


Article

# INFORMATION STRUCTURE OF ANCIENT GREEK\*

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## ABSTRACT

*The aim of this paper is to provide a description of the information structure in Ancient Greek considering the semantics of the moods and the verbal aspect in clause complex, in particular the use of the participle placed before the main clause. From the perspective of information structure, three kinds of participles are described: circumstantial participle (CP), absolute genitive participle (AGP) functioning as tracking reference, and upgraded participle (UP), based on the factive presupposition semantics of the participle (modulation). It is argued that the participle semantics contributes to the information structure processing of these uses of the participle as common ground management in complex clauses. Besides, taking into account its modulation semantics, the participle is a syntactic device for the coding of the information structure, which contributes to the pragmatics of the reference tracking (RT) and its adverbial uses. The samples are taken from Classical*

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*Greek (Aristophane's comedies) and Biblical Greek (The book of Acts). The theoretical approach is the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) applied to the Greek language (PORTER, 2021, 2015, 2009, 1993; ALBUQUERQUE, 2020, 2018, REED, 1997) with the findings of the information structure studies (MATIĆ et al., 2014; KRIFKA; MUSAN, 2012; LAMBRECHT, 1994; CHAFE, 1987), using the notions of Given/New, background/prominence, and presupposition/assertion.*

**Keywords:** *Information structure. Factive presupposition. Modal semantics. Verbal aspect. Greek participle.*

## Introduction

This paper describes the information structure of Ancient Greek of the complex clause in participle constructions. It is considered how the semantics of the participle (in prepositional position) in relation to the other moods and the verbal aspectual choices drives the reader concerning the information structure in ancient Greek. As for the Greek system mood, these categories are found: mood, modality, and modulation. The proper mood is indicative with +assertion, while in the realm of modality relies on imperative, subjunctive, and optative. Participle is modulation, namely, a factive presupposition (ALBUQUERQUE, 2018). As a result of this, the participle has not to do with the content information, but rather the participle deals with the common ground management. The common ground content refers to the information that is mutually known to be shared in communication, while the common ground management is the information structure that guides speakers to take into consideration the addressee's current information state, and hence to facilitate the flow of communication (KRIFKA; MUSAN, 2012).

By complex clause, it is meant the hypotactic relation between a subordinate and a main clause. The participles are subordinate in the sense that they do not function by themselves in the clause (syntactic motivation) and due

to their morphosyntactic dependency of the main clause (morphosyntactic motivation)<sup>1</sup>.

### Information structure in Greek studies

Taking into account the factive presupposition semantics of the participle and its placement before the main clause (ALBUQUERQUE, 2020, 2018), it is argued that the participle is a linguistic “packing” device in Chafe’s terms, that is, “devices having less to do with the content of an utterance than with the way that content is wrapped up and presented to a hearer” (CHAFE, 1987, p. 21). In a more elaborated way, the participle is common ground management, which contributes to its pragmatic uses such as circumstantial, upgraded, and tracking reference. Defined as common ground management, information structure means that speakers use certain linguistic forms in order to signal which features of the common ground are relevant at a given point in discourse and what operations are to be performed on the common ground (MATIĆ *et al.*, 2014; KRIFKA; MUSAN, 2012).

### The participle and information structure

In Greek, the constituent order is not primarily a syntactic phenomenon. Rather, the ordering of the constituents depends on the information status. This is the position of a constituent is largely determined by how new and important information is presented (EMDE BOAS *et al.*, 2019), and the participle contributes to this phenomenon.

Morphologically, the participle has aspect (perfective, imperfective, and stative), voice, number, gender, and case<sup>2</sup>, lacking grammatical person. For example, the participle *λαλούντων* (*laloúntōn*, ‘speaking’<sup>3</sup>) indicates by *-ntōn* (*-ντων*) present aspect (imperfective), active voice, plural number, and genitive case. Lacking the grammatical person, the reader needs to infer who is the person doing the action. In SLF, there is a distinction between grammatical subject and logical subject. The former refers to the relation between a noun or pronoun agreement with the verb. The latter indicates the doer of the action. The Greek participle has a grammatical subject, which can be a noun or a pronoun in the genitive case, but also a logical subject that may be inferred by the reader.

<sup>1</sup>Traditionally, the term ‘absolute’ is used to refer to the participle used as independent in relation to the main clause. Haeley and Haeley (1990) argue that such notion is not appropriate to this type of genitive in Greek since it is morphosyntactically related to the main clause. The morphosyntactic functions of AGP are summarized as follows: 1) switch reference – it can indicate change of subject in relation to the main clause; 2) change of setting – it can signal a setting of time, place or situation, when at the beginning of a paragraph; 3) anaphoric reference (back reference) when within the paragraph and 4) it can have a double function: setting and anaphoric reference at the same time (HAELEY and HAELEY, 1990). We will retain this metalanguage, but with such consideration of these authors.

