

The argument structure of adjectival participles revisited

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Abstract

In this paper, we argue that adjectival passives across languages do not seem to differ in terms of the presence/absence of verbal layers (v, Voice), and we provide morphological evidence for this claim from German, English, and Greek. Particular restrictions observed with adjectival passives compared to verbal passives, such as a more limited availability of event-related modification, are best accounted for under a semantic explanation. In particular, we propose that it follows from an account according to which the underlying event of adjectival passive remains in the kind domain, due to the category change from verb to adjective.

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1. Introduction

One central question that has preoccupied the literature on adjectival passive participles has been to delineate and account for their properties in comparison to verbal passive participles, on the one hand, and the similarities and differences between adjectival passives and adjectives on the other (see, e.g., Wasow, 1977; Levin and Rappaport, 1986; Lazckó, 2001; Emonds, 2006). Kratzer's (2000) contribution substantiates the division of adjectival participles into two semantic subclasses in German, based on whether or not they can be modified by *immer noch* 'still'. **Target state participles**, which are compatible with *immer noch*, are argued to describe reversible, transitory states and to be derived from categoryless stems that have both an event and a target state argument (1a). **Resultant state participles** (borrowing a term from Parsons, 1990), in turn, cannot combine with *immer noch*; Kratzer argues that these participles are derived from verbs and introduce states that hold forever after the event that brings them about (1b), formalized by employing a perfectivity operator.

- (1) a. Die Geißlein sind (immer noch) versteckt. TARGET STATE
the goats are still hidden
'The goats are still hidden.'

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- b. Das Theorem ist (*immer noch) bewiesen. RESULTANT STATE
 the theorem is still proven
intended: ‘The theorem is still proven.’

She furthermore argues that both types of participles lack Voice, i.e. that the external argument is completely absent. Apparent evidence for this claim comes from the lack of control into purpose clauses (2a) (see also Baker et al., 1989) and the lack of the so-called disjoint reference effect (3a) in adjectival participles, i.e. the availability of a reflexive reading, as opposed to verbal participles (2b, 3b) (see also Kratzer, 1994).³

- (2) a. *Der Reifen war aufgepumpt, um die Fahrt fortzusetzen.
 the tire was inflated in order the journey to continue
intended: ‘The tire was inflated in order to continue the journey.’
 b. Der Reifen wurde aufgepumpt, um die Fahrt fortzusetzen.
 the tire became inflated in order the journey to continue
 ‘The tire was (being) inflated in order to continue the journey.’
- (3) a. Das Kind war schlampig gekämmt.
 the child was slopp(il)y combed
 ‘The child was combed in a sloppy manner.’
 (i) Someone (else) (has) combed the child. DISJOINT INTERPRETATION
 (ii) The child (has) combed him/herself. REFLEXIVE INTERPRETATION
 b. Das Kind wurde schlampig gekämmt.
 the child became slopp(il)y combed
 ‘The child was (being) combed in a sloppy manner.’
 (i) Someone (else) (has) combed the child. DISJOINT INTERPRETATION
 (ii) NOT: The child (has) combed him/herself. REFLEXIVE INTERPRETATION

Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou (2008), building on Anagnostopoulou (2003), argue that this semantic difference between the two types of adjectival (or stativized; cf. fn. 3) participles is a direct reflection of a structural difference. In particular, they propose that Greek stative participles in *-tos*, which lack event implication, are root-derived (4a). The term ‘stative’ here is adopted from Embick (2004) who proposes a structural distinction between root-derived **stative** participles and verb-derived **resultative** ones.⁴ Furthermore (English, German and Greek *-menos*) target state participles are argued to be directly derived from vPs (4b), whereas only Greek resultant state (*-menos*) participles can involve a Voice layer on top (4c); a similar argument in favour of the presence of Voice in participles has been made for Hebrew participles derived from the causative template (Doron, in press).⁵

- (4) a. [Asp [Root]] (English, German, Greek *-tos* stative participles)
 b. [Asp [vP [Root]]] (English, German, Greek *-menos* TS participles)
 c. [Asp [VoiceP [vP [Root]]]] (Greek *-menos* RS participles, Hebrew causative template)

³ Note that German makes a morphological distinction between adjectival and verbal passives, in that adjectival (past) participles combine with an inflected form of *sein* ‘to be’, whereas verbal (past) participles combine with an inflected form of *werden* ‘to become’. If combination with (the copula) *sein* is the defining characteristics for a participle to be adjectival, as is commonly assumed (disregarding the combination of the auxiliary *sein* with participles derived from unaccusative predicates in perfect constructions; but see also Gese et al., 2011), then both types of participles are adjectival, and we follow this common assumption. Kratzer’s overall conclusions, however, seem to suggest that she views both types of participles as stativized, but resultant state participial constructions as verbal, rather than adjectival.

⁴ Since Kratzer (2000), Anagnostopoulou (2003) and Embick (2004), many authors have proposed similar structural differences for various languages, under either or both pairs of labels and with some variation as to the precise nature of the structural differences (see, e.g., Lundquist, 2008; Sleeman, 2011). We would like to point out, however, that these two different systems of classification are not in a one to one mapping relationship, as we will make more precise in Section 2. In particular, Kratzer’s target state participles are not necessarily stative in Embick’s system, and neither are Embick’s resultative participles necessarily equated with resultant state participles (see also the discussion in Alexiadou et al., in press, which clarifies this terminological confusion). Many thanks to Elena Anagnostopoulou for further discussion on this point.

⁵ Kordoni (2002) also provides empirical support for the presence of an external argument in *-menos* participles and spells out an LFG account, according to which a verbal participle with the complete argument structure of the underlying verb is converted into an adjective.

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