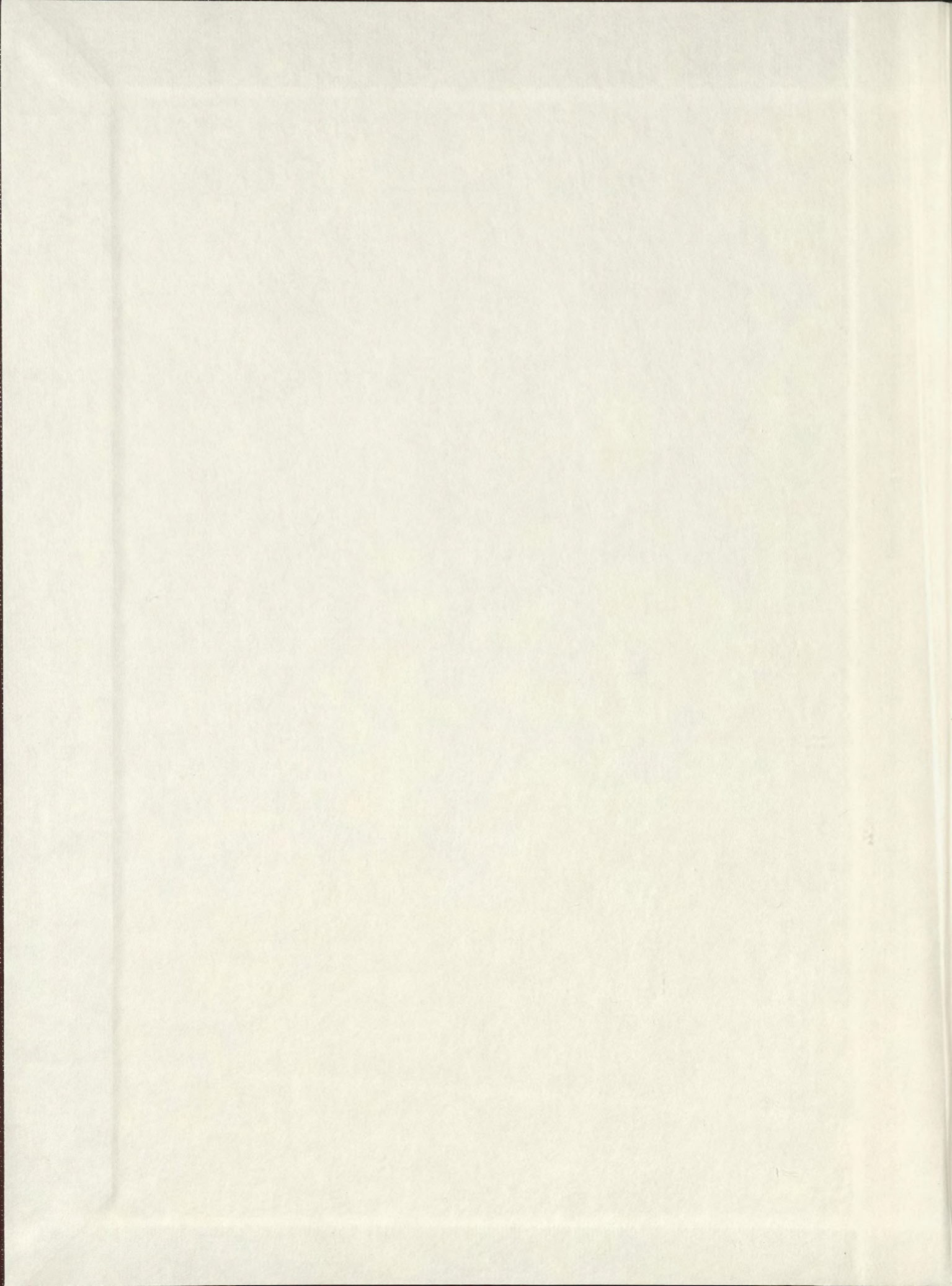


VOICE IN THE GREEK OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

BY

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VOICE IN THE GREEK OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

by

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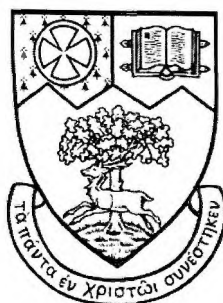
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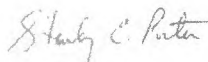
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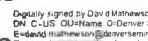
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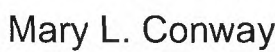
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ABSTRACT

“Voice in the Greek of the New Testament”

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Re-evaluations of the category of deponency in recent years have been the leading cause of a paradigm shift taking place in studies on the ancient Greek voice system, opening up new avenues for further remodelling. The present study contends that verbal voice operates according to an ergative two-voice system, active and middle-passive, producing two contrastive roles the subject plays in a clause. Within a nominative-accusative alignment patterning, which marks out transitive operations of a clause, ergative functions centered on verbal voice are present in the language’s verbal morphology and syntax. An ergative view of voice specifies different transitive participant roles and focuses on the affected element of the clause that realizes or actualizes the verbal process. Clearer expression of the subject’s function in the clause occurs by distinguishing between two opposing roles: the subject functioning either as realization of the process or as cause of the process. Two basic and contrastive roles of the subject, therefore, mean that two semantic domains for voice are operational in the language system network despite the occurrence of three morphological forms in the aorist and future tense-forms. The middle and passive uses, together comprise the middle-passive voice, and the active voice comprises the other voice domain. Middle and passive functions share the common feature of subject-affectedness, but middle uses occur when

there is a feature of internal agency in addition to the subject actualizing the verbal process. Passivity occurs when the subject actualizes the verbal process with an added feature of external agency to the clause. Moreover, passivity takes place through specific grammatical constructions within the middle-passive voice that operate as agentive augmentations (specified or not) of a middle-passive clause type. This is frequently expressed using the so-called, 'passive marker,' $-(\theta)\eta$, that was encroaching upon middle forms during this stage of the language and gradually expanding its range of function in the New Testament writings.

CONTENTS

SUMMARY PAGE	ii
SIGNATURE PAGE	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
LIST OF TABLES	vii
INTRODUCTION	1

PART ONE: A HISTORY OF RESEARCH ON ANCIENT GREEK VOICE

CHAPTER 1: TRANSITIVITY AND VOICE IN (PROTO) INDO-EUROPEAN	14
CHAPTER 2: VOICE IN ANCIENT GREEK	46

PART TWO: METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER 3: INTRODUCING SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL LINGUISTICS FOR A THEORY OF LANGUAGE AND GRAMMAR	115
CHAPTER 4: MODELLING THE ANCIENT GREEK VOICE SYSTEM	157

PART THREE: VOICE ANALYSIS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

CHAPTER 5: ACTIVE VOICE	206
CHAPTER 6: MIDDLE-PASSIVE VOICE (MIDDLE USE)	253
CHAPTER 7: MIDDLE-PASSIVE VOICE (PASSIVE USE)	302
CONCLUSION	347
BIBLIOGRAPHY	358

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: System Network of Causality for Ancient Greek Voice	185
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INTRODUCTION

Beginning in 1900, a large number of inscribed clay tablets were discovered by British archeologist, Arthur Evans, who was excavating the ruins of a palace on the island of Crete at the site of an ancient city called Knossos. These tablets revealed a writing system and script that had never been seen before which Evans called Linear B, dated tentatively to the Bronze Age period. Among a host of possible languages, the script itself was believed to be a form of Etruscan, but very little progress was made on deciphering the script for the next fifty years. The renown and prestige that had grown up around Evans's major archeological undertakings and their discoveries throughout the first half of the century had at the time created a perception that pervaded the scholarly field. There was a strong belief that the ruins being unearthed on the island of Crete belonged to an independent kingdom, distinct from the civilization on the mainland of Greece. It was believed that these tablets were used primarily as a bureaucratic tool, strictly for administrative purposes of an Aegean kingdom belonging to the Mycenaean civilization. This theory would effectively rule out Greek as a candidate for the language of the Linear B script, compelling scholars to opt for another "Minoan" language that demonstrates this people's unique identity.¹

¹ Robinson, *Lost Languages*, 75–84; Chadwick, *Linear B and Related Scripts*, 6–11; Chadwick, *The Decipherment of Linear B*, 5–25.

The publication of the Linear B script became something more than another ancient artifact. It fascinated many people as a linguistic riddle hiding a window into the ancient world. This riddle needed to be cracked. One person driven by this desire was Alice Kober, an assistant professor of classics at Brooklyn College in New York who taught Latin and ancient Greek. For almost two decades, throughout the 1930s and 40s, Kober studied the Linear B texts meticulously, without the aid of computers, searching painstakingly for patterns in the texts by recording the frequency of every symbol or sign and noting relationships among the signs. In her work, Kober developed a methodology of her own making for analysing the script that eventually enabled her to see patterns emerge more consistently. Text forms repeatedly began the same way but various shifts and changes of signs frequently occurred at the end of these forms depending on use. This soon led Kober to the conclusion that declension is evident in this language in which the language inflects using different forms to signal different uses of the same word. Related to this, Kober also identified masculine and feminine variants through vowel changes that are almost exclusive to Indo-European languages, thus narrowing down the pool of candidates somewhat for the language of Linear B.²

By the late 1940s, Kober had made significant progress in deciphering Linear B, but unfortunately she fell ill and died suddenly from cancer at the early age of 43, still not knowing what these texts were saying. Kober's many years of hard work would not be in vain, however, since several others who shared Kober's fascination and passion for this ancient writing, also had been working on the Linear B code. One person in particular was a young British architect by the name of Michael Ventris. Ventris took up Kober's

² Robinson, *Lost Languages*, 86–91. See also "Alice Kober: Unsung Heroine Who Helped Decode Linear B," June 6, 2013.

work, learning her method, which eventually proved to be a sturdy bridge for Ventris to cross into the decipherment of these texts. Ventris took especially into account what these documents were used for, as having administrative and business purposes, compelling him to look for place names, titles, and other words that are unlikely to change from document to document given their official nature.

Now having access to more Linear B tablets by this time, especially the Pylos tablets discovered in Greece in 1939, Ventris had the privilege of working with a bigger corpus and benefitting from other scholars also working on these texts at the time. One such scholar was Emmett Bennett Jr., whose work on classifying some eighty-nine signs suggested that Linear B script was a syllabary and not an alphabet.³ Ventris formed a correspondence with Bennett that would motivate Ventris to push forward in his effort of decipherment, even at the cost of ending his career as an architect.⁴ Ventris designed a grid system to plot the different sign values, observing patterns of frequency and positioning of signs, and sign combinations. Building on Kober's work, Ventris was able to establish more decisively patterns of inflections in at least six different declensions, each with three forms resembling case forms. Moreover, Ventris's statistical analysis enabled him to propose possible phonetic values associated with each sign that included various consonant and vowel combinations and patternings. Soon sign combinations began to form intelligible "words" that began to resemble place names for cities and towns, such as Knossos and Tuliso, recognizable as ancient Greek names known today. And now the texts were beginning to speak.⁵

³ Robinson, *Lost Languages*, 86–89.

⁴ Robinson, *The Man Who Deciphered Linear B*, 76–78.

⁵ Chadwick, *Linear B and Related Scripts*, 12–21. See Robinson, *Lost Languages*, 93–101, where examples of Ventris's grid system are provided.

In June of 1952, Ventris wrote to a colleague stating he is almost completely convinced that Linear B is Greek. In his own words, Ventris states that Linear B is “a difficult and archaic Greek, seeing that it is 500 years older than Homer and written in a rather abbreviated form, but Greek nevertheless.”⁶ Further translations of other Linear B scripts seemed to confirm Ventris’s findings. Half a century after their initial discovery, a new theory could now be advanced, supported by the discovery of more Linear B tablets on mainland Greece, that the Greek language came to Crete through invasion and colonization from mainland Greece. The language was put into writing using a system indigenous to that place, developed by a non-Greek people, the Mycenaean people, living on the island of Crete.

Because no one could recognize the signs used to put the ancient Greek language into writing, this script remained a mystery for so long and it was assumed that an unfamiliar writing system also meant an unfamiliar language far removed from today. But the fact is, the language itself, though very old, had been known all along, it was merely masked behind a different form of expression. It was made even harder to recognize because of scholarly preconceptions at the time that disregarded the script as Greek, presuming some other Minoan language type, a theory still held to even by Ventris himself until the time of decipherment.

It took the perseverance of people like Kober and Ventris, among others, whose knowledge and expertise in the ancient Greek language itself, including Latin, made them able to recognize connected patternings that emerge between languages. Kober and Ventris possessed tools of analysis sharpened by years of studying languages, ancient to

⁶ Robinson, *Lost Languages*, 101.

modern, among which there are many texts extant today that are younger in comparison to the Linear B texts. Both Kober and Ventris applied their knowledge of how languages work, how words mean, and how these meanings are expressed, to find out how an unrecognizable language might work, and what it could possibly be saying. This formed their method that would guide their arduous task of analysis. For Alice Kober in particular, it is remarkable what she eventually turned up in her rigorous study of this script. This is so, especially considering that at the time, she was working with only what had been made public, which was only a small fraction of the more than 3000 tablets and fragments excavated at Knossos. Her work gives great credibility toward making attempts at deciphering an unfamiliar ancient language and the forms it comes in, by utilizing the tools of inquiry gained through study and knowledge of other languages.

The pursuit many years ago to decipher Linear B was to decode meaning in an ancient text. The present study on verbal voice is also a pursuit for meaning in ancient texts, taken up in similar spirit as texts that still have meaning to be unlocked by applying tools of analysis gained from the study of other languages. By no means do I claim to put myself in the same league as Kober and Ventris in regard to their expertise in ancient languages and the painstaking task they underwent to decipher Linear B. I do share their passion and conviction, however, that by applying to an ancient language linguistic tools that have become readily available today, an ancient language not only still speaks today, but more also can be gained from it, and what is known can be better understood.

In this study, the ancient Greek language is taken up with particular attention given to verbal voice as a feature of the grammar of the language. A methodology is applied in this study by using a specific linguistic theory known as Systemic Functional

Linguistics that studies modern English primarily, but is applied to other languages as well. Both modern English and ancient Greek are related to each other by belonging to the Indo-European family of languages. The tools acquired through the linguistic study of modern English can be applied to the study of ancient Greek to help reveal observable patterns that emerge in this language. Applying a specific theory such as Systemic Functional Linguistics to ancient Greek helps to explain occurrences that would otherwise remain masked by both sheer unfamiliarity—a language form that does not exist today and is too far removed from the present day—and modern-day assumptions about verbal voice in the current scholarly field that continue to impede efforts to better understand—decipher—how verbal voice operates in the grammar of this ancient language.

Whereas much of what Kober and Ventris observed held their focus at the morphological level, in this study on ancient Greek, attention is focused at the clausal level,⁷ that is, the level in which communicating meaning linguistically is mapped into an integrated grammatical structure.⁸ This will take place not to the neglect of morphology, as this is an integral part of voice as a feature of the grammar. But to better understand verbal voice, the working parts of the clause need to be studied. There are different kinds of meanings realized at the clause level, but the focus in this study centres on one of the principal systems of the clause called *transitivity*. Ancient Greek displays transitivity as a grammatical feature of the language and this study recognizes transitivity to be a complex system of the clause, whose definition must be broadened out to include all the

⁷ The term, “clause,” will be used extensively throughout this study rather than “sentence,” which better refers to an orthographic unit of language and its structure. “Clause,” on the other hand, is a grammatical unit made up of other various grammatical constituents that realize meanings.

⁸ Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 10.

interactive relationships taking place in a clause. It is much more than referring to the action of a verb proceeding from a grammatical subject that “transfers” onto an object. As a grammatical system, transitivity enables an order to be imposed upon the linguistic expressions of meanings and this is realized as a clause in the act of language. The clause is a specific configuration of language use and the system of transitivity provides the grammatical resources to produce a clause configuration capable of communicating meaning. Transitivity centres on an action or verbal process, but also yields a complex interaction among all constituents, resulting in various degrees of effectiveness or intensity of the verbal process itself and how it is portrayed in relation to other constituents of a clause (e.g. affectedness of an object, volition of an agent, telicity, punctuality, among others).⁹

The aim of this study, however, is not to categorize various degrees of transitivity taking place in a clause, although this study acknowledges that there are many different facets of transitivity realized among the constituents of a clause. Rather, this study’s aim is to identify and observe what transitivity creates—alignment patternings that emerge among constituents of a clause in ancient Greek—and how transitivity manifests itself at the clausal level especially in regard to voice. All languages of the world, both ancient and modern, have alignment systems in place in order for the language to make sense when using it. John Du Bois observes that “[e]very language provides its users with systematic ways of organizing the core arguments of the clause, establishing a more or less stable and consistent framework for the foundations of its grammar.”¹⁰ Alignment systems provide the logical and sequential ordering of clausal constituents involved in a

⁹ Hopper and Thompson, “Transitivity in Grammar and Discourse,” 251–52.

¹⁰ Du Bois, “Ergativity in Discourse and Grammar,” 23.

given linguistic act in order to produce meaningful text. A language's system of transitivity creates distinctive reoccurring patterns of relationships among constituents of a clause, signalled in various ways. These patterns follow certain rules that enable the proper organization, interaction, and sequencing among constituents so that meaning is produced. This is what is referred to in this study as alignment patternings or alignment systems.

This study asserts that ancient Greek verbal voice is a specific realization of alignment patternings taking place in the language. In verbal voice, a given clause configuration follows a certain functional arrangement of its constituents to convey meaning. A system of transitivity is capable of producing different alignment systems in the same language, each interacting with each other, and occurring to various extents depending on different criteria at work when using the language. The focus here is on the kind of outworking of transitivity that is realized by verbal voice, namely its alignment system at work, which is a central component to the grammar of the language. Identifying this system and how it works—it is contended—yields a better understanding of the grammar of verbal voice in the language.

Thus, this study argues that an *ergative* alignment patterning emerges in uses of voice in the Greek of the New Testament texts, producing a two-voice system, labelled as active and middle-passive. An ergative patterning puts focus on the patient or affected participant of a clause in relation to the verbal process. This ergative patterning is marked on the verb of a clause, supported by cross-referencing agreement between the verb and subject participant. In this alignment, there are two highly contrastive roles of the subject participant thereby producing two opposing voice “domains,” active and middle-passive.

The middle-passive voice is further divided according to agency (causality) in relation to the verbal process, qualifying a distinction in this voice between two separate uses. These two uses, middle and passive, are hyphenated to show that together they comprise one voice since the role of the subject participant, which is central to verbal voice, is the same function for both middle and passive uses.

The following is divided into three parts. Part One is a history of research consisting of two chapters. The first chapter looks at what has been discussed in the field of contemporary linguistics in regard to alignment systems in languages around the world. This chapter explores transitivity and its different stages of development as it has grown into a complex system of language. The study of transitivity goes back a few centuries, but contemporary linguistics has more recently identified three general types of alignment patternings among languages in the world, both ancient and modern: active, ergative, and nominative-accusative systems. Ergativity in particular, as a manifestation of transitivity, is realized by a distinctive alignment patterning and the identification of this in languages around the world has generated much research and discussion in the field of linguistics in recent decades. Discussion in this chapter centers on the Indo-European family of languages since this is the language to which ancient Greek belongs, but other languages of the world are also discussed.