<sup>2</sup>In Greek, there are five cases: nominative, which indicates the subject; accusative, which signal the direct object; dative, which is indirect object, and the genitive, which is adjunct (nominal or adverbial). But genitive and dative have also wide-ranging uses.

<sup>3</sup>Translations here are used just for didactic purposes. The Greek participle is a quiet distinct category which has no equivalence in English or Brazilian Portuguese.

Taken *lalouñtōn* ('speaking') again, the agent, 'speaker', must be inferred by means of the discursive information in the previous context and/or the reader's mind from the broad discourse. For this reason, a better explanation of the participle in terms of information structure needs an interface semantic–syntax–discourse account in the uses of the Greek participle.

In the interface semantic–syntax–discourse, the participle is a category that guides the interlocutor in relation to the information structure providing given information (Given) in relation to new information (New) in the main clause. A usual category of participle in Greek grammars is that of circumstantial participle, a pragmatic use. The circumstantial participle is understood as adding an optional constituent to a clause to express a circumstance, cause, condition, motivation, purpose, etc. However, the Greek language has many devices to express adverbial notions as shown in the example below<sup>4</sup>.

- (1)  
 ὅταν ἐμπλησθῶσ' ὕδατος πολλοῦ κἀναγκασθῶσι φέρεσθαι  
 when 3PL.SBJV.AOR water many 3PL.SBJV.AOR to move  
*hótan emplēstōs' hýdatos polloû kanankastōssi phéresthai*  
 "When they were filled with water, they compelled themselves to move" (*Clouds*.377)

<sup>4</sup>Here are the glosses used in this paper:  
 IND - indicative;  
 INF - infinitive;  
 PTCP - participle;  
 IMP - imperative;  
 SBJV - subjunctive;  
 OPT - optative. As for verbal aspect: AOR - aorist; PRS - present; IMPR - imperfect; PRF - perfect and PPRF - plusperfect.

The reference used in this paper related to the Aristophanic texts is the following: ARISTOPHANES. *Aristophanes Comoediae*. In: HALL, F. W.; GELDART, W. M. (ed.). Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907. 2v.

In this clause complex, the first clause is adverbial marked for *hótan* (ὅταν, 'when'). If the Greek has cues to grounding the interlocutor in the situation speech (such as temporal, spatial, causal, etc.), why can a participle be used and what is the difference between an adverbial clause and a participle clause in a complex sentence? The proposal of this paper is to suggest that the distinction relies on the information structure: while adverbial sentences are used as common ground content, the participle sentences function as common ground management.

Another participle category is the so-called absolute genitive participle (AGP). The peculiarity of this category is that it can be accompanied by a pronoun in the genitive case and in the same number of the participle. Such pronoun serves as the "grammatical subject" of the sentence participle (SILVA; ALBUQUERQUE, 2021).

<sup>5</sup>It is a particle which has no translation to English or Portuguese. This does not mean that Greek particles are meaningless. For instance, in the case of such particle, it functions as a way of indicating the reader a new information whether a new paragraph or a new character in the scene. The reference used in this paper related to the New Testament texts is the following: ALAND, Barbara; ALAND, Kurt. *Novum Testamentum Graece*. 27th revised edition. Stuttgart: German Bible Society, 2006.

(2)

Κρατοῦντος δὲ<sup>5</sup> αὐτοῦ τὸν Πέτρον καὶ τὸν Ἰωάννην  
 PTCP.PRS dé him the Peter and the John  
*Kratoúntos dé autoú tòn Pétron kai tòn Iōánnēn*  
 συνέδραμεν πᾶς ὁ λαὸς πρὸς αὐτοὺς  
 3SG.IND.AOR all the people to them  
*synédrame pás ho laòs pròs autoùs.*

“Grasping him Peter and John, all the people ran together to them” (*Acts*. 3:11).

In this example, the pronoun in the genitive case αὐτοῦ (*autoú*, “him”) functions as the grammatical subject of the participle referring back to the current participant. This is a case where the participle as AGP functions as RT in the information structure. The referent tracking (RT) is the capability of interlocutors in identifying the referent of a linguistic expression (MATIĆ *et al.*, 2014).

The proposal here is that the AGP express a common denominator between information structure and reference tracking: common ground management. In other words, “they depend on the estimation by the interlocutors of what the current status of the common ground between them is” (MATIĆ *et al.*, 2014, p. 2). It is necessary that the interlocutor access from his or her memory the immediate referent by process of inference:

In order to choose the focus of an utterance, the speaker must have a theory of the current state of mind of the hearer, and in order to decode the utterance with a certain focus structure, the hearer must have a corresponding theory of the speaker’s mind (MATIĆ *et al.*, 2014, p. 2).

Finally, the last participle category is the upgraded participle. It means that the participle ideationally upgrades its modal semantics into the same of the main clause. For example, if the main clause is in the indicative mood, the participle, being modulation, upgrades to the indicative mood as well (ALBUQUERQUE, 2020, 2018).

