Adjectives

Describing the Qualities of Things

Getting Started with Adjectives

- It's hard to say much using only nouns and pronouns
  - Simon is a father.
    - what kind of father?
  - The king is a man.
    - what kind of man?

- An adjective modifies (describes) a nominal
  - Simon is a **good** father.
  - The king is an **old** man.

The Forms of Adjectives

- If you can use nouns and pronouns, you can use adjectives
  - Share the same endings
- Most adjectives have different forms for each gender
  - Like 3rd person personal pronouns
    - masculine (2nd decl. endings)
    - feminine (1st decl. endings)
    - neuter (2nd declension)
  - Dictionary form gives 3 endings
    - *καλος, -η, -ον*

καλος, -η, -ον

The Case Forms of Καλος, "Good"

	Masc. (2nd decl.)	Fem. (1st decl.)	Neut. (2nd decl.)	
nom.	καλος	καλη	καλον	singular
gen.	καλου	καλης	καλου	
voc.	καλε	καλη	καλον	
nom.	καλοι	καλαι	καλα	plural
gen.	καλων	καλων	καλων	
voc.	καλοι	καλαι	καλα	

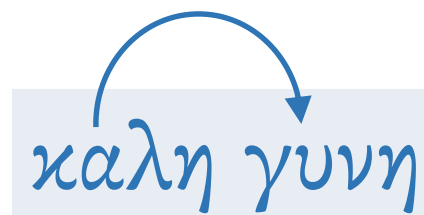# Adjectives are Agreeable

- How do we know which nominal the adjective is describing?
  - In English
    - word order (adj. right before nom.)
  - In Greek
    - word order flexible

- An adjective *agrees* with the nominal it modifies
  - Same gender
  - Same case
  - Same number (usually)

ἀνθρωπος κακος

a bad person

καλη γυνη

a beautiful woman
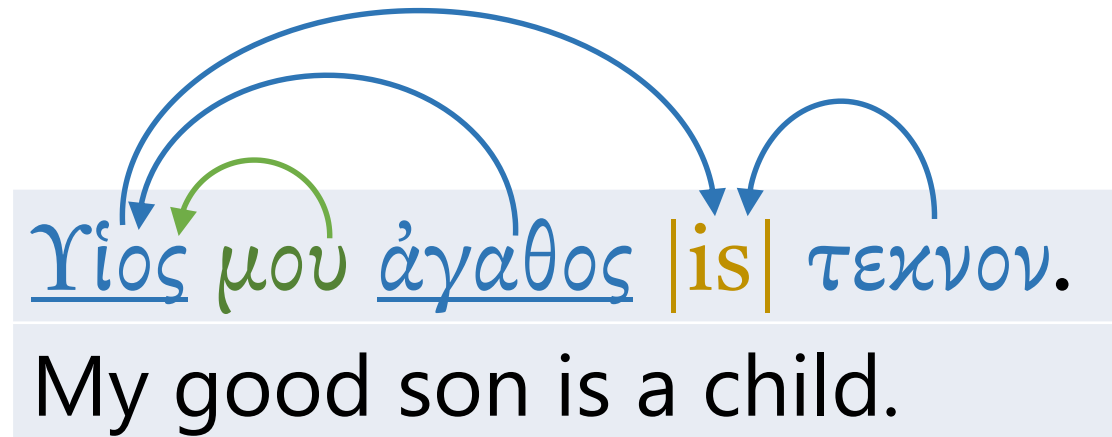
οἰκος του ἀγαθου υἱου
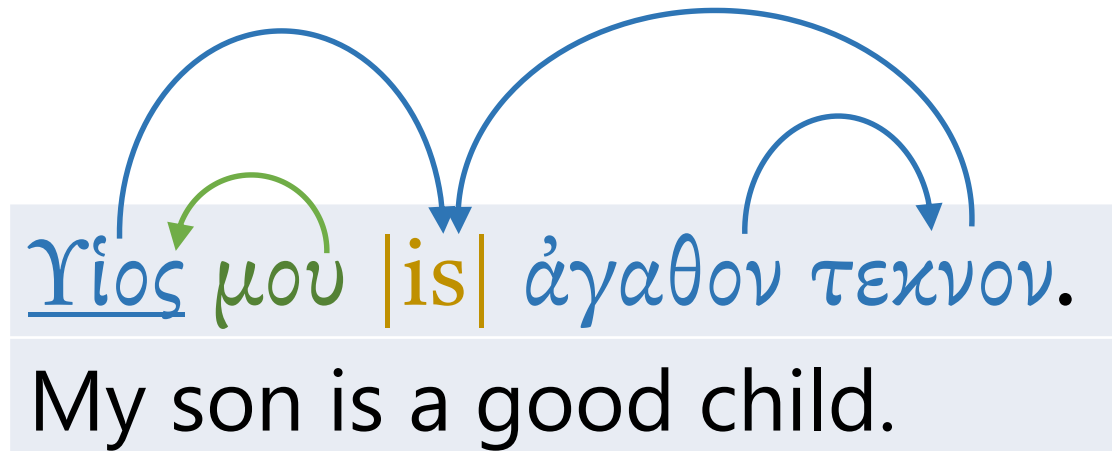
a house that belongs to the good son

