

HOW 'ADJECTIVAL' ARE ADJECTIVAL PASSIVE PARTICIPLES IN MODERN GREEK AND ENGLISH?*

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In this paper passive forms requiring a lexical derivation in Modern Greek (M.G.) (i.e. passive participles) and English (i.e. adjectival *-ed* participles) are compared and contrasted on the basis of a set of morphosyntactic criteria, with a view to revealing the degree of their affinity to common adjectives. It is, thus, claimed that both M.G. and English adjectival passive participles exhibit a mixture of adjectival and verbal properties of a verbal nature. It is also shown that though this gradience in the adjectival vs verbal characteristics of lexical passives exists in both languages, nevertheless, M.G. and English manifest interesting differences with respect to its realizations.

In Lascaratou & P.-Warburton (1984) evidence from Modern Greek was presented to support, and thus reinforce, the theoretical distinction between lexical and transformational passives which has been shown to be valid in English (Wasow, 1977; Chomsky, 1981) and Russian (Babby & Brecht, 1975), among other languages. Thus, on the basis of Wasow's distinguishing criteria, it was argued that M.G. *be*+participle passives are adjectival and should, therefore, be lexically derived, whereas non-*be*-passives (i.e. monolectic and *have*-passives) require a syntactic derivation. What is interesting about this distinction in M.G. is that it is realized by means of a parallel morphological distinction, which, however, is not the case in English. In other words, in M.G., where there are three different morphological realizations of the passive, one of them is clearly adjectival, while in English, where all passives are of a *be*+participle form, the lexical derivation of some of them depends on the adjectival (morphosyntactic and semantic) properties of the participle. Consequently, in English it is harder to detect adjectival passives than it is in M.G.

In what follows we shall attempt to answer the question that naturally arises: Does the lexical derivation of all M.G. and some English passive participles mean that they behave like 'true' adjectives, or does their deverbal origin interfere by means of certain morphosyntactic characteristics which set them apart from pure adjectives? It will be argued that in both languages adjectival passives constitute a separate set of adjectives,

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which, due to their deverbal nature, are 'less adjectival' than common adjectives and share some morphosyntactic features with verbs.

1.1 M.G. passive participles distinguish themselves from other adjectives by not allowing prefixation with the negative prefix *a-* (*an-* before vowels), which is highly productive with common adjectives. This prefix is also commonly found attached to deverbal adjectives ending in *-tos*, which are formed from the aorist stem and have the same or almost the same meaning as the passive participle. (See Setatos, 1985 for a comparative study of verbal derivatives in *-ménos* and *-tos*, in relation to their function, metaphorical uses, impossible or problematic formations, verbal categories, compounds, and to the system of verbal adjectives and nouns. See also Triantafyllidis, 1941: 136-137.) Compare,

	1a.	kakós	-	ákakos
		evil	-	unevil
	b.	ísos	-	ánisos
		equal	-	unequal
	c.	áksios	-	anáksios
		worthy	-	unworthy
	d.	γraftós	-	áγraftos
		written	-	unwritten
but not	e.	γraménos	-	*áγraménos
	f.	xtistós	-	áxtistos
		built	-	unbuilt
but not	g.	xtizménos	-	*axtizménos
	h.	vrastós	-	ávrastos
		boiled	-	unboiled
but not	i.	vrazménos	-	*avrazménos

Unlike M.G. participles, English participles can be prefixed with a negative prefix, namely *un-*, this, in fact, being one of the distinguishing criteria widely used in support of their adjectival nature. (See Siegel, 1970; Quirk et al., 1972; Bresnan, 1976; Wasow, 1977.) E.g.:

- 2a. This village is *uninhabited*.
- b. Mary's quick recovery was *unexpected*.
- c. Her mother-in-law is *uneducated*.

The fact that the prefix *un-* gets attached to a substantial class of passive participles without there existing corresponding active transitive verbs, e.g. **uninhabit*, **unexpected*, **uneducate*, constitutes evidence in support of the claim that some English participles are adjectival rather than verbal.