(3)

ἀναστάντες δὲ οἱ νεότεροι συνέστειλαν αὐτὸν.  
 PTCP.AOR de hoi neóteroi 3PL.IND.AOR autòn  
*anastántes de hoi neóteroi synésteilan autòn.*  
 “Rising up, the young men covered him.” (*Acts* 5:6)

Adverbial clauses can be seen as common ground content in that they dealt with the truth-conditional of the sentence, for example. Both adverbial and participle clauses provide background information to the reader. The distinctive semantics of the participle clause is that it is common ground management: it does not deal with the truth-conditional semantic since it is not a proposition. Rather, it is:

The imaginative or mental exercise done by the reader or hearer to reflect, complement, or react to what is being said. It is as though the author/speaker wants to make the readers participants of some assigned task by him within the discourse (ALBUQUERQUE, 2020, p. 7).

In this definition, the participle is not just common ground, as it is the adverbial clause, rather it is common ground management, in which the information is put in a certain form in order to call the reader into the participation of the discourse. The example (4) above illustrates this.

<sup>6</sup>It is a particle which has no translation to English and Portuguese. It has lots of functions (see also note 6 above).

(4)  
 τοῦτο μὲν<sup>6</sup> εἰδῶς  
 this PTCP.PRF  
*toûto mèn eidōs*  
 ἄπαθε Μάγνης ἅμα ταῖς πολιαῖς κατιούσαις  
 3PS.IND.AOR. Magnes at once the grey hair PCTP.AOR  
*hápathe Mágñēs háma taís poliaís katióusais*  
 “This, as known to the poet, suffered Magnes with his whitened hair.” (*Knights*. 520)

In (4) the perfect participle *eidōs* (εἰδῶς, ‘known’) does not treat about the truthfulness of the information. But rather, guides interlocutors to take for granted the addressee’s current information state facilitating the flow of communication. The reader is called to participate in the interaction by drawing from his encyclopedic knowledge of the poet. The participle is a clue that the information is known to the spectators. Since the participle is in the stative aspect (perfect), the spectators are led to consider that the presupposition is quite prominent, since Aristophanes seeks to show how Athenians have ceased to value poets. With the use of the perfect participle, the readers are guided to Aristophanes’ central point: the Athenians

mistreated Magnes, which is asserted by the use of the aorist indicative (ἄπαθε, *hápathe*, ‘suffered’).

Furthermore, the semantic description of the participle takes into account its communicative function in relation to the moods (infinitive, indicative, imperative, subjunctive, and optative) in a functional relationship considering that: 1) choice implies meaning; 2) the distinction between mood, modality and modulation and 3) the distinction between semantics and pragmatics (SILVA; ALBUQUERQUE, 2021).

In SLF approach the Greek moods are described by the oppositions +assertion and -assertion. The indicative mood relies on the +assertion category, while participle, infinitive, imperative, subjunctive, and optative rely on the -assertion category. The semantic distinction between these moods are modulation (participle [+factive presupposition] and infinitive [-factive presupposition]) and modality (imperative, subjunctive and optative) (ALBUQUERQUE, 2020). Taken as contrast, the indicative and participle are +assertion (mood) and +factive presupposition (modulation), respectively.

The reader needs to distinguish what is asserted from what is presupposed while following the choices of the aspect in transmitting the message. Here we are talking about grammatical presupposition: the participle is typically reader-oriented, it is an invitation for the reader to participate in the action in the form of reflection (ALBUQUERQUE 2020, 2018).

(5)

εἶτα Κρατίνου μεμνημένος,

Then Cratino PCTP.PRF

*eíta Kratínou memnḗmenos,*

ὅς πολλῶ ῥεύσας ποτ' ἐπαίνω

which a lot of 3PS.IND.AOR to flow praise

*hòs pollōi rheúsas pot' epainōi*

“Then, of Cratino remembered, he made a lot of applause flow.” (*Knights*. 526)

In (5), the perfect participle *memnḗmenos* (μεμνημένος, ‘remembered’) orients the reader in that he or she access from his/her mind (encyclopedic knowledge) the knowledge about Cratino, an old poet. Taken for granted that Cratino is known by the spectators, Aristophanes uses the participle in order to calls the reader to participate in the interaction. The verse of

the play *Knights* is located in the parabasis, which is a section in the play that directs to the spectator's attention. In other words, the participle is used to indicate what is non-asserted (presupposition), while the aorist participle  $\rho\acute{\epsilon}\upsilon\sigma\alpha\varsigma$  (*rheúsas*, 'he made') indicates what is asserted. The same happens in example (4) above.

The participle is a category, which works together with the verbal aspect in the verbal system of the Greek language. This blending among participle and verbal aspect influences directly in the information structure. Specifically, the aorist participle placed before the main clause, which can be used as background information and as circumstantial use guiding the reader in relation to the prominence (focus) of the discourse (see (6) – (10) examples below).