Chapter 2 moves specifically into the area of ancient Greek voice studies. The chapter surveys significant portions of the vast amount of research that has been done on verbal voice by contemporary linguists as well as those working in the branch of biblical studies that concerns the original languages of the biblical texts. Serious discrepancies persist in how voice is interpreted as functioning in ancient Greek, perhaps indicating

why so much has been written on the topic. However, despite the large amount of work, this survey, especially in relation to the preceding chapter, also reveals how comparatively little crossover has occurred between the field of contemporary linguistics and the field of biblical studies in attempts to gain a better understanding of ancient Greek voice as it occurs in the texts of the New Testament.

Part Two of this study is on methodology and modelling. Chapter 3 introduces the linguistic theory Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), the approach taken in this study and the methodology that will be applied to study voice in the texts of the New Testament. SFL is a well-established theory originating from studies of modern English, whose beginnings go back a century. Since the 1960s, SFL has come into its own as a theory through further developments by linguist, Michael Halliday. In recent years SFL has expanded considerably, taken up by many other prominent linguists, and branching out into other forms and theoretical approaches. The emphasis SFL puts on language as a distinctive grammar system will help to establish a better model for how voice operates in Greek. More specifically, the Transitive and Ergative Models of SFL that identify patternings in a transitive system of language will be applied to ancient Greek voice as the means for analysing the NT texts.

Chapter 4 offers a model of ancient Greek verbal voice based on SFL that articulates an independently standing grammar system of voice, namely its lexicogrammar, which utilizes an ergative patterning of transitivity. A key distinction is clarified in this chapter between a nominative-accusative transitive system as a system that is oriented towards the grammatical subject and an ergative transitive system oriented towards the grammatical patient. Although Greek exercises a nominative-

accusative system for its subject—verb—object relations, the language shifts into an ergative system particularly for operations of voice. Thus, modelling voice according to this type of patterning opens up new ways to identify various lexicogrammatical relationships taking place in a clause.

The final section of the study, Part Three, is the analysis section that applies the method and modelling discussed in Part Two to the NT texts. There are three chapters in this section. Chapter 5 focuses on the active voice with special attention given to the Transitive Model of SFL. A broad range of uses of the active voice is considered, offering analysis of specific texts according to how an ergative alignment patterning underlies this voice. In this voice, the verbal process moves out from the domain of the subject participant (in consideration to semantic features of the verbal process), which encodes causality in this voice.

Chapter 6 takes up the middle-passive voice, offering a description of this voice that comes from applying the Ergative Model of SFL. This model helps to identify ergativity as the primary alignment patterning underlying voice and is especially helpful for specifying middle and passive uses. In this chapter, special attention turns to middle uses, specifically in which the verbal process moves entirely into the domain of the subject participant while agency to the process is also maintained in the subject. As with the active voice, a broad range of middle uses is considered, paying attention to verbs that have traditionally been treated as deponent verbs. An alternative is offered to this categorization throughout the analysis of specific texts, making a clearer distinction between functions of the active and middle-passive voice.

The final chapter takes up the middle-passive voice again but this time with focus on passive uses. The verbal process also moves fully into the domain of the subject participant in passive uses, however agency remains external to the subject, originating from some other participant, whether specified or not. Various passive uses are analysed throughout the chapter, including the theta form that signals passive uses in the aorist and future tense-forms. Observing the relationship of passive uses to middle uses, as well as to active uses, helps to conceptualize the voice system in its fullness, grounded in the overall approach taken in this study that voice operates according to an ergative alignment system.

PART ONE

A HISTORY OF RESEARCH ON ANCIENT GREEK VOICE

TRANSITIVITY AND VOICE IN (PROTO) INDO-EUROPEAN

Introduction

This study begins with a survey of how verbal voice and related notions of transitivity have been considered within the field of comparative linguistics. The focus here is on work that has been done on the Indo-European (IE) family of languages, which has a long history of research dating back more than two centuries. This family is recognized today as the most studied group of languages in the world and it is the family to which the Greek language belongs. Indo-European linguistics is both theoretical and empirical in its orientation, and through diachronic comparison of individual IE languages, it has centered in large part on reconstruction efforts into earlier stages of these languages. In IE linguistics, all the related languages are examined, directing similarities and differences among them towards reproducing Proto-Indo-European (PIE), the theoretical parent language that was the common ancestor to all of its daughter languages comprising the IE language family. IE linguistics offers on the whole a wealth of knowledge about how the IE languages work by providing an accounting of language changes, and where distinctive language features that characterize IE languages, both ancient and modern, may have come from.¹¹

¹¹ For surveys in Indo-European linguistics, see Beekes, *Comparative Indo-European Linguistics: An Introduction*; Clackson, *Indo-European Linguistics: An Introduction*; Fortson IV, *Indo-European Language and Culture*; Gamkrelidze and Ivanov, *Indo-European and the Indo-Europeans: A Reconstruction and Historical Analysis of a Proto-Language and Proto-Culture*; Lehmann, *Theoretical Bases of Indo-European Linguistics*; Lockwood, *Indo-European Philology*; Meier-Brügger, *Indo-European Linguistics*; Schmalstieg, *Indo-European Linguistics: A New Synthesis*.

This chapter considers some conceptualizations of verbal voice that have been put forward in IE linguistics with emphasis on the development of transitivity,¹² realized by alignment systems, as special attention is also given to the notion of ergativity. There are specific language features identified in PIE, relevant to verbal voice, that may have been passed on, having helped to shape the ancient Greek language from its earliest beginnings. The findings of comparative IE linguistics involving PIE suggest how prominent features of IE languages may have originated and evolved by the time these languages were operational, including ancient Greek, pointing to a certain trajectory a language travels in developmentally. Gaining a sense of such a trajectory for ancient Greek will help to develop a grammar of Hellenistic Greek voice that is sensitive to both where the language has come from and where it is headed.¹³

A Two-Voice System?

In the field of comparative linguistics, it has been a longstanding view going back well into the nineteenth century that a two-voice system, comprised of an active and middle opposition, likely formed the original basis for verbal voice that all Indo-European (IE) languages share in common. However, it has not been so clear how to conceptualize this system, especially when the so-called middle voice appears also to have two separate voice functions itself, producing the term, *medio-passive* or *middle-passive* among grammar treatments that hold this two-voice view. Generally, an active-middle

¹² Unless otherwise stated, uses of the term, *transitivity*, refer to the definition of transitivity discussed in the introduction to this study.

¹³ All languages have a fascinating capability to refashion themselves in new ways at different stages in their history. In this regard anything that might suggest a kind of genetic determinism for future stages of a language needs to be dealt with carefully and held to only loosely.

opposition for voice has been understood in relation to the grammatical subject performing the action in the active voice in contrast to the grammatical subject performing the action in such a way that the action also “bears upon” the subject somehow in the middle voice. Many attempts by grammarians have been put forth to better define and clarify this voice opposition. Earlier research into the IE languages paid particular attention to the ancient Sanskrit language within comparative philology (as it was called at the time). The groundbreaking work was by F. von Schlegel in the publication, *Über die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier* (1808), in which work on Sanskrit became the catalyst for much subsequent research in this newly emerging field of science.¹⁴ The Sanskrit language was a curious fascination during this time among philologists. Despite its geographical separation, Sanskrit bore striking resemblances to Greek and Latin in vocabulary and features of grammar, leading some to postulate that all three languages came from a common source.¹⁵ In 1820, F. Bopp remarked concerning

¹⁴ Classic works in IE philology of the nineteenth century include Brugmann, *Elements of the Comparative Grammar of the Indo-Germanic Languages* (1888); Brugmann and Delbrück, *Grundriss der vergleichenden grammatik der indogermanischen Sprachen*. (1886-1900); Bopp, *Über das Konjugationssystem der Sanskritsprache in Vergleichung mit jenen der griechischen, lateinischen, persischen und germanischen Sprache* (1816); Bopp, *Vergleichende Grammatik des Sanskrit, Zend, Armenischen, Griechischen, Lateinischen, Lithauischen, Altslawischen, Gothischen und Deutschen*. 6 Abtheilungen (1833-52). Translated into English as *A Comparative Grammar of the Sanskrit, Zend, Greek, Latin, Lithuanian, Gothic, German, and Slavonic Languages* (1845-53); Delbrück, *Syntaktische Forschungen* (1871-88); Osthoff and Brugmann, *Morphologische Untersuchungen auf dem Gebiete der indogermanischen Sprachen*. (1878-1910); Pott, *Etymologische Forschungen auf dem Gebiete der indogermanischen Sprachen*. 6 vols. (1833-36); von Schlegel, *Über die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier: ein Beitrag zur Begründung der Alterthumskunde* (1808); Schleicher, *Compendium der vergleichenden Grammatik der indo-germanischen Sprachen* (1871); Whitney, *The Roots, Verb-Forms, and Primary Derivatives of the Sanskrit Language*. (1885).

¹⁵ The original impetus for further research into this is attributed to Sir William Jones whose famous words in 1786 declared that such strong affinities among these languages is a phenomenon that could not have been produced by accident. His original words are worth repeating: “The Sanskrit language, whatever be its antiquity, is of a wonderful structure; more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either; yet bearing to both of them a stronger affinity, both in the roots of verbs, and in the forms of grammar, than could possibly have been produced by accident; so strong indeed that no philologist could examine them all three without believing them to have sprung from some common source, which perhaps no longer exists.” (Quoted in Lockwood, *Indo-European Philology*, 22)

Greek, Latin, and other IE languages, “I feel inclined rather to consider them altogether as subsequent variations of one original tongue, which, however, the Sanskrit has preserved more perfect than its kindred dialects.”¹⁶ Bopp goes on to say, however, that although frequently more primitive forms of Greek and Latin seem to be preserved in Sanskrit, the reverse appears also to be the case, “where grammatical forms, lost in the Sanskrit, have been preserved in Greek and Latin.”¹⁷ Sanskrit, Latin, and Greek all share the commonality of monosyllabic roots among nouns and verbs, for example, such as Latin, *da, sta, mon, min, frag, vid, voc* corresponding with Sanskrit, roots, *da* (to give), *st’ā* (to stand), *man* (to mind), *b’anj*, (to break), *vid*, (to know), and *vach* (to speak). Similarities between Sanskrit and Greek *ar, φα* (to shine)/Skr. *b’ā*; *ἐδ* (to eat)/Skr. *ad*; *δεικ* (to show, point)/Skr *dis’*.¹⁸ For voice, Greek and Sanskrit seem to have inherited very similar morphology for their active and middle voices possibly characteristic of an earlier common source (e.g. third person singular present middle *-εσαι Gr./-atē Skr.*; third person plural middle *-ονται Gr./-antē Skr.*). According to Bopp, both languages originally inflected for active voice with similar terminating vowels. In Sanskrit, *b’avami, b’avasi, b’avati, b’avanti*, and Greek (earlier athematic endings) *μι, σι, τι*. These forms made only slight changes in the middle voice by lengthening their terminating vowels. Sanskrit becomes in the middle voice, *b’avē, b’avasē, b’avatē, b’avantē*, and Greek shifts from *μι, σι, τι* to *μαι, σαι, ται*.

Perhaps inadvertently, Bopp seems to introduce a third voice—if it can be called a voice at all—into the discussion on a two voice system when he describes the middle

¹⁶ Bopp, “Analytical Comparison,” 15.

¹⁷ Bopp, “Analytical Comparison,” 15.

¹⁸ Bopp, “Analytical Comparison, 19–20.

voice in Sanskrit as having the capability also to perform passive functions. Bopp does not, however, provide a clear definition of what a passive function is, but only that there is one in the language and middle forms can signal this, giving this form two functions according to Bopp's formulations.¹⁹ But now this raises questions as to how to conceptualize relations between form and function, and whether or not this is a two voice or a three voice formulation. In Bopp's study, further clarification is needed as to whether voice is being defined according to its morphological forms or by different clause types. In comparison, other studies take a somewhat different approach, such as W. D. Whitney's *Sanskrit Grammar*, which focuses on the Sanskrit verbal system by examining verbal roots. Whitney also arrived at the conclusion that the passive voice (not clearly defined by Whitney) did not have a form distinct from a middle form in early Sanskrit. Rather, a passive function could be expressed optionally within the middle voice, and on this basis, according to Whitney, there are still only two voices.²⁰

Both Bopp's and Whitney's studies are representative of research at the time that attempts to define the grammar of verbal voice using the comparative method. But it becomes evident in these studies that in their work to explain what might be called today in linguistics, constituency—larger units of language consisting of smaller units—another dimension needs to open up, one that explores what such grammatical units or constituents of language actually do among each other, that is, the kind of relationships taking place among constituents. In order for the reader to engage with Bopp's and

¹⁹ Bopp, *Comparative Grammar*, 985; 988.

²⁰ Whitney, *Sanskrit Grammar*, 200–1. See also Delbrück, *Altindische Syntax*, 263–65. For Greek, see Schwyzer-Debrunner, *Griechische Grammatik*, 237–38; Lehmann, *Theoretical Bases of Indo-European Linguistics*, 161–62.

Whitney's claims that one verbal form can signal more than one function, there is first a need to show how clauses and their constituents operate together in language use.

Towards a New Approach to Language Study

An assumption underlying the comparative method in philology during the early nineteenth century was a principle borrowed from the natural sciences that variations among members of a class stem from a central theme or design that was fundamentally invariant and immutable.²¹ Having adopted also much of its methods and procedures from other branches of science, particularly biology, anatomy, zoology, and botany, comparative linguistics was from its outset highly atomistic in its methodological outlook. Early approaches to linguistic typology identified increasingly smaller units of language according to shared features and linguists classified these component parts primarily at phonological and morphological levels. On this basis, languages around the world were classified as analytic (e.g. Chinese) or synthetic (e.g. Greek and Sanskrit), depending on how much inflectional change takes place, and in between these two types stood agglutinative languages (e.g. Turkish).

Attention quickly turned to more historical study of languages and this carried on throughout the remainder of the nineteenth century. Philologists attempted to map out genetic associations of language components and examine the vast array of genealogical relationships among languages that occur over a long stretch of time. This made it possible to observe gradual language changes over time and how language components correlate to each other by exhibiting temporal sequences. Diachronic analysis of language

²¹ See Denton, *Evolution*, 94.

revealed stages that languages pass through and how features of languages can fall away and completely cease to exist, or be retained with either very little changes or with significant modifications made to adapt to new language uses.

Towards the later part of the nineteenth century, old assumptions in the natural sciences were giving way to new ones and now an important notion arose that evolutionary processes drive historical change. In the field of philology, it became increasingly clear that language does in fact change over time steadily and consistently and these trends can be observed among its various components and structures. As a result, categories of language typology now needed to be reconsidered in light of new directions being taken in many fields of the natural sciences at the time, including philological studies. The scope of studying language structurally needed to expand to include social and cultural patterns in order to determine how languages operate as a whole. It meant including all levels of language, not just those that focus on the smallest features like phonology and morphology, but syntactic and lexical features as well that can better reflect the influence of broader social contexts.²² Towards the end of the nineteenth century prominent linguists were becoming well aware of the need for such study. Certainly Ferdinand de Saussure was vocal during this time by introducing notions of language as system, but other IE linguists were also expressing concern as well. Karl Brugmann writes in 1903 that “language is a highly complex human activity in which the

²² This gave rise to a pursuit of study referred to as linguistic anthropology, which would later become sociolinguistics. Some of the earliest pioneers included Franz Boas, Edward Sapir, Benjamin Lee Whorf, Bronislaw Malinowski, and J. R. Firth. See Porter, “Sociolinguistics and New Testament Study,” 116–124.

most varied factors are coordinated in mutual dependence on the whole, and in which basically everything is conditioned by everything else.”²³

It soon became evident that smaller units of language belong to and operate within the larger system of language, and until this can be incorporated adequately, analysis and reconstruction from a historical perspective remains incomplete. Language needs to be examined in its totality in terms of both content and expression. All the levels of language are mutually interrelated with one another and identifying syntactic relations especially, becomes fundamental to language having any use at all. Without entirely abandoning a historical approach, at the end of the century, IE linguistics turned their attention to more synchronic analysis for further developments in typology with special attention given over to syntax.²⁴ This also affected further reconstructions of PIE and further assessments of earlier theories of an active-middle basis for voice.

Early Beginnings of Transitivity: Active–Inactive Opposition

Indo-European linguist, J. Clackson, postulates that in the earliest stages of PIE, distinct categories of syntax were still undeveloped. The active-middle voice opposition seems not to have been connected with more advanced notions of an opposition between transitivity and intransitivity, nor with an increase in the valency of the verb or its reduction (detransitivization), which all pertain to structural notions of a clause.²⁵ Since

²³ Brugmann, *Kurze vergleichende Grammatik*, viii. (Translated in Lehmann, *Theoretical Bases*, 51.)

²⁴ This new direction in the field is captured well in the title of Ries’s book published in 1894, *Was ist Syntax?*

²⁵ Clackson, *Indo-European Linguistics*, 143. For studies on voice in PIE see Sihler, *New Comparative Grammar of Greek and Latin*, 448–49; Weiss, *Outline of the Historical and Comparative Grammar of Latin*, 380–83; Beekes, *Comparative Indo-European*, 225–26; 239–42; Clackson, *Indo-European Linguistics*, 142–51.

the 1970s, research has moved in the direction that early PIE can be identified as having features of an “active language” whereby rudimentary notions of transitivity emerge specifically from the lexical semantics of nouns and verbs.²⁶ An active language operates on the basis of a fundamental congruence between nouns and verbs according to how their meanings are classified. Both nouns and verbs fall into two broad classes based on elements of animacy and volition inherent in their lexical meanings. When nouns and verbs are animate, the referent of a noun shows a sense of being “alive” or a verbal action animates its nominal referent. Related to this is whether or not the referent of a noun typically asserts its will or volition based on a noun’s meaning. Thus, “active” nouns and verbs convey typically an animated, volitional action and event, and “inactive” nouns and verbs typically convey a non-animated, non-volitional state of being, situation, or condition. Brigitte Bauer observes that active languages can display in their most basic relational patterns a single subject nominal and verb grouped together strictly according

Transitivity is used here in the narrower sense referring to a specific type of operation of the verb. In this view, the idea is that the opposition between verbs that show transitivity and those that do not pertain to whether or not a verb exerts its action onto something else or someone else, that is, another constituent of a clause, in order for the linguistic assertion and verbal idea to make sense. By being in this role, this constituent has traditionally been called, *object* or *patient*, in relation to the verbal action. Verbs that do this in order to convey a sensical, complete thought are, therefore, called *transitive*. By contrast, verbs that do not need to exert its action onto something to convey a sensical, complete thought are called *intransitive*. The contrastive notion of transitive and intransitive is treated here as syntactical terms (“advanced notions”), occurring when verbs and nominals of a clause interact with each other. However, to answer what causes so-called transitive and intransitive behaviour in language use has led linguists to grapple with meaning, namely how words mean in use.