With respect to the possibility of a negative prefixation, therefore, M.G. and English manifest an interesting difference: While some English *-ed* participles have adopted a typically adjectival prefixation, M.G. participles remain outside any such derivational process which is equally typical of adjectives in M.G. In other words, English participles exhibit here a stronger affinity to adjectives than M.G. participles do.

1.2 On the other hand, neither M.G. nor English passive participles allow suffixation

with any of the forms which, attached to adjectives, produce a diminutive effect. Thus, in M.G. the following diminutive suffixes are only attached to adjectives, never to participles¹. E.g.:

- 3a. *-úlis* : kondós - kondúlis
 short - shortish
 áspros - asprúlis
 white - whitish
- b. *-útsikos*: mikrós - mikrútsikos
 small - smallish
 kalós - kalútsikos
 good - good-dim
- c. *-opós* : kítrinos - kitrinopós
 yellow - yellowish
- d. *-íðerós* : mávros - mavriðerós
 black - blackish
- e. *-ulós* : paxís - paxulós
 fat - fattish

- but not 4a. vrazménos - *vrazmenúlis
 boiled - boiled-dim.
- b. lipiménos - *lipimenútsikos
 sad - sad-dim.
- c. kurazménos - *kurazmenopós
 tired - tired-dim.

Similarly, no such suffixation is possible in English. The only suffix which, attached to adjectives, produces a down-toning effect, i.e. *-ish*, is never found with *-ed* participles. (See Quirk et al., 1972:1006.) Eg.:

- 5a. red - reddish
 b. tall - tallish
 c. poor - poorish

- but not 6a. worried - *worriedish
 b. painted - *paintedish
 c. boiled - *boiledish

Consequently, the impossibility of accepting typically adjectival diminutive suffixes, constitutes a common characteristic for M.G. and English passive participles, which sets them apart from adjectives in both languages.

2.1 In English, where the intensifier *very* is used with gradable adjectives and adverbs

1. It is worth noting that in a popular Greek song the diminutive form of a participle is used quite exceptionally. This is the form *meθizmenáki* which is the result of the suffixation of the participle *meθizménos* (drunk) with the diminutive suffix *-áki*. It is interesting to observe that *-áki* is typically added to nouns to produce a diminutive effect or indicate endearment. The form *meθizmenáki*, therefore, is quite idiosyncratic and should be attributed to poetic licence.

while *very much* is used to intensify verbs, the possibility of intensifying passive participles with either of the two can be used as a test for their adjectival or verbal properties, respectively. (See Quirk et al., 1972:246; Wasow, 1977:340.) Compare,

- 7a. He hated her very much.
 b. She was *very much hated* (by him).
 c. *She was *very hated*.
- 8a. The dog frightened the baby very much.
 b. The baby was *very much frightened* (by the dog).
 c. The baby was *very frightened*.

What our examples show is that, while *very much* is freely used with passive participles, the use of *very* is more restrictive, its co-occurrence with certain participles thus revealing their adjectival nature.

On the other hand, no such test is possible in M.G. because both verbs and adjectives can be intensified by means of the same adverbial, namely (*pára*) *polí*, e.g.:

- 9a. tin aγapó (*pára*) *polí*.
 her-acc. love-I (very) much.
 (I love her (very) much.)
 b. íne (*pára*) *polí* ómorfi.
 is-she (very) much beautiful.
 (She is (very) beautiful.)

The intensifier *polí* also functions as a prefix, which, however, discriminates between participles and adjectives: it gets commonly attached to the former but never to the latter. More specifically, *poli-* is freely bound to passive participles that are derived from verbs denoting an action that can be repeatedly carried out. In such cases *poli-* acquires a particular meaning; it refers to the frequency of the action repeated and it is often interchangeable with the even more emphatic prefix *xiljo-* (one thousand times). In the following starred examples the adjectives are prefixed with *poli-/xiljo-*.