### **Information structure, modal semantics, and verbal aspect**

Broadly speaking, verbal aspect is defined as the subject's perspective (RIJKSBARON, 2019, 2002; EMDE BOAS *et al.*, 2019). In SFL aspect is defined as "a morphologically-based semantic category which grammaticalizes the author/speaker's reasoned subjective choice of conception of a process." (PORTER, 1993, p. 1). Morphologically, the aorist is represented, prototypically, with the ending  $\sigma\alpha$  (-sa); the present with  $\omega$  (-ō), and the perfect with  $\kappa\alpha$  (-ka).

From this definition, one can highlight the following: 1. The conceptualization indicates that meaning is a subjective construction of the way in which a writer/speaker expresses his/her view of the situation. 2. The options of systemic choices (perfective, imperfective, and stative); that is: the potential for meaning when the options that the aspectual system offers (perfective, imperfective, and stative). Perfective aspect indicates the summary view of the subject, which is presented by the aorist. Imperfective aspect conceptualizes the internal view of the subject, which is presented by the imperfective and the present tense. The difference between the two is that the former indicates a certain remoteness and the latter does not. Finally, stative aspect indicates the grammaticalization of the state or condition of the grammatical subject, which is



expressed by the pluperfect and the perfect. The distinction between the two is also in terms of remoteness: the pluperfect indicates a certain spatial remoteness from the subject's vision. 3. Gradience between morphology and semantics (PORTER, 2021, 2015).

It is a feature of functionalism continuity between the components of language, which means to say that aspectual relations form a gradient opposition. In this gradient opposition, aorist is the less morphologically marked, thus the less prominent. The perfect is the most marked, and thus the most prominent. By these gradient oppositions, prominence is indicated by the choice of the verbal forms, such as present (+marked), imperfect (-marked), and perfect (most marked). In sum, verbal aspect, in terms of LSF, is described as experiential metafunction, which deals with how the subject's experience represents meaning in her mind.

(6)

ὅτι σωφρονικῶς κούκ ἀνοήτως ἐσπηδήσας ἐφλύαρει  
 that wisely not scene PCTP.AOR 3SG.IND.IMPRF  
*hóti sōphronikōs kouk anoētōs espēdēsas ephlyárei*  
 “Who, wisely not entering the scene in a foolish way, was talking nonsense.”  
 (*Knights*. 545)

In general, the aorist participle tends to appear before the main clause providing background to the main clause, which is usually in the imperfective aspect (present or imperfect tense) as in the example (7) with the aorist participle *espēdēsas* and the imperfect indicative *ephlyárei*.

(7)

Ἀπολυθέντες δὲ ἦλθον πρὸς τοὺς ἰδίους  
 PTCP.AOR. 3PL.IND.AOR to the fellows  
*apolythéntes dè élthon pròs toùs idíous*  
 “When they were released, they went to their fellows.” (*Acts*. 4:23)

In (7), the aorist participle gives background information in order to prepare the reader to the main clause in the aorist indicative, respectively *apolythéntes* and *ἦλθον*. As both examples have shown, the participle placed before the main clause guides the reader to the main information in the main clause.

Prototypically, the present participle in Greek tends to appear after the main clause (postpositive) while the aorist participle tends to come before the main clause (prepositive). Both positions have consequences for the information structure in Greek clause complex. The present participle after the main clause is a projection as elaboration and is not considered here.

(8)

ἀλλ' ἀποδύντες τοῖς ἀναπαίστοις ἐπίωμεν  
 But PTCP.AOR the anapests 1PL.SBJV.PRS  
*all' apodýntes toῖs anapaístois epíōmen.*  
 “But undressing, let us run to the anapests.” (*Acharnians*. 626)

(09)

καὶ νικήσας  
 And PTCP.AOR  
*kai nikēsas*  
 ἔλθοις στεφάνοις κατάπαστος  
 2SG.OPT.AOR crowns covered with  
*élthois stephánois katápastos*  
 “and winning, come back covered with crowns.” (*Knights*. 500, 502)

(10)

καὶ τοῦτο εἰπὼν ἐκοιμήθη  
 And this PTCP. AOR 3SG.IND.AOR  
*Kai toúto eipòn ekoiméthē.*  
 “Having said this, he died.” (*Acts*. 7:60)

In (9) – (11), the aorist participles (*apodýntes*, *nikēsas*, and *eipòn*, respectively) are placed before the main clause (*epíōmen*, *élthois*, and *ekoiméthē*, respectively). All the participles being presupposition invites the reader to participate by providing background information as a type of dramatic pause, which drives the reader to the focus of the discourse. In (9) and (10), the reader is prepared for the beginning of the parabasis, which is the moment when the poet addresses the audience directly. In (11) we find a resumption of what has been narrated before by Stephen causing his death: the aorist participle clause (*kai toúto eipòn*) encapsulates the long speech done by Stephen before the Sanhedrin, driving the reader to the main point which is his death.

