ACC trips-GEN pricewise accessible-GEN even **families-DAT** with children-INST.]

This year the Fischer travel agency has focused attention on offering trips affordable even **for families** with children.

## DATIVE: A RECEIVER 4 — INDIRECT OBJECTS WITH ‘TAKE’

As we have seen with the apparently “opposite” meanings of GENITIVE: A SOURCE and GENITIVE: A GOAL, sometimes languages treat opposites as though they were similar in an abstract way. A similar logic is at work in the dative case, where Czech marks both the receiver in an act of giving and the loser in an act of taking in the same way, using DATIVE: A RECEIVER. For example, in Czech one can say both *Bratr mu dal poslední korunu* [Brother-NOM **him-DAT** gave last crown-ACC] ‘His brother gave **him** his last crown’ and *Bratr mu vzal poslední korunu* [Brother-NOM **him-DAT** took last crown-ACC] ‘His brother took his last crown **from him**’. Czech exploits the parallels between *dát/dávat* ‘give’ and *vztít/brát* ‘take’ quite consistently, as we see in these examples:

DATIVE: A  
RECEIVER  
in the context  
of taking.



- (39) Chová se jako malé dítě, když **mu** berou jeho oblíbenou hračku.

[Behaves self-ACC like small child-NOM, when **him-DAT** take his favorite toy-ACC.]

He’s behaving like a small child does when someone takes away his favorite toy.



- (40) Následný vývoj v Čechách po změně režimu v roce 1989 vzal **mnohým lidem** iluze o rychlém a hlavně bezbolestném přechodu od socialismu k tržnímu kapitalismu.  
[Subsequent development-NOM in Bohemia-LOC after change-LOC regime-GEN in year-LOC 1989-NOM took **many people-DAT** illusions-ACC about rapid-LOC and especially painless transition-LOC from socialism-GEN to market capitalism-DAT.]

The subsequent development in Bohemia after the change in regime in 1989 took away **many people’s** illusions about a rapid and especially a painless transition from socialism to market capitalism.

Note that the person from whom something is taken is often not mentioned in English as in (39), or is mentioned as the initial possessor of the item that is removed as in (40).

Like *dát/dávat* ‘give’, *vzít/brát* ‘take’ has a number of synonyms and near-synonyms that also occasion the use of DATIVE: A RECEIVER. As is evident from the table below, these verbs focus primarily on taking that victimizes the original owner; most of these verbs are better thought of as synonyms of ‘steal’ than of ‘take’, and there is palpable overlap between this use of DATIVE: A RECEIVER and the use of DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER with words meaning ‘harm’.

#### Synonyms and Near-synonyms of ‘take’

|                                              |                                                 |                                           |
|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| ‘swipe’<br><i>čmáznout</i> (CCz)             | ‘expropriate’<br><i>vyvlastnit/vyvlastňovat</i> | ‘wrest from’<br><i>vyrvat/rvát</i>        |
| ‘confiscate’<br><i>konfiskovat</i>           | ‘take away’<br><i>sebrat/sbírat</i>             | ‘yank away’<br><i>vy-trhat; vytrhnout</i> |
| ‘misappropriate’<br><i>odcizit/odcizovat</i> | ‘pinch’<br><i>šlhnout</i> (CCz)                 | ‘seize’<br><i>zabavit/zabavovat</i>       |
| ‘take away’<br><i>odebrat/odebírat</i>       | ‘pinch’<br><i>štípnout</i> (CCz)                | ‘appropriate’<br><i>zcizit/zcizovat</i>   |
| ‘take away’<br><i>odejmout/odnímat</i>       | ‘steal’<br><i>u-krást</i>                       |                                           |
| ‘remove’<br><i>odstranit/odstraňovat</i>     | ‘snatch away’<br><i>vyfouknout</i> (CCz)        |                                           |

- (41) Občas **mi** ukradnou bicykl.  
[Occasionally **me-DAT** steal bicycle-ACC.]  
Occasionally they steal **my** bicycle.
- (42) Muž odmítl peníze vydat, otevřel dveře auta a snažil se vytrhnout **útočníkovi** zbraň.  
[Man-NOM refused money-ACC hand-over, opened door-ACC car-GEN and tried self-ACC yank-away **attacker-DAT** weapon-ACC.]  
The man refused to hand over the money, opened the car door and tried to yank away **the attacker’s** weapon.
- (43) Komunisté v padesátých letech často násilím vyvlastnili **soukromým zemědělcům** značné majetky a přeměnili je na jednotná zemědělská družstva.  
[Communists-NOM in fifty years-LOC often violence-INST appropriated **private farmers-DAT** considerable properties-ACC and transformed them-ACC to unified agricultural cooperatives-ACC.]  
In the fifties the communists often appropriated **from private farmers** considerable property by violence and converted it into collective farms.

F  
MF  
MF  
M

As we saw above the notion of ‘giving’ can be present when something is created for someone else. The same kind of logical extension applies to taking — if you destroy something that belongs to someone, you have in effect taken that something away, motivating use of DATIVE: A RECEIVER to mark the owner of something that gets demolished, as we see in this example:



- (44) Stoletá voda v roce 1995 zničila domy téměř **všem obyvatelům** vesnice Troubky.  
[Hundred-year water-NOM in year-LOC 1995-NOM destroyed houses-ACC practically **all residents-DAT** village-GEN Troubky-NOM.]  
The hundred-year flood of 1995 destroyed the houses of nearly **all the residents** of the village of Troubky.



- (45) Městský soud projednává kuriózní případ, kdy sedmdesátiletý důchodce rozbil **svému sousedovi** téměř všechna okna.  
[City court-NOM processes curious case-ACC, when seventy-year-old retiree-NOM broke **own neighbor-DAT** practically all windows-ACC.]  
The city court is processing the curious case of a seventy-year-old retiree who broke nearly all of **his neighbor's** windows.

One can also take something from oneself, and once again dative *si* steps in to play this role, most commonly with verbs like *odřící/odřeknout/odřikat si* and *odepřít/odpírat si* both of which mean approximately ‘give up, refuse (to take)’. Here are some examples for weight watchers and smokers, people who are often faced with denying themselves what they crave:



- (46) Ten další zákusek **sis** mohl odřící, začínáš se podobat svému otci.  
[That further pastry-ACC **self-DAT-AUX** could refuse, begin self-ACC look-like own father-DAT.]  
You could have refused that extra pastry, you’re beginning to look like your father.



- (47) Akce Den proti kouření by měla kuřákům pomoci odepřít **si** svoji denní dávku nikotinu alespoň na jeden den.  
[Action-NOM Day-NOM against smoking-DAT AUX had smokers-DAT help give-up **self-DAT** own daily dose-ACC nicotine-GEN at-least for one day-ACC.]  
Anti-Smoking Day should help smokers give up their daily dose of nicotine at least for one day.

## DATIVE: A RECEIVER 5 — TAKING THE SELF

The parallels between ‘give’ and ‘take’ extend also to the relationship between words that mean ‘give oneself to’ and those that mean ‘take oneself from’, motivating the use of DATIVE: A RECEIVER with words that indicate various kinds of escape, loss, and estrangement. Like the approximate synonyms of *vzít/brát* ‘take’ above, most of these words imply some kind of harm done to the indirect object marked DATIVE: A RECEIVER.

DATIVE: A RECEIVER in the context of taking the self.



- (48) **Nevyhnutelným konfliktům** se společnost nesmí vyhýbat, k tomu ale potřebuje zralé a kurážné politiky.  
[Inescapable conflicts-DAT self-ACC society-NOM dares-not avoid, to that-DAT however needs mature-ACC and courageous politicians-ACC.]  
Society must not try to avoid **inescapable conflicts**, but for this it needs mature and courageous politicians.

## Words Meaning ‘take self from’

|                                                           |                                                                             |                                                        |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| ‘be missing’<br><i>chybět</i>                             | ‘ride away (causing one to miss a train, bus, etc.)’<br><i>ujet/ujíždět</i> | ‘avoid; steer clear of’<br><i>vyhnout/vyhýbat se</i>   |
| ‘be(come) alienated’<br><i>odcizit/odcizovat se, cizí</i> | ‘escape’<br><i>ujít/ucházet</i>                                             | ‘free oneself from’<br><i>vymanit/vymaňovat se</i>     |
| ‘not be enough of’<br><i>nedostávat se</i>                | ‘die on’<br><i>umřít/umírat</i>                                             | ‘wrench loose’<br><i>vymknout/vymýkat se</i>           |
| ‘take one’s leave of’<br><i>odporoučet se</i>             | ‘leak, escape’<br><i>uniknout/uníkat</i>                                    | ‘become estranged from’<br><i>vzdálit/vzдалovat se</i> |
| ‘defect’<br><i>odrodit se</i>                             | ‘flee’<br><i>upláchnout (CCz)</i>                                           | ‘run off on’<br><i>zdrhnout/zdrh(ov)at (CCz)</i>       |
| ‘outgrow’<br><i>odrůst/odrůstat</i>                       | ‘flow away, elapse’<br><i>uplynout</i>                                      | ‘die on’<br><i>zemřít</i>                              |
| ‘disappear’<br><i>propadnout/propadat se</i>              | ‘flee’<br><i>u-prchnout/prchat</i>                                          | ‘disappear on’<br><i>z-mizet</i>                       |
| ‘be missing’<br><i>scházet</i>                            | ‘make way for’<br><i>ustoupit/ustupovat</i>                                 | ‘get lost on’<br><i>ztratit/ztrácet se</i>             |
| ‘dodge, make way for’<br><i>uhnout/uhýbat (se)</i>        | ‘run away’<br><i>utéci/utíkat</i>                                           |                                                        |

- (49) Na okamžik ztuhl, ochromen čímsi nepoznaně silným, ale pak se **té síle** vymanil a vyběhl za tím jemu nejdražším hlasem.

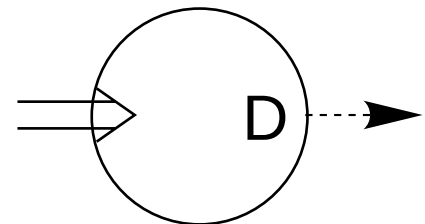
[For instant-ACC stiffened, paralyzed-NOM something-INST inconceivably powerful-INST, but then self-ACC **that power-DAT** freed and ran after that-INST him-DAT most-dear voice-INST.]

For an instant he stiffened up, paralyzed by something inconceivably powerful, but then he freed himself **from that power** and ran after the voice that was most dear to him.

## DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER 1 — BENEFIT

Something happens to a DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER, and the dative item absorbs that experience. You can think of this as a diluted version of DATIVE: A RECEIVER; here the dative doesn’t get or lose something, instead it gets just an experience of something. Words meaning ‘show’ and ‘appear to’ are transitional examples, demonstrating the link between DATIVE: A RECEIVER and DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER. We use the dative case for expe-

DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER expresses an item exposed to benefit, harm, possession and need, external forces, ease and difficulty, and obligation and desire.



A force (arrow) acts on a DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER (circle labeled D), which has the potential to exert a force (dotted arrow)



riences because the DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER is capable of appreciating the impact of whatever action or state it is exposed to. Experiences can be good and bad, thus benefiting or harming the DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER. Possession and need are also common experiences, and then there are many miscellaneous experiences that don't fit into neat categories. Let's start with the good experiences that bring benefit to the DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER.