- 10a. to trayúði aftó íne *poli-/xiljo-* trayudizméno.
 the-nom. song-nom. this-nom. is many/one thousand times sung-nom.
 (This song has been sung many/one thousand times.)
 b. *to trayúði aftó íne *poli-/xiljo-* dimofilés.
 the-nom. song-nom. this-nom. is many/one thousand times popular-nom.
 (*This song is many/one thousand times popular.)
- 11a. to astío aftó íne *poli-/xiljo-* ipoméno.
 the-nom. joke-nom. this-nom. is many/one thousand times told-nom.
 (This joke has been told many/one thousand times.)
 b. *to astío aftó íne *poli-/xiljo-* kinó.
 the-nom. joke-nom. this-nom. is many/one thousand times common-nom.
 (*This joke is many/one thousand times common.)
- 12a. i fústa aftí íne *poli-/xiljo-* foreméni.
 the-nom. skirt-nom. this-nom. is many/one thousand times worn-nom.
 (This skirt has been worn many/one thousand times.)

- b. *i fústa aftí íne poli-/xiljo- paljá.
 the-nom. skirt-nom. this-nom. is many/one thousand times old-nom.
 (*This skirt is many/one thousand times old.)

Adjectives do not allow prefixation with *poli-* and *xiljo-* because the outcome of this prefixing is semantically deviant. This is naturally due to the fact that on the one hand *poli-* and *xiljo-* presuppose the repetition of an action, whereas, on the other, adjectives strictly express properties. It is precisely this that semantically distinguishes passive participles from adjectives; although a participle basically denotes a state or property, the action from which the state or property originates is implicitly present in the meaning of the participle. Consequently, the dual semantic load carried by passive participles allows the prefixes *poli-* and *xiljo-* to be attached to them and bring out their verbal implications.

2.2 One more characteristic of M.G. passive participles which differentiates them from adjectives is that the former may be modified by the manner adverbials *kalá* (well) and *kaká* (badly), whereas the latter cannot². In fact, *kalá* and *kaká* are commonly prefixed to participles. Compare,

- 13a. to vivlío aftó íne kalá γraméno / kaloyraméno.
 the-nom. book-nom. this-nom. is well written-nom. well-written-nom.
 (This book is well(-)written.)
- b. *to vivlío aftó íne kalá endiaféron.
 the-nom. book-nom. this-nom. is well interesting-nom.
 (*This book is well interesting.)
- 14a. o orizmós su íne kaká δjatipoméno /
 the-nom. definition-nom. your-gen. is badly formulated-nom. /
kakoδjatipoméno.
 badly-formulated-nom.
 (Your definition is badly(-)formulated.)
- b. *o orizmós su íne kaká asafís.
 the-nom. definition-nom. your-gen. is badly unclear-nom.
 (*Your definition is badly unclear.)
- 15a. o ángelos íne kalá diméno / kalodiméno.
 the-nom. Angelos-nom. is well dressed-nom. well-dressed-nom.
 (Angelos is well(-)dressed.)
- b. *o ángelos íne kalá kompsós.
 the-nom. Angelos-nom. is well elegant-nom.
 (*Angelos is well elegant.)

2. There is an exception to this neat pattern, however. This is the adjective *ásximos* (ugly) which occurs prefixed with *kaká-* in the form *kakásximos* (extremely ugly). In this case, therefore, the prefix *kaká-* functions as an intensifier rather than as a manner adverbial.

- 16a. to fajitó ine *kaká majireméno* / *kakomajireméno*.
 the-nom. food-nom. is badly cooked-nom. badly-cooked-nom.
 (The food is badly(-)cooked.)
- b. *to fajitó ine *kaká análato*.
 the-nom. food-nom. is badly saltless-nom.
 (*The food is badly saltless.)

It might be argued that the passive participles which are prefixed with *kalá-/kaká-* are lexically derived from corresponding active transitive verbs which are already prefixed with these forms. In other words, one might wish to claim that the prefixation with *kalá-/kaká-* precedes the derivation of the participles and, therefore, these prefixed forms do not constitute any evidence of the 'special' status of passive participles, which, amongst other things, is manifested through their ability to get freely prefixed with forms which are never attached to common adjectives.

