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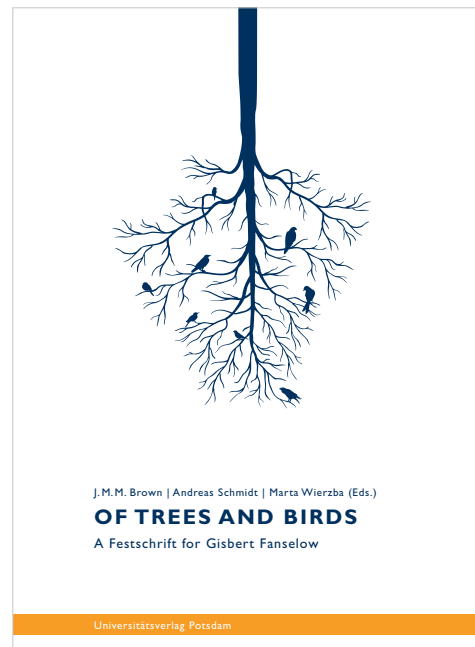
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A form-function mismatch? The case of Greek deponents¹

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1 The puzzle

Greek has a class of verbs bearing non-active morphology (NAct) called deponent verbs (Mackridge 1985, Embick 1998). These are special, as, although they bear the marking typically associated with intransitive members of verbs undergoing transitivity alternations, they are not part of a transitivity alternation. Deponents are either transitive verbs bearing NAct, (1a), or intransitive verbs which lack active forms altogether, (1b).

- (1) a. O Janis metahirizete kialia ja na di
 the John.NOM use.NACT.3SG binoculars.ACC for SUBJ see.3SG
 ta pulia.
 the birds
 ‘John uses the binoculars in order to see the birds.’
- b. *erho-Active vs. erhome-NActive ‘come’

These verbs have been discussed in the literature, as they seem to exhibit, according to Baerman (2007), a mismatch between form and function. In particular, in systems such as the one put forth in Embick (1998),

1. To Gisbert, who has always been interested in morpho-syntactic puzzles and as we wanted to investigate psych verbs all those years ago, with great respect and appreciation.

and adopted in Alexiadou et al. (2015), deponents challenge the treatment of NAct as being subject to the rule in (3). The rule in (3) signals that NAct morphology appears realizing a Voice projection which lacks a specifier, i.e. a structure of the type (4a), which is basically an intransitive/unaccusative structure. It is the structure associated with passives, (2d), reflexives, (2e), and NAct marked anticausatives (e.g. burn, in (2b)-(4c)). By contrast, active Voice morphology is associated either with a structure that lacks Voice altogether (unmarked anticausatives, e.g. open in (2c)-(4b) or a transitive structure, (2a)-(4c), which projects an external argument in its specifier. Active Voice is the default Voice in Greek. The problem deponents thus raise is that NAct appears, yet the corresponding verbs are either transitive or if they are intransitive they lack transitive counterparts that would enforce the application of rule (3).

- (2) a. O Janis ekap**se** ti supa. *causative*
 the John.NOM burnt.3SG the soup.ACC
 ‘John burnt the soup.’
- b. I supa keget**e**. *marked anticausative*
 the soup.NOM burns.NACT.3SG
 ‘The soup is burning.’
- c. I porta anik**se**. *unmarked anticausative*
 the door.NOM opened.3SG
 ‘The door opened.’
- d. To vivlio diavast**ike** ktes. *passive*
 the book.NOM read.NACT.3SG yesterday
 ‘The book was read yesterday.’
- e. I Maria hteniz**ete**. *reflexive*
 the Mary.NOM combs.NACT.3SG
 ‘Mary combs herself.’
- (3) Voice → NAct/___ (no specifier)

- (4) a. [MiddleVoiceP [-D] NAct [_{vP} [_{ResultP} √burn]]] *NAct*
 b. [_{vP} [_{ResultP} √open]] *active*
 c. [VoiceP DP [_{vP} [_{ResultP} √burn]]] *active*

In this contribution, I will propose an analysis of deponents that builds on insights in Zombolou & Alexiadou (2014), and Oikonomou (2011). These authors have shown that there are four main types of deponents in Greek. Once we pay particular attention to the verb classes participating in deponent formation and see how these can be structurally analyzed, deponents seem no longer problematic, but see Weisser (2014) for an alternative. I will offer an account of the presence of NAct morphology in both the transitive and intransitive cases, updating the proposal in Alexiadou (2013). The account dispenses with Embick's (2000) proposal that the information marking deponency can be added as a diacritic on the root, but see Lavidas & Papangeli (2007). In my discussion, I focus on two classes: the subject experiencer class and the unaccusative deponents. I will then turn to a brief comparison of deponents to Germanic (and Romance) inherent reflexives.