²⁶ Up until this time the predominant theory since the late nineteenth century was that PIE was an ergative language. This will be taken up further below. The tide began to change from ergative to active typology for PIE during the 1970s as more and more typological studies were undertaken across a wide spectrum of languages continuing into the present day. These studies have provided a wealth of new data to better trace the processes of language development and change. A short summary of the features of active typology in relation to PIE is in Schmidt, “Reconstructing Active and Ergative Stages of Pre-Indo-European,” 335–36. See also Schmidt, “Zur Typologie des Vorindogermanischen,” 91–112; Klimov, “On the Character of Languages of Active Typology,” 11–25; “On Contentive Typology,” 327–41; “On the Notion of Language Type,” 149–54. Both Schmidt and Klimov were at the forefront of active typological research at the time for PIE. For more on active typology for PIE see Bauer, *Archaic Syntax*, 1–92; Clackson, *Indo-European Linguistics*, 176–80; Drinka, “Alignment in Early Proto-Indo-European,” 464–500; Lehmann, *Theoretical Bases*, 40–42; 213–17.

to lexical concordance between the two constituents. This means active nouns are typically grouped with active verbs only and inactive nouns are grouped with inactive verbs only (e.g. *active*: “The bird (animate) is flying (animate);” *inactive*: “The stone (inanimate) is lying (inanimate)).²⁷ Among verbs in particular, active verbs unfold in time, effecting some sort of change by the end of its process, whereas verbs in a state of being, inactive verbs, do not have their actions unfold in time and space, also without indications of moving towards any kind of change of state. Among the two classes of verbs, the larger class of the two, active or eventive verbs, includes verbs of happenings and doings that bring about changes in its corresponding active nominals. The smaller class of inactive or stative verbs does not indicate any activity or change of state but conveys a present state of being (e.g. in English, ‘be,’ ‘know,’ ‘hate,’ ‘sit,’ ‘stand,’ ‘sleep’) in the corresponding inactive or stative nominal which is typically the grammatical subject.²⁸ Consequently both nouns and verbs tend to develop doublets whereby each has two lexical units distinguished by active and inactive meaning. In order to accommodate a greater number of relations, a noun has an active lexical unit as well as a counterpart that is inactive/stative. This results in a common feature among active languages that these languages can become rich in lexical nuance by having a variety of words for the same semantic concept within its vocabulary.²⁹ Related to this, linguists

²⁷ Bauer, *Archaic Syntax*, 11–14.

²⁸ The *grammatical subject* as used here basically means the nominal that performs the verbal action whether this action is an active one or an inactive one. The need arises, however, to define *subject* more precisely, as this definition is too simplistic to do justice to the syntactic patterns of operation that are recognized as taking place in a clause. It is better to think in terms of “subject-hood” for a given nominal that requires more precision in defining its role to perform as the grammatical subject in relation to a verb. See Dixon’s discussion, which gives special attention to ergative languages, in Dixon, *Ergativity*, 111–42.

²⁹ See Klimov, “On the Position of the Ergative Type,” 329; Meillet, “La Catégorie du Genre et les Conceptions Indo-Européennes,” 216. A possible extrapolation from this for Greek is what may seem to be “doublets” in Greek whereby a certain verb forms only in the active voice (*activum tantum*) while another verb with very similar meaning forms only in the middle voice (*medium tantum*). An active/inactive origin

postulate that PIE would have begun with a very minimal case system, if any at all, because relations between verb and nominal is based on lexical agreement. Yet, since two animate participants can be involved in the verbal process, markers may be needed to distinguish between the animate participant in a subject role and an animate participant in a patient/object role. This would give rise to a case system, which is a typical feature of languages as they develop transitivity. However, since active languages are underdeveloped in transitivity as a grammatical feature, typically they have underdeveloped case systems as well.

In the course of time, rather than always having an active form and an inactive form that mean the same in the language, verbs soon could be used in both an active and inactive sense. Inactive verbs especially, could be conveyed actively as a process leading into its state of being. For example, to use English, the stative verb, “stand” could be used in a strictly stative sense in “I stand” as the state that is the result of the process, but “I stand” could also be intended as “I am (in the process of) standing (up)”. This would put focus on the unfolding process of standing. Likewise an active verb could convey not only an event that effects change in its corresponding participants, but also convey a final state of being that results from its active process inherent in its lexical meaning.³⁰ Greater interchangeability began to take place between active nouns and verbs and inactive nouns and verbs.

suggests, for example, that ἐθέλω “I want” may be an active verb, expressing an animate sense of desire, albeit more ephemeral perhaps, whereas βούλομαι, “I want,” may be an inactive verb, expressing inanimacy with more emphasis on a deeper, more durative state of mind. This is not to suggest, however, that active voice is the more animate voice and middle voice the more inanimate voice—a distinction that is hard to maintain for Greek. Nonetheless, verbs with different nuances of meaning find more distinctive expression through the use of different voices.

³⁰ To try to convey this in English would require an auxiliary verb that signals tense (e.g. “I have eaten;” “he has walked”). An active verb enters an inactive state as a result of previous action.

Moreover, an inflectional marking system eventually developed in order to maintain and regulate further interchange among nominal participants and verbs with particular emphasis on the subject and verb relationship.³¹ In this marking system active and inactive verbs have their own distinctive inflections typically with active conjugations becoming more extensive than inactive ones. The purpose of the inflectional endings is to show the distinction between animate and inanimate verbs “transfer” the process type of the verb onto the corresponding nominal, namely the subject, and to indicate primarily the kind of subject of a clause that is determined by the meaning of the verb. In this way, a user may choose to use a lexically inactive nominal with an active verb (e.g. “the stone is rolling away”). To convey a more active sense for the inactive noun as grammatical subject, the active verb would inflect using a cross-referencing system that confers the activity of the verb onto the inactive grammatical subject. Through this marking system, an active verb will make the subject active and likewise an inactive verb will make the subject inactive or stative. By the verb inflecting, it signals that the verb makes a corresponding nominal active or inactive, and not the other way around. The role of a nominal in the subject-verb relationship is semantically motivated by the verb’s meaning. In other words, inflectional patternings on the verb based on a verb’s meaning is all that is needed to indicate whether a nominal is active or inactive in relation to the verb. In this regard the verb plays more of a governing role toward nominals as to the kind of role a nominal plays in a clause and this opens up the notion that the verbal process can define an entire clause, being either an active or inactive one. Moreover, a verb can begin to take on more inflected forms, becoming capable of more

³¹ See Bauer, *Archaic Syntax*, 11–14; 74–77; Klimov, “On the Character of Languages of Active Typology,” 21.

complexity in transitivity by specifying a range of functions including tense, aspect, number, mood, gender, including various degrees of volition, control, and consciousness, among others, conferred onto the subject by the verb. Thus, verbal morphology could become extensive in this language while any system for marking nominals remains minimal and basic. Research into active languages suggests that a marking system for nominals in the least grew up alongside another system that marks on the verb but also involves nominals in this system. A marking system that marks nominals only, i.e. a nominative-accusative system, is quite possibly a later development in languages that have them. And if it is a later development, it is more likely that a nominative-accusative system is not the only system at work for making sense of how constituents in a clause interact with each other.

Active Language Typology and Voice

Active languages are still in existence today in different parts of the world, those most attested being from among Native American languages. These languages have since evolved towards greater degrees of transitivity—interactive relationships among constituents—but they are still known for retaining their distinctive active-inactive oppositions and semantically-based subject-verb pairings. Linguists today have observed these features of active languages and have traced how these languages have the capability to retain their most primitive features while at the same time developing further into more advanced systems of transitivity. Active languages can continue to exercise developed transitive relations between verb and nominals, signalled on the verb, while at the same time exercise a case marking system for nominals. An example is the

language, Choctaw, a Native American language that originates from the southeastern region of the United States. This language classifies its verbs according to active and inactive based on a verb's meaning and uses a marking system on its verb to cross reference the subject. At the same time, Choctaw has a developed case marking system on its nominal participants that is a nominative-accusative case system.³² This type of case system typically marks all subjects alike when drawing a distinction between a nominal performing an action (grammatical subject) and a nominal receiving an action (grammatical object). Choctaw also makes further semantic differentiation between subjects of transitive and intransitive verbs and marks this formally on the verb. Transitive verbs can be active or inactive and likewise intransitive verbs can be active or inactive. Choctaw is a representative example of how active languages utilize two marking systems, in this case one that marks the verb and the other that marks nominals, both working together to convey transitive relations.

Another example is, Laz, a language indigenous to the Black Sea coastal regions of modern-day Turkey and Georgia. Like Choctaw, Laz classifies its verbs according to an active-inactive opposition, but rather than cross-referencing on the verb, Laz utilizes two distinct case systems to differentiate the two types of verbs. It uses a nominative-accusative case system for inactive verbs and an ergative case system for active verbs (but also seems to include some inactive verbs as well in the ergative when these may be construed as transitive).³³ Two distinctive systems for marking transitivity occur simultaneously in Laz rooted in its verbal lexical semantics. Both Laz and Choctaw may

³² See Woolford, "Split Ergativity in Syntax and at Morphological Spellout," 217. See also Broadwell, *A Choctaw Reference Grammar*, 39.

³³ See Harris, *Diachronic Syntax*, 52–53. Discussion on differences between ergative systems and nominative-accusative systems is taken up below.

be observed as languages in which two different alignment patternings occur together for marking transitive relations.³⁴

The active patternings in these modern-day languages suggest that if PIE began as an active language, it too could have eventually developed into a language with advanced systems of transitivity and was capable of exercising more than one alignment patterning at once. PIE would become a highly inflectional or fusional language that utilized a range of distinctive inflectional markings on verbs and nominals alike. This would enable it to make further specifications as to the kinds of relationship a subject nominal might have with a verb in terms of how a subject might be characterized in relation to the meaning of the verb.

Moreover, if PIE began as an active language, it would have established an active-inactive (eventive-stative) opposition as fundamental to how the language operates. The meaning of the verb is conferred onto the subject as one of two opposing types or roles that the subject could display in a transitive relationship. This would form a rudimentary basis for further developments of transitivity. Active verbs confer an active role status on the subject in which the subject performs the action and specifically initiates a change of state that unfolds in the verbal process. In contrast, inactive verbs confer onto the subject an inactive status that has to do more with the subject being involved with the end result of the process in which the process finds its realization in the

³⁴ Woolford argues that an important distinction needs to be upheld between an overt case system a language uses and other transitive patternings that also co-occur to mark transitivity. Woolford labels Laz an active-ergative language (or more preferably simply ergative) because in addition to its active language properties, it clearly uses an ergative case marker on the subject for its active verbs whether they are transitive or intransitive. When verbs do not license ergative case for its subject, Laz utilizes a nominative-accusative patterning or simply a subject-object patterning, according to Woolford. See Woolford, "Split Ergativity in Syntax and at Morphological Spellout," 217–19.

subject.³⁵ In this primitive conception of clausal transitivity, the opposition, active vs. inactive based on distinctions of animacy, may have formed a very rudimentary basis for later developments of how words, groups of words, and whole clauses are construed in a communicative act and eventually verbal voice would play a part in this.

Furthermore, an active-inactive basis for voice opposition is put forth by Georgii Klimov, who argues that in active languages the semantic nature of active and inactive verbs conveys a conceptual direction of movement based on a verb's meaning. It is a distinction between *centrifugal* action of the verb—movement away from a starting point—versus *centripetal* action—movement towards a middle point or center.³⁶ An inactive verb corresponds to centripetal movement in which the action of the verb is drawn into the domain of the subject and it undergoes the action as a state or condition. An active verb corresponds to centrifugal action in which the action of the verb moves outward and away from the subject, affecting other clausal constituents that undergo the action. In both kinds of movement, the subject-verb relation forms a kind of nucleus that is the source of energy for the process. Klimov argues that basic conceptions of voice are grounded in this fundamental semantic relationship between subject and verb and how the action of the verb is construed according to this relationship. The PIE active-middle opposition of voice would develop respectively according to this opposition between

³⁵ Though this may be a precursor to verbal voice in ancient Greek, voice in Greek cannot be defined as having only an active language patterning within its nominative-accusative system. This is because voice in Greek does not mark its voice distinctions strictly on the basis of the simple lexical division between active and inactive verbs. That being said, however, the lexical meaning of a verb can affect the voice of a verb, or more precisely, affect how a verb utilizes the system of voice for its expression, such as so-called middle-only and passive-only verbs whose lack of active forms and limited use of the voice system seems to correlate with a verb's individual meaning. Perhaps this occurrence can be traced back to an active language trait of PIE, especially since certain middle-only verbs curiously seem to have inactive or state-like connotations according to how this term is being applied here (e.g. βούλομαι, γίνομαι, δύναμαι).

³⁶ Klimov, "On the Character of Languages of Active Typology," 19.

centrifugal and centripetal action, which originates in the active-inactive distinction.³⁷ In PIE, active voice corresponding with active or eventive verbs exercises centrifugal action and this means that the subject nominal, whether an animate or inanimate noun, is agentive to the direction of the verbal process. Middle voice, corresponding with inactive or stative verbs, exercises centripetal action and this means that the subject nominal, whether animate or inanimate, is the affected nominal in relation to the direction of the verbal process. This has also led linguists to postulate that the passive voice is a later development by the daughter languages of PIE as it came about by more advanced conceptions of transitivity and further developments into a nominative-accusative system. In active languages, within the subject-verb nucleus, the verbal process either goes out from the subject or remains within its domain. But this must be modified somewhat in a passive construction. Even though the passive voice is centripetal action because the subject is in a patient role, an agentive nominal external to the subject-verb core is present, thus portraying the idea of transference of the action of the verb from one nominal to another.³⁸

³⁷ Klimov, "On the Character of Languages of Active Typology," 19. For more on oppositional roles of subject, see Van Valin, Jr. and LaPolla, *Syntax*, 263–70. Alternatively, A. Sihler restricts the development of subject and voice opposition to active/eventive verbs only. Stative verbs, by virtue of their inherent stativity, did not require, or at least were slower in developing, an active-middle voice opposition. In Sihler's view, "A state is neither middle nor active, for two connected reasons: the grammatical subject of a stative verb is not an agent, and a state has no outcome." (Sihler, *Comparative Grammar*, 565) However, Sihler does not clarify what the grammatical subject of a stative verb actually is if it is not an agent, as well as how the subject cannot cause a state to occur, if the subject is not an agent. One is left to surmise that Sihler treats a stative verb as strictly a linking or equative verb (x is y) which would fit the description that a state is not an agent-outcome relationship. It is even harder to accept Sihler's view that "a state has no outcome" (which he also does not explain further) when the role of a nominal as undergoer can itself be the outcome or realization of an action. In other words, explanation is needed as to how the verbal action as a state cannot be the outcome itself.

³⁸ See Lehmann, *Theoretical Bases*, 214; Fortson, *Indo-European Language and Culture*, 83; Beekes, *Comparative Indo-European Linguistics*, 225–26. In Greek, the peculiar use of active endings with the theta/eta tense formative on the so-called aorist passive tense-form is certainly suggestive of this view that the language is emphasizing the transference of the verbal process among clause constituents that is more characteristic of transitive uses of the active voice. For more on this from a modern Greek perspective, see Roussou, "Voice Morphology and Ergativity in Modern Greek," 406–18.

Klimov's use of metaphor here is helpful for conceptualizing the basic alterations that can take place in voice regarding the opposing roles of subject in relation to the verbal process. Whether it was intended by Klimov or not, this metaphor also helps to conceptualize later notions of transitivity, especially a working contrast between transitive and intransitive subjects originating from the meaning of the verb. However, this should not lead to the overly simple conclusion that active voice is only transitive action and middle voice is only intransitive action. Active languages display both transitive and intransitive verbs in both their active and inactive verb classes (e.g. intransitive verbs in an active verb class in English might be "I dance" or "I cry"). How active languages have developed over time suggests that a verb may have active meaning on its own, typically showing centrifugal action (e.g. Laz marks all these verbs ergative case), but its meaning in relation to the subject and other participants modulates to allow also centripetal movement for an active verb in relation to the subject (active verbs in Laz can occur in both transitive and intransitive clauses). Likewise a verb may have inactive meaning on its own in relation to the its subject, but when the verb enters into relations with other participants as well, it can display centrifugal movement by moving out toward another participant. (Perhaps in English the closest example would be a stative "to be" verb linked with an adjective such as in, "I am strong," modulating into a transitive verb such as "He strengthened the disciples.")

In PIE, transitivity is expressed through different ways of marking participant roles in relation to the verbal process as the language begins to push beyond patterning relations between verb and nominals based primarily on verb meaning and type. PIE

continues to build on an active-inactive grounding, but moves towards the development of a new type of alignment patterning.

Ergativity and PIE Alignment Patterns

From an active language stage, PIE continued to exhibit advances in transitivity as a grammatical feature of the language. As a natural progression, PIE would form, in addition to its basic active patterning, a transitive system that has been described as an *ergative* alignment pattern, which lays emphasis on a nominal that is affected by the verbal process. While still maintaining its basis in the lexical semantics of the verb, PIE expanded its scope of transitivity to include and specify other constituent roles. PIE would maintain the active language feature of two contrastive types of subject (active subject–inactive subject), but now draw this distinction in the subject in ways that include more syntactic criteria (or more precisely, semanto-syntactic criteria because these are a combination of lexical semantics of the verb and multiple transitive relationships among constituents). In other words, PIE likely began to develop such new patternings because this type of system maintains the original active-inactive opposition of the subject, but loosens the general rule of active languages that marks all subjects, whether animate or inanimate, strictly according to a semantics-based active or inactive verb class. In a purely active language structure, the focus is on subject and verb agreement while having very little, if any at all, additional transitive roles for nominals such as direct and indirect object roles, and roles that express possession.³⁹ In active language systems, the metaphors used above to describe directionality, namely centrifugal action and centripetal

³⁹ Lehmann, *Theoretical Bases*, 215.

action, center primarily on the subject-verb relationship governed by the meaning of the verb. In addition, obviously there can be other constituents involved in a given grammatical construct, and in an ergative patterning, these other constituents and their syntactic roles become more defined.

Transitioning into an ergative system from an active one means that for PIE an active or inactive type of subject based on the meaning of the verb is oriented towards extending towards another nominal or itself through the verbal action. In the development of active languages, an active or inactive status of the verb begins to confer its status onto the subject. An ergative patterning maintains this by having two separate statuses of the subject nominal—active or inactive (eventive or stative)—governed by the verb. This soon develops into an affected and unaffected opposition as to the status of the subject and other participants of a clause. An ergative patterning develops its own marking system as well and demonstrates this by marking the nominal constituents of a clause according to the constituent in which the verbal process finds its realization.⁴⁰ In this system the verbal process is interpreted as being actualized in a specific nominal element of the clause playing a verb-affected role. On this basis differing roles among all the nominal elements of the clause are distinguished and therefore marked on either the noun or verb, or both, to indicate differences in function. In a typical ergative alignment, the subject of intransitive verbs (S) is grouped together in function with the object of transitive verbs (P) assigning to them the unmarked “absolute” case marking.⁴¹

⁴⁰ For introductory discussions on the various manifestations of ergativity across many languages, see Silverstein, “Hierarchy of Features and Ergativity,” 112–71; Comrie, “Ergativity,” 329–94; Dixon, *Ergativity*, 59–138; DeLancey, “An Interpretation of Split Ergativity and Related Patterns,” 626–57; Anderson, “On the Notion of Subject in Ergative Languages,” 1–23.