It is a fact that there are some active transitive verbs which may occur prefixed with *kalá-/kaká-*, such as *kalotróyo* (I eat enjoyable food) *kakotróyo* (I eat badly), *kalopíno* (I drink pleasant drinks), *kalopernó* (I have a good time), *kakopernó* (I have a bad time)³. However, these prefixed forms are idiosyncratic in that they are mainly used intransitively and, consequently, they do not occur in passive constructions. Moreover, no participles are derived from them. Compare,

- 17a. *kaloperásame* sti sandoríni; *kalofáyame* ke
 had-we a good time in-the-acc. Santorini-acc.; enjoyed-we good food and
kaloípjame.
 enjoyed-we good drinks.
 (We had a good time in Santorini; we enjoyed good food and drinks.)
- b. **kaloperásame* tis ðjakopés mas sti sandoríni;
 enjoyed-we the-acc. holidays-acc. our-gen. in-the-acc. Santorini-acc.;
 **kalofáyame* topikés lixudjés ke *kaloípjame* áfθono
 ate-we-well local-acc. specialities-acc. and drank-we-well plenty-of
 ylikó krasí.
 sweet-acc. wine-acc.
 (*We spent our holidays well in Santorini; we ate delicious local specialities
 well and we drank plenty of sweet wine well.)

We can safely conclude, therefore, that *kalá-/kaká-* participles are not derived from already prefixed active forms but rather their prefixation follows their lexical derivation from corresponding, non-prefixed, active transitive verbs. Thus, the evidence provided by the *kalá-/kaká-* test is two-fold: on the one hand, passive participles have been shown to differ from common adjectives in that, unlike them, they are freely prefixed with *kalá-/kaká-* and, on the other, the fact that *kalá-/kaká-* are also found attached to certain intransitive verbs — no matter how restricted or marginal this class of verbs is

3. As Triantafyllidis (1941:150) observes, such forms which are prefixed with *kalá-* produce a down-toning effect when they are used in the negative. E.g., *ðen kalovlépo* (I do not quite see) *ðen kalopernó* (I am not having a good time).

— brings out the semantic affinity of participles to verbs.

In English, too, the manner adverbial *well* can be used to modify passive participles but not adjectives. In addition, *well* is often compounded with participles, e.g.:

- 18a. This essay is *well written/well-written*.
 b. The food is *well cooked/well-cooked*.
 c. *Your house is *well clean*.
 d. *English chocolate is *well tasty*.

On the other hand, the manner adverbial *badly*, which is equally used to modify participles, never occurs compounded. Moreover, *badly* is often used to express intensification rather than manner. E.g.:

- 19a. This essay is *badly written*. (Manner adverbial)
 b. Your presence is *badly needed*. (Intensifier)
 c. I felt *badly disappointed*. (Intensifier)

What is shown by the co-occurrence of M.G. and English passive participles with the manner adverbials discussed above is that despite their adjectival properties, they clearly 'echo' the action of the verb from which they are derived. Thus, on the one hand, they express a state and, on the other, they can refer to the quality of the action from which the state originates. Once more, therefore, the dual nature of participles is brought out.

3.1 M.G. *be*+participle passive constructions — like any other passive form, i.e. monolectic or *have*-passive — can take both [+animate] and [-animate] *apó* agent-phrases⁴, while adjectives can only be accompanied by the latter. The reason is that agent-phrases consisting of a [+animate] NP are agent-phrases *par excellence*, in the sense that they refer to a 'doer', i.e. an animate entity that performs an action. They require, therefore, that the constructions they collocate with have partly at least, verbal implications. Consequently, they cannot appear in constructions that simply express properties, such as *be*+adjective constructions. Compare,

- 20a. i xóra íne *prodoméni* *apó* *tus simáxus tis*.
 the-nom. country-nom. is betrayed-nom. by the-acc. allies-acc. her-gen.
 (The country has been betrayed by her allies.)
- b. *i xóra íne *móni* *apó* *tus simáxus tis*.
 the-nom. country-nom. is alone-nom. by the-acc. allies-acc. her-gen.
 (*The country is alone by her allies.)
- c. ta maljá tis ánis íne *koména* *apó*
 the-nom. hair-nom. the-gen. Annie's-gen. is cut-nom. by
ton ángelo.
 the-acc. Angelos-acc.
 (Annie's hair has been cut by Angelos.)