In the following examples (11-12), it can be observed the uses of the participle at the level of morphosyntax and its pragmatic effect concerning the information structure.

(11)

ἄλλ'	ἴθι	χαίρων,	καὶ	πράξειας
Rather,	IM.PRS	PTCP.PRS		with 2PS.OPT.AOR
<i>áll'</i>	<i>íthi</i>	<i>cháirōn,</i>	<i>kaì</i>	<i>práxeias</i>

κατὰ	νοῦν	τὸν	ἐμόν,	καί	σε	φυλάττοι
as for	mind	the	my,	with	you	3PS.OPT. PRS
<i>katà</i>	<i>nóun</i>	<i>tòn</i>	<i>emòn,</i>	<i>kaì</i>	<i>se</i>	<i>phyláttoi</i>

Ζεὺς	ἀγοραῖος.	καὶ	νικήσας [...]
<i>Zeùs</i>	<i>agoraíos</i>	<i>kaì</i>	<i>PTCP.AORS</i>
<i>Zeùs</i>	<i>agoraíos</i>	<i>kaì</i>	<i>nikēsas</i>

ἔλθοις	στεφάνοις	κατάπαστος.
2PS.OPT.AOR	<i>stephánois</i>	<i>katápastos</i>
<i>élthois</i>	<i>stephánois</i>	<i>katápastos</i>

“Rather go rejoicing and may you be fortunate according to my thought. And guard you Zeus marketer. And if you win [...], come back covered with crowns” (*Knights*. 498-500, 502).

The present imperative being developed by the present participle “rather go rejoicing” (*áll' íthi cháirōn*) orients the spectators to what goes ahead causing a certain expectation as to the content of the parabasis, taking into account, as Runge (2011) states, the use of the participle after the main prayer, whose purpose is to cause suspense in the reader regarding the cataphoric content. Next, the chorus uses an aorist optative “and may you be fortunate” (*kaì práxeias*) indicating the chorus’ change of perspective, highlighting its desire. In addition, as already stated, it is typical of comedy to mention divine myths, being a case of intertextuality as seen in the next verse.

First, it is worth noting the recategorization of Zeus as “marketer” making mention to the function of the main character, the Sausager, who sold sausages at the fair. This form of referencing Zeus orients the reader toward the discourse favoring the Sausage Maker being associated with this god. In evoking Zeus, the use of the present optative “guard” (*phyláttoi*) expresses desire of the chorus regarding the victory of the festival poet. On the other hand, in the next verse there is use of the aorist optative.

The aorist participle “winning” (*nikēsas*), being presupposition (ALBUQUERQUE, 2020), guides as to the use of the aorist optative “come back” (*élthois*) expressing the desire of the chorus in a distanced way as background. The uses of the

aoorist, indicating some remoteness, point to the choir's desire, but without so much commitment as to the certainty of victory since this depends not on the choir, but on the spectators. These aorists, in the participle and optative, not only highlight conceptualize the choir's desire and the uncertainty of victory but also orient the speech towards the spectators with in the next verse with present imperative and the aorist participle.

The present imperative "pay attention" (*prosécheite*), in the verse 503 (ὕμεῖς δ' ἡμῖν προσέχετε τὸν νοῦν [*hymeis d' hēmîn prosécheite tòn noûn*] "but you take heed"), directs the spectators as to the parabasis in the following verses (510-610). In Greek, the aorist imperative is usually used for gods, while the present imperative is addressed to human speakers (BAKKER, 1966). This aspectual distinction in the imperative can be explained not only by the social functions exercised by the participants in Greek culture, but also the interactional character of language so that the aspectual choices and oppositions express the various relationships established between subjects.

(12)

ὕμεῖς δ' ἡμῖν προσέχετε τὸν νοῦν  
*hymeis d' hēmîn* 2.PP. IMP.PRS *tòn noûn*  
 πειραθέντες καθ' ἑαυτούς.  
 PTCP.AORS *kath' heautoús*.  
*peirathéntes kath' heautoús*.

But you take heed [...] accustomed by themselves. (*Knights*. 503, 506)

In turn, the aorist participle "accustomed" (*peirathéntes*), used to characterize the spectators as accustomed to the poetry, has the function of associating them with the parabasis, taking as presupposition the common practice of the Athenians to participate in the festivals where the plays were staged. In other words, this participial construction in the aorist echoes the context of culture as a common background among the participants of the interaction. Furthermore, this participial construction in the aorist serves as the background for the presentation of the parabasis in its following verses of the parabasis.

In the Greek verbal choice system, the analysis of the participle takes into account its relation to other modal forms (indicative, imperative, subjunctive, and optative) as well as verbal aspect (perfective [aorist], imperfective [present], and

stative [perfect]). Moreover, these morphosyntactic choices also need to consider the discourse level, understood as the analysis beyond the sentence and factors of discourse genre and interaction between the participants<sup>7</sup>. In examples (11-12) above, the excerpt is part of the parabasis section, which is a part of the play in which the chorus of actors turn directly to the spectators in order to influence them. As noted in the analysis of the verses, the uses of participles guide the spectators to the interlocutor's points of emphasis. In this case, the chorus aims to show the spectators that the parable will begin.