2 Deponents are not transitive verbs

According to Zombolou & Alexiadou (2014), the main classes of Greek deponent verbs are (all Greek verbs are in 1st person singular, as the language lacks infinitives):

1. *Psych verbs (mental stative verbs)*: A large number of deponents falls into this class and they are both intransitive and transitive (esthanome (feel), xerome (I'm happy), (erotevome (fall in love), sevome (respect), sixenome (loath), fovamai (fear), etc.
2. *Mental dynamic verbs*: diamartrome / paraponieme (complain), astievome (kid), ironevome (quip), isxirizome (claim), katarieme (curse), dexome (accept), arnume (deny), ipopsiazome / ipoptevome (suspect), empistevome (trust), etc.
3. *Benefactives*: epofelume (benefit from), danizome (borrow), ek-metalevome (exploit), ekdikume (take revenge) etc.

4. *Unaccusatives*: *erxome* (come), *prospeionome* (land), *apogeionome* (take off), etc.

While certain of the intransitive verbs had a transitive counterpart in earlier stages of Greek, most of them did not. Although, as Weisser (2014) also points out, deponent verbs are not a sub-class of psych verbs, it is quite surprising that most deponent verbs are actually psych verbs. As can be seen from the list Zombolou & Alexiadou (2014) provide, these verbs correspond to class I experiencer predicates in Belletti & Rizzi (1988). As we will see below, I will argue that the reason why these verbs surface with NAct relates to the special syntax associated with this verb class.

Beginning with transitive deponents, we observe that these behave unlike typical transitive verbs on a number of criteria. To begin with, they do not passivize, as shown in (5):

- (5) a. O Janis fovate tus aetus.
 the John.NOM fears.NACT the eagles.ACC
 ‘John fears eagles.’
- b. *Oi aeiti fovithikan apo to Jani
 the eagles.NOM fear.NACT by Janis.ACC

Second, as Markantonatou (1992) and Oikonomou (2011) note, the experiencer argument is included in the psych nominalization, unlike other nominalizations which only maintain the internal argument, see Alexiadou (2001); the external argument can only be introduced via a *by*-phrase in non-psych nominalizations:

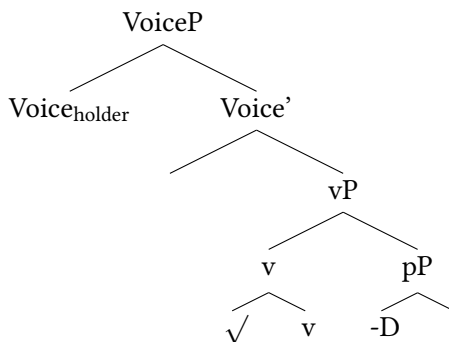
- (6) o fovos tu Jani ja tus aetus
 the fear the John.GEN for the eagles
 ‘John’s fear of eagles’
- (7) i katastrofi tis polis apo tus varvarus
 the destruction the city.GEN by the barbarians
 ‘the destruction of the city by the barbarians’

This seems to point to the conclusion that the experiencer argument patterns like an internal argument. Assuming, following Kratzer (1996) and Alexiadou et al. (2015), that external arguments are introduced at the layer of VoiceP, crucially, subject experiencers are thus not introduced in Voice, but must be introduced in some layer lower than Voice.

The psych verbs under investigation, being class I psychological verbs, are stative verbs, and their external argument is not agent but a holder in Kratzer's (1996) system. We have already established that the experiencer argument cannot be introduced in VoiceP, as its presence would trigger default active Voice, see (3) and (4) above. Thus, the structure of these types of predicates must be more complex than previously assumed.

I will assume, following Hale & Keyser (2002), Doron (2003), Landau (2010), and Alexiadou (2011, 2013), that stative subject experiencer verbs include an abstract preposition in their structure, labeled pP in (8a-b) below, see Wood (2014) and work by Svenonius (2007) and many others. According to Svenonius (2007), the figure argument is introduced in pP, (8b), in a way similar to agent and state holders in VoiceP. Following Hale & Keyser (2002), the preposition phrase involved is one of central coincidence, which blocks a change of state interpretation.

(8) a.



b. [pP figure [pP ground]]

The pP in (8b) contains a place for the figure argument and a place for the ground argument. According to Wood, in Icelandic *-st* appears in intransitive variants of verbs that undergo the causative alternation, but

also on verbs that appear together with PP complements, (9), figure reflexives. The latter group bears active morphology in the absence of the PP, and *-st* is obligatory in the PP context. Unlike the verbs discussed here, the Icelandic figure reflexives are agentive verbs.