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Υἱός μου ἀγαθος |is| τεκνον.

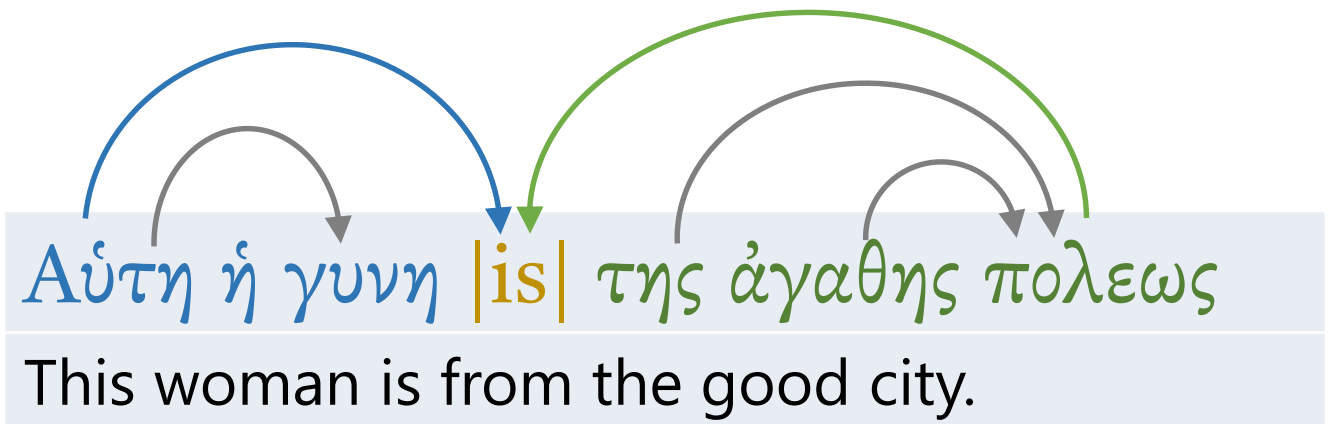My good son is a child.

Υἱός μου |is| ἀγαθον τεκνον.

My son is a good child.

Adjectives are Agreeable

- Normal adjectives keep their 1st or 2nd declension endings
  - Even when modifying 3rd declension nominals

Αὐτη ἡ γυνη |is| της ἀγαθης πολεως

This woman is from the good city.