The participle, with its semantics of factive presupposition, acts strongly when used to orient the interlocutor to information structure so that it signals to the interlocutor the peaks of prominence. However, the choices of participles and their contribution to information structure need to be seen in relation to the other modal forms. In clause complex, the participle tends to be used before main clauses composed of optative, indicative or imperative as exemplified above (11).

In short, the structure of information in Greek, starting from the semantic analysis of the participle, considers the entire Greek verbal system in its choices and combinations (morphosyntax) based on the discursive targets of the enunciator in his/her interaction with the interlocutor.

### Information structure, syntax, and pragmatics

This last section deals with the relation between the semantics of the participle as modulation and its pragmatics effects in the information structure considering the prepositive position of the participle (i.e., placed before the main clause). Also, we have seen in the last section, the participle can be postpositive or prepositive in relation to the main clause. This last section deals with the pragmatics uses of the participle in the prepositive clause complex relation.

In its textual function, the participle is used as given information in relation to the new information of the main clause. A piece of given information is the one that can be recovered from the immediate linguistic context of the previous discourse, while new information means something that has not been present in the immediate linguistic context before (KRIFKA; MUSAN, 2012; REED, 1997).

<sup>7</sup>The notion of context in LSF is considered in terms of: (1) intertextuality, (2) culture, (3) situation (register) and (4) ideology (FUZER; CABRAL, 2014; LECKIE-TARRY, 1995). As for intertextuality, we observe the constant presence of myths. It is worth highlighting Dionysus considered the god of comedy (cf. verses). In verses (498-506), the chorus evokes Zeus by associating him with the main character, Sausager. Another important intertextual element in the parable is the reference to the poet's competitors, seeking to demean them and the poet win the audience's votes (BILES, 2011). As for culture, the plays were staged in festivals (POMPEU, 2019). In these festivals, they were staged in order to win. Knights, Aristophanes' second play, was staged in the year (424 BC) being the champion in this year. Those who judged the plays were the spectators, for this reason the parable has an essential function when it is directed to the public. Parable, coming from the noun *παράβασις*, means to advance. In verse 508, we have "advance to the spectators" (*prós tó théatron parabénai*). As far as the situation context (register) is concerned, we have the field, the tenor and the mode. The first means "what is happening". In the parabasis, the topic is politics in which two slaves of the People (Athens), Demosthenes and Nitia, get rid of the smart-ass slave Paflagonius (Cleon)

by using a Sausage (Agoracritus) in a dispute of low qualities between the two in order to serve the People (POMPEU, 2019). The second concerns the social roles of the participants in the interaction. In the case of the parable, we have the chorus of knights, the poet, and the Athenian spectators (explain the social role of the knights and the poet). As for the ideological context, it is about power relations. Specifically, on the one hand, the poet's criticism of the spectators for not knowing how to choose good politicians, considering that the poet presents himself in the position of educator of Athens. On the other hand, the construction made of the poet's image throughout the parable with the aim of receiving acceptance and winning the championship. Aristophanes' comedies are marked by a dialogue with the literary aspects of Athens, such as the myths, but also by a dialogue with sociopolitical issues. The poet was not unaware of what was happening in his time. For this reason, it is possible to observe how his comedies dealt with social issues such as politics and war. In sum, the parable is a section in Aristophanic comedy whose purposes are, on the one hand, to censure the spectators and the poet's opponents; on the other hand, to praise the poet by asking for votes for his comedy. (DUARTE, 2000).

When put before the main clause, the participle is used as given information. It is necessary for the reader to infer the logical subject. As given information, the participle can refer back to the previous discourse as in the example (10) above. In particular the aorist participle, which prototypically tends to be used before the main clause, is given information providing background information in order to focus the main clause (cf. (11) below).

Adapted from SFL into the Greek studies, focus is defined as prominence (REED, 1997). Prominence is the way the speaker draws the reader's attention to important topics: It is also included in the secondary linguistic literature, where it is referred to, as emphasis, foregrounding, relevance, or salience (PORTER, 2009).

As the ideational metafunction (modulation), the participle has the role of focusing (prominence) on the main clause, and its semantic (factive presupposition), indicates "a necessary common ground between the reader/listener and an author", with the purpose of inviting the readers to participate in the construction of the meanings (ALBUQUERQUE, 2020, p. 70).