Kindness comes in many forms, and there is a wealth of ways in which something or someone can bring benefit. Here is a table of words that you can expect to see accompanied by DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER:

DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER in the context of benefit.

### Verbs Expressing Benefit

|                                                                  |                                                         |                                       |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 'assist'<br><i>asistovat</i>                                     | 'do well, be lucky, succeed'<br><i>po-dařit se</i>      | 'suit'<br><i>slušet</i>               |
| 'allow, permit'<br><i>dovolit/dovolovat</i>                      | 'please'<br><i>po-lahodit</i>                           | 'be good for'<br><i>svědčit</i>       |
| 'suit'<br><i>hodit se</i>                                        | 'help'<br><i>pomoci/pomáhat</i>                         | 'relieve'<br><i>ulehčit/ulehčovat</i> |
| 'suit, work for'<br><i>jít</i>                                   | 'wish (well), be kind'<br><i>po-přát</i>                | 'relieve'<br><i>ulevit/ulevovat</i>   |
| 'go well'<br><i>klapnout/klapat (CCz)</i>                        | 'be lucky'<br><i>po-vést se</i>                         | 'satisfy'<br><i>vyhovět/vyhovovat</i> |
| 'sympathize with, condole'<br><i>kondolovat</i>                  | 'do well, thrive; succeed'<br><i>po-/vy-/z-dařit se</i> | 'taste good'<br><i>za-chutnat</i>     |
| 'suit, be convenient to, comply with'<br><i>konvenovat (CCz)</i> | 'forgive'<br><i>prominout/promíjet</i>                  | 'appeal to'<br><i>za-líbit se</i>     |
| 'patronize, favor'<br><i>nadržovat</i>                           | 'benefit'<br><i>prospěť/prospěvat</i>                   | 'appeal to'<br><i>zamlouvat se</i>    |
| 'help with'<br><i>napomoci/napomáhat</i>                         | 'assist, serve'<br><i>přísluhovat</i>                   |                                       |
| 'suit, look good on'<br><i>padnout</i>                           | 'serve'<br><i>sloužit</i>                               |                                       |

Here are some examples of relatively concrete assistance given to a DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER:



- (50) **Nám** to zatím se ženou klape. (CCz)  
[Us-DAT that-NOM now with wife-INST work-well.]  
Right now things are going well for my wife and I.



- (51) **Pražskému týmu** kuchařů se podařilo připravit 2125 palačinek.  
[**Prague team-DAT** cooks-GEN self-ACC succeeded prepare 2125-ACC pancakes-GEN.]

**The Prague team** of cooks managed to prepare 2125 pancakes.



- (52) Armáda v socialistickém Československu sice měla sloužit **lidu**, ve skutečnosti však byla nástrojem komunistické moci.

[Army-NOM in socialist Czechoslovakia-LOC after-all had serve **people-DAT**, in reality-LOC however was instrument-INST communist power-GEN.]

The army in socialist Czechoslovakia was, after all, supposed to serve **the people**, however in reality it was an instrument of communist power.



The following examples illustrate how benefit can be rendered in a relatively metaphorical sense:

- (53) Nejen **zraku**, ale i **hmatu** může lahodit umělecké dílo.  
[Not-only **sight-DAT**, but even **touch-DAT** can please artistic work-NOM.]  
A work of art can be pleasing not only **to the sight**, but also **to the touch**.



- (54) Kancelář prezidenta by uvítala takového kandidáta, který by konvenoval **její názorům** a umožňoval jí zasahovat do řízení ústavu.

[Office-NOM president-GEN AUX welcomed such candidate-ACC, who-NOM AUX complied **its views-DAT** and enabled it-DAT intervene to management-GEN institute-GEN.]

The office of the president would welcome a candidate who complies **with their views** and helps them intervene in the management of the institute.



In addition to these verbs, a great number of adjectives expressing positive qualities and inclinations can be used with the dative in a similar fashion, among them *milý* 'nice, pleasant', *nápomocný* 'helpful', *příjemný* 'pleasant', *vzácný* 'precious', *užitečný* 'useful', *vděčný* 'thankful'. Here are a couple of examples:

- (55) Vážení posluchači, mám tu čest přivítat mezi námi **nám** tak vzácného hosta — pana prezidenta Václava Havla.

[Esteemed listeners-NOM, have that honor-ACC welcome among us-INST **us-DAT** such precious guest-ACC — Mr. president Václav Havel-ACC.]

Ladies and Gentlemen, I have the honor of welcoming a guest who is very special **to us** — president Václav Havel.



- (56) Mohu **vám** být ve vaší záležitosti nějak nápomocen?

[Can **you-DAT** be in your matter-LOC somehow helpful-NOM?]

Can I be helpful **to you** in some way in this matter?



To express ‘like’ (any attraction weaker than full-blown love, which is of course *milovat*), Czech uses verbs meaning ‘appeal to, please’, especially *líbit se*, with the dative, and the logical structure of the sentence is the inverse of what we have in English, so *Ty se mi líbíš* [You-NOM self-ACC **me-DAT** please] really means ‘I like you’. Here’s an example of how this works in Czech:

DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER with *líbit se* ‘like’.

- F**  
**M**
- (57) Mladé holky se **chlapovi** líbí pořád.  
[Young girls-NOM self-ACC guy-DAT please always.]  
**A guy** always likes young girls.
- F**  
**M**
- (58) Chtěla jsem se **mu** líbit, nevěděla jsem, že líčení u žen nesnáší, a také jsem netušila, že červená barva ho dokáže rozzuřit jako býka.  
[Wanted AUX self-ACC **him-DAT** please, not-knew AUX, that makeup-ACC at women-GEN not-endures, and also AUX not-suspected, that red color-NOM him-ACC manages enrage like bull-ACC.]  
I wanted **him** to like me, I didn’t know that he can’t stand makeup on women, and I also didn’t suspect that the color red could enrage him like a bull.

Odd as it may seem, the verb *líbit se* cannot be used to describe liking food and beverages (unless you only want to refer to the way they look); if the subject is caloric consumables, the only correct choice is *chutnat* ‘taste good’. Here’s an example for good measure:

DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER with *chutnat* ‘taste good’ used for food and drink.

- F**  
**M**
- (59) Pivo **mu** chutná, ale je drahé.  
[Beer-NOM **him-DAT** tastes-good, but is expensive-NOM.]  
**He** likes beer, but it’s expensive.

The use of the verb *jít* with the dative to mean ‘suit, work for’ is idiomatic, but then so is the use of English *go* in phrases like *go well with*. In this example, the thing that is ‘going’ is the studying, though in English we don’t always bother mentioning the person who is having the experience:

Idiomatic use of DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER with *jít* to express ‘suit, work for’.

- F**  
**M**
- (60) Nenech se rušit, chtěl jsem se jen přesvědčit, jak **ti** jde studium.  
[Not-let self-ACC disturb, wanted AUX self-ACC just convince, how **you-DAT** goes studying-NOM.]  
Don’t let me disturb you, I just wanted to see how the studying was going.

*Jít* can be used in combination with the preposition *o* + ACC to describe what someone cares about, or is concerned with, what their main point is. Here is an example of this usage with DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER:

- F**  
**M**
- (61) Jde **mu** o obranu klasiků proti módním trendům na amerických univerzitách.  
[Goes **him-DAT** about defense-ACC classics-GEN against fashionable trends-DAT at American universities-LOC.]  
**He’s** concerned about defending the classics from the fashionable trends at American universities.

Some benefit verbs associated with approval can appear either with an accusative direct object or with an infinitive, in addition to the item marked DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER. These verbs include: *dovolit/dovolovat* ‘allow’, *povolit/povolovat* ‘permit’, *přijmout/přijímat* ‘accept’, *schválit/schvalovat* ‘approve’. In the first two examples below, the approved items are things represented as accusative direct objects (*projekt* ‘project’ and *vše* ‘everything’), and in the third one the approved item is an action described by a verb (*ukončit* ‘finish’). As we see in the first example, this use of DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER can also suggest possession.

- (62) Projekt **nám** musí mimo jiné schválit i ministerstvo životního prostředí.  
[Project-ACC **us-DAT** must among other-ACC approve also ministry-NOM life environment-GEN.]  
Among other things, the Ministry of the Environment must also approve the project **for us** (= approve **our** project).
- (63) Nesmíš **mu** vše dovolovat, jednou by se ti to mohlo vymstít.  
[Not-must **him-DAT** everything-ACC allow, once AUX self-ACC you-DAT that-NOM could have-bad-consequences.]  
You mustn’t allow **him** everything, one day there could be terrible consequences.
- (64) Příznivé počasí **nám** dovolilo ukončit stavbu před termínem.  
[Favorable weather **us-DAT** allowed finish construction-ACC before deadline-INST.]  
The favorable weather allowed **us** to finish construction before the deadline.



## DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER 2 — BENEFIT FOR THE SELF

DATIVE: AN  
EXPERIENCER *si* in  
the context of  
benefit for the  
self.

It is the nature of human beings to want to increase their own pleasure and capacities whenever possible, and this occasions the use of the Czech dative pronoun *si*, since such activities involve persons providing benefit for themselves. In most cases, the verbs involved also exist without *si* (except the position verbs below), but *si* transforms their meaning to reflect the self-indulgence it implies.

The verb *užít/užívat* *si* ‘enjoy’ is very representative of the use of the *si* to express benefit for oneself. By itself, *užít/užívat* means simply ‘use’, but if we use something self-indulgently, then we use it in order to enjoy it. The verb *žít* ‘live’ can acquire the self-indulgent meaning ‘live it up’ simply by adding *si*. Here are examples of how *si* expresses enjoyment with these two verbs:

- (65) Hezky **si** užíte konec léta. (CCz)  
[Nicely **self-DAT** use end-ACC summer-GEN.]  
Enjoy the rest of the summer!
- (66) Žili **si** tam jako bohové.  
[Lived **self-DAT** there like gods-NOM.]  
They lived it up there like gods.