Positioning Adjectives
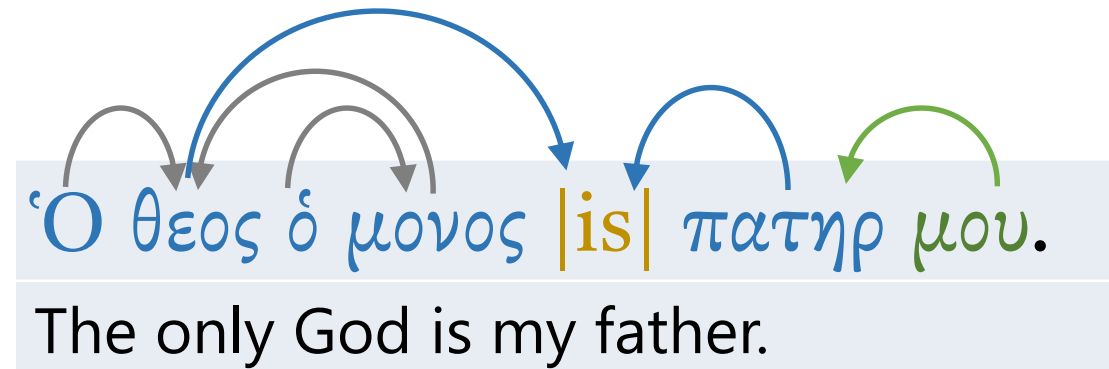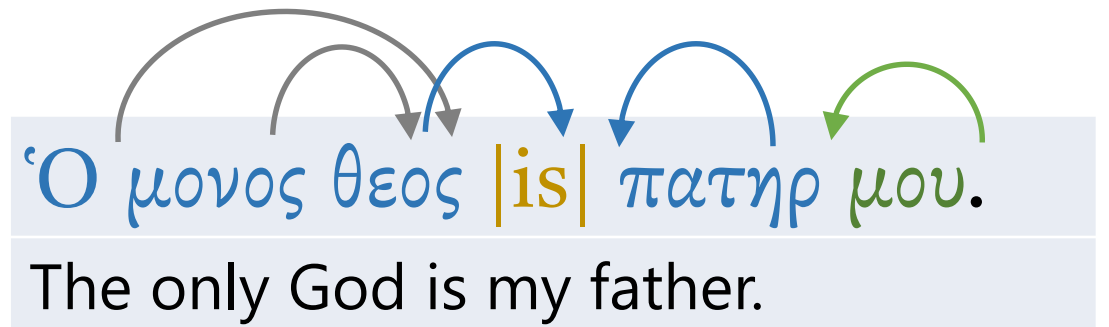
- Attributive position
  - Either
    - Place adjective between the nominal and its article
    - Repeat the article in front of the adjective
  - Indicates the adjective is modifying this nominal directly
    - Only possible with definite nominals

Ὁ μονος θεος |is| πατηρ μου.

The only God is my father.

Ὁ θεος ὁ μονος |is| πατηρ μου.

The only God is my father.

Positioning Adjectives

- Attributive position
  - Watch out for proper nouns (names)
    - they are **implicitly definite**
    - treat them as if they have an article in front
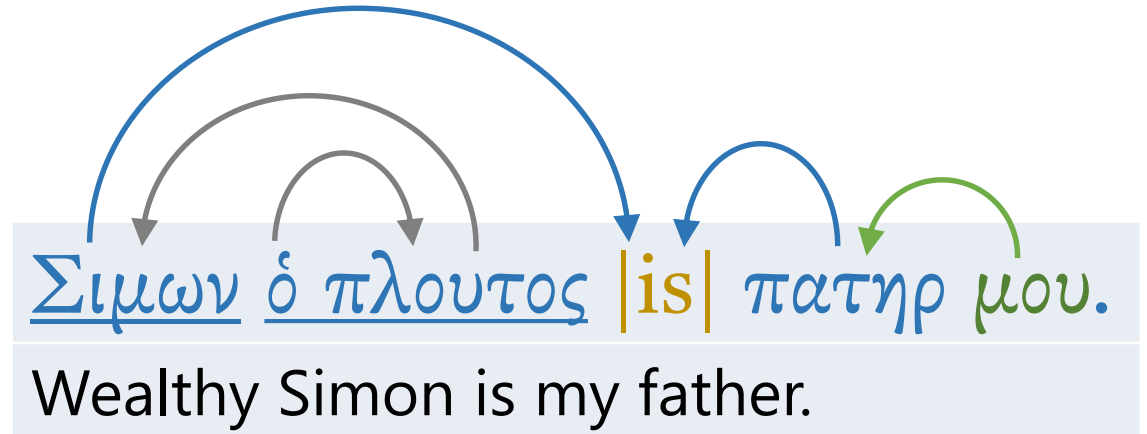
Σιμων ὁ πλουτος |is| πατηρ μου.