- (9) Þau vilja brjótast inn í húsið.
 they.NOM want break.ST in to house.the
 ‘They want to break into the house.’ (Wood 2014: 11)

Building on and extending Wood’s (2014, 2015) analysis of figure reflexives, and see also Kastner (2017), I propose that the non-active morphology found with this class is the result of a [-D] feature on the head *p*, which is always contained within stative verbs: this prohibits a DP from appearing in its specifier, in analogy to Voice[-D], see Schäfer (2008), which triggers NAct in Greek. The subject-less predicate *p* undergoes what is termed by Kastner “late saturation”, i.e. an argument introduced later satisfies the requirement of that head. Importantly, “the composition will result in the DP in Spec,VoiceP bearing two roles: the role introduced by Voice and the role introduced by *p*.” (Wood 2014: 4). Crucially, however, the morphology of Voice will be NAct.²

Let me now turn to the other classes of deponents. First, note that the unaccusative deponents belong to the change of location class and/or contain prefixes related to prepositions. Notice that in some cases, the nominal form corresponding to land occurs in the structure, which could arguably be the ground element in the *pP* structure:

- (10) *pros-gei-on-ome*, *apo-gei-on-ome*
 to-land-v-NAct from-land-v-NAct
 ‘land’, ‘take off’

2. The question that arises is whether this analysis predicts that all stative and class I psych verbs should surface with NAct. This is clearly not the case, e.g. the Greek counterparts of *love* and *hate* surface with Act morphology and have an NAct variant, although it is unclear whether this form is a true passive. If indeed they form a true passive, this points to a split: there are certain psych verbs of class I that have truly external arguments, as suggested in Hale & Keyser (2002). We can speculate whether this has to do with either DP movement from Spec,*pP* to Spec,VoiceP or *p* incorporation to the v-Voice layer.

Change of location verbs have arguably a structure as in (11) below, where the pP is not one of central coincidence, Alexiadou & Schäfer (2011). We could thus assume that a single DP is interpreted both as the figure and the undergoer of the event, but NAct morphology appears as the pP bears a [-D] feature:

- (11) [_{vP} [_{pP}]]

In fact, note that prefixes are also found in several of the transitive deponents in the other verb classes, e.g. *apo* ‘from’, *pros* ‘towards’, *meta* ‘with’, *ek* ‘from’, *kata* ‘against’, *ipo* ‘under’, etc.

- (12) para-ponieme (complain), ipo-psiazome / ipo-ptevome (suspect), em-pistevome (trust), ep-ofel-ume (benefit from), ek-metal-ev-ome (exploit)

This enables us to propose that these too contain a pP in their structure as well thus leading to an analysis similar to what we have seen in (8a), in the presence of an agentive Voice head in some cases.

Turning now to the unavailability of passivization with these verbs, since they bear NAct morphology already, they simply cannot provide the input to passive formation. As to why the internal argument bears accusative in the case of transitive verbs, this follows from the theory of dependent case: the lower argument bears accusative when it is c-commanded by another argument in the same domain, VoiceP in our case (Marantz 1991, Baker 2015). With respect to nominalization, the claim is that the structure that is nominalized is the one below the v layer (Alexiadou 2011).

This treatment of NAct enables us to offer a novel approach to the following puzzle: Alexiadou et al. (2015: 96) note that in Greek most prefixed verbs form an anticausative with NAct. Similar observations are made for French:

- (13) a. To pedi isihase.
the child quietened.ACT
‘The child got quiet.’

- b. To pedi kath-isihastike.
 the child recomposed.NACT
 ‘The child got recomposed.’

If such verbs contain a pP and the presence of NAct is conditioned by the presence of pP, then we do not need to analyze the prefix as the head of an adjunct to VoiceP. The contrast between the prefixed form and the one without in terms of morphological realization is thus explained.

3 Deponent verbs and inherent reflexives

Kallulli (2013) argued that the counterpart of Greek deponents in German and Romance are inherent reflexive verbs, which obligatorily co-occur with *sich* and *se* respectively. Of special interest here are inherent reflexives that are psychological verbs. Such reflexives are also transitive, as *sich* bears accusative case (Fanselow 1991, Schäfer 2008). As these verbs passivize, see Fanselow (1987), Schäfer (2012) among others and references therein, we cannot analyze *sich* as a reflex of intransitive Voice. We can, however, extend Schäfer’s (2008) and Wood’s (2014) analysis and analyze *sich* as an expletive form, occupying Spec,pP. From this perspective, inherent reflexive *sich* is the counterpart of anticausative *sich* in Schäfer’s treatment of this form. According to Schäfer, anticausative *sich* is located in the specifier of an expletive Voice. In the cases at hand, *sich* is introduced in Spec,pP. This, as Wood suggests, will give us a reflexive and transitive type of structure, without the typical properties that characterize reflexive pronouns, cf. Fanselow (1991).

- (14) a. Er fürchtet sich vor dem Adler.
 he fears REFLEXIVE from the eagle
 ‘He is afraid of the eagle.’
- b. *Er fürchtet mich vor dem Adler
 he fears me from the eagle

Such a structure can thus feed impersonal passive formation. The anaphor could be licensed by the implicit argument of the passive (Fanselow

1987), although that would lead to problems with respect to dependent case, which ideally should only take overt DPs into consideration. Schäfer (2012) discusses this in detail and concludes that dependent case can be assigned to *sich* if default agreement has valued T.

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