Verbs of Enjoyment with *po-* *si* and *za-* *si*

|                                                                  |                                                |                                                         |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| ‘have a nice conversation’<br><i>pobesedovat si</i>              | ‘do some playing’<br><i>zahrát/zahrávat si</i> | ‘take a good look at’<br><i>posvítit si na + ACC</i>    |
| ‘enjoy a debate’<br><i>podebatovat si</i>                        | ‘do some grumbling’<br><i>zahubovat si</i>     | ‘have a nice chat’<br><i>povykládat si</i>              |
| ‘have a nice talk’<br><i>pohovořit si</i>                        | ‘go for a ride’<br><i>zajezdit si</i>          | ‘be lazy for a while’<br><i>zalenošit si</i>            |
| ‘have some fun’<br><i>pohrát/pohrávat si</i>                     | ‘have a smoke’<br><i>zakouřit si</i>           | ‘go for a fly’<br><i>zalétat si</i>                     |
| ‘relish, get a good taste of’<br><i>pochutnat/pochutnávat si</i> | ‘have a nice chat’<br><i>popovídat si</i>      | ‘enjoy some skiing’<br><i>zalyžovat si/zalyžářit si</i> |
| ‘lie about a bit’<br><i>poležet si</i>                           | ‘indulge oneself’<br><i>popřát/popřávat si</i> | ‘have a good cry’<br><i>zaplakat si</i>                 |
| ‘have some puffs’<br><i>zabafat si</i>                           | ‘have a romp with’<br><i>poskočit si</i>       | ‘go for a swim’<br><i>zaplavat si</i>                   |
| ‘have a run’<br><i>zaběhat si</i>                                | ‘get a good sleep’<br><i>pospat si</i>         | ‘enjoy some fishing’<br><i>zarybařit si</i>             |

Similarly, the verb *hrát* ‘play’ is fairly non-specific and can be used in a variety of contexts (for playing games, sports, musical instruments, etc.). However, if Czechs want to talk about what children do when they play, they will almost always use *hrát si* to emphasize the fact that this kind of play is done for the fun of it. Certain other activities like throwing or kicking a ball can be done just for fun, and Czech adds *si* to the verbs *házet* ‘throw’ and *kopat* ‘kick’ to produce *házet si* ‘throw for fun’ and *kopat si* ‘kick for fun’. Here is an example from an article on cloning:

- (67) *Hrát si na Boha se nevyplatí.*  
[Play **self-DAT** on God-ACC self-ACC not-pays.]  
It doesn’t pay to play God.

There are many other activities that can be enjoyed, usually in pleasurable quantities. The prefixes *po-* and *za-* frequently combine with *si* and verbs describing enjoyable activities to produce verbs that mean ‘enjoy doing something, have a nice time doing something’. The most common verbs of this type are gathered in the table below, although Czechs are capable of creating more verbs according to this pattern whenever the mood strikes them.

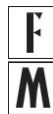
DATIVE: AN  
EXPERIENCER *si*  
with verbs of  
enjoyment  
prefixed in *po-*  
and *za-*.

Here are some examples to give you a feel for how these verbs are used:

- (68) Na palačinkách **si** pochutnali návštěvníci oslav svatého Vavřince, patrona kuchařů a cukrářů.

[On pancakes-LOC **self-DAT** tasted visitors-NOM celebration-GEN St. Vavřinec-GEN, patron-GEN cooks-GEN and confectioners-GEN].

Visitors at the celebration of St. Vavřinec, patron saint of cooks and candy-makers, **enjoyed** tasting the pancakes.



- (69) “Moji chlapi” **si** zajezdili na horských kolech z půjčovny hotelu, já jsem **si** raději poležela na sluníčku.

[“My boys-NOM” **self-DAT** rode on mountain bikes-LOC from rental-office-GEN hotel-GEN, I-NOM AUX **self-DAT** rather lay on sun-LOC.]

“My boys” **enjoyed** going for a ride on mountain bikes from the hotel rental office, but I instead **enjoyed** laying around in the sun.



- (70) Maminko, šla bych **si** tak ráda na chvilku k tobě zaplákat.

[Mom-VOC, went AUX **self-DAT** so gladly for moment-ACC to you-DAT cry.]

Mom, I would really like to go visit you for a moment and **have a good cry**.



DATIVE: AN  
EXPERIENCER *si*  
with verbs  
meaning ‘assume  
a position’.

There are four verbs that mean ‘take a position’, all of which require *si*: *dřepnout si* ‘squat’, *sednout/sedat si* ‘sit down’, *lehnout/lehat si* ‘lie down’, *stoupnout/stoupat si* ‘stand up’. The connection with benefit for the self is obvious for the first three verbs, since squatting, sitting, and lying down are all things that we do to increase our comfort. The fourth verb, *stoupnout/stoupat si* ‘stand up’, might seem a bit puzzling until we remember that this is not the usual, neutral verb that Czechs use for standing up — the verb most normally used is *vstát/vstávat*. *Stoupnout/stoupat si* is used only in contexts where a standing position is the most convenient one. For example when a mother is helping a small child get dressed, she might say *Tak si stoupni!* ‘So get up!’, emphasizing that the dressing will be easier to accomplish while standing. Other contexts would include stepping up to a counter or other raised surface so that one can get something. The following examples show the obligatory use of *si* with verbs meaning ‘assume a position’:

- (71) Včera mě ošklivě bolela hlava, šla jsem **si** brzy lehnout.

[Yesterday me-ACC wickedly hurt head-NOM, went AUX **self-DAT** early lie.]

Yesterday I had a wicked headache and went to bed (literally: lay down) early.



- (72) Dřepni **si** někde na bobek a přestaň otravovat!

[Squat **self-DAT** somewhere on berry-ACC and stop bothering!]

Go squat somewhere and stop being a pest!



DATIVE: AN  
EXPERIENCER *si*  
with verbs  
expressing relief  
and urgency.

People do a variety of things in response to stress: they hurry up, voice their needs, complain, and rest. All of these activities help a person who feels some urgency or need for relief, and are thus beneficial. Here are some Czech verbs of this type that are associated with *si*:

Verbs of Relief and Urgency with *si*

|                                                              |                                                        |                                                                       |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ‘be able to afford’<br><i>dovolit/dovolovat si</i>           | ‘louge, take a rest’<br><i>po-hovět si</i>             | ‘hurry up’<br><i>přispíšit si; pospíšit si</i>                        |
| ‘lament’<br><i>naříkat si</i>                                | ‘complain’<br><i>stýskat si</i>                        | ‘get up a little earlier than usual’<br><i>přivstat/přivstávat si</i> |
| ‘take a breather’<br><i>oddechnout si</i>                    | ‘complain’<br><i>po-stěžovat si</i>                    | ‘say what one needs’<br><i>říci si</i>                                |
| ‘rest’<br><i>odpočinout/odpočívat si</i>                     | ‘heave a sigh’<br><i>povzdechnout si</i>               |                                                                       |
| ‘relieve oneself (go to the bathroom)’<br><i>odskočit si</i> | ‘complain about’<br><i>po-/za-stesknout/stýskat si</i> |                                                                       |

- F**  
**M**
- (73) “Velkým problémem hlavního města jsou psí výkaly”, posteskl **si** primátor Jan Koukal.  
[“Big problem-INST capital city-GEN are dog droppings-NOM”, complained **self-DAT** mayor Jan Koukal-NOM.]  
“Dog droppings are a big problem in the capital city,” complained mayor Jan Koukal.

Knowing about something and knowing what to do or think about it are valuable experiences for people, ones that tend to attract the use of Czech *si*. Here are common verbs of this type that you are likely to encounter, followed by a few examples. You might notice that several of these verbs also exist without *si*, although their *si* and non-*si* meanings are quite different from each other. *Cenit*, for example, means ‘estimate, assess’, whereas *cenit si* means ‘appreciate’, a meaning that relates the estimation to the benefit it brings to the person doing the estimation. Without *si*, *myslet* means ‘think’ in the sense of ‘engage in a thought process, use one’s brain’, but *myslet si* means ‘think’ in the sense of ‘have an opinion’.

DATIVE: AN  
EXPERIENCER *si*  
with verbs.

- F**  
**M**
- (74) Dále já **si** uvědomuju, že kousek od chvály a pocty je vždycky schovaná nějaká ostuda. (CCz)  
[Further I-NOM **self-DAT** realize, that piece-ACC from praise-GEN and honor-GEN is always hidden-NOM some embarrassment-NOM.]  
I also realize that not far from praise and honor there is always some hidden embarrassment.

- F**  
**M**
- (75) Mnoho lidí **si**, jako i já, myslí, že životní cíle této společnosti i cesta k nim jsou špatné.  
[Many-NOM people-GEN **self-DAT**, like also I-NOM, think, that vital goals-NOM this society-GEN and path-NOM to them-GEN are bad-NOM.]  
Many people like myself think that this society’s vital goals and the path to them are bad.

Verbs of Awareness and Capability That Use *si*

|                                                                         |                                                      |                                                      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| ‘appreciate, have a high opinion of’<br><i>cenit si</i>                 | ‘remember’<br><i>při-pamatovat si</i>                | ‘notice’<br><i>všimnout/všímat si</i>                |
| ‘think, have an opinion’<br><i>myslet si</i>                            | ‘take into one’s head’<br><i>umínit si</i>           | ‘remember’<br><i>vzpomenout/vzpomínat si</i>         |
| ‘take a fancy to’<br><i>oblíbit/oblíbovat si</i>                        | ‘set one’s mind on’<br><i>usmyslet si</i>            | ‘take into one’s head’<br><i>zamanout si</i> (CCz)   |
| ‘know how to use something, consult with’<br><i>poradit si s + INST</i> | ‘realize, be aware’<br><i>uvědomit/uvědomovat si</i> | ‘take a fancy to’<br><i>zamilovat/zamilovávat si</i> |
| ‘appreciate’<br><i>považovat si</i> (CCz)                               | ‘respect’<br><i>vážít si</i>                         | ‘memorize, fix in memory’<br><i>zapamatovat si</i>   |
| ‘imagine’<br><i>představit/představovat si</i>                          | ‘know how to’<br><i>vědět si rady</i>                |                                                      |

In a weaker sense, our behavior is something that we do for ourselves, following our own design (whether ultimately good or bad), and Czech has two verbs meaning ‘behave, perform’ which use the dative *si*, *počínat si* and *vést si*.

- (76) Obě české tenistky **si** na turnaji v Moskvě vedly dobře a postupují do druhého kola.  
[Both Czech tennis-players-NOM **self-DAT** on tournament-LOC in Moscow-LOC performed well and progress to second round-GEN.]

Both Czech tennis players performed well at the Moscow tournament and are progressing to the second round.



## DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER 3 — HARM

DATIVE: AN  
EXPERIENCER in  
the context of  
harm.

Czech has a rich variety of expressions for harm inflicted upon a DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER. Some of the most common ones are in this table. You will notice that *po-hrozit* ‘threaten’ shows up both here and under verbs of communication under DATIVE: A RECIPIENT above. This verb is just as ambiguous in Czech as it is in English; a threat can be construed either as a message delivered to a DATIVE: A RECEIVER or as a physical reality endured by a DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER.

- (77) Zakázali **mi** jezdit do zahraničí.  
[Forbade **me-DAT** ride to foreign-countries-GEN.]  
**I** was forbidden to go abroad.







- (78) Vyšetřovatel jej již obvinil z obecného ohrožení spáchaného z nedbalosti, za což **mu** hrozí až pět let vězení.

[Investigator-NOM him-ACC already indicted for general menace committed-GEN from negligence-GEN, for which-ACC **him-DAT** threatens up-to five-ACC years-GEN jail-GEN.]

The investigator has already indicted him for general menace due to negligence, for which **he** can get up to five years in jail (literally: **he's** threatened with up to five years in jail).