Wealthy Simon is my father.

Positioning Adjectives

- Attributive position
  - Generally adjectives modify the closest valid nominal (before or after)
    - Unless context makes it clear which word the adjective modifies
    - Agreement can rule out some possibilities

❌ Ἀνηρ |is| ὁ πατηρ πλουτος.

The father is a wealthy man.

Positioning Adjectives

- Attributive position
  - Generally adjectives modify the closest valid nominal (before or after)
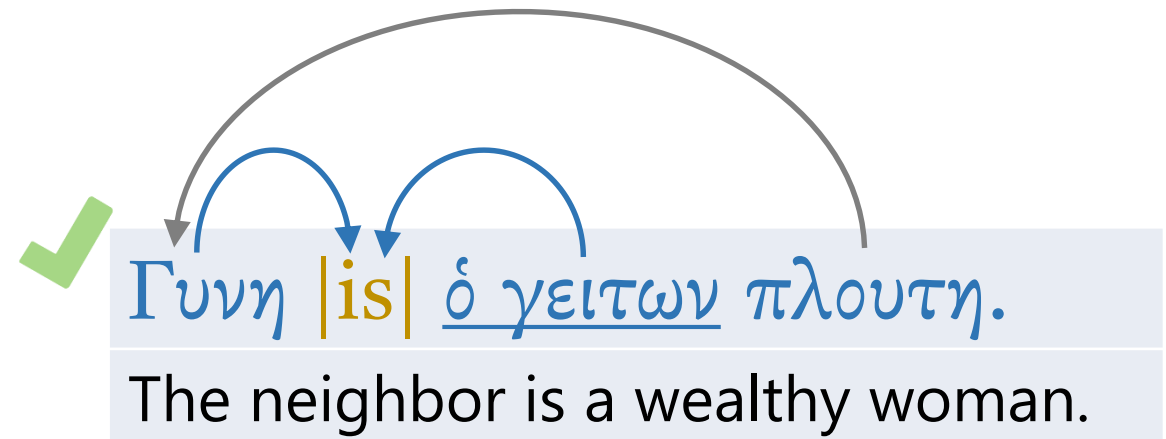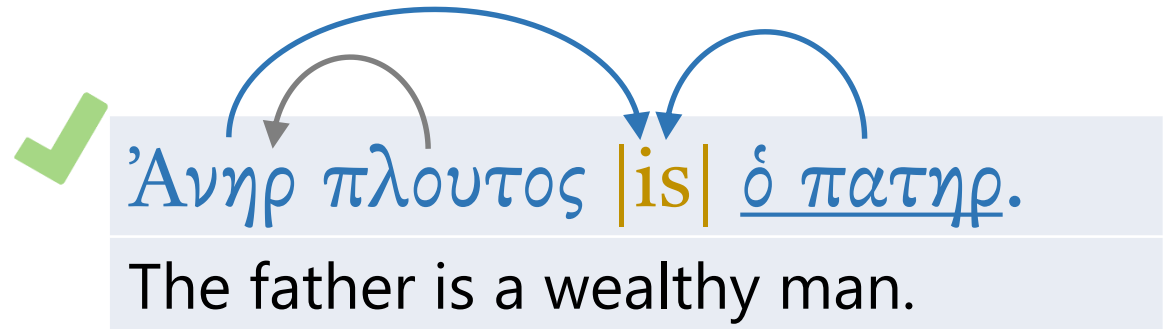   - Unless context makes it clear which word the adjective modifies
    - Agreement can rule out some possibilities

✓ Ἀνηρ πλουτος |is| ὁ πατηρ.
The father is a wealthy man.