⁴¹ The ergative and transitive models that will be applied in this study as a methodology (see chapter 3) move well beyond these traditional categories of transitive and intransitive verbs but for the purposes of introducing ergativity for voice, this way of framing the concept is still helpful.

Absolutives⁴² are also referred to as the inherent or obligatory case-marking because in both transitive and intransitive clauses, they mark the nominal that exemplifies the defining characteristic of ergativity: the realization of the verbal process.⁴³ So-called transitive and intransitive verbs produce their respective type of clause or configuration and these are determined by the meaning of the verb. This directly correlates with active language patterns whereby there are two kinds of verb, active (eventive) and inactive (stative), based on a verb's meaning. This gives the subject of transitive verbs (A) a distinct role as cause or agent in the clause that initiates the action, marked with the "ergative" case.⁴⁴ Yet this case is a non-obligatory case and can be left out when its presence is unnecessary since constituents in an absolutive role are the focus. In this regard, an ergative alignment is not oriented toward the grammatical subject, which is the unmarked nominal in a nominative-accusative system. It does not base its transitive operations in a clause primarily on the constituent that is typically the cause of the verbal process, but instead the constituent that undergoes the effect of the process. In an ergative patterning, the meaning of the verb produces a syntactic status of the verb as transitive or intransitive, to help distinguish different transitive relationships, including participant roles, in a clause. These two different syntactic statuses of the verbal process create two different roles for the subject participant that are conferred onto the subject as being either patientive (absolutive case) or agentive (ergative case). When a nominal plays an ergative role in particular, within a transitive clause, its role is considered to be merely

⁴² Or that which displays the "resultant completion or totality" of the action.

⁴³ See Bobaljik, "On Ergativity and Ergative Unergatives," 45–88; Laka, "Unergatives That Assign Ergative, Unaccusatives That Assign Accusative," 149–72; Dixon, *Ergativity*, 59.

⁴⁴ That is, the nominal that "works" in an agentive role to bring about the process as source of energy or power for the process.

instrumental in the sense that a process occurs with the help of the nominal in the ergative case, and when this happens, it is typically the marked constituent.⁴⁵

Moreover, the subject of an intransitive verb (S) is distinguished grammatically from the subject of a transitive verb (A) since the intransitive subject function of realizing the process is seen as being identical to the object of a transitive verb (P). Here a binary opposition is created between these two roles of subject (S–A): the subject of a transitive verb functions as agent or cause of the verbal process (ergative) and the subject of an intransitive verb functions as undergoer of the action (absolutive).

In contrast to an ergative patterning, a nominative-accusative alignment system (hereafter ‘nom-acc system’), which eventually PIE evolved into before splitting up into the various daughter languages, does not mark a grammatical distinction between subjects of transitive and intransitive verbs. This alignment pattern is typically based on an “extension” interpretation of the clause rather than on “affected entity.” Morphologically there is no distinctive inflectional markings on the subject to reflect these different functions since the focus is more on the verbal process extending toward another element in the clause or not. Rather this system groups both transitive and intransitive subjects together as a single function and draws an opposition between subject and the point the process extends toward, or more commonly, the object (SA–P), and distinguishes this opposition by different case markings. In contrast to absolutes in an ergative system, nominatives in a nom-acc system are typically the non-affected participants, shifting focus onto the participants in the accusative and other cases to

⁴⁵ See Klimov, “On the Position of the Ergative Type,” 331. Klimov also notes that this instrumental sense of the role of the subject may account for why most ergative languages lack a formal instrumental case. The shift to an orientation that the subject is the primary cause of the verbal process in nom-acc systems may then be why accusative systems developed distinct instrumental cases.

which the process extends. In both transitive and intransitive clauses, the process extends outward from the subject, only that in intransitive clauses, the process extends only as far as the subject itself due to the lexical semantics of the verbal process. Both ergative and nom-acc alignments draw an opposition between subject and object in a transitive clause, but because an ergative system lays greater emphasis on the subject as potentially an affected participant by the process, an ergative patterning makes an additional contrast by marking two distinctive roles of the subject, ergative and absolutive, thus making the opposing semantic functions of the subject grammatically more explicit.

Ergative patternings in languages began to be observed as early as the end of the nineteenth century, and studies during this time in Sanskrit have suggested an ergative feature for voice in PIE. Sanskrit grammar distinguishes its active and middle voices by using the terms, *ātmane* and *parasmai* which mean “for oneself” and “for another” respectively. The conceptual distinction here is between actions whose effects bear upon their own sources for the action, and those actions which do not.⁴⁶ In other words, the voice opposition in Sanskrit may be viewed from an ergative perspective that the subject of the clause undergoes or is affected by the action or another participant is. Since this notion of affectedness is the organizing principle for voice constructions in Sanskrit, eventually it set a precedent for PIE voice grammar being capable of displaying an ergative feature for voice. For most of the twentieth century, comparative linguists continued to hold to this theory for voice, and further assessments of alignment patternings in PIE led to conclusions that PIE was essentially an ergative language on the whole based on observations of distinctive morphological markings. And PIE as an active

⁴⁶ See Klaiman, “A Typology of Voice Systems,” 33.

language, as discussed above, represents an earlier stage prior to developing into an ergative language.

In addition to Sanskrit, philologists were also working on Greek for reconstructing PIE and perhaps the most well-known theory for an ergative patterning in PIE based on Greek was put forth in 1901 by C. C. Uhlenbeck through his cross-linguistic work on reconstructed case markings in PIE. Uhlenbeck concluded that despite the general trajectory of IE languages to develop towards nom-acc systems to grammaticalize transitivity, there are remnants evident in these languages that suggest an earlier stage in their development that had utilized ergative systems, and traces of an older ergative system left behind are observable within Greek's accusative system.⁴⁷ Uhlenbeck attempted to recover an ergative marking pattern by arguing that the Greek masculine/feminine, nominative noun-ending $-\varsigma$ is a descendant from an earlier ergative marker (subject/agent of transitive verbs) as masculine/feminine nominative nouns represented the 'acting person' noun-type of the verbal process. Respectively, the neuter nominative endings in the singular $-v$ and plural $-\alpha$ in the second declension (zero ending in third declension singular) are undifferentiated between the nominative and accusative cases. According to Uhlenbeck, these show residual characteristics of older absolutive markings since the neuter case may have represented the noun-type undergoing the process in an ergative system. The lack of distinction between the nominative and accusative case endings in the neuter suggests an ergative alignment that groups together

⁴⁷ Uhlenbeck, "Agens und Patiens im Kasussystem der indogermanischen Sprachen," 170–71. For a brief summary of Uhlenbeck's view including three other related views (Vaillant, Martinet, and Savcenko) that together helped to maintain the longevity of the ergative hypothesis, see Schmidt, "Reconstructing Active and Ergative Stages of Pre-Indo-European," 333–45.

in function the subject of intransitive verbs (nominative) and the object of transitive verbs (accusative).⁴⁸

Following Uhlenbeck's work at the turn of the century, others have built on this hypothesis to further substantiate that PIE was an ergative language such as Andre Martinet who, in his 1962 Oxford lectures, observed discrepancies in marking patterns between obligatory, hence frequently used markings, and less frequently used markings in IE languages. Martinet argued that in a nom-acc system, since the subject-case is the obligatory nominal role of the clause, it is cumbersome for languages to constantly mark this as an agent case, for such markings become unnecessary due to their frequent usage. This kind of role should be the unmarked case. However, Greek appears to have an agent case marking -ς that is used frequently and is clearly distinctive from the non-obligatory patient-case (oblique cases) which, according to Martinet, should be the marked case and display more distinctive markings than the subject markings because of its less frequent usage. More so, the undifferentiated and sometimes zero marking patterning of the neuter markings in both nominative and accusative cases suggest that they were actually the unmarked absolute case in an ergative system, in which they would have played the obligatory and more frequently used role. Martinet pointed out that this unusual patterning for marking transitivity roles thus indicates that elements of an earlier ergative system have remained despite PIE developing into a nom-acc system.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Uhlenbeck's theory was criticized by Edward Sapir at the time and more recently by others working in IE linguistics. For more on their views and further studies on ergativity in the IE daughter languages, see Sapir, "Review of C. C. Uhlenbeck," 82–86; Clackson, *Indo-European Linguistics*, 176–78; Dixon, *Ergativity*, 70–83; Bauer, *Archaic Syntax in Indo-European*, 56–60; and Garrett, "The Origin of NP Split Ergativity," 265–71.

⁴⁹ Martinet, *A Functional View of Language*, 149–51. For other views on this see also, Vaillant, "L'ergatif indo-européen," 93–108; Beekes, *Comparative Indo-European Linguistics*, 193–94.

The ergative hypothesis for PIE provides an explanation for the transition from semantic-based verb-nominal relations characteristic of an active language, to language features that exercise a more developed system of transitivity. Uhlenbeck's original theory drew a strict correlation between the ergative case as an animate noun and the absolutive case as an inanimate noun. It was assumed that the agent of the process in a transitive clause, defined as the specific occurrence of the verbal process transferring onto an object, was typically an animate noun, thus marking masculine and feminine gender, corresponding to an active/eventive verb (Uhlenbeck called this agentive role, 'Activus' for the 'acting' noun). The corresponding object of the process in a transitive clause was typically inanimate corresponding to an inactive/stative verb, on par in function with the subject of intransitive verbs whereby the subject has an inactive origin acting as the undergoer of the process (Uhlenbeck called both these roles 'Passivus').

The principal criticism of Uhlenbeck's theory, however, is that it relies too much on the opposition of the semantic feature of animacy to distinguish between participant roles in an ergative alignment. Its correlations of animate = ergative and inanimate = absolutive assume an overly simplistic bifurcation in which no interchangeability occurs. More recently, cross-linguistic studies have shown that such a correspondence that Uhlenbeck put forth is not always the case for languages that show features of ergativity. The tendency in most modern-day languages with ergative features is to mark in the ergative case nominals that are less animate to inanimate and utilize a nom-acc marking system instead for more animate nominals.⁵⁰ Yet this split can run in the other direction as well. As Bernard Comrie points out, in some Polynesian languages such as Samoan,

⁵⁰ See the scale diagrams that illustrate this, "Nominal Hierarchy" in Dixon, *Ergativity*, 84–85, and "Noun Phrase Hierarchy" in Silverstein, "Hierarchy of Features and Ergativity," 112–71, here 122–23.

“the ergative construction is used with more dynamic verbs, the nominative-accusative construction with more stative verbs.”⁵¹ Languages that display ergative features are always “split” in some way producing so-called split-ergative languages in that at most a language is a combination of features of both ergative and nom-acc systems due to the mixture of features between systems.⁵² No language to date has ever been shown to be fully ergative despite some languages that appear to be fully nom-acc in both morphology and syntax. The language today documented as closest to a fully ergative one is Dyirbal, a northeast Australian language, which has “a split-ergative morphology but an entirely ergative syntax.”⁵³

Moreover, ergative systems also appear to be inherently unstable and inconsistent and this is reflected in the many variations of how ergativity can be expressed from language to language. The development of nom-acc systems and their simpler syntactic regularity seems to compensate for this variability and inconsistency of ergative features. This means that nom-acc systems may gradually “absorb” features of an ergative system and take over parts of its grammatical operations but how this takes place and to what extent varies from language to language. Generally, it has been observed that, according

⁵¹ Comrie, *Ergativity*, 373. Samoan also maintains a form of semantic ‘doublets’ as well in that a verb’s meaning may have two different senses conveyed by either an ergative system marking or a nom-acc system marking, while some verbs based on their meaning only appear in ergative constructions. See also Trask, “On the Origins of Ergativity,” 395.

⁵² There is a wide range of opinion among linguists today as to how a split ergative language might be defined. So-called splits take place along several different lines, such as person splits, for example; splits that occur according to the semantic nature of the verb or nominal elements involved with the verb; splits that occur according to tense/aspect or mood; or splits that occur on syntactic grounds involving main clause and subordinate clause relations. See Dixon, *Ergativity*, 70–110. Approaches to defining ergative splits range from broader more pattern- and syntactic-based criteria (e.g. Dixon, *Ergativity*; Deal, “Ergativity,” 654–707) to a more narrow basis of specific case identity and structural change (Woolford, “Split Ergativity in Syntax,” 205–25; Coon, “Rethinking Split-Ergativity in Chol,” 207–53). This study considers PIE and ancient Greek as exercising different transitive patternings including ergative patternings, but refrains from calling either of these languages split-ergative languages.

⁵³ Dixon, *Ergativity*, 14–15.

to cross-linguistic diachronic studies, nom-acc system markings spread by affecting elements of higher degrees of animacy first and then moving toward elements lower in degree. A common occurrence of this would be the process of “stabilizing” the subject by reducing its morphological variability.⁵⁴ This does not mean, however, that as a result, a functional split disappears altogether from the subject in a nom-acc system. Rather, as Jessica Coon has argued, “the ‘split’ remains but will be unobservable on the subjects themselves since transitive and intransitive subjects, by definition, pattern alike (i.e. nominative).” Coon stresses that split-ergativity is not limited to ergative patterning languages only, but occur in nom-acc systems as well, only that “these split-conditioning characteristics are obfuscated in nominative-accusative patterns.”⁵⁵

Further, in the evolutionary process of PIE from an active system towards developing more advanced features of transitivity, a more comprehensive marking system for participant roles is a clear indicator of advancements. These changes are put into effect by language users who saw the need for greater interchangeability among constituents with different lexical meanings as to the kind of role a constituent plays in a clause (e.g. agent, patient) and any qualities associated with that role (e.g. animacy, volition). An ergative alignment system represents a significant step towards more advanced syntax, built on an active language system, but also forming the basis for a nom-acc system. Moreover, both ergative and nom-acc systems are capable of operating together as co-dependent and complementary systems within a language. Both exhibit

⁵⁴ Bauer, *Archaic Syntax*, 39–41. See also Schmidt, “Probleme der Ergativkonstruktion,” 97–116, here 105–6. Considering ancient Greek, this could account for the lack of different markings of the nominative case for what originally may have been different syntactic functions of the (animate) subject participant.

⁵⁵ Coon, *Aspects of Split-Ergativity*, 7; 186. The implications of this for ancient Greek and its alignment patterns are potentially many, if the view is adopted as this study does, that ancient Greek was a nominative-accusative language that retained ergative features.

more developed marking systems, display more advanced transitivity as a grammatical feature, and both move beyond strictly semantically-based functions into more developed syntactic ones, showing clear distinctions from active systems. As Brigitte Bauer concludes, “the fundamental distinction between language types is not between nominative and ergative languages, which both display transitivity as a grammatical feature, but between these two language types and active languages.”⁵⁶

Conclusion

There is a long history of discussion within comparative linguistic research on how PIE was organized internally as a language, including conceptions of a two-voice system that exhibited this internal organization. Ergativity has for a long time held a prominent place in this discussion among linguists, proving itself not to be a foreign notion to the IE languages. In recent years, further typological and cross-linguistic studies have modified their theory of PIE, moving away from PIE strictly as an ergative language *per se*, in favour of a theory of active language systems forming an earlier basis for PIE, which eventually developed ergative patternings. Active languages display some of the most fundamental operations of language and recent work in these languages has revealed more types of an active language system which has opened up new possibilities for reassessing PIE alignment systems.⁵⁷ In comparative linguistics and PIE studies, the tide

⁵⁶ Bauer, *Archaic Syntax*, 43.

⁵⁷ These languages feature two additional types of alignment systems in this regard called ‘Split-S’ systems and ‘Fluid-S’ systems. In both of these, the intransitive subject (S) is subdivided further into an agentive role or patientive role depending on the meaning of the active or stative verb it collocates with. Typically the selection of a role is based on whether or not the verbal action involves some kind of volitional and conscious control of the action by the intransitive subject. ‘Split-S’ systems have a more fixed arrangement of these collocations between subject and verb, whereas ‘Fluid-S’ systems allow for the potentiality of an intransitive subject assuming either one of the roles, by taking into account other criteria

has shifted towards a consensus that though ergativity characterized language patternings in PIE, active alignment systems are considered to be even earlier than ergative systems. Because active languages display minimal transitivity and are based rather on active-inactive semantic distinctions focused on subject-verb relations, subject and object relations are not clearly distinguished and object roles are diminished. In this regard, an ergative system stands between active systems and nom-acc systems because on the one hand, an ergative system does not differentiate as much subject and object relations, since the absolutive case diffuses both subject and object roles of an action for intransitive verbs. But on the other hand, like nom-acc systems, the absolutive case clearly differentiates the object from the subject in a transitive clause.

Further, typological studies acknowledge that the opposition, active-inactive, for both nouns and verbs is still pertinent to ergative systems among the many split-ergative languages that still exist today. The difference is that in a more developed marking system for nominals, the strict one-to-one, animate = ergative and inanimate = absolutive patterning has been shown to be untenable and a “misassumption that inanimate nouns never receive ergative case-marking in an ergative system.”⁵⁸ The stricter rule found in active systems that subject-verb relations are determined by the lexical semantics of the verb loosens up with the development of ergative systems but without completely abandoning the active-inactive opposition. In reconstructions of PIE as an active language that originally had only a verbal marking system, an ergative system in all likelihood represented a transitory period as PIE evolved towards a nom-acc system that

such as contextual usage and degrees of intention of the speaker/writer (i.e. conveying an action as done on purpose, or by accident, or coincidentally, etc). Dixon, *Ergativity*, 70–83.

⁵⁸ Clackson, *Indo-European Linguistics*, 177. See also Villar, “Ergativity and Animate/Inanimate Gender in Indo-European,” 167–96, esp. 178–80.

incorporated a developed marking system for nominals. IE linguists today acknowledge that PIE in the least passed through an ergative stage some time in its development from an active language, and vestiges of an ergative stage are still evident in various forms among the IE daughter languages.

In the course of its development, PIE as an active language would evolve into an ergative system and this would eventually give way to a nom-acc system but without losing some of its active and ergative features. In this regard, Klimov's statement in 1973 still holds that views "ergativity as a particular phase of the transformation of the active construction of a language into the nominative one."⁵⁹ An ergative system acts as an intermediary link between active language forms and more developed forms of transitivity that both ergative and accusative systems accommodate. The alignment pattern of an ergative system demonstrates a close relationship to active/eventive—inactive/stative origins from which it emerged. It then went on to develop more features of transitivity realized by case and other marking systems. Given this trajectory, and despite PIE evolving into a nom-acc system, the language may have preserved prominent features of ergativity.

It stands to reason, therefore, that Greek, as a daughter language, has inherited elements of ergativity from its PIE parent language, and though Greek itself uses a nom-acc marking on nominals, it has retained this ergative trait in its verb. This appears to be manifested in Greek voice through its verbal morphology and syntax. A clear distinction in subject roles is maintained in which the subject realizes the choice to act either in an agentive role (akin to the ergative case), or in a role that realizes or actualizes the action

⁵⁹ Quoted from the original work in Russian translated in Schmidt, "Reconstructing Active and Ergative Stages of Pre-Indo-European," 337.