#### Verbs Expressing Harm

|                                         |                                                             |                                           |
|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| 'be disgusting'<br><i>hnusit se</i>     | 'hurt'<br><i>ublížit/ubližovat</i>                          | 'threaten'<br><i>vyhrožovat</i>           |
| 'bother'<br><i>nesedět</i>              | 'make (be) disgusting'<br><i>znechutit/znechucovat (se)</i> | 'impede, hamper'<br><i>za-bránit</i>      |
| 'threaten'<br><i>po-hrozit</i>          | 'do someone an injustice'<br><i>u-křivdit</i>               | 'forbid'<br><i>zakázat/zakazovat</i>      |
| 'take revenge on'<br><i>po-mstít se</i> | 'harm'<br><i>u-škodit</i>                                   | 'envy'<br><i>závidět</i>                  |
| 'be in the way'<br><i>překážet</i>      | 'bother'<br><i>vadit</i>                                    | 'evoke disgust'<br><i>z-ošklivit (se)</i> |

Although just about any adjective expressing a negative quality can inspire the use of DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER, the following four adjectives assume this role with particular frequency: *nepříjemný* 'unpleasant', *odporný* 'disgusting', *protivný* 'repulsive', *trapný* 'both-ersome', as we see in the following examples:



- (79) Učitel nesmí, i když je to někdy obtížné, dělit žáky podle toho, kdo je **mu** milý nebo protivný.

[Teacher-NOM not-dares, even when is that-NOM sometimes difficult-NOM, di-  
vide students-ACC according-to that-GEN, who-NOM is **him-DAT** dear-NOM or  
repulsive-NOM.]

Even though it is sometimes difficult, a teacher must not divvy up his students ac-  
cording to who is dear **to him** and who is repulsive.



- (80) Slavné japonské suši může být pouze podle popisu **některým lidem** odporné, avšak po ochutnání často změni názor.

[Famous Japanese sushi-NOM can be only according-to description-GEN **some people-DAT** disgusting-NOM, however after tasting-LOC often change opinion-ACC.]

Based solely on a description, the famous Japanese sushi is disgusting **to many people**, however they often change their minds after they taste it.

Like the benefit verbs, there are some verbs describing harm that frequently have an accusative direct object or infinitive verb tagging along in addition to the DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER. The most common verbs of this type all mean ‘refuse’: *odmítnout/odmítat*, *odřici/odřeknout/odřikat*, and *odepřít/odpírat*. The item refused in the first example below is expressed as an accusative direct object (*jasnou penaltu* ‘a clearly deserved penalty kick’), but in the second example the refusal involves an action, expressed as a verb (*podepsat* ‘sign’).

- (81) Poté, co rozhodčí odepřel **mužstvu** Slávie jasnou penaltu, propukly na stadionu emoce.

[After, what-NOM referee-NOM refused **team-DAT** Slávie-NOM clear penalty-kick-ACC, burst-out at stadium-LOC emotions-NOM.]

Emotions burst out at the stadium after the referee refused **the** Slávie **team** a clearly deserved penalty kick.

- (82) Matka **mi** odmítla podepsat domácí úkol plný chyb.

[Mother-NOM **me-DAT** refused sign home assignment-ACC full-ACC mistakes-GEN.]

Mother refused to sign the homework assignment full of mistakes **for me** (= **my** assignment).

DATIVE: AN  
EXPERIENCER with  
verbs of physical  
harm prefixed in  
*na-*.

Getting a beating is certainly experienced as harm, motivating the use of DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER. If you take a Czech verb meaning ‘deliver a blow’ and add the prefix *na-* (which here means ‘do a quantity of something’), you can get a verb which means ‘to hurt **a person**’, and the person is marked as DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER.

#### Verbs of Physical Punishment in *na-*

|                             |                                |                            |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| ‘beat’<br><i>nabít</i>      | ‘spank’<br><i>naplácat</i>     | ‘beat’<br><i>natlouci</i>  |
| ‘slap’<br><i>nafackovat</i> | ‘slap’<br><i>napohlavkovat</i> | ‘beat’<br><i>natřískat</i> |
| ‘kick’<br><i>nakopat</i>    | ‘whack’<br><i>nařezat</i>      |                            |
| ‘thrash’<br><i>namlátit</i> | ‘whip’<br><i>nasekat</i>       |                            |

- (83) Pokud policista například nafackuje **malému děcku**, je otázka, jestli toto povolání může nadále vykonávat.

[If policeman-NOM for-example slaps **small child-DAT**, is question-NOM, if that profession-ACC can further perform.]

If, for example, a policeman slaps **a small child**, the question arises as to whether he can continue in his job.

- F**  
**M**
- (84) Otec býval prchlivý, často se tak rozzuřil, že zbil matku, a když nabil **mamince**, namlátil obyčejně i **nám**.  
[Father-NOM was hot-headed-NOM, often self-ACC so enraged, that beat-up mother-ACC, and when beat-up **mom-DAT**, thrashed usually also **us-DAT**.]  
Father was hot-headed, often he would get so enraged that he beat mother up, and when he beat up **mom**, he usually thrashed **us** too.

Although we are more likely to do things for our enjoyment, and Czech has many verbs to prove it, people do distress themselves, as evidenced by verbs of harm with *si*, such as *hnusit si* ‘be sickened at’ and *ošklivit si* ‘be disgusted by’. Here’s an example of involuntary distress:

- F**  
**M**
- (85) Peklo **si** prožil devatenáctiletý horolezec, který čtyři dny čekal na záchranu.  
[Hell-ACC **self-DAT** lived-through nineteen-year-old mountain-climber-NOM, who-NOM four days-ACC waited for rescue-ACC.]  
A nineteen-year-old mountain climber who had to wait four days to be rescued went through hell.

## DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER 4 — POSSESSION

In English we talk about our body parts by using possessive forms like *my*, *your*, *her*, but when Czechs express the relationship between a person and a body part, they will often use dative forms like *mi* [**me-DAT**] ‘**me**’, *ti* [**you-DAT**] ‘**you**’, and *jí* [**her-DAT**] ‘**her**’. This is possible because whenever something happens to a part of your body, you experience that event, playing the role of DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER. This is true for all manner of events directed toward body parts, whether beneficial, harmful, or neutral. For many types of events it would actually be strange to use the possessive form in Czech, since this would seem to deny that a person had any experience of something that happened to their body. For example, you can say *Zlomil jí ruku* [Broke **her-DAT** arm-ACC] ‘He broke **her** arm (literally: He broke the arm **to her**)’, but you cannot normally replace *jí* with the possessive *její* ‘her’ in this sentence, because this sounds as if the woman in question were somehow alienated from her own arm (perhaps it was cut off before he broke it?). Here are some examples of how DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER indicates the relationship between a person and his or her body parts:

DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER can express possession of a body part.

- F**  
**M**
- (86) **Kvidovi** poklesly koutky úst, ale byl odhodlán svou pravdu hájit.  
[**Guido-DAT** drooped corners-NOM mouth-GEN, but was determined-NOM own truth-ACC defend.]  
The corners of **Guido’s** mouth drooped, but he was determined to defend his point.

- F**  
**M**
- (87) Hlavou **mu** během oněch deseti, dvaceti vteřin proletělo dobrých padesát podstatných jmen ženského rodu.  
[Head-INST **him-DAT** during those ten-GEN, twenty seconds-GEN flew-through good-GEN fifty-NOM substantive nouns-GEN feminine gender-GEN.]  
During those ten or twenty seconds a good fifty feminine nouns flew through **his** head.

DATIVE: AN  
EXPERIENCER *si*  
can express the  
subject's  
possession of a  
body part.

- (88) Sliny se **mu** sbíhaly a kouř valící se z mokrého dřeva **mu** vehnal slzy do očí.  
[Saliva-NOM self-ACC **him-DAT** ran and smoke-NOM rolling-NOM self-ACC  
from wet wood-GEN **him-DAT** drove-in tears-ACC to eyes-GEN.]

**His** mouth was watering, and the smoke pouring from the wet wood brought tears to **his** eyes.

Of course it is always possible for people to do things to their own body parts, especially when attending to personal hygiene or as the result of an accident, and once again Czechs have an occasion to use the dative pronoun *si*. In these instances the use of *si* is mandatory, since the use of a possessive form would imply that someone else's body part was involved (and that the other party had no experience of the event). The following is a list of common phrases in which *si* indicates that the given body part belongs to the subject of the sentence, and a few examples are presented to show how these phrases function in real sentences.

#### Common Expressions with *si* Used to Mark Possession

|                                                            |                                                               |                                                             |
|------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| 'polish <b>one's</b> shoes'<br><i>na-krémovat si boty</i>  | 'bruise <b>one's</b> shoulder'<br><i>pohmoždit si rameno</i>  | 'brush <b>one's</b> teeth'<br><i>vy-čistit si zuby</i>      |
| 'stub <b>one's</b> toe'<br><i>narazit/narážet si palec</i> | 'skin <b>one's</b> knee'<br><i>rozbít/rozbítjet si koleno</i> | 'dislocate <b>one's</b> finger'<br><i>vyvrtnout si prst</i> |
| 'clip <b>one's</b> nails'<br><i>ostříhat si nehty</i>      | 'wash <b>one's</b> hands'<br><i>u-mýt si ruce</i>             | 'break <b>one's</b> leg'<br><i>zlomit si nohu</i>           |
| 'sprain <b>one's</b> ankle'<br><i>podvrtnout si kotník</i> | 'wipe <b>one's</b> hands'<br><i>utřít/utírat si ruce</i>      |                                                             |

- (89) Matka **si** utřela ruce do utěrky a nalistovala v časopise stránku se zatrženým textem.  
[Mother **self-DAT** wiped hands-ACC to dishcloth-GEN and turned-pages in maga-  
zine-LOC page-ACC with crossed-out text-INST.]

Mother wiped **her** hands on a dishcloth and turned to a page in the magazine where the text was crossed out.

- (90) Nejlepší český fotbalista, který **si** zlomil nohu na konci sezóny, se v současné době doléčuje.

[Best Czech soccer-player-NOM, who-NOM **self-DAT** broke leg-ACC on end-LOC  
season-GEN, self-ACC in present time-LOC completes-treatment.]

The best Czech soccer player, who broke **his** leg at the end of the season, is still recuperating at the present time.

- (91) Každou neděli jsme se museli podrobit stejnému rituálu: vykoupat se, umýt **si** hlavu, vyčistit **si** zuby, ostříhat **si** nehty.

[Every evening-ACC AUX self-ACC had submit same ritual-DAT: bathe self-ACC,  
wash **self-DAT** head-ACC, clean **self-DAT** teeth-ACC, cut **self-DAT** nails-ACC.]

Every week we had to submit to the same ritual: take a bath, wash **our** heads, brush **our** teeth, and cut **our** nails.

It is possible to find examples of DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER being used to indicate possession of an item other than a body part, particularly if the item is removed, destroyed, or significantly damaged. The case of removal has already been covered in our discussion of the verb *vzít/brát* ‘take’ and its near-synonyms, which, as we saw, can be extended to include destruction. Damage overlaps somewhat with harm, and the dative is particularly likely to appear if the possessed item is important enough to the possessor to cause an experience of suffering, as in *Bratr mi naboural auto* [Brother-NOM **me-DAT** crashed car-ACC] ‘My brother crashed **my** car’. Here’s an example to illustrate this use:

DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER can express possession of items other than body parts.