4. 'Agent-phrase' is used here as a cover term to refer not only to those phrases which contain an animate NP expressing the agent, i.e. the doer of an action, but also to refer to phrases which consist of an inanimate NP denoting the cause or instrument.

- d. *ta maljá tis ánis íne kondá apó
 the-nom. hair-nom. the-gen. Annie's-gen. is short-nom. by
 ton ángelo.
 the-acc. Angelos-acc.
 (*Annie's hair is short by Angelos.)
- e. i ikónes aftés íne zoyrafizménes apó
 the-nom. pictures-nom. these-nom. are-they painted-nom. by
 mikrá pedjá.
 little-acc. children-acc.
 (These pictures are painted by little children.)
- f. *i ikónes aftés íne xromatistés apó
 the-nom. pictures-nom. these-nom. are-they colourful-nom. by
 mikrá pedjá.
 little-acc. children-acc.
 (*These pictures are colourful by little children.)

On the other hand, agent-phrases consisting of a [-animate] NP expressing the cause or instrument, rather than the 'doer' of an action, can occur with adjectives as well as with participles. E.g.:

- 21a. i iríni íne kurazméni apó tin polí duljá.
 the-nom. Irene-nom. is tired-nom. from the-acc. much-acc. work-acc.
 (Irene is tired from too much work.)
- b. i iríni íne xlomí apó tin polí duljá.
 the-nom. Irene-nom. is pale-nom. from the-acc. much-acc. work-acc.
 (Irene is pale from too much work.)
- c. o jánis íne zalizménos apó to krasí
 the-nom. John-nom. is dizzy-nom. from the-acc. wine-acc.
 pu ípje.
 that-acc. drank-he.
 (John is dizzy from the wine he drank.)
- d. o jánis íne árostos apó to krasí
 the-nom. John-nom. is sick-nom. from the-acc. wine-acc.
 pu ípje.
 that-acc. drank-he.
 (John is sick from the wine he drank.)

What is shown in examples 20 (a-f) and 21 (a-d) is that, despite their adjectival characteristics, passive participles behave like the other passive forms with respect to the collocation with agent-phrases. Thus, unlike 'true' adjectives, which can only take agent-phrases expressing cause or instrument, participles can also be accompanied by [+animate] agents, which typically and exclusively co-occur with verbs.

The situation seems to be more subtle in English, where *by* agent-phrases, whether animate or inanimate, occur only with passives and never with adjectives. However, the collocation of the participle with a [+animate] or [-animate] agent-phrase may indicate stronger verbal or adjectival force, respectively. In fact, for Quirk et al. (1972:244) this

distinction can be used to test the verbal force retained by the participle. 'The verbal force', it is argued, 'is explicit for the -ed form when a *by* agentive phrase with a personal agent is present, indicating the correspondence to the active form of the sentence:

The man was *offended* by the policeman.
 We are *appreciated* by our students.
 She was *misunderstood* by her parents.'

On the other hand, Quirk et al. remark (1972:244), modification by the intensifier *very* being an explicit indication that the participle has achieved adjective status, it would be plausible to expect that the co-occurrence of *very* together with an animate *by* agent-phrase would produce an unacceptable sentence. 'However,' it is claimed, 'with the -ed participle form, there appears to be divided usage, with increasing acceptance of the co-occurrence of *very* with a *by* agentive phrase containing a personal agent:

?The man was *very offended* by the policeman.'

Obviously, when a participle form accepting *very* co-occurs with an inanimate *by* agent-phrase, the intensifier *very* can freely be retained. E.g.:

- 22a. They were *very annoyed* by her insistence.
 b. I am *very disappointed* by your lack of consideration.