(akin to the absolutive case), despite the subject-nominal not showing any inflectional markings for these different roles. Unfortunately, in the history of research for Greek voice, an ergative feature of the verb has been so little acknowledged, if at all, that a historical survey of Greek voice will not reveal much on ergative notions of voice. Nevertheless, a glimpse into this history does reveal, not only Greek's continuity with PIE, but other significant developments in the language as well that are pertinent to verbal voice.

VOICE IN ANCIENT GREEK

Introduction

Greek belongs to the Indo-European family of languages and the ancient Greeks called verbal voice, διάθεσις (*diáthesis*), which conveys a semantic condition, state, or disposition of the verb that is conferred onto the grammatical subject in relation to the verbal process.⁶⁰ This chapter surveys voice from some of the language's earliest evidence up through the later Hellenistic period following the time of the writing of the New Testament. The first part of the chapter traces the continuity of voice from PIE through the first few stages of the Greek language. This leads into discussion on interpretations of voice that began to take hold during the Hellenistic period as the study of language was becoming a formal discipline. This era has had a lasting influence upon how ancient Greek voice has been subsequently viewed up to the present day. The chapter will also review some of the main interpretations of voice in current research that have been especially pertinent to biblical studies and have affected how voice has been understood in the Greek of the New Testament in particular. Though effort is made to cover the most important areas, this chapter certainly does not claim to be fully exhaustive in its treatment. As with the previous chapter, the aim is to provide a glimpse into what has shaped our current views of ancient Greek voice and to develop a historical background that sheds light on where these views have come from.

⁶⁰ See Porter, *Idioms*, 62.

Mycenaean Greek

As one of the earliest documented languages in the IE family, the written records of ancient Greek go back to the Mycenaean civilization that flourished toward the end of the Bronze Age from approximately the sixteenth century to the twelfth century BCE and has handed down the earliest preserved written form of the Greek language known as the Linear B Script. The oldest confirmed Linear B tablets have been dated to c.1450–1350 BCE with other tablets dated to c.1200 BCE. In the early 1950s, architect Michael Ventris, building on the work of Alice Kober, deciphered the Linear B tablets. Scholars have since held that the Greek of the Linear B tablets appears to be the closest link to PIE and the oldest piece of evidence that points to a prehistoric voice system. For example, the texts have / de-ka-sa-to / for δέξατο (“he received”) in KN Le 641.1, and / e-u-ke-to / for εὔχεται (“he prays or declares”) in PY Eb 297.1 and Ep 704.5, as well as / to-ro-qe-jo-me-no / for τροπεόμενος (“turning about”) in PY Eq 213.1.⁶¹ In the contextual usage of each of these verb forms, a consistent pattern emerges that seems to show the verbal process coming about through the subject participant and there appears to be no other cause of the process occurring besides the subject. Ventris and Chadwick also observe a usage of verbs that take on the same endings but seem to express a passive use of the verbal process, in which initiation of the verbal process occurs outside of the subject and verb core. For example, PY Vn 20.1-2 reads, /o-a / e-pi-de-da-to (=ἐπιδέδαστοι) / pa-ra-we-wo / wo-no / which may be translated as ‘Thus the wine of Parawe has been distributed.’ Also KN So 4440 has / a-mo-ta / pte-re-wa / o-da-twe-ta / de-do-me-na (=δεδομένα) / which may be translated as, ‘Six pairs of wheels of elmwood with studs

⁶¹ See Ventris-Chadwick, *Documents in Mycenaean Greek*, 269, 547.

which have been contributed.⁶² These examples may be indications that an early voice system in the language, in continuation from PIE, utilized the same inflectional forms used in the preceding examples also to express passive uses of the subject, since it appears that Greek at this stage did not have a distinct passive form. L. R. Palmer has advanced the possibility that / a-ke / and / pe-re / found in PY Tn 316, are aorist passive forms, ἄγη and φρη, but it is just as possible that these are present indicatives, ἄγει and φέρει.⁶³

In Mycenaean Greek, there is reason to believe that a distinction existed between middle and passive functions, but there is no conclusive evidence that middle and passive uses were distinguished formally. Admittedly the corpus of data is very small and fragmentary, making it difficult to draw any substantial conclusions. The so-called passive marker, the -(θ)η- form, that would supposedly mark a third voice according to later interpretations of verbal voice, shows up definitively with its distinctive theta marker in the aorist and future tense-forms only several centuries later in the Homeric writings. This occurs along with the emergence of a completely different alphabet and writing system for the Greek language following the collapse of Mycenaean society and the ensuing ‘Greek Dark Ages.’

The Archaic Period

The Greek Archaic period from c. 800–479 BCE saw major developments in Greek culture, from politics, architecture, and art, to trade and robust population growth. In the area of language and literature this was the time of the great Epic literature of Homer and

⁶² Ventris-Chadwick, *Documents*, 348, 372, 518.

⁶³ Palmer, *The Interpretation of Mycenaean Greek Texts*, 265–7.

Hesiod. Out of its strong oral tradition, the compositions of these lyrical poets were put down into writing and these have revealed voice patternings in the grammar that have continued on in the development of the language. IE linguist W. Lehmann draws a correlation between the Greek verb of the Homeric literature and the Sanskrit verbal system in which active and middle voices are apparent in both. Passive meaning is a feature of the verbal system in both languages, but according to Lehmann, the middle forms in Greek are sometimes used to express a passive sense, though passive uses are less frequent than middle uses.⁶⁴ In the *Iliad*, for example, there is middle usage in *Il.* 16.230, *νίψατο δ' αὐτὸς χεῖρας*, 'and he (himself) washed his hands,' and in *Il.* 1.10, *ὄλεκοντο δὲ λαοί*, 'and the people perished.' Then there is middle form with a passive sense that specifies agency as in *Il.* 6.134–5, *ὕπ' ἀνδροφόνου Λυκούργου θεινόμεναι βουπλήγι*, '(he) was struck by man-slaying Lycurgus with an ox-goad,' and in *Il.* 13.675–6, *δηϊόωντο λαοὶ ὑπ' Ἀργείων*, 'people were being slaughtered by the Argives.'⁶⁵ The subject in a passive sense of the middle form seems to share the same voice disposition as the subject in the middle form because both subjects are in a role that is affected by the process. In a passive use, a non-subject nominal, realized by an oblique case, enters a causal role that is typically expressed using a prepositional phrase, but sometimes such cause is not explicitly stated as in *Il.* 1.5, *Διὸς δ' ἔτελείετο βουλή*, 'And the plan of Zeus was being accomplished.'⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Lehmann, *Theoretical Bases*, 162.

⁶⁵ Examples taken from George, *Expressions*, 14, 49

⁶⁶ This is also a good example of the ambiguity and variability of expressing agency. In this clause, it is harder to determine the function of the genitive, whether it is agentive or possessive ('...the plan was being accomplished by Zeus.'). See the helpful discussion in George, *Expressions*, 48–51.

Lehmann goes on to say that “the passive voice was developed in later Greek as parallel to the active,” and that “by the time of New Testament Greek the middle had virtually been lost.”⁶⁷ These are puzzling statements, however, as to what Lehmann means exactly by “passive voice,” especially if it is evident in the Homeric literature (as Lehmann himself states) that passive meaning is already taking place using middle forms. It is also unclear if Lehmann means only middle *forms* were lost, but middle function continued, though signalled by another form. Lehmann seems to suggest in these statements that a distinct passive voice, possibly marked by a distinct form, $-(\theta)\eta-$, took over the original middle voice at a later stage and this passive voice form now became the primary opposition in an active-passive voice system. However, Lehmann does not offer any further explanation for why the same middle forms of the Homeric literature are ubiquitous in the New Testament writings and also occur alongside the so-called $-(\theta)\eta-$ passive forms. Middle forms have not been lost by the time of the NT, but some appear to be on the decline. For Lehmann’s statements to hold true that the middle voice was virtually lost, it will have to be shown that the middle forms of the New Testament really have only passive or active meaning and that the $-(\theta)\eta-$ passive forms, if they are actually passive forms, have only passive meaning and not middle meaning.⁶⁸

During the period of the Homeric writings, the morphological voice form, $-(\theta)\eta-$, appears in the texts in only the aorist and future tenses. It has been difficult to pinpoint exactly what gave rise to this form and what its intended purpose is. According to B. Delbrück, this form may have initially been a suffix to mark intransitive verbs in the

⁶⁷ Lehmann, *Theoretical Bases*, 162.

⁶⁸ Lehmann’s assessments of Greek voice are representative of much confusion that exists in the field about the relationships between form and function for voice. Much of it lies in the imprecision involving terminology and the lack of clearly defined terms as this survey will show.

active voice.⁶⁹ Related to this intransitive use, the $-(\theta)\eta-$ form may be a descendant from a suffix in PIE, $*-eh-$, denoting state predicates and stativity of the subject. With its integration into the aorist tense-form in particular, the $-(\theta)\eta-$ form may indicate a closer relationship between perfective aspect and middle/passive voice.⁷⁰ Moreover, in the literature during this time, uses of the $-(\theta)\eta-$ form appeared to be overlapping with middle uses expressed by middle forms, but this is open to interpretation. *Il.* 5.621–2 conveys middle use in, οὐδ’ ἄρ’ ἔτ’ ἄλλα δυνήσατο τεύχεα καλὰ ὤμουιν ἀφελέσθαι, ‘but he was not able after that to remove the beautiful armor from his shoulders.’ In *Il.* 23.465–6, the same verb appears with the $-(\theta)\eta-$ form, which could be middle or passive use: οὐδὲ δυνάσθη εὖ σχεθέειν περὶ τέρμα, ‘and he was not able [or enabled] to guide it well around the turning post.’⁷¹ Limitations become evident as to what precisely these forms signal. It is not clear that these forms encode only middle voice uses since both of these examples also could have a passive interpretation. Reading the wording of the entire clause in context suggests a feature of external causality is possible. It floats the idea of an unstated reason why (‘because of...’). In both cases the man was not able to perform the acts of ‘removing’ or ‘guiding,’ which could mean that he is not the cause of his failures, something else is. Moreover, it is attested elsewhere that the wording of clauses that have these voice forms can convey a more overt passive sense with stated agency,

⁶⁹ Delbrück, *Syntaktische Forschungen*, 75.

⁷⁰ Aubrey, “Motivated Categories,” 578–81. A possible stative function for the $-(\theta)\eta-$ form within perfective aspect, however, still would have maintained a distinction from the perfect tense-form (stative aspect) at least at this stage in the language. In this scenario, the aorist $-(\theta)\eta-$ form would convey a greater sense of the process as a complete whole by the process *entering* into a state or achieving a state (e.g. ‘became dry’) while the perfect tense-form would focus on the final resultant state of a process. For more on intersections between verbal aspect and verbal voice, see the study by Bakker, “Voice, Aspect and Aktionsart,” in which Bakker argues that the ancient Greek middle has a basic value of subject-affectedness, but the distribution and meaning of the $-(\theta)\eta-$ form as both a voice and an aspectual marker (perfective aspect) is further constrained by Aktionsart and features of transitivity in an event-type.

⁷¹ George, *Expressions*, 15.

especially when certain phrases are present as, ὕπο δηωθέντες, in *Od.* 9.66, οἱ θάνον ἐν πεδίῳ Κικόνων ὕπο δηωθέντες, ‘who died on the plain, slaughtered *by the Cicones*’ and, ὑπ’ ἐμοί, in *Il.* 5.646, ἀλλ’ ὑπ’ ἐμοί δμηθέντα πύλας Αἴδαο περήσειν, ‘but defeated *by me*, to cross the gates of Hades.’⁷² The common feature among all instances of the -(θ)η- form is the role of the subject as endpoint for the verbal process.

According to Rutger Allan, in his study on the middle voice in the Homeric and Classical writings, the aorist -(θ)η- form occurs in five middle voice meanings: (1) passive middle (2) spontaneous process, (3) mental process, (4) collective motion, and (5) body motion, while the aorist middle occurred in all middle uses.⁷³ In the Homeric literature, constructions with this marker appear not to have been limited to a passive sense only but overlapped with typical middle meanings. As Carl Conrad observes, “[w]hile the -(θ)η- forms do indeed quite frequently indicate a passive sense, it cannot be assumed by any means that this was their regular and invariable function.”⁷⁴ Likewise, although Allan draws a sharp distinction between middle and passive *form* with the passive form only occurring in the aorist and future tenses marked by the -(θ)η-, his study demonstrates significant interchangeability in *function* between middle and passive uses among all tenses and voice forms due to the subject-affectedness that both middle and passive uses hold in common.⁷⁵ According to P. K. Andersen, passive uses were not limited to a specific passive form. Instead passive uses were such an integral part of the

⁷² George, *Expressions*, 15.

⁷³ All the middle uses of the aorist middle are: (1) indirect reflexive, (2) mental activity, (3) speech act, (4) perception, (5) direct reflexive, (6) reciprocal, (7) collective motion, (8) body motion, and (9) mental process.

⁷⁴ Conrad, “New Observations,” 3.

⁷⁵ What Allan means here by “subject-affectedness” can be better defined, but it seems to revolve around the subject undergoing the verbal process. It is not altogether clear from Allan’s study what accounts for the existence of a so-called distinct passive form in the aorist and future if the -(θ)η- encodes middle voice meaning.

middle voice that sometimes they were expressed even with middle forms of the aorist and future tense-forms whose distinct morphological $-(\theta)\eta$ - passive forms were already evident.⁷⁶ Allan, however, makes a significant qualification to this and maintains a sharper distinction between middle and passive use in the aorist by stating that “sigmatic middle aorists with passive meaning do not exist in historical Greek.” Allan makes his claim on the basis that aorist middles have distinctly animate subjects that express volition, while the $-(\theta)\eta$ - forms not so much, and the presence or absence of volition in the subject is determinative for voice usage in the aorist tense-form.⁷⁷ Differing views such as these are indicative of the ambiguity and interpretive nature associated with determining passivity in the grammar of the Greek language especially since the language is only in written forms.

Given the considerable interchangeability between middle and passive uses in the Homeric literature, it is also still inconclusive whether Greek actually developed a distinct passive-only form at all in the course of its development or if the $-(\theta)\eta$ - form is a new, perhaps innovative voice marker that grew up in the language to mark a multifunctional range of uses, gradually superseding the original middle markings.⁷⁸ According to Allan’s study, at this stage of the language, the $-(\theta)\eta$ - form may be characterized as having a range of middle uses depending on the semantic class of the verb rather than having a strictly passive use.⁷⁹ But this raises the concern that a verb’s lexical meaning simply ‘overrides’ voice form, rather than form realizing a consistent

⁷⁶ Andersen, “Remarks on the Origin of the Term, ‘Passive’,” 4.

⁷⁷ See Allan, *The Middle Voice*, 148–49, and below for an extended evaluation of Allan’s study on the middle voice.

⁷⁸ Aubrey calls the theta form “multifunctional morphology,” capable of taking on new uses, even including stativity. See Aubrey, “Motivated Categories,” 575–85.

⁷⁹ For an early statement on this, see Jankuhn, *Die passive Bedeutung medialer Formen*, 37.

systemic function that lexical meaning fits into. At the same time, if the $-(\theta)\eta-$ form marks a separate third voice as the single form for a passive function, this also raises some questions. Though this form had its start at this very early stage in the history of the language, why did its development stop short and not carry through to the other tense-forms, which also show passivization? Why is there no evidence of usage beyond the aorist and future tense-forms in the Homeric period or later on? Or should this matter be viewed in this way at all? As a passive form, was there in fact a need among users of the language for the development of the $-(\theta)\eta-$ form that happened to involve the aorist and future tense-forms only, a need that is unnecessary for the other tense-forms?

The Hellenic World

With the establishment of a democratic state in the city of Athens in 507 BCE, ancient Greek society rose to unprecedented new heights during the Classical period (c. 507–323 BCE), also known as the great ‘Golden Age of Greece’ that would set the course for western civilization. From among the many regional Greek dialects that comprised the various Greek city-states up to this time, the Attic dialect of Athens became most prominent as the form and sound of the language in which much of the literature from this period is composed. During this period, in what came to be known as “classical” usage, classicist Guy Cooper sees much overlap in voice functions in that “often the aorists ending in $-(\theta)\eta\upsilon-$ still function as middles in Attic. . . and middle forms are used as passives.”⁸⁰ Andersen arrives at a two voice system:

Since these ‘passive’ forms were originally employed in the anticausative and later were never restricted to ‘passive’ constructions, but rather were employed in virtually the very same range of constructions as the inflectional ‘middle’ (as well

⁸⁰ Cooper, *Attic Greek Prose Syntax*, 583–84.

as the anticausative in other languages), we have evidence that their basic function is identical to that of the ‘middle’. Thus, in terms of function Classical Greek exhibits not three distinct voices/diatheses, but only two: the active and the ‘middle’.⁸¹

More precise defining of the semantic role of the subject in regards to these ‘passive’ forms and ‘middle’ forms is needed, especially since voice centers on the role of the subject. The $-(\theta)\eta-$ form may show similar function to middle forms in relation to the subject, but it may show different function in regard to agency, which now involves interpreting the lexical semantics of individual verbs. (Verbs are ‘anticausative’ based on their meaning.) Nonetheless, there appears to be a wider consensus that this period also saw a steady increase in use of the $-(\theta)\eta-$ form and a gradual expansion of this form into other middle uses at what seems to be the expense of the sigmatic aorist middle and secondary verb endings, while still maintaining the other passive functions of this form.⁸² The $-(\theta)\eta-$ began to encroach upon the sigmatic aorist form during this time (it eventually disappears entirely later on), but rather than the $-(\theta)\eta-$ form undergoing a process of narrowing into a more independent passive function only, it continues to expand its range of uses.⁸³ The $-(\theta)\eta-$ “came to encode events with more agency in their conception, such as reflexives, reciprocals, and mental activities, which involve a more prototypical agent as the primary figure.”⁸⁴ However, this kind of use of the $-(\theta)\eta-$ shows little difference in use from an intransitive active voice use. Supposedly encoding events with more agency may be due more to the lexical semantics of the verb and not the grammatical function encoded in the form, which may still be thoroughly ‘passive,’ depending on how this is

⁸¹ Andersen, “Remarks,” 10.

⁸² See Allan, *The Middle Voice*, 147, 156; Ramón, “From Aktionsart to Aspect and Voice,” 149–82; Horrocks, *Greek*, 103; Pennington, “Deponency in Koine Greek,” 56–57.

⁸³ Aubrey, “Motivated Categories,” 572.

⁸⁴ Aubrey, “Motivated Categories,” 572; 602. See below for a critique of this view in “Further Assessments.”

defined. In any case, by the time of the NT writings, $-(\theta)\eta-$ usage appears to increase significantly and preference for the $-(\theta)\eta-$ over middle forms becomes noticeable, so much so that Alexander Buttmann, using more traditional terminology for the $-(\theta)\eta-$, in his classic NT grammar states, perhaps with a bit of exaggeration, that “[t]he number of these Passive Aorists (for the most part to be translated intransitively) is very great; examples, therefore, are to be found everywhere in multitudes.”⁸⁵ It is interesting to note how Buttman calls the $-(\theta)\eta-$ “passive” to begin with, suggesting this was its original function. Buttman’s statements also need to be qualified by the fact that many verbs in the NT still use middle forms in addition to their $-(\theta)\eta-$ forms.