- F**  
**M**
- (92) Nejdřív **mi** dvě rakety spadly na dům a pak ruští vojáci odnesli všechno, co zůstalo.  
[First **me-DAT** two rockets-NOM fell on house-ACC and then Russian soldiers-NOM took everything-ACC, what-NOM remained.]  
First two rockets fell on **my** house, and then the Russian soldiers took everything that was left.

In English we say that things have ends (as well as beginnings and middles), and this notion of possessing an endpoint justifies expressions like *There’s no end to those problems* or *I’ll put an end to that*. In a parallel fashion it is possible to use the dative case in Czech in conjunction with the word *konec* in the phrases *ne-být* + DAT + *konec* and *u-dělat* + DAT + *konec*, as in: *Není těm problémům konec* [Is-not those problems-DAT end-NOM] ‘There’s no end to those problems’ and *Udělám tomu konec* [Will-make that-DAT end-ACC] ‘I’ll put an end to that’. Here’s an authentic example of how DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER marks the possessor of an end:

DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER expresses having an end with *konec*.

- F**  
**M**
- (93) Česká dálkařka Šárka Kašpárková ve finále bohužel třikrát přešlápla a to byl konec všem nadějím na medaili.  
[Czech long-jumper Šárka Kašpárková-NOM in finals-LOC unfortunately three-times overstepped and that-NOM was end-NOM **all hopes-DAT** for medal-ACC. Unfortunately the Czech long-jumper Šárka Kašpárková stepped over the line three times during the finals and that was the end **of all hopes** for a medal.]

## DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER 5 — Age, environment, emotions, and need

This use is a grab-bag for all kinds of other experiences encountered by a DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER. The logic here is that something is happening in the outside world that is causing a change or a feeling in the DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER. A constant force exerted by external reality is the unrelenting march of time. As a result we age, and in Czech we experience this process in the dative case. This is why we ask *Kolik je vám let?* [How-many-NOM is **you-DAT** years-GEN?] ‘How old are **you**?’ and we reply *Je mi dvacet let* [Is **me-DAT** twenty-NOM years-GEN] ‘I am twenty years old’. Here are examples of how age is expressed in context:

DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER in the context of external forces.

DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER expresses age.

- (94) Vážená redakce, za necelý měsíc **mi** bude osmdesát let, ale stále čtu se zaujetím váš časopis.

[Esteemed editorial-board-VOC, in not-whole month-ACC **me-DAT** will-be eighty-NOM years-GEN, but still read with interest-INST your periodical-ACC.]

Dear Editor, in less than a month **I** will be eighty years old, but I still read your periodical with interest.



- (95) Když je **některým hokejistům** třicet let, jsou tak otlučení, že musí vrcholový sport opustit.

[When is **some hockey-players-DAT** thirty-NOM years-GEN, are so battered-NOM, that must top-performance sport-ACC abandon.]

When **some hockey players** are thirty years old they are so beaten up that they have to abandon top-performance sport.



DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER expresses exposure to environmental and emotional conditions.

Environmental conditions can induce feelings of heat and cold, as in *Je jí zima/horko* [Is **her-DAT** cold/hot] ‘**She feels** cold/hot’, a host of emotions, as in *Je mi smutno/Není mi k smíchu* [Is **me-DAT** sad/Is-not **me-DAT** to laughter-DAT] ‘**I feel** sad/**I don’t feel** like laughing’, as well as nausea, as in *Bylo mu nevolno/blbě* [Was **him-DAT** uneasy/weird] ‘**He felt** sick to his stomach’. Here is a sentence illustrating this use of DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER:

- (96) Je **nám** líto, ale váš dotaz nebyl úspěšný.

[Is **us-DAT** sorry, but your inquiry-NOM was-not successful-NOM.]

**We** are sorry, but your inquiry was not successful.



DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER expresses indifference with *být ...jedno*.

DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER is commonly associated with the phrase *být jedno*, literally ‘be one’ in an idiom that expresses the feeling of indifference, as in this example:

- (97) To **nám** může bejt celkem jedno, pane Louka. (CCz)

[That-NOM **us-DAT** can be entirely one-NOM, Mr.-VOC Louka-NOM.]

That won’t matter **to us**, Mr. Louka.



DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER expresses need with *třeba* and *nezbytné* ‘necessary’.

In contrast to apathy, one can also express need this way, by using DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER with *třeba* ‘necessary’ or *nezbytné* ‘necessary’, as in this example:

- (98) Je **ti** to třeba, v tvém věku stále takto riskovat a ničit si zdraví?

[Is **you-DAT** that-NOM necessary, in your age-LOC constantly this-way risk and ruin self-DAT health-ACC?]

Do **you** need, at your age, to keep risking and ruining your health this way?



## DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER 6 — Beneficiaries and victims

Things happen to DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER with *stát/stávat se*.

Ultimately, anything that happens can happen to someone, and of course that someone will be expressed as DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER. This use of the dative case is particularly frequent with the generic verb for ‘happen’ *stát/stávat se*. Here’s an example of how this works:





- (99) Občas se **nám** stávalo, že v podniku, kde jsme se sešli a pustili písničky na přenosném gramofonu, začali lidi reagovat, tančit a děkovat.  
 [Occasionally self-ACC **us-DAT** happened, that in establishment-LOC, where AUX self-ACC gathered and played songs-ACC on portable record-player-LOC, began people-NOM react, dance and thank.]  
 It occasionally happened **to us** that in the establishment where we gathered and played songs on a portable record-player people began to react, dance and say “thank you”.

There are additionally all manner of actions that can be done for someone’s benefit, such as opening a door for someone, making calls for someone, or even washing the dishes for someone. At this point we see an overlap between DATIVE: A RECEIVER and the “benefit” uses of DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER. Here are a few examples of acts done for the benefit of others:

Various actions can be undertaken for the benefit of DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER.



- (100) Tak **mi** je pojd’ najít, ty chytrá!  
 [Then **me-DAT** them-ACC come find, you-NOM smart-NOM!]  
 Then come and find them **for me**, you smart-alec!



- (101) Sypu **rybkám** v akváriu sušené mšice.  
 [Pour **fish-DAT** in aquarium-LOC dried aphids-ACC.]  
 I pour out dried aphids **for the fish** in the aquarium.



- (102) Maminka odešla **dcerkám** pro helmičky, tatínek vypustil rodinné psy a připravil kola.  
 [Mother-NOM went **daughters-DAT** for helmets-ACC, father-NOM let-out family dogs-ACC and prepared bicycles-ACC.]  
 The mother went to get the helmets **for her daughters**, and the father let the family dogs out and prepared the bicycles.

The dative pronoun *si* is often added to sentences just to emphasize that the subject was affected by some event. In both of the examples below the dative pronoun could easily be removed and the sentences would be perfectly grammatical. But dative *si* is there to provide some extra information, reminding us that the subject was impacted by the event.

Dative pronoun *si* emphasizes that the subject is affected by an event.



- (103) Já **si** dělám všechno sám.  
 [I-NOM **self-DAT** do everything-ACC self-NOM.]  
 I do everything all by myself.



- (104) Líbí se vám hudba šedesátých let natolik, že **si** ji používáte doma?  
 [Please self-ACC you-DAT music-NOM sixties years-GEN so-much, that **self-DAT** it-ACC play at-home?]  
 Do you like sixties music so much that you play it at home?



DATIVE: AN  
EXPERIENCER  
suggests that an  
activity is  
happening to a  
person.

(105) Fotbalisté Realu Madrid přijeli do Brazílie na mistrovství světa napravit reputaci, kterou **si** zkazili mdlými výkony v lize.

[Soccer-players-NOM Realu Madrid arrived to Brazil-GEN on championship-ACC world-GEN repair reputation-ACC, which-ACC **self-DAT** spoiled mediocre performances-INST in league-LOC.]

The Realu Madrid soccer players have come to Brazil for the world championship to repair the reputation which they spoiled with mediocre performance in the league.

F  
M

In Czech you can add *se* to many ordinary verbs and use the DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER to describe how the subject is experiencing an action. The grammatical implication here is that instead of the subject performing the action, the action is something that is happening to the subject. In the next example it would certainly be possible to say instead *Jak chodíš v těch nových botách?* [How walk in those new shoes-LOC?] ‘How do you walk in those new shoes?’, but by adding *se* to the verb and putting the logical subject in the dative case, the author of this sentence emphasizes that the experience of walking is being imposed on the person by the shoes:

(106) Jak se **ti** chodí v těch nových botách?

[How self-ACC **you-DAT** walks in those new shoes-LOC?]

How do **you like** walking in those new shoes?

F  
M

The verb that is used most commonly this way is *za-chtít* ‘want’, which with the dative case and *se* takes on a meaning of ‘feel like’, as we see in these two examples:

(107) Chce se **mu** něco dodat, ale po chvílce váhání si to nechá pro sebe.

[Wants self-ACC **him-DAT** something-ACC add, but after moment-LOC hesitation-GEN self-DAT that-ACC leaves for self-ACC.]

**He** feels like adding something, but after hesitating for a moment he keeps it to himself.

F  
M

(108) Nechtělo se **mu** daleko od lidí.

[Not-wanted self-ACC **him-DAT** far from people-GEN.]

**He** didn’t feel like being far from people.

F  
M

The idiom *být tomu zvykem* [be **that-DAT** custom-INST] ‘be customary’ also uses the dative and also falls within the purview of experiencing doing something:

(109) Naše nemocnice vykonávají mnohem větší rozsah a objem péče, než je **tomu** v Evropě zvykem.

[Our hospitals-NOM provide much-INST larger range-ACC and scope-ACC care-GEN, than is **that-DAT** in Europe-LOC custom-INST.]

Our hospitals provide a much larger range and scope of care than is customary in Europe.

F  
M

## DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER 7 — Alleged beneficiaries and victims

Odd as it may seem, the dative case can be used to allege that something happened to someone even when they weren't involved at all. This use of the dative case is commonly referred to as the "ethical dative". When the dative is used this way, it is never grammatically required. Instead, the speaker is using the dative case in order to capture the hearer's attention, or to express aggression or solidarity. The first example comes from the movie *Kolja* — Louka is sitting alone in his apartment, phoning women, and with every one he uses the same line:

DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER can imply interest, aggression, or solidarity.



- (110) Tak se **ti** mi udělalo nějak smutno, a že víš, na koho jsem si vzpomněl?  
 [So self-ACC **you-DAT** me-DAT made somehow sad, and that know, on who-ACC  
 AUX self-DAT remembered?]  
 Well, **you know**, I was feeling kind of sad, and guess who I started thinking about?

Louka's feeling of loneliness has never been experienced by or affected the woman he is talking to, but he wants her to care about it, and thus in a sense he offers her his story, as if she were participating in it. In another part of the movie, Louka is summoned to Státní bezpečnost (State Security) in connection with his feigned marriage to a Russian woman, and his interrogator uses the dative case in this aggressive assertion:



- (111) Tak vy jste se **nám** oženil, pane Louka!  
 [So you-NOM AUX self-ACC **us-DAT** married, Mr.-VOC Louka-NOM!]  
 So you got married **on us**, Mr. Louka!

The marriage is of course none of the interrogator's business — he wasn't there and had nothing to do with it — but he asserts his authority by presenting the whole act to himself and his team, saying in effect 'we're in charge, and what you do is our business'.