However, the co-occurrence of [+animate] *by* agent-phrases with clearly adjectival participles, such as forms prefixed with *un-*, shows that the distinction put forward by Quirk et al. (1972), namely between participles with retained verbal force and those with acquired adjective status — as shown from the [+/-animacy] feature of the accompanying agent-phrase — can only be regarded as a tendency rather than as a safe criterion leading to a clear-cut distinction. Consider the following:

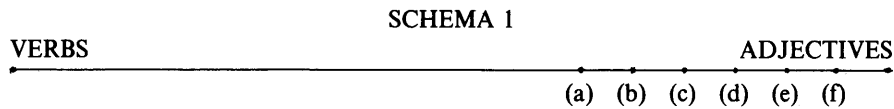
- 23a. The flying object was *unidentified* by the research team.
 b. The deserter was *undesired* by his countrymen.
 c. Her nervousness passed *unnoticed* by the majority of her audience.
 d. Many vital parts of history still remain *undiscovered* by historians.

As was argued earlier, prefixation with *un-* constitutes clear evidence of the adjectival status of the participles. This, however, as our examples show, does not prevent co-occurrence with animate *by* agent-phrases.

Concluding remarks. Our comparison of M.G. passive participles and English adjectival -ed participles with 'pure' adjectives in both languages has shown that the former have certain characteristic properties of their own which are a consequence of their deverbal origin. These special properties can be accounted for if adjectival participles are treated as a separate class of adjectives which are less 'adjectival' than common adjectives and share some morpho-syntactic features with verbs.

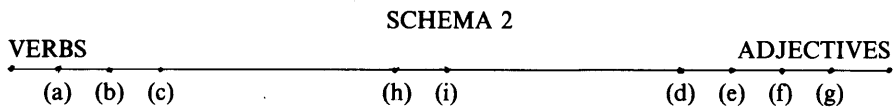
This gradience in the adjectival vs verbal properties of M.G. participles can be illustrated schematically by means of a scale (Schema 1), where verbs are located at one polar end and adjectives at the other. Participles would then generally be placed at, or close to, the adjectives end, though some of their uses would figure a little further towards the verbs end. Sentences 24 (a)-(d) were discussed earlier in this paper, while 24

(e) and (f) illustrate clear adjectival characteristics of M.G. participles discussed in Lascaratou and P.-Warburton (1984).



- 24a. *i ikónes aftés íne zoyrafizménés* apó mikrá pedjá.
(These pictures are painted by little children.)
- b. *to trayúdi aftó íne poli-/xiljo-trayudizméno.*
(This song has been sung many/one thousand times.)
- c. *to vivlío su íne kaloyraméno.*
(Your book is well-written.)
- d. *i iríni íne kurazméni* apó tin polí ðuljá.
(Irene is tired from too much work.)
- e. *o ángelos íne árostos kje eknevrizménos.*
(Angelos is ill and upset.)
- f. *o jánis íne pjo kurazménos* apó ména.
(John is more tired than me.)

In English, where all passives (lexical or syntactic) are of a *be*+participle type, it is even more difficult to draw a clear dividing line between adjectival and verbal constructions. The following schema attempts to illustrate this gradience. Thus, some of the uses discussed in this paper which indicate retained verbal force (25 (a)-(c)) are placed close to the verbs end and some others which reveal acquired adjective status (25 (d)-(g)) are located closer to the adjectives end. Most importantly, sentences 25 (h) and (i), where both typical adjectival and verbal features co-exist in the same construction, are inevitably placed somewhere in the middle of the scale.



- 25a. She was *misunderstood* by her parents.
- b. The food is *well cooked*.
- c. She was *very much hated*.
- d. They were (*very*) *annoyed* by her insistence.
- e. I felt *badly disappointed*.
- f. The baby was *very frightened*.
- g. This village is *uninhabited*.
- h. ?The man was *very offended* by the policemen.
- i. The deserter was *undesired* by his countrymen.

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