

Passive and Middle Voices

A lesson for the *Paideia* web-app
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The Passive Voice

- So far all of our Greek verbs have been in the *active voice*
 - Subject performs the verbal action
 - "Clare is going to the store."
 - "Ricardo often makes dinner."
- But some verbs can also be used in the "passive voice"
 - Subject is the *receiver* of the action
 - In English: "to be" + past participle
 - "Clare is carried to the store."
 - "Ricardo is served dinner."
 - Now Clare is not doing the "carrying", and Ricardo is not doing the "serving"
 - Performed by someone else and *directed at* Clare and Ricardo
 - But they're still the grammatical subjects



Primary Middle/Passive Endings

	Singular	Plural
1 st person	-μαι	-μεθα
2 nd person	-σαι	-σθε
3 rd person	-ται	-νται



Primary Middle/Passive Endings

	Singular	Plural
1 st person	-ομαι	-ομεθα
2 nd person	-η	-εσθε
3 rd person	-εται	-ονται



Present Middle/Passive Examples

	Singular	Plural
1 st person	λυομαι	λυομεθα
2 nd person	λυη	λυεσθε
3 rd person	λυεται	λυονται



So Who's Performing the Action?

- In English we use the preposition "by" to identify the agent behind a passive verb
 - "Clare is being carried to the store by her horse."



Expressing Agency with 'Υπο

- In Greek the agent is identified using the preposition **ὕπο**
 - **Ὁ ἄρτος φερεται ὑπο Μαρίας.**
 - "The bread is being carried by Maria."
 - **Βλεπομαι ὑπο γυναικος.**
 - I am usually seen by a woman.
- The agent is in the genitive case after **ὕπο**
 - This doesn't have a normal genitive meaning
 - Case is like a switch "activating" the meaning "by" for the preposition



Expressing Agency with Δια

- The agent can also be introduced with another preposition, δια
 - Followed by the genitive case
- An *intermediate* agent
 - Not the ultimate source of the action
 - Just the immediate cause
 - Sometimes translate δια with "through" instead of "by"
- E.g.
 - Θυσια διδοται δια δουλου μου.
 - A sacrifice is being offered by my slave.
 - Because δια is used we know the sacrifice wasn't the slave's idea
 - Someone else sent him to make the offering



Contracting prepositions

- The final vowel can drop off a preposition
 - If the next word starts with a vowel
 - Replaced with apostrophe
- E.g.
 - ὑπ' αὐτοῦ
 - δι' αὐτοῦ
- How do I type the apostrophe?
 - Switch to English keyboard



Acting Reflexively

- Sometimes I perform an action on myself
 - The *agent* of the action is the same as the *receiver*
- ἑαυτος, -η, -ον, "himself, herself, itself"
 - Just like the pronoun αὐτος but with an extra prefix
 - Rough breathing over the prefixed ε
 - ἵστησι ἑαυτον.
 - He stands himself up.
- ἀλληλων, "one another, each other"
 - Ἐγειρουσιν ἀλληλων
 - They are starting to lift one another.



Acting Reflexively

- ἐμαυτος, -η, -ον, "myself"
 - Just like ἐαυτος but with prefix ἐμ- instead of ἐ-
 - Smooth breathing on epsilon instead of rough
 - ἴστημι ἐμαυτον.
 - I am standing myself up.
- σεαυτος, -η, -ον, "yourself"
 - Just like ἐαυτος but with prefix σε- instead of ἐ-
 - The σε- reminds us of συ, "you"
 - ἴστης σεαυτον.
 - You are standing yourself up.



Neither Passive Nor Active

- Some actions aren't active or passive
 - The agent is the same one receiving the action
- The "middle" voice
 - Sometimes reflexive
 - Λυομεθα. "We set ourselves free."
 - Sometimes English would use an active verb
 - Τη Κορινθη πορευονται. "They are going to Corinth."
 - Sometimes called "deponent" verbs
 - We'll call them "middle only" verbs



So Is It Passive Or Middle?

- The passive voice and middle voice use the same verb endings
 - So how do we tell them apart?
- Is the verb "middle only"?
 - Generally don't have a passive voice
 - Dictionary form is middle
 - *έρχομαι* (not *έρχω*)
 - *προσευχομαι* (not *προσευχω*)
- What is the context?
 - Try passive first, then try middle
 - Which one makes better sense in this situation?



Present Middle/Passive Imperative

	Singular	Plural
1 st person	--	--
2 nd person	πορευ <u>ου</u>	πορευ <u>εσθε</u>
3 rd person	πορευ <u>εσθω</u>	πορευ <u>οεσθωσαν</u>



Present Middle/Passive Infinitive

Active

λυειν

"to release"

Middle/Passive

λυεσθαι

"to be released"



Present Middle/Passive Infinitive

Active

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Middle/Passive

πορευεσθαι

"to go"



Keep Learning

- You can learn more about the present middle and passive voices here:
 - Mounce, *Basics of Biblical Greek* (3rd edition)
 - present middle and passive 18.1-18.18 (pp. 149-154)
 - Wallace, *Basics of New Testament Syntax* (1st edition)
 - "Voice," *Middle*, pp. 183-186
 - "Voice," *Passive*, pp. 186-191