If the person being addressed is understood as a victim rather than as a perpetrator, **nám** 'us' can be used to sympathize and soothe. Thus if a child is crying over a pile of ruined toys, an adult might say the following, even if s/he is not a co-owner of the toys, never witnessed the event, and really has nothing to do with it:



- (112) Ty zlé děti **nám** rozbily hračky, vid'  
 [Those naughty children-NOM **us-DAT** broke toys-ACC, see?]  
 Those naughty children broke **our** toys, didn't they?

Here the dative **nám** 'us' really means 'I sympathize with you, I feel your pain.' On occasion, it is possible to use more than one ethical dative in a sentence. Here is an example of two ethical datives (**ti** and **mi**), plus one dative used to express possession (**si**):

- (113) Pustila jsem dceru na hory, a ona **ti** si **mi** zlomila nohu! (CCz)  
 [Let AUX daughter-ACC on mountains-ACC, and she-NOM **you-DAT** self-DAT **me-DAT** broke leg-ACC!]  
 I let my daughter go to the mountains, and, **you know what**, she broke her leg **on me**!

The full force of the dative in this sentence might be conveyed this way: she broke her leg and I'm going to have to take care of her, and I want you to listen to this and feel sorry for me!

## DATIVE: A COMPETITOR 1 — MATCHED FORCES

DATIVE: A COMPETITOR compares the nominative subject with the dative as a potential subject of a further action.

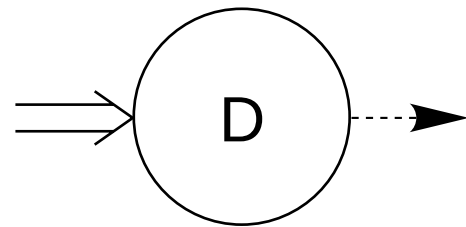
DATIVE: A COMPETITOR and the nominative subject vary in the relative forces they exert.

DATIVE: ACOMPETITOR can indicate an equal competitor.

Remember that the hallmark of the dative is that a dative item has the potential to do something. Grammatically, this means the dative item can potentially be the subject of a sentence, a role usually marked with the nominative case. The fact that a dative item is potentially a nominative item implies a comparison between the dative and the nominative. The uses of the DATIVE: A COMPETITOR

exploit just this comparison, for here we see the dative item in competition with a nominative item. All possible combinations are realized, so the dative and the nominative can either be equal in strength or one can be stronger than the other. When the two items are evenly matched they participate in a symmetrical relationship as equal competitors. If the dative item is more powerful than the nominative, it exerts a force to which the nominative item submits; here the dative has some kind of advantage over the nominative. If instead the nominative is superior, it dominates the dative. These three logical outcomes will be termed “matching forces”, “submission”, and “domination” below.

In identifying an equal competitor, the meaning of the DATIVE: A COMPETITOR overlaps somewhat with the benefit meaning of DATIVE: AN EXPERIENCER, particularly if the two parties are equally engaged in some harmonious activity. The table on the following page has some words that typically trigger the meaning of roughly equally matched forces and here are some examples of how they are used:



A force (arrow) arrives at a DATIVE: A COMPETITOR (circle labeled D), which has the potential to exert a force (dotted arrow)

- (114) Žádná žena patrně neodolala **jeho kouzlu**.  
 [No woman-NOM apparently not-resisted **his charm-DAT**.]  
 Apparently no woman could resist **his charm**.

- (115) Státní delegace uctila ve Varšavě památku židovských bojovníků, kteří téměř měsíc vzdorovali **německým okupantům**.  
 [State delegation-NOM honored in Warsaw-LOC memory-ACC Jewish fighters-GEN, who-NOM nearly month-ACC defied **German invaders-DAT**.]  
 In Warsaw the state delegation honored the memory of the Jewish fighters who defied **the German invaders** for nearly a month.



(116) Pokud jde o McDonalda, shodli jsme s Martinem, že jejich hamburgery se **řízku** nevyrovnejí, ale hranolky mají docela dobré.

[As-long-as goes about McDonald's-ACC, agreed self-ACC with Martin-INST, that their hamburgers-NOM self-ACC **cutlet-DAT** not-match, but french-fries-ACC have quite good-ACC.]

Concerning McDonald's, Martin and I agreed that their hamburgers are no match for **a cutlet**, but their french fries are pretty good.

#### Words Expressing Matched Forces

|                                                        |                                                              |                                       |
|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 'face, confront'<br><i>čelit</i> (LCz)                 | 'be similar'<br><i>podobat se</i>                            | 'oppose'<br><i>vzepřít/vzpírat se</i> |
| 'compensate'<br><i>kompenzovat</i>                     | 'take revenge on'<br><i>po-mstít se</i>                      | 'resist'<br><i>za-/u-bránit se</i>    |
| 'compete against'<br><i>konkurovat</i>                 | 'be in the way'<br><i>překážet</i>                           | 'oppose'<br><i>za-odporovat</i>       |
| 'correspond to'<br><i>korespondovat</i>                | 'equal'<br><i>rovnat se</i>                                  | 'oppose'<br><i>za-oponovat</i>        |
| 'resist'<br><i>odolat/odolávat</i>                     | 'keep up with'<br><i>stačit</i>                              | 'oppose'<br><i>z-protivit se</i>      |
| 'repay, retaliate'<br><i>odplatit/odplácet</i>         | 'match, be able to compete'<br><i>vyrovnat/vyrovňovat se</i> |                                       |
| 'correspond to; answer'<br><i>odpovědět/ odpovídat</i> | 'defy'<br><i>vzdorovat</i>                                   |                                       |

Several adjectives express a similar meaning, and also occasion the use of DATIVE: A COMPETITOR, as we see in this small table and the following example:

DATIVE: A COMPETITOR can express matched forces in association with adjectives.

#### Adjectives Expressing Matched Forces

|                                   |                                         |                         |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 'analogical'<br><i>analogický</i> | 'similar, resembling'<br><i>podobný</i> | 'equal'<br><i>rovný</i> |
| 'repulsive'<br><i>odporný</i>     | 'repulsive'<br><i>protivný</i>          |                         |



(117) Už vám někdo řekl, že jste podobný **poslanci Ivanu Pilipovi**?

[Already you-DAT someone-NOM said, that are similar-NOM **member-of-parliament-DAT Ivan Pilip-DAT**?]

Has anyone ever told you that you look like **Ivan Pilip, the member of parliament**?

DATIVE:  
ACOMPETITOR can  
express matched  
forces in  
association with  
prepositions.

In addition to the verbs and adjectives listed above, a number of prepositions and prepositional phrases express relationships of meeting or opposition, and of course these words occasion the use of DATIVE: A COMPETITOR:

### Prepositions and Prepositional Phrases Expressing Matched Forces

|                                       |                                           |                               |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ‘in resistance to’<br><i>na odpor</i> | ‘similar’<br><i>podobně</i>               | ‘to meet’<br><i>v ústrety</i> |
| ‘opposite’<br><i>naproti</i>          | ‘against’<br><i>proti</i>                 | ‘meeting’<br><i>vstříc</i>    |
| ‘in spite of’<br><i>navzdory</i>      | ‘proportionately to’<br><i>úměrně (k)</i> | ‘in spite of’<br><i>vzdor</i> |
| ‘as opposed to’<br><i>oproti</i>      | ‘to face’<br><i>v tvář</i>                |                               |

- (118) Paní starostka nechala vybudovat krásné byty pro staré lidi hned naproti **škole**, aby se mohli dívat na děti.

[Madame mayor-NOM let build beautiful apartments-ACC for old people-ACC immediately opposite **school-DAT**, so-that-AUX self-ACC could look at children-ACC.]

The mayor had beautiful apartments built for old people right across from **a school** so that they could look at the children.

- (119) Našli se i tací, kteří se nebáli veřejně vystoupit proti **tomuto násilí** a zveřejnit své názory.

[Found self-ACC even such-NOM, who-NOM self-ACC not-feared publicly speak-out against **this violence-DAT** and publicize own opinions-ACC.]

There were even some people who were not afraid to speak out in public against **this violence** and to publicize their opinions.

The preposition *proti* ‘against’ is also frequently seen in combination with other compatible words, such as *ob-hájit se proti* ‘defend oneself from’, *bojovat; boj proti* ‘battle against’, and *protestovat proti* ‘protest against’.

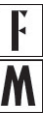
There is an important preposition that expresses the idea of matching forces, *vůči* ‘in the face of, against, to, toward’. Unfortunately we don’t have a similar preposition in English, so the glosses for *vůči* are not very helpful or even contradictory. Looking at examples is probably the only good way to get a sense of what it means. Even though we can translate all the uses in these sentences using ‘to’, the meaning of *vůči* is clearly much more specific:

- (120) Je zcela přirozené, že v určitém věku jsou děti v opozici vůči **svým rodičům**.

[Is entirely natural-NOM, that in certain age-LOC are children-NOM in opposition-LOC to **own parents-DAT**.]

It is entirely natural for children of a certain age to be opposed to **their parents**.

*vůči* + DATIVE: A  
COMPETITOR ‘to,  
towards, in the  
face of, for’.



- F**  
**M**
- (121) Díky nadměrnému užívání antibiotik jsou mnohé bakterie vůči **běžným antibiotikům** rezistentní.  
[Thanks excessive use-DAT antibiotics-GEN are many bacteria-NOM to **common antibiotics-DAT** resistant-NOM.]  
Due to the excessive use of antibiotics, many bacteria are resistant to **common antibiotics**.

- F**  
**M**
- (122) Redakce měla tento článek vrátit a velmi takticky podotknout, že některé pasáže mohou být ofenzivní vůči **části** obyvatelstva.  
[Editorial-board-NOM had that article-ACC return and very tactfully point-out, that certain passages-NOM can be offensive-NOM to **part-DAT** population-GEN.]  
The editors should have returned the article and very tactfully pointed out that certain passages might be offensive to **some** of the population.

## DATIVE: A COMPETITOR 2 — SUBMISSION

Submission has many entailments, among them belief and obedience. If you submit yourself to someone, you will trust this person, you will fall under the influence of this person, being surprised and amazed at their acts, and you may even become obsessed with or envious of this person. The object of such subservient behavior need not be a person, of course, though it will always be something that can exert a powerful force, such as drugs or authority (usually political or religious). Learning can also be understood as a submissive behavior, in which one yields one's intellect and efforts to a body of knowledge and its proponents. In Czech, you as a nominative subject will surrender yourself to a dative item, a competitor with an advantage. Like the matched forces above, submission is expressed in conjunction with both verbs and adjectives (there are only two common adjectives, however, and both are related to verbs in the table, so they are included there). The table on the following page and these examples are provided to give you a feel for how this works:

DATIVE:  
ACOMPETITOR can  
indicate a  
competitor with  
an advantage.

- F**  
**M**
- (123) Děti školního věku se musí ve třinácti letech podrobit **povinné lékařské prohlídce**.  
[Children-NOM school age-GEN self-ACC must in thirteen years-LOC submit **mandatory medical examination-DAT**.]  
At age thirteen, school-age children must submit to **a mandatory medical examination**.