✓ Γυνη |is| ὁ γειτων πλουτη.
The neighbor is a wealthy woman.
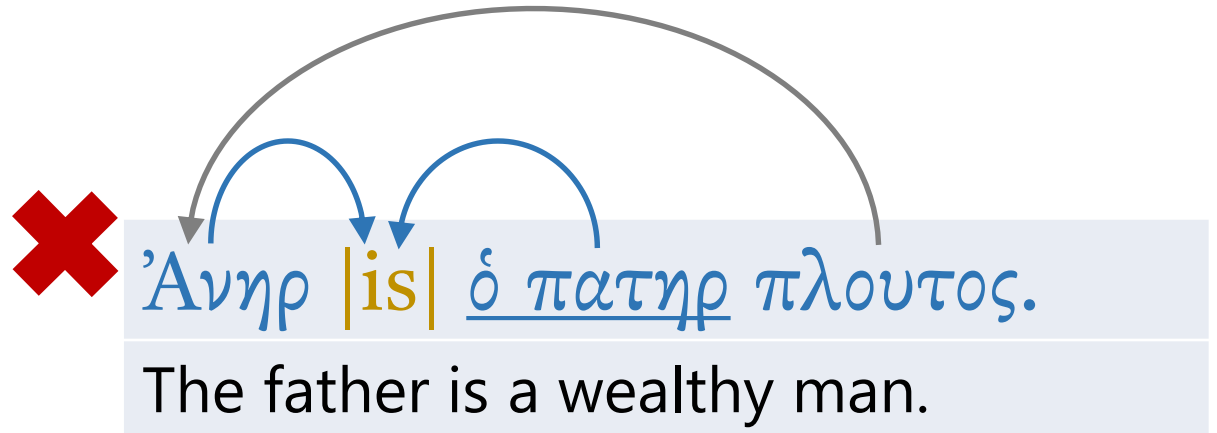
Positioning Adjectives

- "Predicate position"
  - Adjective is the predicate complement of a verbless clause
    - Definite nominal
    - Adjective **not between** article and nominal
    - **No article repeated** in front of adjective.

- Other signs the adj. might be a predicate complement?
  - No verb in the clause
  - Only one nominal in the nominative case

Ἡ θυγατηρ |is| καλη.

The daughter is beautiful.
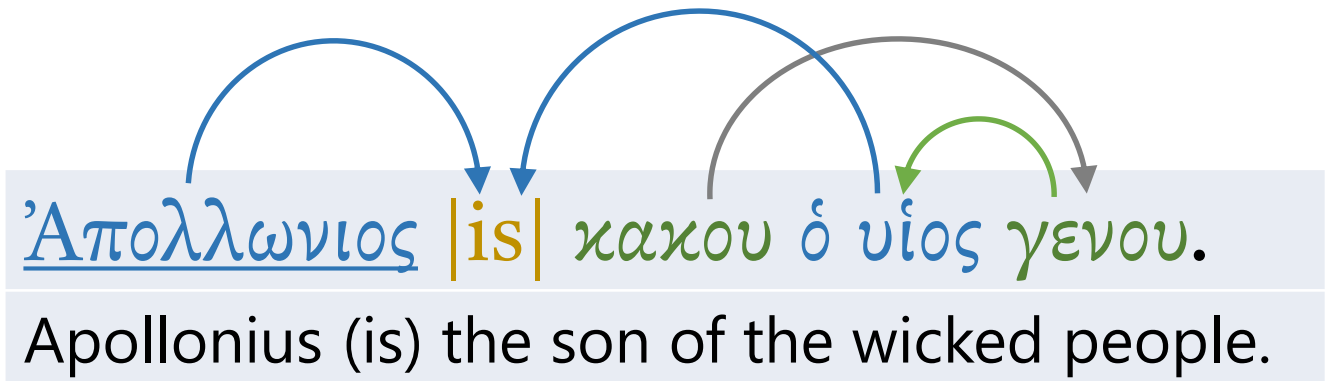
Καλη |is| ἡ θυγατηρ.

