

15.5 Uses of the participle, part I

PARTICIPLES “PARTICIPATE” OF ADJECTIVAL AND VERBAL FUNCTIONS.

Because they are adjectives, they must agree with the noun or pronoun to which they refer.

Because they convey the connotation of a verb, they may take a D O, an I O, or any other function their verb is able to take.

EITHER FUNCTION MAY PREDOMINATE, AS THIS OVERVIEW SHOWS:

OVERVIEW OF FUNCTIONS WITH ENGLISH PARALLELS

A) ADJECTIVAL FUNCTIONS PREDOMINATE

attributive: an ongoing concern, a singing choir

as nouns (substantives): English participles are not used as nouns without some support: “the smiling one.”

B) VERBAL FUNCTIONS PREDOMINATE

B1: SUPPLEMENTARY: They saw the man walking (in Greek: “clause of perception”)
He started talking.

B2: CIRCUMSTANTIAL:

a) attached	(equivalent to various adverbial clauses) Seeking, you will find. (conditional) After being praised, the boy worked even more eagerly. (temporal)
b) absolute	Weather permitting, the game will be played. (Genitive absolute in Greek; also equivalent to various adverbial clauses)

FUNCTIONS OF GREEK PARTICIPLES

A) PARTICIPLES THAT FUNCTION PRIMARILY AS ADJECTIVES OR NOUNS. THEY ARE USED GENERALLY WITH AN ARTICLE

- In the attributive position

[ὁ γεωργὸς οὐκ εἶδε τοὺς κλέπτοντας νεανίας.]
 S V DO

The farmer did not see the thieving youths. (This participle is in the first attributive position)

[ὁ γεωργὸς οὐκ εἶδε τοὺς νεανίας τοὺς τὰ μῆλα κλέπτοντας.]
 S V DO

The farmer did not see the youths that robbed the apples (This participle is in the second attributive position)

- Used substantively, as nouns

[ὁ γεωργὸς οὐκ εἶδε τοὺς κλέπτοντας / = τοὺς κλῶπας]
 S V DO

The farmer did not see the thieves.

B) PARTICIPLES IN USES WHERE THE VERBAL FUNCTION PREDOMINATES. THEY ARE NOT USED WITH AN ARTICLE

- B1) SUPPLEMENTARY PARTICIPLES, USED WITH MAIN VERBS.

- α) AS VERBAL PREDICATES OF NOUN CLAUSES DEPENDING UPON "VERBS OF PERCEPTION."

This group includes verbs denoting physical perception through the senses (e.g. to see,) and others denoting learning associated with physical perception (e.g. , to find, to know, etc.). The S of these clauses of perception is normally in the accusative, and so is the participle that serves as verbal predicate:

main clause	“clause of perception” (indirect statement)	
[ὁ γεωργὸς οὐκ εἶδε]	(τοὺς νεανίας	κλέπτοντας.)
S	V	S in acc
		verbal predicate: participle in the accusative

The farmer did not see the young men stealing.

Note 1: It should be noted that ἀκούω (= to hear), which takes a verbal complement in the genitive, governs a clause of perception where both S and participle are in the genitive:

main clause	“clause of perception” (indirect statement)	
[ὁ γεωργὸς ἤκουσε]	(τοῦ οἰκέτου	κράζοντος.)
S	V	S in genitive
		verbal predicate: participle in the genitive

The farmer heard the servant screaming.

Note 2: When the same verbs denote intellectual perception or knowledge, they tend to take an indirect statement introduced by ὅτι or ὥς .

β) SUPPLEMENTARY PARTICIPLES, USED IN COMBINATION WITH A FEW VERBS (MOSTLY IN CLASSICAL GREEK) MEANING “BEGIN,” “CONTINUE,” ETC.

Typically, in these phrases the burden of the verbal meaning is carried by the participle, while the conjugated verb shows a circumstance of that action. Compare “She started crying,” “Did you finish using the phone?”

Examples:

θύων τοῖς θεοῖς διετέλεσα

I continued offering sacrifice to the gods.

παῦσαι λέγουσα

Stop talking! (addressing a woman, since the participle is feminine).

- **B2) CIRCUMSTANTIAL PARTICIPLES, INDICATING SOME CIRCUMSTANCE UNDER WHICH THE VERBAL ACTION TAKES PLACE. THEIR FUNCTION IS PRIMARILY ADVERBIAL, REFERRING TO TIME, CAUSE, CONDITION, ETC.**

English participles closely parallel many of these usages.

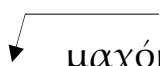
a) THE NOUN THEY MODIFY MAY HAVE A SYNTACTICAL FUNCTION IN THE CLAUSE, SUCH AS SUBJECT, DIRECT OBJECT, ETC. I WILL CALL THESE "ATTACHED PARTICIPLES".

OR

b) THE PARTICIPLE MAY BE "UNATTACHED" OR ABSOLUTE. THE NOUN IT MODIFIES DOES NOT HAVE A SYNTACTICAL FUNCTION IN THE CLAUSE. ABSOLUTE PARTICIPLES will be studied in Lesson 16.5. THE PARTICIPIAL PHRASE AGAIN INDICATES TIME, CAUSE, CONDITION, ETC.

EXAMPLES OF B2a:

1) expressing time

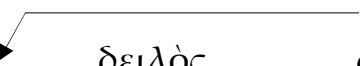

 μαχόμενος τῷ ἀδελφῷ ἀπέθανε.
 //S// participle w/Subject dat w/pple S + V

He died fighting against his brother (= He died as he was fighting against his brother)

κατελθοῦσα ἡ μήτηρ ἐπέπληξε τῷ παιδίῳ.
 participle w/Subject S V dat w/V

a) *The mother (upon) coming down, rebuked her child . / b) Coming down, the mother rebuked her child / c) The mother came down and rebuked her child. / d) After she came down, the mother rebuked her child.*

2) expressing cause


 δειλὸς ὦν ἀπέφυγε
 //S// PN through pple pple w/Subject V

Being cowardly, he fled (= He fled because he is / was a coward.)

3) stating a condition

καλὰ ποιοῦντες καλὰ δεχόμεθα.
 DO of pple pple w/Subject //S// DO V

Doing good (deeds) we receive good (deeds). (= If we do good, we receive good.)

Notes:

- 1) The tense of the circumstantial participle may denote aspect, but often it rather denotes time *relative to the time of the main verb*. That is why the translations marked as c) and d) of sentence 2) are possible.
- 2) Participles may take verbal complements, as stated before: in sentence 3) the participle of the verb *to be* is accompanied by a predicate nominative.

CIRCUMSTANTIAL PARTICIPLES MAY BE EQUIVALENT TO OTHER CLAUSES. EXAMPLES WILL BE GIVEN LATER.