

## Grammatical (non-)identity in Greek participles

Donnerstag,  
05.03.2020  
10:00–10:30  
VMP5 2067/2071

Laura Grestenberger

University of Vienna

laura.grestenberger@univie.ac.at

This paper discusses the diachrony of the Greek passive participial suffix *-menos* and argues that non-identity arises when the morphosyntactic feature content of functional heads changes. The Modern Greek (MG) suffix *-men(os)* forms perfective passive participles and is used in periphrastic passive constructions. Alexiadou & Anagnostopoulou 2008, Alexiadou et al. 2015, etc., have argued that MG *-men-* realizes stative Asp, couched in a DM analysis in which participial suffixes are not categorial, but spell out verbal functional heads—in this case, when no head movement to T has taken place (cf. Embick 2000). Moreover, MG *-men-* has two different underlying structures: target state *-men-* expresses reversible states and selects *v*, (1a); resultant state *-men-* expresses irreversible states and selects Voice, (1b).

- (1) a.  $[_{AspP} \text{-men-}]_{TARG} [_{VP} v [_{RootP} \text{Root DP}_{THEME} ]]]$   
 b.  $[_{AspP} \text{-men-}]_{RES} [_{VoiceP} \text{Voice} [_{VP} v [_{RootP} \text{Root DP}_{THEME} ]]]]$

By contrast, Ancient Greek (AG) *-men-* was a „middle“ participial suffix that could occur in a wide range of syntactic contexts *including* passive, but also in transitive constructions. Furthermore, AG *-men-* could be used with pres., aor., and perf. stems, while MG *-men-* is restricted to the perfective passive. Greek *-men-* therefore displays non-identity *synchronically* (between target and resultant state readings) and *diachronically* (from middle to strictly passive syntax). According to Alexiadou et al. 2015, Schäfer 2017 (among others), the functional head that triggers nonactive („middle“) and active morphology in Greek is Voice[-ext.arg.], so the fact that AG *-men-* is compatible with „middle“ contexts suggests that it was able to select this Voice head. On the way to MG, a reanalysis took place in which Voice failed to be acquired in certain contexts. This resulted in a structure that includes only the internal argument of the verb, and thus a passive reading for transitive verbs. The context for this reanalysis was the passive use of *-men-* in the perfect middle of transitive verbs in periphrastic constructions.

I propose that participial Asp was originally spelled out as follows in AG:

- (2) a.  $\text{Asp} \leftrightarrow \text{men-} / \_ \text{Voice[-ext.arg.]}$     b.  $\text{Asp} \leftrightarrow \text{-nt-}$ : elsewhere

This changed as *-men-* was increasingly used in resultative/perfective contexts, leading to a reanalysis by which only Asp[pfv] was realized as *-men-*. The context in (2a) also changed: from Voice[-ext.arg.] to „thematic passive Voice“ (Schäfer 2017), with the features indicated in (3). This led to a restriction of *-men-* to the perfective stem of transitive, agentive verbs.

- (3)  $\text{Asp}[PFV] \leftrightarrow \text{-men-} / \_ \text{Voice[agent,-D]}$

On the way to MG, the Voice head was lost in contexts where acquirers had inadequate evidence for positing agentive semantics, resulting in a „split“ of Asp[pfv] into a target and a resultant state participle. The development of *-men-* is thus the result of a diachronic reanalysis of the feature content of a lexical item.

**References:** Alexiadou, A. & E. Anagnostopoulou (2008). Structuring participles. *Proceedings of WCCFL 26*, 33–41. Cascadilla. Alexiadou, A. A., E. Anagnostopoulou & F. Schäfer (2015). External arguments in transitivity alternations. *OUP Embick, D. (2000). Features, syntax, and categories in the Latin perfect. Linguistic Inquiry 31*, 185–230. Schäfer, F. (2017). Romance and Greek medio-passives and the typology of Voice. In D'Alessandro, R., Franco, I. & Gallego, A. *The verbal domain*. OUP, 129–152.