- F**  
**M**
- (124) Vždy se v hloubi duše obdivoval **mužům** a **ženám**, kteří přežili koncentrák a dokázali dále normálně žít.  
[Always self-ACC in depth-LOC soul-GEN admired **men-DAT** and **women-DAT**, who-NOM survived concentration-camp-ACC and managed further normally live.]  
In the depths of his soul he always admired **men** and **women** who had survived the concentration camp and managed to live normally afterward.

- F**  
**M**
- (125) **České armádě** důvěřuje 56% občanů České republiky.  
[**Czech army-DAT** trusts 56%-NOM citizens-GEN Czech Republic-GEN.]  
56% of the citizens of the Czech Republic trust **the Czech Army**.

## Words Expressing Inclination/Submission

|                                                    |                                                                   |                                                        |
|----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| ‘be true to, honor’<br><i>dostát/dostávat</i>      | ‘submit to’<br><i>poddát/poddávat se</i>                          | ‘assist, pander to’<br><i>přisluhovat</i>              |
| ‘trust’<br><i>důvěřovat</i>                        | ‘be surprised’<br><i>po-divit se</i>                              | ‘adapt to’<br><i>přizpůsobit/ přizpůsobovat se</i>     |
| ‘woo, court’<br><i>dvořit se</i>                   | ‘toady to’<br><i>podkuřovat</i>                                   | ‘serve; service’<br><i>sloužit; služba</i>             |
| ‘give in to, indulge’<br><i>holdovat (CCz)</i>     | ‘succumb to’<br><i>podlehnout/podléhat</i>                        | ‘side with someone’<br><i>stranit</i>                  |
| ‘give in to, indulge’<br><i>hovět</i>              | ‘kowtow to’<br><i>podlézat</i>                                    | ‘yield to’<br><i>ustoupit/ustupovat</i>                |
| ‘bow to’<br><i>klanět se; poklona</i>              | ‘submit, conform to’<br><i>podrobit/podrobovat se</i>             | ‘believe; loyal, faithful to’<br><i>u-věřit; věrný</i> |
| ‘cringe before’<br><i>kořit se (LCz)</i>           | ‘subordinate self to’<br><i>podřítit/podřizovat se</i>            | ‘be indebted to; grateful’<br><i>vděčit; vděčný</i>    |
| ‘belong, be proper to’<br><i>náležet</i>           | ‘submit to, comply’<br><i>podvolit/podvolovat se</i>              | ‘surrender to’<br><i>vzdát/vzdávat se</i>              |
| ‘learn’<br><i>na-učit se</i>                       | ‘surrender to’<br><i>pokořit/pokořovat se</i>                     | ‘pay homage to’<br><i>za-holdovat</i>                  |
| ‘listen to’<br><i>naslouchat</i>                   | ‘understand’<br><i>po-rozumět</i>                                 | ‘be obliging to’<br><i>zavděčit/zavděčovat se</i>      |
| ‘admire; admiration’<br><i>obdivovat se; obdiv</i> | ‘give in to, indulge’<br><i>povolit/povolovat</i>                 | ‘envy’<br><i>závidět</i>                               |
| ‘slave for’<br><i>otročit</i>                      | ‘become obsessed with, addicted to’<br><i>propadnout/propadat</i> |                                                        |

Reciprocal uses are possible for some of these verbs, occasioning the use of *si*, often in combination with *navzájem* ‘mutually’, as we see in these examples:

- (126) Předpokladem skutečné komunikace je schopnost naslouchat **si** navzájem.  
[Precondition-INST real communication-GEN is ability-NOM listen **self-DAT** mutually.]

The precondition for real communication is the ability to listen to **each other**.

- (127) Když se nad tím zamyslím, musím přiznat, že s mojí sestrou jsme **si** začali rozumět až v dospělosti.

[When self-ACC above that-INST think, must admit, that with my sister-INST AUX **self-DAT** began understand only in adulthood-LOC.]

When I think about it, I have to admit that my sister and I began to understand **each other** only in adulthood.







- (128) Podle posledních průzkumů veřejného mínění si ženy častěji než muži myslí, že by **si** manželé měli být navzájem věrni.

[According-to latest polls-GEN public opinion-GEN self-DAT women-NOM more-often than men-NOM think, that AUX **self-DAT** spouses-NOM had be mutually faithful-NOM.]

According to the latest public opinion polls, more women than men think that spouses should be faithful to **each other**.

## DATIVE: A COMPETITOR 3 — PREPOSITIONS EXPRESSING INCLINATION/SUBMISSION

Although there are only two prepositions associated with DATIVE: A COMPETITOR in the meaning of inclination/submission — *k* ‘to, toward, for’ and *kvůli* ‘because of, for the sake of’ — they are sufficiently complicated and unlike any English equivalents to merit their own section. Both prepositions point us toward something that can exert influence, guiding the nominative subject’s action. Approach, as opposed to arrival, implies some level of subordination. When you reach a destination by means of *k* + DAT, you will have to interact with it rather than just arriving at it. Movement to non-human destinations is achieved via *do* + GEN or *na* + ACC, but movement to a human destination requires *k* + DAT, because a human being exerts forces rather than just serving as a passive endpoint for movement, as we see in this example, where the doctor will supposedly do something if someone comes to complain about insomnia:

The prepositions *k* and *kvůli* describe a relationship subordinate to DATIVE: A COMPETITOR.

*k* + DATIVE: A COMPETITOR ‘to, toward, for’.

*k* + DATIVE: A COMPETITOR is used with human destinations.



- (129) Navíc si většina lidí vůbec nemyslí, že by s nespavostí měli chodit k **lékaři**.

[Furthermore self-DAT majority-NOM people-GEN at-all not-think, that AUX with insomnia-INST had go to **doctor-DAT**.]

Furthermore, most people really don’t think that they should go to **a doctor** for insomnia.

The same principle applies to metaphorical movement as well. In this next example, no one really moves; there is instead a transfer of loyalties that is understood as movement to people, requiring *k*:



- (130) Radikálně levicoví voliči pochopitelně přešli ke **komunistům**.

[Radically left voters-NOM of-course went-over to **communists-DAT**.]

Of course the radical left voters have gone over to **the communists**.

One of the important distinctions between a non-human destination and a human one is that when we arrive at a person, we do not enter or otherwise physically encroach upon them, we just come nearer, going in that person’s direction. This idea can be extended to physical locations in space, especially if the location is a prominent landmark (a role that a window serves in a room), as the following example attests. Here, the editor does not enter the window, he just walks up to it:

*k* + DATIVE: A COMPETITOR with non-human destinations means ‘toward, in the direction of’.

- (131) Redaktor vítězně přešel k **otevřenému oknu**, zabubnoval prsty na parapet a roztržitě vyhlédl na ulici.

[Editor-NOM victoriously walked-over to **open window-DAT**, drummed fingers-INST on ledge-ACC and distractedly looked-out on street-ACC.]

The editor walked victoriously over to **the open window**, drummed his fingers on the ledge and looked out into the street.



Movement is used metaphorically to understand changes that take place in many domains, such as that of socio-economic status in the example below. Here the common phrase *dostat/dostávat se k* ‘get to’ is used to describe movement toward better employment.

- (132) Chci se jen dostat k **pořádný práci**. (CCz)

[Want self-ACC only get to **real work-DAT**.]

I just want to get **a real job**.



If you are simply moving in the direction of something, then that something is serving as a landmark guiding your movement (rather than as a mere destination), and this occasions the use of *k* both in combination with *směrem* ‘in the direction’ and by itself, as in the next two examples:

- (133) Mobilizuje veškerou svou inteligenci, vynalézavost a důvtip, vykročil otec směrem k **domu**.

[Mobilizing all own intelligence-ACC, resourcefulness-ACC and ingenuity-ACC, stepped-out father-NOM direction-INST to **house-DAT**.]

Mobilizing all his intelligence, resourcefulness and ingenuity, father stepped out in the direction of **the house**.



- (134) Všichni se nedůvěřivě sklonili ke **svým sklenkám**.

[Everyone-NOM self-ACC in-disbelief leaned to **own glasses-DAT**.]

Everyone leaned toward **their glasses** in disbelief.



*K* can also appear in the absence of movement, in a situation where the final location obtains, in which case it can describe a fixed spatial relationship. The following quote is from a woman’s recollections of the Soviet invasion. Here the woman has already reached the sidewalk, and *k* describes her feeling of being fastened to it, unable to intervene to save a man’s life:

- (135) Zůstávám stát, hrůza mě přikovala k **chodníku**.

[Remain stand, horror-NOM me-ACC shackled to **sidewalk-DAT**.]

I just stand there, horror has chained me to **the sidewalk**.



Metaphorical  
uses of *k* +  
DATIVE: A  
COMPETITOR to  
indicate  
tendencies,  
purpose, and  
relationships.

Metaphorically, movement in the direction of something can be understood as an inclination or tendency, as we see here:

- F**  
**M**
- (136) Mezinárodní výzkumy ukazují, že novináři mají statisticky významný sklon k **nezdravému životnímu stylu**.  
[International studies-NOM show, that journalists-NOM have statistically significant propensity-ACC for **unhealthy life style-DAT**.  
International studies show that journalists have a statistically significant propensity for **an unhealthy life style**.

In the domain of purpose, directing energies toward some end is often best translated as having or doing something *for* something else in English, as we see in the next example, where the qualifications are present *for* driving:

- F**  
**M**
- (137) Parlament schválí novelu zákona o odborné způsobilosti k **řízení** motorových vozidel.  
[Parliament-NOM approves ammendment-ACC law-GEN about expert qualification-LOC for **driving-DAT** motorized vehicles-GEN.]  
Parliament will pass an amendment about the expert qualifications for **driving** motorized vehicles.

Relationships are of course a type of inclination, and a great variety of relationships can be expressed using the preposition *k*, just as we use the prepositions *to* and *toward* in combination with words like *relation* and *relationship*. The two relationships present in the following example both involve forces that order human existence: the first is the relationship of people (journalists) *toward* their rights, and the second is their relationship *to* their employers:

- F**  
**M**
- (138) Čeští žurnalisté jsou v převážné většině lhostejní ke **svým oprávněným nárokům** ve vztahu k **zaměstnavatelům**.  
[Czech journalists-NOM are in overwhelming majority-LOC apathetic-NOM to **own legitimate rights-DAT** in relation-LOC to **employers-DAT**.]  
The vast majority of Czech journalists are apathetic concerning **their legitimate rights** in relation to **their employers**.

The use of *k* to express the relationship of belonging is particularly well-motivated, since the notion of subordination is very strong; note also that *patřit* 'belong' is consistently associated with the dative case (see the table of verbs in the previous section), whether or not it is used in combination with *k*, as illustrated here:

- F**  
**M**
- (139) Novinářská profese podle světových statistik patří z hlediska zdraví a střední délky života k **nejohroženějším profesím** vůbec.  
[Journalistic profession-NOM according-to world statistics-GEN belongs from viewpoint-GEN health-GEN and average length-GEN life-GEN to **most-endangered professions-DAT** altogether.]  
According to world statistics concerning health and average lifespan, journalism belongs among **the most endangered professions**.

*k* + DATIVE: A COMPETITOR expressing belonging and adding 'to'.