Furthermore, during this period the Aristotelian notion of *enérgeia* rose to prominence as philosophers pondered the various causes and origins of the elements in our universe. *Enérgeia* was understood as a force of causality that held the power to actualize a potential element that is latent at the present time.⁸⁶ Naturally this notion made its way into thinking about the functions of language since language was the necessary medium to converse on matters of logic and dialectic. Every sentence therein contained not only an element expressing *enérgeia*, that is, an element expressing causality of the verbal process, but also an element expressing *páthos*—an element of the sentence that suffers, bears, or undergoes the verbal process, which in doing so, actualizes the action. As N. E. Collinge states, “One thing is clear: the Greeks had a strong innate impulse to see things in binary form.” Unities becoming dualities, balanced clauses, hinted alternatives, and otiose alternatives mark the literature at all levels of

⁸⁵ Buttmann, *A Grammar of the New Testament Greek*, 191.

⁸⁶ Law, *The History of Linguistics in Europe*, 25. See also, Stumpf, *Socrates to Sartre*, 97–100.

genre.⁸⁷ In language, *enérgeia* and *páthos*, together produce an opposition of causality and actualization; these are internal to the clause and center on the relationship between verb and grammatical subject. In relation to the semantics of the verb, the subject can take on either one of two states or dispositions of the verbal process: the role of causality or the role of actualization. Because of their origins in philosophy, other semantic terms were employed as well during the Hellenistic period to express the roles of causality and actualization involving the subject. For example, in Aristotle, *Categories*: ποιεῖν/πάσχειν; Stoic tradition: δραστική/παθητικά; Aristarchus, *Ariston.sch.*: ἐνεργητικά/παθητικά; Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Amm. 2*: ποιητικόν/παθητικόν; Thrax, *Tekhnē*: ἐνέργεια/πάθος. Yet despite these different nuances, they all appear to have communicated essentially the fundamental *enérgeia* and *pathos* opposition which remains consistent descriptors for voice throughout antiquity. But how this opposition and its individual terms came to be interpreted among ancient philosophers and grammarians is not such a simple matter. The Neoplatonist philosopher, Simplicius of Cilicia (c. 490–560 BCE), in his commentary on Aristotle’s *Categories*, discusses a number of verbs and whether the notion of ποιεῖν is always directed towards some entity outside of the subject or whether it may exist absolutely, in the sense that effects of the verb exist within their occurring; or whether or not there is such a thing as absolute affectedness for πάσχειν in which there may be no agent of an action at all.⁸⁸

Many competing views were put forth by philosophers and new categories that were invented first by Greek grammarians and later by Latin grammarians made it increasingly difficult to assume a strict correlation between an *enérgeia* and *pathos*

⁸⁷ Collinge, “Greek Use of the Term, ‘Middle,’” 233.

⁸⁸ See Rijksbaron, “Greek Middle Voice,” 440–42.

opposition. Allan notes how the terms πάθος and παθητικά, for example, could apply semantically not only to middle and passive verbs, but also to active verbs whose meanings have a strong sense of the subject undergoing the process despite being marked active voice (e.g. νοσῶ ‘I am ill’ and ὀφθαλμιῶ ‘I suffer from ophthalmia’).⁸⁹ Soon more philosophical bases for understanding voice would combine with, and eventually be superseded by, new linguistic tools that needed to be developed in order to engage critically with classical texts in the coming new era of Greek culture.

Hellenistic Greek

Transitivity

The conquests of Alexander the Great in the fourth century BCE ushered in the Hellenistic period (323 BCE–31 BCE) of the Greco-Roman world (323 BCE–330 CE), during which the Greek language was being studied in new and innovative ways that culminated in the works of the great Latin grammarians of late antiquity. The practice of restoring and preserving older works of Homeric and classical literature developed into a major discipline in order to promote their perpetuity for future generations. This process involved creating new copies of these works by hand that would be improvements and enhancements of older versions and in order to perform such a task, the tools of textual criticism, exegesis and interpretation, and literary analysis had to be employed.

Consequently, advancements in the study of the Greek language would develop alongside and support this endeavor since language in written form—the text—was the linguistic material these tools were being applied to. Developing a systematized theory of

⁸⁹ See Allan, *Middle Voice*, 17 n.21. See also Rijksbaron, “Greek Middle Voice,” 438.

Greek grammar to better understand how the Greek language worked would become very useful to these burgeoning philologists who were analyzing the texts of Homer, Aeschylus, Plato, Xenophon, among many others, as copies were made from copies in order to preserve what was deemed as the true and original text. Better informed textual decisions could be made and better commentaries and expositions could also be written the more the language of the text was understood. This opened up new avenues for further advancements in linguistic theory during this time.

Very soon general language studies took on the form of grammar studies and became a scholarly pursuit in its own right (*Grammatikē*). Grammarians emerged in the field whose training was grounded in the philological tradition as influences from currents in the philosophical tradition were also evident. Linguistic study was gaining a more independent identity but primarily with the aim to systematize what constituted “correct Greek” whether that be from a more philosophical or literary standpoint. Beginning around 300 BC, the Stoics, in particular, Zeno of Citium, took up earlier observations of language by philosophers preceding them, especially within the Socratic tradition, and made significant advances towards a more systematized theory of Greek grammar. According to Stoic theory, there is a fundamental logical ordering underlying language whereby language use is governed by specific rules derived from the very nature of language and based primarily on a rationalist approach.⁹⁰ The development of sentence “syntax,” especially by the Stoics, took on a conceptual identity fashioned according to Stoic mode of thought. Their belief in language’s inherently logical function translates into “a rational, rule-governed notion of syntax, distinguished by its internal

⁹⁰ Blank and Atherton, “The Stoic Contribution to Traditional Grammar,” 320.

‘congruity’, rather than appeal to usage or authority to explain and justify what is taken to be syntactically correct and to outlaw what is not.”⁹¹ Actual language usage and appeals to historical development (etymology) were not neglected by the Stoics but such criteria for determining grammatical correctness were clearly secondary to logical reasoning. The logic undergirding syntax meant that among the different ‘parts of speech’ (*merê tou logou*) of a sentence, different groupings occur to form a proposition of meaning or a statement. This comes about through the relations between elements of the sentence according to various syntactic groupings. In this regard the basic concepts of grammatical *διάθεσις*⁹² or “voice” were being developed in Stoic grammatical theory. The use of *διάθεσις* meant that such relations mean “holding a certain disposition towards something” which produced certain “conditions” that characterized elements of a sentence. Since notions of transitivity and intransitivity of the verb were being developed at the same time, *διάθεσις* also had connotations of “arrangement” which more specifically signified directionality of the verb in relation to the subject. That a verbal process transfers or passes onto another element of the sentence to form a certain arrangement or grouping became an established tenet of Stoic syntax. The verbal process was then further distinguished as “direct” (*ortha*), “reversed” (*huptia*), “neutral” or “neither” (*oudetera*), or “reflexive” (*antipeponthota*) in relation to a noun.⁹³

From its earliest beginnings as a nascent grammatical category, verbal voice seems to have continued from PIE its close association with the transitive and intransitive

⁹¹ Blank and Atherton, “The Stoic Contribution to Traditional Grammar,” 321.

⁹² It is not clear whether this term itself was coined by the Stoics or came into use some other way later on. Nevertheless, Stoic grammar is some of the earliest Greek evidence of a rudimentary understanding of the grammatical function that *διάθεσις* came to mean in ancient Greek grammar.

⁹³ Blank and Atherton, “The Stoic Contribution to Traditional Grammar,” 322–23.

nature of verbs in the language. Notions of transitivity centered on the verb developed further during the Hellenistic period but this led to new interpretations of verbal voice. Though still acknowledging the disposition of the subject for voice, focus shifted away from a more strictly subject-role opposition towards a more developed syntactic opposition. Voice became refined as linear operations of the clause and understood more strictly according to an ‘extension and impact’ view of the verbal process. In other words, voice came to mean that transitivity defines specific structural patterns in which the directionality of the verbal process itself is emphasized based on the semantics of the verb,⁹⁴ downplaying the distinctive roles of the subject for voice. Thus *enérgeia* became ‘active’⁹⁵ voice in terms of the verbal process typically extending out toward an object: subject→verb→object structure (*ortha*). If the verbal process moves in this same direction but not onto a separate object or patient (intransitive) then this would be a reflexive use (*antipeponthota*). Then *pathos* becomes ‘passive’ voice in that the direction reverses and the verbal process extends toward the subject: subject←verb←oblique case/prepositional phrase structure (*huptia*).⁹⁶

Now *enérgeia* and *páthos* were redefined to form opposing endpoints with emphasis on the direction or disposition of the *verb*—‘active’ and ‘passive’ voices—and

⁹⁴ Recall from chapter one earlier understandings of verbal voice as ‘centripetal action’ versus ‘centrifugal action.’ The Stoics may be seen as interpreting a similar view within a more developed grammatical theory of language.

⁹⁵ References to each voice in this particular interpretation are henceforth put into single quotation marks referring to a traditional view of voice as a three-voice system that this study is bringing into question.

⁹⁶ The terminology used to describe voice functions has been a source of confusion in studies on voice. The term, ‘passive’ in English comes from the Latin, *passivum* from *pati* meaning ‘to suffer.’ In grammar this has to do with the element of the clause that ‘suffers’ or ‘undergoes’ the action as ‘patient’ of the action. In this sense, *passivum* is quite close in meaning to Greek *pathos* and thus our English ‘passive’ maintains their meanings rather well. However, in modern English usage, ‘passive’ has acquired different meanings and ‘suffer’ is no longer its typical sense. Beginnings of its change in usage may very well go back to Stoic influence since the voice category, *huptia* in Stoic terms can also mean, ‘laid back’ which is closer in meaning to our more modern usage for ‘passive.’

not the subject. Based on this, a kind of artificial ‘middle’ syntactic category opened up that sat between these two opposing configurations in order to accommodate ambiguity that arose between form and function of the verbal process. With reinterpretations of voice, ‘middle’ now refers to a ‘conceptual space’ between the active and passive voices. This is, in Stoic terms, *oudetera* in the sense that this ‘middle’ category is neither entirely one voice nor entirely the other voice, but rather ‘neutral’ in status between the two opposing voices. All together *diáthesis* becomes redefined according to a three voice system—‘active,’ ‘middle,’ and ‘passive’ that reconfigures the earlier two-voice system according to a different kind of semantic opposition.⁹⁷

By the time of the writings of the early Byzantine scholar and grammarian, Priscian, in the early sixth century CE, the notion of transitivity had secured its place as a central function of both Latin and Greek grammar. From among the surviving works handed down from the ancient grammarians, Priscian was the first to formally introduce and write extensively on transitivity. In his massive work, *Institutiones Grammaticae*, Priscian speaks of *transitio personarum*, ‘transition of persons’ in which he draws distinctions between transitive and reflexive sentences, and discusses intransitive occurrences as well. In the final volume, Book 18, verbal voice is discussed in these syntactic terms by Priscian as he draws upon both Latin and Greek literary and grammatical sources.⁹⁸ Priscian’s works show how much grammar, especially syntax,

⁹⁷ As will be seen below, specialized studies on verbal voice, especially the middle voice, have responded to this syntactic and structural interpretation of voice by emphasizing the semantics of the verb for voice patternings. While this helps our understanding of Greek voice to some extent, emphasis on the semantics of the verb means such approaches still operate largely within the disposition of the verb (e.g. cognitive verbs, emotive verbs, verbs of movement, stative verbs, etc.), too often to the exclusion of the disposition of the subject. Thus they do not fully break free from a structural interpretation nor do they go far enough to recover an overall grammatical system of voice.

⁹⁸ Law, *History of Linguistics*, 86–91.

had developed, even since the days of Apollonius Dyscolus (2nd century CE) and Donatus (4th century CE), into the study of how words directly relate to and affect each other from earlier philosophical study of language primarily in service to forming structures of logical propositions. From Priscian onwards, issues in syntax now set the agenda for further developments in grammar well into the medieval period and beyond, and these developments current in the sixth century CE also helped to form the basis for subsequent grammars that reconstruct the Greek of the New Testament corpus.

Greek Grammars

Interpretations of voice as a three-voice system based on early notions of transitivity that stress the directionality of the verbal process have continued into the modern era. It shows up in statements on voice such as those by Robert Robins, “*Energetikon* [active] was used of active transitive verbs.”⁹⁹ It also has shown up especially in Greek grammars in that functions of voice are understood in large part according to a transitive/intransitive view of the verb. An early seminal Greek grammar that reflects this view of voice and has also set a precedent for many subsequent grammars up to the present day is Georg Winer’s original 1822 New Testament Greek grammar.¹⁰⁰

Winer opens his section on the verb with discussion on voice and begins on the premise that all verbs take on a transitive (causative) or intransitive (reflexive) designation and function. Although Winer furnishes no further definition of transitivity and intransitivity, it can be inferred that transitive/intransitive has much to do with the lexical meaning of the verb but the exact relationship between a verb’s meaning and its

⁹⁹ Robins, *The Byzantine Grammarians*, 70.

¹⁰⁰ Winer, *A Treatise on the Grammar of New Testament Greek*, 314–30.

use of a particular voice is unclear. According to Winer, the ‘active’ voice denotes transitivity as the verbal process transfers onto an object. A verb is intransitive when this does not occur, but it is unclear if a verb is still in the active voice. There are many exceptions to these rules as transitive verbs can assume intransitive function and intransitive verbs can also have transitive function.¹⁰¹ The ‘middle’ voice, according to Winer, refers the verbal process back to the agent. This suggests that this is one of the major exceptions to the function of transitive verbs which can function intransitively by employing the ‘middle’ voice. But it is also unclear what the definition of agent is and what its distinction is from the grammatical subject since the two terms seem to be used interchangeably in Winer. The agent/subject in the ‘middle’ voice can have several different functions. This echoes the ‘hybrid’ nature of the ‘middle’ voice, going back to the ancient Stoic notion of *oudetera*. A few of its primary functions are that (1) it can function like the direct object in a reflexive sense; (2) the verbal process can perform back onto or for the agent/subject; or (3) it can denote the verbal process taking place at the subject’s command or the subject granting permission for this to occur.¹⁰² Finally, a verb’s voice is ‘passive’ when the noun that is in the dative or genitive case as governed by the verb becomes the ‘subject’ of the verbal process. This implies that the usual grammatical subject functions as an object when the ‘passive’ voice is employed.¹⁰³

Winer’s grammar picks up on the inconsistencies that arise in trying to maintain such close relationship between voice and a verb’s transitivity but fails to offer any sort of substantial resolution. Subsequent grammars have tried to make a clearer distinction

¹⁰¹ Winer, *Treatise*, 314–16.

¹⁰² Winer, *Treatise*, 316–18.

¹⁰³ Winer, *Treatise*, 326.

between voice and transitivity on the basis that the bifurcation, transitive/intransitive, is based on a verb's lexical meaning. Grammars have acknowledged that verbal meaning does not line up conveniently with verbal functions of voice when 'active' voice is equated with 'transitive' functions or 'middle/passive' voice with 'intransitive.'¹⁰⁴ Yet the occurrence of such phenomena as *media tantum* (middle-only) verbs is an example of how voice still interacts with verbal semantics, which influences how voice is used. Grammars have continued to struggle in reconciling voice and transitivity and this has greatly affected how to locate the basis for operations of voice. That is, they have struggled to understand how functions of voice are bound up with lexical meaning of the verb and at the same time operate according to a grammatical system marked by a distinctive morphology. The typical approach taken among most grammars to overcome this acute difficulty has been to provide a highly minimalistic statement on the function of each voice (i.e. the grammar system) and then proceed to create a seemingly endless inventory of categories for the use of each voice based on a verb's lexical meaning and contextual usage (e.g. simple active, causative active, reflexive active, direct middle, indirect middle, permissive middle, dynamic middle, reflexive middle, simple passive, divine passive, etc.).¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ See e.g. Robertson, *Grammar*, 797; Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 409. For instance, there are so-called intransitive verbs that have active forms such as κατοικέω (I live, dwell); καθίζω (I sit); εὐαγγελίζω (I bring good news); ἀμαρτάνω (I sin, do wrong). This also includes other formal inconsistencies such as intransitive verbs with mostly middle/passive forms that may switch to an active form such as ἦλθον in the aorist tense from ἔρχομαι (I go, come) or πίπτω (I fall) which in the future tense has only middle/passive forms e.g. πεσοῦμαι, built on its second aorist stem, ἔπεσον. For more see also Andersen, "Remarks on Dionysius Thrax's Concept of Diathesis," 23–25.

¹⁰⁵ This has come to be standard methodological practice for writing a grammar on Greek since this has not been limited to the category of voice only (the number of categories that have been created for the genitive case alone, for example, can be rather overwhelming). For a Greek grammar that tries to avoid this trend in its description of voice, see Mathewson and Ballantine Emig, *Intermediate Greek Grammar*, 142–52. See also Porter, *Idioms*, 62–73.

Grammars, therefore, seem to attest that, under a three-voice model of verbal voice, defining the functional relationships among the three voices becomes increasingly complicated. This is true for the middle voice in particular since it is viewed as something like a grammatical hybrid of the ‘active’ and ‘passive’ voices. The result is that verbs fall into specific categories depending on how they fit into the ‘active’ and ‘passive’ opposition. A predominant view on voice has developed from this that sees the primary category and function of the middle voice as ‘reflexive’ since the verbal process appears to be equally split between ‘active’ and ‘passive’ by the subject performing the action (active) and the action then coming back onto the subject (passive).¹⁰⁶ That the subject in a reflexive middle does something to itself fits well with the transitive notion of the verbal process transferring onto or affecting an object (but in this case it is the subject as a ‘conceptual object’). This view of the primary function of the middle voice has been both endorsed and disputed among Greek grammars over its long history up until the present day. Whereas a New Testament Greek grammar states that “[t]he genius of the middle can most clearly be seen by this [reflexive] use,”¹⁰⁷ at the same time its usage in the NT is very rare and other grammars have doubted that the reflexive middle even exists at all in the NT which brings into question the primacy of this use of the middle. Charles Moule states, “Grammars sometimes describe the Middle as primarily reflexive. Whether or not this is true for certain periods, it is manifestly not true of N.T. usage.”¹⁰⁸ James Moulton permits only one occurrence of a reflexive middle in the NT: Matt 27:5:

¹⁰⁶ For a work that still endorses this view as the primary function of the middle voice, see Fairbairn, *Understanding Language*, 105–6.

¹⁰⁷ Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 416.

¹⁰⁸ Moule, *Idiom Book*, 24.