(13)

γυμνᾶς παραῖδὼν<sub>[BACKG]</sub> ἐξέβαλ' οἰῶ, τὸ ξίφος.  
 gymnas PTCP.AOR 3SG.IND.AOR 1SG.SBJV.PRS the kyphos.  
 gymnās paraoidōn exébal', oiō, tò xíphos.  
 "Seeing the woman, he threw the sword, and was left alone." (*Lysistrata*. 156)

The subject of the verbs is Menelaus. The character of the play, Lampito, is describing a scene in which Menelaus sees the woman (Helen), and throwing his sword, he stands alone gazing at her. While the aorist participle and the aorist indicative provide background information, Lampito turns her discourse to the focus point, namely, Menelaus was left alone gazing at Helen's beauty. The aorist participle *paraoidōn* (παραῖδὼν) and the aorist indicative *exébal'* (ἐξέβαλ) function as background in order to set the main clause on the spotlight, that is, the present subjunctive *oiō* (οἰῶ, 'was left alone'). In terms of information structure, the perfective aspect (aorist) tends to be placed before the main clause, which can be in the indicative, imperative subjunctive, and optative. In other

words, modulation serves as a spotlight to mood and modality in the information structure of Greek complex clause. Put in another way, it means that

The pragmatic use of focus does not have an immediate influence on truth conditions, but it helps in guiding the direction in which communication should develop, and it also aids in building the cognitive representations that are to be constructed by the interlocutors (KRIFKA; MUSAN, 2012, p. 9).

The aorist participle functions as ‘spotlight’ in relation to the main clause. In other words, the participle has the pragmatic use of focus, which relates to the public communicative goals of the participant, that is, the common ground management.

The aorist participle, because of its ideational semantics and background function, can be used to lead the reader to take the clause in the participle to be in the same semantic status as the main clause. In other words, with a main clause in the indicative mood, the clause in the participle tends to cause the pragmatic effect of also being put into the indicative mood. It is the upgraded participle (ALBUQUERQUE, 2018). For this reason, in (11) above, the aorist participle *paraoidòn* (παραῖδὼν, ‘seeing’) can be translated as an indicative mood. But the chosen for the participle relates to the information structure in inviting the reader to participate in the interaction.

The so-called adverbial participle is virtually a pragmatic effect by inference of the reader. Both participle clause and adverbial clause are common ground. The distinction between them resides in that the participle is common ground management, while the adverbial clause is common ground content. In the example (11) above, the aorist participle *paraoidòn* (παραῖδὼν, ‘seeing’) could be translated as an adverbial clause such as: “When he saw the woman, he threw the sword, and was left alone”. This happens due to the participle as a factive presupposition, which invites the reader to make inferences. In a logical perspective, the event in the aorist participle comes before the following events in the aorist indicative and present subjunctive. However, it must be taken into account that the participle, as factive presupposition, deals with the flow of the information in relation to the reader’s knowledge. The point is that the participle functions primarily as information

structure guiding the interlocutors on the management of the information.

What is said here is that the pragmatic use of the participle sentence as giving information which contributes to the inference of participle clause as if it were adverbial clause. On account of its factive presupposition semantics, the clause in the aorist participle can be used to indicate some adverbial relation being what Lambrecht (1994) calls as topic, which is the scene-setting expression, or as an element which sets a spatial, temporal, or individual framework within the main predication holds. This explains the example (12) below in which the perfect participle below was translated as temporal clause.

(14)

εἰρημένον δ' αὐταῖς ἀπαντᾶν ἐνθάδε

PTCP.PRF them INF.PRS entháde

*eirēménon d' autáis apantân entháde* βουλευσομέναισιν οὐ περὶ φαύλου πράγματος,

PTCP.FUT not around phaulou prágmatos

*bouleusoménaisin ou perì phaulou prágmatos*

εὔδουσι κούχ ἤκουσιν.

3PL.IND.PRS not 3PL.IND.PRS

*heúdousi kouch hékousin.*

“Speaking to gather here, coming to deliberate on something important, they sleep and don’t arrive.”

(*Lysistrata*. 13–15)

In Greek, there are a lot of grammatical elements directly involved in temporal encoding, these are certain temporal nouns, however: ἐνιαυτός, ἔτος, ἡμαρ, ἡώς, μείς, νύξ, χρόνος, ὥρη; and temporal adverbs: ἤδη, πάλαι, οὐπω, ποτε, εἴτα, ἔπειτα, ἐπειδή, τότε, εὐθύς, ταχέως, δηθά, δηρόν, διαμπερές, μίνυνθα, πανῆμαρ.

Both information structure and reference tracking are based on the combination of pragmatic inference and the decoding of linguistic signals (MATIĆ *et al.*, 2014). Reference tracking refers to the ability of the interlocutors to unequivocally determine the referent(s) of a linguistic expression (MATIĆ *et al.*, 2014). The AGP is such a linguistic device that guides the reader in the identification of the referent by the process of inference. In Greek, the absolute genitive participle (AGP) is such decoding linguistic sign used as (1) new setting or scenario (such as temporal, spatial setting), (2) anaphoric topic,



and (3) switch-reference (SILVA; ALBUQUERQUE, 2021). And as seen below the AGP functions as referent tracking.