When something is added, the item it is added to is generally rather greater in importance, itself inspiring the addition. The phrase *k tomu* [to **that-DAT**] ‘in addition to **that**, into **the bargain**, to go with it’ plays upon this concept. Here’s an example of how it is used:

- (140) Řím si sice nadělil grandiózní ohňostroj, ale neposkytl **k tomu** žádnou veřejnou toaletu.  
[Rome self-DAT admittedly bestowed grandiose fireworks-ACC, but not-provided to **that-DAT** any public toilet-ACC.]  
It’s true that Rome treated itself to grandiose fireworks, but it didn’t offer any public toilets to **go with it**.



*k* + DATIVE: A  
COMPETITOR used  
with events.

Events frequently structure our lives, forcing us to interact with them. In the next pair of examples, there are two events involved. One is an anniversary, the birthday of a political figure, and the other is the successful completion of a task.

- (141) V listopadu 1948 publikoval snad upřímně míněné verše ke **Gottwaldovým narozeninám**.  
[In November-LOC 1948 published probably sincerely intended verses-ACC to **Gottwald’s birthday-DAT**.]  
In November 1948 he published what were probably sincerely intended verses on the occasion of **Gottwald’s birthday**.



- (142) Supervizor jednání pogrataloval oběma představitelům k dobře **odvedené práci**.  
[Supervisor-NOM negotiations-GEN congratulated both representatives-DAT to well **delivered work-DAT**.]  
The negotiations supervisor congratulated both representatives on **a job well done**.



*k* + DATIVE: A  
COMPETITOR in  
phrases and  
idioms.

The preposition *k* participates in a number of prepositional and other phrases, among them: *v poměru k* ‘in relation to’, *vzhledem k* ‘in relation to; due to’, *nehledě k* ‘ignoring’, *se zřetelem k* ‘with regard to’, *směrem k* ‘heading toward’ (see above), *ve směru k* ‘in the direction of’, *s přihlédnutím k* ‘out of consideration for/of’, *ve vztahu k* ‘in relation to’, *přijít k sobě* ‘regain consciousness’, *přiznat se k* ‘admit to’, *náchylný k* ‘having a tendency to’. The next three sentences illustrate how some of these phrases are used:

- (143) On sám se rozhodl ve straně zůstat s přihlédnutím **k tomu**, že měl dva syny, kteří studovali.  
[He-NOM self-NOM self-ACC decided in party-LOC stay with consideration-INST to **that-DAT**, that had two sons-ACC, who-NOM studied.]  
He himself decided to stay in the party out of consideration for **the fact** that he had two sons in school.
- (144) Dalším problémem jsou projevy rasismu ve vztahu **k občanskému soužití a zaměstnanosti**.  
[Further problem-INST are expressions-NOM racism-GEN in relation-LOC to **civic coexistence-DAT and employment-DAT**.]



Expressions of racism in relation to **civic coexistence** and **employment** are another problem.



- (145) Přiznám se k **tomu**, že mě nebavilo chodit na povinné schůze a sedět tam celou hodinu.

[Admit self-ACC to **that-DAT**, that me-ACC not-pleased go to mandatory meetings-ACC and sit there whole hour-ACC.]

I admit that I didn't like going to mandatory meetings and sitting there for a whole hour.

Numerous idioms in Czech include the use of *k*, among them the expression *být k* + DATIVE: A COMPETITOR (e.g., *smíchu*, *nevydržení*) 'be (funny, unbearable; literally 'be for laughter, not bearing it)'; and the use of neuter singular verb forms of *dojít/docházet k* + DATIVE: A COMPETITOR which really means nothing more than 'be; happen'. Here are two examples of each type:



- (146) K rozvodu se sestra odhodlala až po třech letech, kdy jejich soužití už bylo k **nevydržení**.

[To divorce-DAT self-ACC sister-NOM resolved only after three years-LOC, when their cohabitation-NOM already was to **not-bearing-DAT**.]

My sister didn't decide to get a divorce until three years later, when their cohabitation had already become **unbearable**.



- (147) Řada českých normalizačních komedií je z dnešního pohledu spíše k **pláči** než k **smíchu**.

[Series-NOM Czech normalization comedies-GEN is from today's viewpoint-GEN rather to **crying-DAT** than to **laughter-DAT**.]

From today's perspective, many Czech normalization-era comedies are more **sad** than **funny**.



- (148) K **havárii** černobylské elektrárny došlo šestadvacátého dubna 1986 v jednu hodinu a třicet minut.

[To **accident-DAT** Chernobyl power-plant-GEN happened twenty-sixth-GEN 1986 at one hour-ACC and twenty-three-ACC minutes-GEN.]

The Chernobyl power plant **accident** took place on April twenty-sixth 1986 at one twenty-three.



- (149) Proti prognózám nedošlo k **žádným velkým překvapením**.

[Against prognoses-DAT not-happened to **any big surprises-DAT**.]

Despite the prognosis, there weren't **any big surprises**.

Availability is expressed in a similar fashion, using the construction *být k mání/sehnání* [be to **having-DAT/getting-DAT**] 'be **available**', as in these sentences:

*kvůli* + DATIVE: A  
COMPETITOR  
'because of, for  
the sake of'.

DATIVE: A  
COMPETITOR can  
indicate a weaker  
competitor  
who is taken  
advantage of.

- (150) Na internetu je nyní k **mání** nová píseň Davida Bowieho.  
[On internet-LOC is now to **having-DAT** new song David Bowie-GEN.]  
David Bowie's new song is now **available** on the internet.



- (151) Dnes lze již jen stěží uvěřit, že na sklonku osmdesátých let nebyl v socialistickém Československu k **sehnání** toaletní papír a že tento problém musela řešit vláda na mimořádném zasedání.



[Today possible already only with-difficulty believe, that on decline-LOC eightieth years-GEN was-not in socialist Czechoslovakia-LOC to **getting-DAT** toilet paper-NOM and that this problem-ACC had solve government-NOM at extraordinary session-LOC.]

Today it is really hard to believe that toward the end of the 80s there was no toilet paper **available** in socialist Czechoslovakia and that the government had to solve this problem in an extraordinary session.

The preposition *kvůli* 'because of, for the sake of' continues our theme of uniting opposites, since it combines both a sense of cause and a sense of ultimate aim. Although this may seem contradictory, we can understand that if there is an event, a contributing factor might be either a cause or an intended target, and sometimes it doesn't matter. I might fall into a ditch because you pushed me from behind, or I might fall in because you pulled me from below — either way, you contributed to my fall, and Czech *kvůli* is an umbrella term that can cover both situations. Here are two examples of *kvůli*, one illustrating the "push" meaning, describing how a scandal can cause job insecurity, and another illustrating the "pull" meaning, describing a writer's goal in terms of pleasing himself rather than others. In both instances *kvůli* + DATIVE: A COMPETITOR identifies a force (like a scandal or a goal) to which an item (like a person) yields:

- (152) V roce 1998 se jeho pozice na japonském ministerstvu financí zatřásla kvůli **korupčnímu skandálu**.



[In year-LOC 1998 self-ACC his position-NOM at Japanese ministry-LOC finances-GEN shook because-of **corruption scandal-DAT**.]

In 1998 his position at the Japanese ministry of finances was shaken up because of **a corruption scandal**.

- (153) A dokonce i toto vše, co píšu, není kvůli **tobě**, ale kvůli **mně**.



[And after-all even that everything-NOM, what-ACC write, is-not for-the-sake-of **you-DAT**, but for-the-sake-of **me-DAT**.]

And after all even everything I write is not for **your** sake, but for **mine**.

## DATIVE: A COMPETITOR 4 — DOMINATION

Domination reverses the imbalance of power between the nominative and the dative that we saw in the preceeding two sections on submission, this time tipping the scales in favor of the nominative item, which then wields influence over the dative item. The list of verbs



involved is not very large, perhaps because opportunities to dominate are fewer than those to match or submit to the influence of others. Here are the verbs you are likely to encounter, plus a few examples for good measure.

### Verbs Expressing Domination

|                                    |                                                                   |                                  |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| ‘dominate’<br><i>dominovat</i>     | ‘have at one’s disposal,<br>take advantage of’<br><i>těšit se</i> | ‘rule over’<br><i>vévodit</i>    |
| ‘preside over’<br><i>předsedat</i> | ‘enchant, bewitch’<br><i>učarovat/učarovávat</i>                  | ‘govern’<br><i>vládnout</i>      |
|                                    |                                                                   | ‘impress’<br><i>za-imponovat</i> |

- F**  
**M** (154) Tak jsem mu šel ukázat, že to zmačnu — a úplně **mi** to učarovalo. (CCz)  
[So AUX him-DAT went show, that that-ACC manage — and completely **me-DAT** that-NOM enchanted.]  
So I went to show him that I could handle it — and it completely enchanted **me**.

- F**  
**M** (155) Krystýnka Kotyzová se těší **pozornosti** První dámy České republiky.  
[Krystýnka Kotyzová-NOM self-ACC comforts **attention-DAT** First Lady-GEN Czech Republic-GEN.]  
Little Krystyna Kotyzová takes advantage of **the attention** of the First Lady of the Czech Republic.

- F**  
**M** (156) Vznikají společnosti, které hodlají dominovat **světovému filmovému průmyslu** a zejména **Hollywoodu**.  
[Appear companies-NOM, which-NOM intend dominate **world film industry-DAT** and as-well **Hollywood-DAT**.]  
Companies are appearing which intend to dominate **the world film industry** and **Hollywood** as well.

- F**  
**M** (157) Koupil jsem si elektrickou kytaru, snažil jsem se s ní zaimponovat **holkám**, jenže je to nezajímalo. (CCz)  
[Bought AUX self-DAT electric guitar, tried AUX self-ACC with it-INST impress **girls-DAT**, but them-ACC that-NOM not-interested.]  
I bought myself an electric guitar and tried to impress **girls** with it, but that didn’t interest them.

## EPILOGUE

Our human capacity to perceive, appreciate, and react to the world around us is the foundation upon which the whole of the dative case is built. It should not surprise you that the name *dative* comes from the Latin word for ‘give’, since giving is the defining concept of



human interaction, be it the presentation of gifts, the giving of good and evil, or the give and take of competition. We are never entirely passive: we take money, understand messages, interpret dreams, and struggle against the forces imposed upon us, matching them, submitting to them, or prevailing over them. In Czech, as opposed to English, people see themselves as subject to atmospheric, temporal, and emotional factors in their environment, since being hot, twenty years old, and sad are all things that happen to people as DATIVE: EXPERIENCERS, rather than characteristics of them (as in English). Czech insists on treating people differently from all other items that serve as destinations, and people require the use of *k* + DATIVE: A COMPETITOR rather than *do* + GENITIVE: A GOAL or *na* + ACCUSATIVE: A DESTINATION. Surrender can take place on a variety of levels, entailing yielding one's behavior, beliefs, intellect, and sense of awe. The dative case unites the concepts of giving and taking, providing a single grammatically efficient construction for both. Throughout the dative case the liberal use of the pronoun *si* reminds us that when we do something, often we do it for ourselves; this self-indulgent tendency of human nature is therefore manifest in Czech, although it is usually passed over in silence in English.