καὶ ἀπελθὼν ἀπήγγξατο (And going away, he hanged himself.)¹⁰⁹ Other reputable grammars that question the primacy of the reflexive middle are mentioned by Stanley Porter.¹¹⁰ Moreover another grammar claims that while the reflexive middle was used frequently during the Classical period, the reflexive active voice was also very common, possibly even more common than the reflexive middle.¹¹¹ Gradually the reflexive middle merged even closer to the reflexive active to the point that the reflexive middle is “semantically equivalent to an active verb with a reflexive pronoun as object.”¹¹² If modern grammars assume a three-voice system (as they typically do), and interpret the reflexive middle in such transitive terms that make it identical with the transitivity of an active reflexive construction, such interpretations could account for the outcome that, by Hellenistic times, as another NT Greek grammar puts it, “[s]ometimes, however, it is scarcely possible to distinguish in meaning between the middle and the active.”¹¹³

By contrast, another grammar of classical Greek contends that “the middle voice is not exactly reflexive;. . . the subject of a middle verb is, however, both the *subject* and the *indirect object* of the action. . . [italics original].”¹¹⁴ Grammarians have also taken up a different view that the primary function of the middle is an ‘indirect reflexive’ usage in which it appears that the more common usage of the ‘middle’ is for the subject to act in one’s own interest. Here the subject performs the verbal process and it typically transfers onto an object just like the transitive function of the ‘active’ voice. But as a middle voice construction, the subject benefits from the action and takes special interest in it. Porter

¹⁰⁹ Moulton, *Prolegomena*, 155.

¹¹⁰ Porter, *Idioms*, 67, n. 1; Robertson, *Grammar*, 806; Moulton, *Prolegomena*, 155–56; Moule, *Idiom Book*, 24; Turner, *Syntax*, 54; Winer, *Treatise*, 316; Dana and Mantey, *Manual Grammar*, 158.

¹¹¹ Smyth, *Greek Grammar*, 391.

¹¹² Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 417.

¹¹³ Vine, *New Testament Greek Grammar*, 128.

¹¹⁴ Williams, *Elementary Classical Greek*, 127.

calls this the ‘proper middle’ and adds that, “[t]his usage is perhaps closest to the general meaning of the middle voice, which involves broadly the participation or involvement of the subject in the action.”¹¹⁵

On the other end of the spectrum, other categories that attempt to clarify the distinction between the functions of ‘middle’ and ‘passive’ are those that give to ‘middle’ uses more ‘active’ qualities such as the subject having more volition like acknowledgment, consent, or permission toward the verbal process being done to the subject.¹¹⁶ However, to determine such distinctions in usage calls for more subjective interpretations of the text (bearing in mind that both middle and passive voices in most tense-forms share the same inflectional forms), which begin to step beyond the actual grammatical functions of the clause and what the form actually encodes, resulting in reading subjective interpretations into the grammar. David Black introduces the ‘middle’ and ‘passive’ voices together in his grammar and concedes that although the middle voice differs from the passive, “[j]ust how the action is related to the subject is not indicated by the middle voice itself but by the context or the verbal idea.”¹¹⁷

In the overall history of writing grammars, much of the same methodological templates, models, criteria, terminology, including assumptions and biases, from their predecessors are carried forward. The influence of Winer’s grammar above, for example, cannot be underestimated in the field of biblical studies as many other NT Greek grammars were written in its wake and have followed in its example. It is difficult to break with tradition in this regard because of the perception of an authoritative precedent

¹¹⁵ Porter, Reed, and Brook-O’Donnell, *Fundamentals of New Testament Greek Grammar*, 122.

¹¹⁶ Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 425–27. Here called the ‘permissive middle voice.’

¹¹⁷ Black, *Learn to Read New Testament Greek*, 86.

set by those who have gone before in studying the language. In the preface to his grammar, Buttman writes in 1858 concerning Winer's grammar that "it is my firm persuasion that Winer's work will long continue to maintain its honorable position in philological as well as theological science."¹¹⁸

Precedence goes well back into the ancient period and its pursuit of knowledge and wisdom that characterized ancient Greek culture. A strong perception arose that those who were closest to the time period of the language, those who actually used the language as native speakers, carry the most authority as to how the language works. This is supposed in Eleanor Dickey's view that,

[A]ncient scholars brought to their work a host of advantages that their modern counterparts lack: native-speaker fluency in ancient Greek, access to vast numbers of papyrus texts hundreds of years older and usually far less corrupt than our medieval manuscripts, knowledge of much of the ancient literature that is now lost, and contact with an explanatory oral tradition going back to the time of the classical writers themselves.¹¹⁹

It is very often assumed that the production of grammatical treatises, literary commentaries, lexica, and philosophical writings about language that were produced during the time period are positioned best for understanding the language. While it is certainly true that distances of time, space, and culture create disadvantages for us today if we want to learn and understand the material that was produced during that time, in the case of the ancient Greek language, it is misleading to think that better knowledge of the language is always equated with going as far back as possible to sources closer to or originating from the time the language was actually used. Textual sources that purport to be in closer proximity to the original language may help depending on the quality of the

¹¹⁸ Buttman, *Grammar*, x.

¹¹⁹ Dickey, *Ancient Greek Scholarship*, 4.

source, but it is still no guarantee in itself for a better understanding of the language. It must be kept in mind that the two general areas of antiquity from which Greek language study arose—philosophy and philology—were in fact not interested primarily in how the everyday language was actually used. In both cases, the development of linguistic theory was basically ancillary to larger and different pursuits that each had at the time.

Further, besides the fact that the material we actually do have from antiquity is quite limited and fragmentary, the nature of linguistic study belongs to the same reality of all pursuits of knowledge which is no different whether in ancient times or modern: all knowledge is always readily subject to a certain point of view. In any field of inquiry, there is always an angle entertained by one but rejected by another; what may be a settled matter for some is a disputed matter for others; what seems logical for one, makes no sense to another. This is especially relevant when we attempt to study an ancient language long past that is no longer living in that form yet continues to be reconstructed. And this is certainly true for the category of verbal voice. For John Lyons, not only is the traditional terminology for voice confusing, “[t]he Greek grammarians. . . left us with a legacy of contradictory statements about the role of voice, not only in the classical languages, but also in English and other modern languages, the description of which has been strongly influenced by traditional grammar.”¹²⁰ But at the same time, Andersen cautions that misunderstandings may be “the result of our own failure to fully understand the distinctions made in the Greek grammatical tradition.”¹²¹

¹²⁰ Lyons, *Introduction*, 372.

¹²¹ Andersen, “Remarks,” 2.

The *Tekhnē Grammatikē*

Grammar treatments of voice can reveal much as to how the tradition of Greek grammars, from antiquity to modern times, has locked in a particular interpretation of voice as the ‘correct’ one that acquires its own ancient precedence. This can be seen from our clearest piece of evidence from the ancient period, the *Tekhnē Grammatikē*, the earliest surviving Greek grammar that offers a model of the Greek voice system.¹²² The *Tekhnē Grammatikē* is a small grammatical treatise attributed to the Homeric scholar, Dionysius Thrax (170–90 BCE). It was used in Greek antiquity to refer to the skill of reading and writing (cf. Plato, *Theaet.* 207B; *Phileb.* 17B–18D). The *Tekhnē* is the only surviving grammar book of antiquity that has come down fully intact. It is also the most comprehensive work on Greek grammar of the Hellenistic period to have come down despite its overall brevity since it covers a fairly wide range of areas.¹²³

In the *Tekhnē*, grammar is defined as “the practical study of the normal usages of poets and prose writers.”¹²⁴ It is within this purpose for literary analysis that the grammar instruction of the *Tekhnē* is presented and this includes, among other topics, voice (διάθεσις).¹²⁵ In the introductory section of the *Tekhnē* concerning the verb, the *Tekhnē*

¹²² The Stoics had their own τέχνη but this work is not to be at all confused with the technical grammatical work provided by Dionysius.

¹²³ The authorship and dating of the *Tekhnē* is highly disputed, including the authenticity of certain parts of the work. Since the classic work by Italian scholar, Vincenzo Di Benedetto in 1958, a wide range of views has been put forth. Some suggest that it is a later work on grammar since it appears to bear the marks of an interventionist editor, written to reflect consolidation and abbreviation of several centuries of experimental developments in grammar that had advanced the field of study. Others have questioned its authenticity based upon Egyptian grammatical papyri. Others, however, have defended the authenticity of the *Tekhnē*, choosing to set this work as representative of the peak of Alexandrian philological scholarship in the second century BC with noteworthy influences from the Stoic tradition. For a detailed summary of the debate, see Pagani, “Pioneers of Grammar,” 17–64. See also Law, *History*, 55–58; Pinborg, “Antiquity,” 103–106; for an English translation and analysis, see Kemp, “Tekhne Grammatike of Dionysius Thrax,” 169–189, and the helpful treatment in Robins, *Grammarians*, 44–86.

¹²⁴ Kemp, “The *Tekhnē Grammatikē*,” 169–70.

¹²⁵ Kemp, “The *Tekhnē Grammatikē*,” 172. Kemp, in his translation, renders these three parts of voice as three ‘states’ and not as three ‘voices’ *per se* (180).

states, “A verb is a word without case inflection, displaying changes of tense, person, and number (and) signifying also *enérgeia* or *páthos*” (Greek words original).¹²⁶ In this statement the two-voice opposition appears to be maintained as part of a general description and function of the verb. Moreover verbal voice appears to signify the disposition of the subject (*onoma*); “There are two voices of the noun (subject), *enérgeia* or *pathos*.” Later in the treatise, in the section specifically on voice (*diáthesis*), three separate voices are stated clearly: “There are three states (*diátheses*): *enérgeia*, *páthos*, (and) *mesótēs*.”¹²⁷ Here the *Tekhnē* introduces a ‘middle’ voice, *μέση διάθεσις*,¹²⁸ which appears to be similar to the Stoic notion of *oudetera* in that it is a position that stands between the two voices, *enérgeia* and *pathos*. According to Andersen, “predicates that exhibit a different form-meaning correspondence, i.e. a combination of ‘active’ [*enérgeia*] form with ‘middle’ [*pathos*] meaning or vice versa, belong to the class of *mesótēs* (MIDDLES) in accordance with the special use of the term ‘middle.’”¹²⁹

Following the statement of the three voices in the *Tekhnē*, examples are provided that show the inflectional forms of each voice. For *mesótēs*, two forms are taken from both *enérgeia* and *páthos* and used as examples, suggesting that, according to this formulation, the ‘middle’ voice has no distinct morphology of its own and is primarily a semantic

¹²⁶ Kemp, “The *Tekhnē Grammatikē*,” 180.

¹²⁷ Kemp, “The *Tekhnē Grammatikē*,” 180. These three voices find their Latin equivalents as *activum*, *passivum*, and *medium*. From this we get our English terms for voice, ‘active,’ ‘passive,’ and ‘medium/middle’ respectively.

¹²⁸ Stephanos Matthaios argues that the earliest indications of *μέση διάθεσις* are found in the works of Thrax’s teacher, Aristarchus of Samothrace (216–144 BCE). Matthaios concedes, however, that this term is never used explicitly in Aristarchus’s writings and at best may be established only through implications drawn from his discussion on *διάθεσις*. See Matthaios, *Untersuchungen*, 318–26.

¹²⁹ Andersen, “Remarks on the Origin of the term, ‘Passive,’” 13.

category.¹³⁰ The category, *mesótēs*, accommodates ambiguity between form and function but only expresses *semantically* either *enérgeia* or *pathos* voice.¹³¹

In this very brief treatment of the voice system, however, there is virtually no further explanation of the three voices—*energeia*, *mesótēs*, and *pathos*—as to what distinguishes them semantically. It does not move much beyond just stating what the three voices are and it seems to assume that just by providing examples of verbs in their inflected forms, the reader will understand the differences, including what middle voice function is.¹³² Andersen points out that in the examples provided for *páthos* in the *Tekhnē*, only verbs with ‘middle’ forms are used and not the $-(\theta)\eta-$ form which might be more expected in this three-voice arrangement of *enérgeia*, *mesótēs*, and *pathos*. This is especially so, given that the $-(\theta)\eta-$ form is a third morphological form available in the voice system that signals *pathos*, albeit only for the aorist and future tense-forms, and given our modern-day understanding of ‘passive’ voice, especially in English.¹³³ A verb used as an example for *páthos* in the *Tekhnē* is $\tau\acute{o}\pi\tau\omicron\mu\alpha\iota$ meaning ‘to beat, strike oneself’

¹³⁰ Kemp, “The Tekhnē Grammatikē,” 180.

¹³¹ What this ‘middle’ category essentially amounts to is that an active verb such as $\pi\acute{\iota}\pi\tau\omega$ (I fall), for example, would be categorized as *mesótēs* because though it is marked ‘active’ voice, semantically it is closer to *pathos* because the subject undergoes the process of ‘falling’ (one does not perform such action onto another entity). This would be a functional use of *mesótēs* and also would eventually become the category *neutrum* in Latin grammar. On the other hand, a verb such as $\beta\omicron\upsilon\lambda\omicron\mu\alpha\iota$ (I want/desire) can be categorized as *mesótēs* because it is marked ‘middle/passive’ voice (formal use), but semantically it can be closer to *enérgeia* or ‘active’ voice because the subject is performing such an action that ‘targets’ another entity (‘I want/desire [something]). This also eventually becomes the category *deponens* in Latin grammar. The creation of this ‘middle’ category, *mesótēs*, shows how individual lexical semantics are highly determinative for designating voice (combined with contextual usage to some degree), and how it becomes highly interpretive from verb to verb as to how the subject relates to the verbal process. This renders morphological marking for voice arbitrary and one starts to wonder what purpose voice markings serve. Thus, in further developments of this tripartite view of voice, the idea that there is a grammatical system for voice that stands independent of lexical semantics, expressed through the various inflectional forms, is neglected and remains undeveloped.

¹³² Kemp attempts his own translations of each of the verbs used as examples but acknowledges that he provides his own interpretive translations and cannot be sure that his translations are what Thrax meant in citing those verbs.

¹³³ That is, passive voice is *derived* from the active voice by reconfiguring the participants in the clause. See discussion below on this from M. H. Klaiman.

as in ‘to beat one’s breast.’ This form is used to signal *páthos* rather than the $-(\theta)\eta$ - form, ἔτυφθην. This suggests to Andersen that although in the aorist tense-form there are three distinct inflectional forms available, for the author of the *Tekhnē*, these forms do not correlate strictly with the three distinct voices put forth for *diáthesis*—*enérgeia*, *páthos*, and *mesótēs*. Rather, the opposition, *enérgeia* and *pathos*, in the *Tekhnē* is closer to the original two-voice distinction, active-middle, as understood from earlier stages in the language prior to it undergoing reinterpretations. Although the *Tekhnē* gives three voices, an important distinction among them is upheld. That is, *enérgeia* and *pathos* remain as the two primary opposing *semantic* expressions for *diáthesis*, expressed using the ‘active’ and (older) ‘middle’ forms, and the category, *mesótēs*, is a new development upon the original active-middle opposition for voice that is intended to account for “a combination of features from the two polar categories,” *enérgeia* and *pathos*.¹³⁴

However, “*mesótēs* is not a semantic property of the verb on a par with *enérgeia* and *páthos*.” It only represents occurrences that are exceptions to the rules.¹³⁵ A. Rijksbaron concurs that the ‘middle’ not only has secondary status, it is a pejorative one as well. Using the more traditional terms, ‘active’ and ‘passive,’ Rijksbaron states, “[t]hereby, the middle is made into a waste-paperbasket for every verb form which in some way or other does not conform to the pattern active forms - active meaning, passive forms - passive meaning. More seriously, this led to the view that these incongruous forms were mere doublets of the canonical active and passive forms and had, thus, no status of their own.”¹³⁶ This may help to explain why statements by other

¹³⁴ Andersen, “Remarks,” 13.

¹³⁵ Andersen, “Remarks on Dionysius Thrax,” 8, 12–16

¹³⁶ Rijksbaron, “Greek Middle Voice,” 439.

grammarians on voice during antiquity would only recognize a two-voice system as the primary opposition for voice. The category, *mesótēs*, despite it contributing to the creation of a three-voice system, seems to be subsidiary to the two primary semantic categories for voice, *enérgeia* and *pathos*.

In three separate works of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who was a scholar active in Rome during the time of Augustus (63 BCE–14 CE), Dionysius maintains a two-voice opposition with no mention anywhere of a third voice. In *Amm.* 2 the two voices are referred to as ποιητικόν and παθητικόν. In his *Th.* 24, he has δραστείριον and παθητικόν and in *Comp.* 6, voice is put into the Stoic terms, ὀρθόν (direct) and ὑπίον (reversed).¹³⁷ The later Latin grammarian, Charisius, in *Artis Grammaticae II* makes mention of *enérgeia* and *páthos*, and Macrobius in *Exerpta*, has *energetikon* and *pathetikon*.¹³⁸ The grammarian, Theodosius of Alexandria, who authored a work on morphology in the third or fourth century CE, the *Kanónes*, says, “the older grammars had not recognized [a middle voice], but rather assigned the occurrences[?] of the middle to both the active and passive.”¹³⁹ The great Alexandrian grammarian, Apollonios Dyscolus (second century CE), in his highly influential work on syntax, *Peri Syntaxeōs*, seems to corroborate this later observation made by Theodosius. Apollonios acknowledges a ‘middle’ voice but he does not ascribe to the ‘middle’ voice a distinct semantic status that differs from the ‘active’ and ‘passive’ voices. A two-voice opposition is upheld by him as well which he calls, ἐνεργητική and παθητική, and he concedes that the ‘middle’ voice is only a

¹³⁷ See de Jonge, *Between Grammar and Rhetoric*, 159–60.

¹³⁸ Keil, *Grammatici Latini*, 167.13–19, 627–28.

¹³⁹ The Greek reads, Ἀλλὰ τοῖς ἀρχαιοτέροις τῶν γραμματικῶν οὐκ ἔδοξεν οὕτως, ἀλλὰ τοὺς χρόνους τῆς μέσης κατεμέρισαν τῇ τε ἐνεργητικῇ καὶ παθητικῇ (emphasis mine). See Teubner, *Grammatici Graeci IV*, 49.

category that demonstrates the capability of the verb to have either an ‘active’ or ‘passive’ sense when using the middle/passive forms.¹⁴⁰

Furthermore, during this period the ‘middle’ voice as *mesótēs* is attested (more securely) after the NT writings, from the second century CE in the works of Apollonius Dyscolus. But even in later developments of grammar, this ‘voice,’ *mesótēs*, did not seem to ever enjoy a well-established semantic status among the other two voices and ambiguity in the function of this μέση διάθεσις appears increasingly to have beset this voice. Not only were attempts to conceptualize the existence of *mesótēs* itself contentious, defining *mesótēs* as a term used by grammarians became increasingly problematic. Juan Signes-Codoñer demonstrates that from the time of Apollonius Dyscolus’s *Syntax* in the second century CE, the notion of *mesótēs* was becoming a highly equivocal term being used without much precision by grammarians and this “fluid situation” meant that many “disagreements between the form and meaning of the words” ensued.¹⁴¹

Signes-Codoñer’s study systematically examines a wide range of extant definitions of the ‘middle’ voice from Apollonios in the second century to late Byzantine grammarians of the sixteenth century CE. Defining the ‘middle’ voice becomes increasingly complicated over this period of time, especially as grammarians also felt compelled to invent new categories to accommodate certain middle uses. All the grammarians reviewed over this long period were clearly operating within some conception of a three-voice framework and the great complexity that this created, especially for the ‘middle’ voice, is strikingly evident. Signes-Codoñer manages to sort

¹⁴⁰ See Rijksbaron, “Treatment of the Greek Middle,” 433–35.