(15)

Λαλούντων	δὲ αὐτῶν πρὸς τὸν λαόν
PTCP-PRES-GEN	them to the people
<i>lalountōn</i>	<i>dè autōn pròs tòn laòn</i>
ἐπέστησαν	αὐτοῖς οἱ ἱερεῖς
3PP.IND.AORS	autois hoi hiereis
<i>epéstēsān</i>	<i>autois hoi hieréis</i>

“Speaking them to the people, the priests came up on them.” (*Acts 4:1*)

In (15), the present participle is in the genitive case, an example of absolute genitive participle because its subject is different from that of the main clause. Its grammatical subject is the pronoun *autōn* (αὐτῶν, ‘them’) which refers to the apostles Peter and John, while the grammatical subject of the main clause *epéstēsān* (ἐπέστησαν, ‘they came up on them’) are the priests (*hoi hieréis*, οἱ ἱερεῖς). In terms of information structure, this participle clause functions as backgrounding information in order to point out the main clause *epéstēsān* (ἐπέστησαν, ‘they came up on them’). The AGP, in this example, functions as switch-reference, which is an anaphoric linkage across clause boundaries (STIRLING, 1993).

(16)

καὶ καταλαβόμενοι ὅτι ἄνθρωποι ἀγράμματοί εἰσιν καὶ ἰδιῶται,
<i>kai</i> PTCP.AORS that men unlearned 3PL.IND.PRS <i>kai idiôtai</i>
<i>kai katalabómenoi hóti ánthrōpoi agrámmatolí eisin kai idiôtai,</i>
ἐθαύμαζον
3PL.IND.IMPRF
<i>ethaúmazon</i>

“They, noticing that these were unlearned men and common men, were astonished.” (*Acts 4.13*)

The aorist participle *katalabómenoi* (καταλαβόμενοι, ‘noticing’) has as its subject the Jewish leaders before whom were the apostles. But the Jewish leaders as logical subjects need to be inferred by the reader. In using the participle, the reader is guided as for the main participants in the current discourse, which are the Jewish leaders. But it is necessary for the reader to infer this using his knowledge. The common ground management helps the interlocutor not only in the

identification of the subject of the participle clause but also in the structure of the information.

In sum, both information structure and reference tracking depend on the estimation by the reader of what the current status of the common ground management between them is, and the AGP is a linguistic device that guides the reader in doing the inference in order to identify both the main point of the discourse and the referent, respectively.

### **Conclusion**

This paper described the structure of information in Ancient Greek based on Systemic-Functional Linguistics in complex clauses. These, in Greek, are fundamentally oriented to guide the interlocutor as to what is prominent or not in the discourse. Particularly, the uses of clauses in the participle that precede the main clause.

The semantics of the participle as a factive presupposition, whose discursive function is to guide the interlocutor to the central points in the interaction, was presented. From a systemic-functional point of view, the participle is ideational metafunction dealing with language as reflexive when seeking to call the interlocutor to the interaction through inference process. The participle can be used as a change of referent when it is an absolute genitive participle, or have the pragmatic effect of adverbial clause or the effect of upgraded being conceived in the mind of the interlocutor (hence ideational meaning).

Mainly, an attempt was made to describe why the participle has these three functions. The justification given in this paper was that the participle, as a factive presupposition, contributes to the information structure and to the referent tracking by the participle being common ground management.

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## ESTRUTURA DA INFORMAÇÃO NO GREGO ANTIGO

### RESUMO

O objetivo deste artigo é fornecer uma descrição da estrutura de informação em grego antigo considerando a semântica dos modos e o aspecto verbal em cláusula complexa, em particular o uso do particípio posto antes da oração principal. Da perspectiva da estrutura de informação, três tipos de particípios são descritos: particípio circunstancial (CP), particípio genitivo absoluto (AGP), funcionando como referência de rastreamento, e particípio atualizado (UP), baseado na semântica do particípio como pressuposição factível (modulação). Argumenta-se que a semântica dessa forma nominal contribui para o processamento da estrutura de informação desses usos do particípio como uma gestão de base comum em orações complexas. Além disso, levando em conta sua semântica de modulação, o particípio é um dispositivo sintático para a codificação da estrutura de informação, o que contribui para a pragmática do rastreamento de referência (RT) e seus usos adverbiais. As amostras são retiradas do grego clássico (as comédias de Aristófanes) e do grego bíblico (o livro de Atos). A abordagem teórica

*é a Linguística Sistêmico-Funcional (LSF) aplicada à língua grega (PORTER, 2021, 2015, 2009, 1993; ALBUQUERQUE, 2020, 2018, REED, 1997), com os resultados dos estudos de estrutura de informação (MATIĆ et al., 2014; KRIFKA e MUSAN, 2012; LAMBRECHT, 1994; CHAFE, 1987), utilizando as noções de Dado/Novo, plano de fundo/prominência e pressuposto/asserção.*

**Palavras-chave:** *Estrutura da informação. Pressuposição factível. Semântica modal. Aspectos verbais. Particípio grego.*

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