The daughter is beautiful.

Positioning Adjectives

- Attributive vs. Predicate
  - Harder to recognize attributive use when nominal is indefinite
    - no article

- An adjective may not be close to the nominal it modifies
  - Look for a nominal that agrees in case, gender, and number

Ἀπολλωνιος |is| κακου ὁ υἱος γενου.

Apollonius (is) the son of the wicked people.

Substantive Adjectives

- Adjective used as a nominal (*substantive*)
  - Not describing another word
  - Identifying a person/thing with a particular attribute
    - Gender follows the referent
- Signs an adjective is substantive
  - Definite article in front
  - No agreeing nominal for it to modify
    - Or nominals that do agree wouldn't make sense

ὁ ἀγαθος	the good man
ἡ ἀγαθη	the good woman
το ἀγαθον	the good thing (or "goodness")

Irregular Adjectives: Πας

	Masc. (3 decl.)	Fem. (1 decl.)	Neut. (3 decl.)	
nom.	πας	πασα	παν	singular
gen.	παντος	πασας	παντος	singular
voc.	πας	πασα	παν	singular
nom.	παντες	πασαι	παντα	plural
gen.	παντων	πασων	παντων	plural
voc.	παντες	πασαι	παντα	plural

Irregular Adjectives: Πολυς

	Masc. (2 decl.)	Fem. (1 decl.)	Neut. (2 decl.)	
nom.	πολυς	πολλη	πολυ	singular
gen.	πολλου	πολλης	πολλου	
voc.	??	πολλη	πολυ	
nom.	πολλοι	πολλαι	πολλα	plural
gen.	πολλων	πολλων	πολλων	
voc.	πολλοι	πολλαι	πολλα	

Irregular Adjectives: Μεγας

	Masc. (2 decl.)	Fem. (1 decl.)	Neut. (2 decl.)	
nom.	μεγας	μεγαλη	μεγα	singular
gen.	μεγαλου	μεγαλης	μεγαλου	
voc.	μεγαλε	μεγαλη	μεγα	
nom.	μεγαλοι	μεγαλαι	μεγαλα	plural
gen.	μεγαλων	μεγαλων	μεγαλων	
voc.	μεγαλοι	μεγαλαι	μεγαλα	

The Special Neuter Plurals

- Neuter plural adjectives are often substantive
  - Substantive even though no article
- Most often with these irregular adjectives
  - $\pi\alpha\nu\tau\alpha$ = "everything" or "all things"
  - $\pi o\lambda\lambda\alpha$ = "many things"
- Can happen with other adjectives too
  - $\kappa\alpha\lambda\alpha$ = "good things"

Keep Learning

- You can learn more about Greek adjectives and their uses here:
  - Mounce, *Basics of Biblical Greek* (3rd edition)
    - adjectives, 9.1-9.13 (pp. 66-68), 9.15 (p. 68), 9.17 (p. 69), 9.19 (p. 72)
    - πας, 10.22 (pp. 85-86)
    - adjective categories, 10.23 (p. 86)
    - πολυς, 13.13 (p. 110)

> **!** Mounce discusses all of the cases together when he discusses adjectives. Don't worry yet about the accusative or dative forms.