¹⁴¹ Signes-Codoñer, *Definitions of the Greek Middle Voice*, 4.

all the definitions into three main overarching definitions: (1) middle means activity or passivity according to the syntactic context, (2) middle implies discrepancy between form and meaning, and (3) middle as an ambiguous category means activity in some verbs and passivity in others.¹⁴² Signes-Codoñer's work is very thorough and it advances the discussion towards greater clarity as to what the ancient grammarians were trying to do. But admittedly his findings also show that there is still need for better explanations not only of 'middle' voice but of the whole Greek voice system as well. Signes-Codoñer concludes that from antiquity leading up to the modern era, "there was no generally acknowledged definition of the middle voice in the Greek grammatical tradition," only a wide range of definitions that were adapted and modified by grammarians according to their own needs.¹⁴³

Deponency

During the later stages of antiquity, language study culminated in the Latin grammarians who embodied the peak of classical grammar. The ancient Latin language appears to have undergone a similar reinterpretation of verbal voice like Greek in that the PIE middle voice shifted to passive voice, *passivum*, thus giving Latin voice an active-passive opposition (i.e. *passivum* understood as 'to suffer' which was a close approximation to Greek *páthos*). The Latin *passivum r-forms* retained the PIE middle and were similar to the Greek earlier middle, *páthos*, because these *r-forms* normally did not include a phrase expressing agency, though they certainly could. This meant that the Latin *passivum* included a range of uses that signalled the affectedness of the subject. Intransitive verbs

¹⁴² Signes-Codoñer, *Definitions*, 10, 16, 19.

¹⁴³ Signes-Codoñer, *Definitions*, 27.

could be marked either active or passive, but typically *passivum* would be used to convey a reflexive or reciprocal sense specifically in four semantic classes: self-care, physiological change, thought or emotion, and translatives or forms of bodily movement.¹⁴⁴

The Latin *activum* and *passivum* opposition also brought about a distinct ‘middle’ voice category, *medium*, called more specifically, *deponency*, originally held for verbs with only *passivum* forms and no *activum* forms, called *media tantum* verbs. Based on the Latin term, *depono*, ‘to lay aside,’ this category came about as grammarians began to recognize that even though a verb might be marked *passivum* only, such verbs seem to ‘lay aside’ *passivum* use and take on *activum* use which puts them into this special category. These verbs behave like active verbs in which the subject performs the action somehow, especially when an object of the verb is also present, but somewhere in the development of the language these verbs lost their active forms, or so it seems. These verbs compensate for this loss by ‘laying aside’ their *passivum* uses in place of *activum* ones in order to function more properly in relation to a subject performing its action that possibly transfers onto an object. This leads to the idea that verbs lacking an active form (middle only verbs) are therefore ‘defective’ because they need to function just like active verbs, but they do not have the proper active markings. Deponency was probably created to help remedy this ‘glitch’ in the language by providing a way to enable these verbs to legitimately have an active sense. If in fact their active forms fell away at some point in the development of the language, which was what the ancient grammarians probably perceived to be the case, deponency was likely developed as a grammatical

¹⁴⁴ Weiss, *Outline of the Historical and Comparative Grammar of Latin*, 381–82. See also Hammond, *Latin: A Historical and Linguistic Handbook*, 103–5.

category for these verbs to regain their active sense by qualifying them to be interpreted as having *activum* meaning even though they do not have *activum* markings. This, however, to reiterate, was based on the assumption that these verbs are so-called ‘defective’ to begin with. And their ‘defective’ character was also based on the assumption that they lacked an overt feature of agency, which they were supposed to have, but did not.

The Latin category of deponency developed by the ancient grammarians was retrofitted onto the Greek language as the predecessor language in Roman culture since Greek also contained verbs that were only *páthos* in form and lacked an *enérgeia* counterpart. Greek voice was at the time also in the midst of reinterpretations and so Latin deponency fit well into this scheme in which ‘active’ and ‘passive’ maintain the basic opposition of voice and thus create a ‘middle’ domain whereby deponent verbs can have their own place since they are neither wholly ‘active’ nor wholly ‘passive’ in both form and meaning. That is, they are not true *enérgeia* verbs because they are marked with *páthos* forms, and they are not truly *páthos* because even though they may be marked in this voice, they are behaving like *enérgeia* verbs. So as Bernard Taylor has observed, “[o]n the one hand then, deponency is not a Greek idea. On the other hand, once the late Latin grammarians had created the term for Latin, the Greek middle voice was a ready place to hang the notion.”¹⁴⁵

Nonetheless both deponency and the shift to *mesótēs* are notions that subsequently took hold in the grammar of the language and together they have redefined the middle voice. The middle voice as *mesótēs* has come to mean that the subject

¹⁴⁵ Taylor, “Deponency and Greek Lexicography,” 172.

performs the action on the one hand (active sense) but on the other hand, the effect of the action also comes back onto the subject in some way (passive sense). Thus, ‘middle’ voice verbs share the commonality with deponent verbs that neither are wholly ‘active’ nor wholly ‘passive,’ but a little of both. A main difference is that while deponent verbs may have ‘laid aside’ their *páthos* meanings for *enérgeia* ones, ‘middle’ verbs, though still ‘active’ in that the subject performs the action, have retained a stronger *páthos* sense that enhances the active sense of the subject’s performance in some way such as reflexive action, special benefit, heightened involvement or interaction, strengthened volition, or personal interest. Defining ancient Greek voice, especially the middle voice, with any sort of precision has still proven to be quite difficult. Due to the effects of deponency, modern attempts at defining voice have failed to be clear because of the confusion pervasive among earlier research extending back into the ancient period.

In modern studies, isolating clear criteria for defining voice has been lacking in discussions on voice despite efforts among linguists. Representative of such efforts is Lyons’s definition in which he tries to draw sharper distinctions between the active and middle voices in particular. The active verb expresses the subject as Agent or doer of the action, and the middle voice expresses the action or state affecting the subject or his or her interests.¹⁴⁶ Modern studies on voice in large part have operated along the same lines of this basic definition by Lyons in some way or another. Though this may be a step in the right direction given the issue of deponency, the deficiency in such definitions that many other treatments of voice also have is the lack of a clear role and definition of ‘subject’ in the middle voice. In Lyons’s definition, there is a clear role of Agent for the

¹⁴⁶ Lyons, *Introduction*, 363.

subject in the active voice, but no role that specifies the subject is stated for the middle voice. One is left to assume that the role of the subject in the middle voice is also Agent just like the active voice, but the difference being that the Agent in the middle voice is affected by the action in some way that the Agent in the active voice is not. Such distinctions become highly interpretive and subjective (e.g. how exactly does the subject benefit from the action?) that steps beyond the grammar itself and still no real distinction is achieved *grammatically* between the active and middle voices—the subject plays the role of Agent in both voices.

The category of deponency has come down to us in the tradition of Greek grammars and continues to exercise an influential role among interpretations and understandings of voice, especially in biblical studies. But this has not been without dissenting views that have arisen, adding to modern Greek grammars' ongoing struggles regarding a lack of clarity and consensus in defining and using this category. Prominent early twentieth-century NT Greek grammars have concluded that deponency is “unsatisfactory” and a dubious category that really has no use for Greek grammar.¹⁴⁷ This has prompted some more recent grammars to exercise caution by not allowing it too much freedom to define functions of verbal voice for the Greek of the New Testament. David Black in his introductory grammar states that at some point in the history of Greek's development deponent verbs laid aside their active forms and replaced them with middle/passive ones while retaining their active meanings. But Black offers no reasons for why verbs would do this in the first place and goes on to say that some of these verbs are at the same time ‘true middles’ because of their emphasis on the subject (e.g.

¹⁴⁷ E.g., Moulton, *Prolegomena*, 153; Robertson, *Grammar*, 332, 811.

reciprocal, reflexive, self-involvement) yet without any further explanation for what this means or what distinguishes a deponent verb from a ‘true middle.’¹⁴⁸

Daniel Wallace qualifies middle deponents by stating that in addition to the absence of active forms, “it must also be demonstrated that the middle *force* is absent” [italics original].¹⁴⁹ This leads Wallace to caution that ascertaining middle voice, including its distinctions from passive voice, needs to be done on a case by case basis. He contends that “a careful examination of the usage of a particular middle voice verb in Hellenistic Greek will shed light on how much can be made of the middle voice.”¹⁵⁰ He then comes up with his own list of “true deponents” but his discussion, which attempts to bring some clarification to the matter of deponent middles and the middle voice as a whole, only raises a host of new unanswered questions. To Wallace, at minimum the subject in the middle voice performs the action but, citing Herbert Smyth, “the action is performed with special reference to the subject.”¹⁵¹ It is difficult to land on any firm semantic grounding of the middle voice since Wallace unsatisfactorily makes the base difference between the active and middle one of merely emphasis, as the former emphasizes the action and the latter emphasizes the actor.

Stanley Porter attempts a cleaner break from deponency in that, “one might be justified in seeing some middle sense with virtually all verbs with middle-voice form, regardless of whether they can be analyzed as deponent.”¹⁵² Quite suspicious of this

¹⁴⁸ See Black, *Learn to Read*, 88–89. Black is mentioned here because his treatment actually offers more discussion compared to many other introductory grammars that choose not even to bother trying to explain this complex matter to first-year grammar students and instead instruct students simply to translate the middle voice (once they have determined that the verb is not passive) the same as the active voice, whether it is deponent or not.

¹⁴⁹ Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 429.

¹⁵⁰ Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 420.

¹⁵¹ Smyth, *Greek Grammar*, 390.

¹⁵² Porter, *Idioms*, 72.

entire category is Jonathan Pennington who asserts firmly, “most if not all verbs that are considered ‘deponent’ are in fact truly middle in meaning.”¹⁵³ David Mathewson and Elodie Ballantine Emig also conclude that, “the concept of deponency is unnecessary, and what we have traditionally called deponent verbs should be seen as true middles with middle meaning.”¹⁵⁴ In light of the legitimacy of deponency coming into question, attention by scholars and grammarians has since focused on reclaiming the original notion of ‘middle’ voice and what this entails prior to it having been subjected to reinterpretations and once deponency as a category has been discarded. Carl Conrad is one who has called for a complete abandonment of deponency in Greek grammar in order for the ‘middle’ voice to return to its original status and function as the marked voice in a two-voice opposition, related to the earlier notion of *enérgeia* versus *pathos*. According to Conrad, ‘middle’ voice means that “the *subject* of a verb is the focus of the verb’s action or state; many Greek verbs in the middle voice are in fact intransitive, but whether intransitive or not, they indicate the deep involvement of the *subject* as the one experiencing, suffering, enduring, or undergoing an action or a change of state” [emphasis mine].¹⁵⁵

As further support for reclaiming ‘middle’ voice, others have performed typological studies that map specific categories for ‘middle’ uses in order to define more precisely their functions and the various types of verbs that exhibit these functions. Neva Miller develops semantic categories as an alternate approach to deponency based on how so-called deponent verbs express personal interest, self-involvement, or interaction of the

¹⁵³ Pennington, “Deponency in Koiné Greek,” 61; Pennington, “Setting Aside Deponency,” 181–203.

¹⁵⁴ Mathewson and Emig, *Intermediate Greek Grammar*, 152.

¹⁵⁵ Conrad, “New Observations,” 3.

subject, and contends that “the non-active form of the verb is valid for communicating a meaning on its own” and middle forms can have “valid meanings apart from active forms.”¹⁵⁶

To help gain a broader perspective on middle voice, outside of biblical studies linguists have taken a cross-linguistic approach to voice to see how languages express voice distinctions. M. H. Klaiman has called attention to research on voice systems across the languages of the world that demonstrates the diverse ways languages encode voice and that not all languages express voice the same way but instead show typological distinctions from each other as operating according to different systems.¹⁵⁷ Modern languages that resemble the ancient Greek voice arrangement of an active-passive opposition with a ‘middle’ voice that sits between the two voices and includes deponency, is by no means the standard voice pattern for any given language’s voice system, according to Klaiman. A crucial feature of a typical active-middle-passive voice system in modern languages is that it is a *derived* system which means that the passive voice is constructed according to an established source, which for the ‘passive’ voice, it is the ‘active’ voice.¹⁵⁸ Since in the ‘passive’ voice, the participant roles are essentially reversed whereby a non-subject, object participant of a clause takes on the subject role, and the subject becomes a participant in a prepositional phrase, the ‘passive’ voice is a reconfiguration of the ‘active’ voice, thus a derived voice, and in this regard a passive configuration can only come about if there is an active one first.

¹⁵⁶ Miller, “A Theory of Deponent Verbs,” 423–30, here 426.

¹⁵⁷ See Klaiman, *Grammatical Voice*, 44–109; Klaiman, *A Typology of Voice Systems*, 46–49.

¹⁵⁸ Klaiman, *Grammatical Categories*, 23–24.

An active-middle voice opposition, on the other hand, is not a derived system but is what Klaiman calls, a *basic* system. In this type of system, a voice opposition is upheld between the two voices but one is not dependent on the other. Both operate independently of each other and the relationship between the two is not based on a source configuration that can potentially restructure into another (non-basic) configuration derived from it, causing participants to take on different semantic roles. In other words, in a basic system, there is no structural basis to think that one system is more basic than the other, both are basic on their own.¹⁵⁹ In ancient Greek, *media tantum* verbs (ironically, the original use of deponency) are one of the stronger indicators that suggest voice operates according to an active-middle system, rather than an active-middle-passive system. Since these are verbs that occur only in the ‘middle’ voice and have no ‘active’ voice counterpart, they cannot be derived from the ‘active’ voice. Likewise the $-(\theta)\eta-$ marker cannot justifiably be called the Greek ‘passive’ marker according to an active-middle-passive view of voice as a derived system since there are some verbs that occur only in this so-called passive form called *passiva tantum* verbs and these too have no active forms. The result is that in an active-middle-passive arrangement, ‘middle’ voice, *mesótēs*, the hybrid voice between ‘active’ and ‘passive’ which includes deponency, is put onto even shakier ground as a legitimate domain for voice since this ‘middle’ voice never had any semantic grounding to begin with in this kind of three-voice arrangement.

¹⁵⁹ Klaiman goes on to state that basic and derived voice systems both convey distinctions in the portrayal of the subject’s relation to the process. In this regard a feature that both systems have in common is that they “mark the affectedness/nonaffectedness of sentential subjects.” A typological feature in voice systems is to signal which participant in the clause is the “affected entity,” which is the participant that accrues the principle effects of the verbal process, and this is “the conceptual constant of every voice system.” (see Klaiman, *A Typology of Voice Systems*, 30; 46–47) Here Klaiman’s work draws a correlation between an ergative view of voice (“controller” and “affected entity” in Klaiman’s terms) and basic voice systems which Klaiman shows is pertinent to ancient Greek and other IE languages.

At the same time, however, Klaiman's insights here into voice may help to clarify distinctions between specifically 'active' and 'middle' voice for Greek, but it seems not so much for relations between 'middle' and 'passive' voice. 'Passive' voice may not be derived (to use Klaiman's terminology) from the 'active' in ancient Greek, but based on what has been discussed so far in this study, it may be derived from the 'middle' voice to some extent, due to similar roles for the subject among both uses.

Further Assessments of Voice

In the final section of this chapter, four specialized studies on verbal voice are reviewed. The views and perspectives offered by these particular studies on voice deserve some extended discussion because of their influential contributions to understanding voice, especially the middle voice. In the first study, P. Eberhard takes up the important notion of 'internal diathesis' to offer a different perspective in our understanding of voice. The second study has become a well-known piece on voice in the field of contemporary linguistics, S. Kemmer's study, *The Middle Voice*. Since its publication, this work has become a respected source that has oriented subsequent treatments of voice including Allan's study on the middle voice in Homeric and Classical Greek discussed above. Allan's study is an important one to contend with because it is a monograph devoted entirely to voice in ancient Greek. This study has also set the course for other extended treatments of voice in ancient Greek including the fourth study reviewed here by R. Aubrey on middle voice and passive morphology which gives special attention to the Greek of the New Testament.

Certainly other specialized studies on voice could be added to this list for more focused review. However, the last three works in particular, Kemmer, Allan, and Aubrey, have been chosen because these three studies, taken together, represent the best example to date of cumulative in-depth studies on voice whereby one has directly influenced the next, progressing from the broader arena of contemporary linguistics (Kemmer) into the field of ancient Greek studies (Allan), leading into even more focused discussion on particular aspects of voice within ancient Greek studies (Aubrey). These studies have no doubt advanced our understanding of voice in many regards especially as modern linguistics have been appropriated into biblical and ancient Greek studies. The present study is also working along the same trajectory as these studies by appropriating a modern linguistic theory (though one that is not adopted by these studies) to ancient Greek with special emphasis on voice in the Greek of the New Testament.

P. Eberhard, *The Middle Voice in Gadamer's Hermeneutics* (2004)

According to Eberhard, the ancient Latin grammarians, working out of their own Latin language, placed too much emphasis on an active/passive opposition for Greek that created a frame of reference for voice based on subject/object and 'doer'/'done to' relations. Eberhard notes a major discrepancy in current views on Greek voice in that an active/passive opposition continues to be the unquestioned framework for voice in general, even though in modern linguistics it has been put forth that the passive voice was a later development arising from the middle voice in not only Greek but all IE languages.¹⁶⁰ Eberhard adopts a view of voice that tries to shift focus away from a strictly

¹⁶⁰ Eberhard, *Gadamer's Hermeneutics*, 11.

active/passive opposition. Rather than focus on an opposition of performance and experience for voice, says Eberhard, focus needs to be instead on relations between the subject and the verbal process and this means that “[t]he question is not *what* the subject actively effects and *how* he or she is passively affected, but *where* he or she is situated [emphasis mine].”¹⁶¹ Locality and not identity is the key to this view on voice.

Eberhard adopts in his work an interpretation of voice originally put forth by linguist, E. Benveniste, that shifts focus onto the location of the subject with respect to the verbal process. In order to better convey this sense of the locality of the subject, Benveniste introduces the terms, “external diathesis” and “internal diathesis” for the opposition between active and middle voices respectively. In the active voice, the subject stands outside of the process or is separated from the process in some way, thus the voice is ‘external.’ The middle voice locates the subject inside the sphere of the verb and the process happens to the subject, encompassing the subject, which is inside the process, thus ‘internal’ voice. “‘Internal’ means that the subject though the seat or locus of the action—think of a dream—is inside the process going on.”¹⁶² Eberhard makes the observation that in Benveniste’s portrayal of voice, the middle voice is no longer a hybrid voice that draws upon features of both active and passive voices for its own identity which has been a longstanding view of voice going back to the ancients as shown above and also highlighted by Eberhard. Rather, Benveniste enables the middle voice to stand more on its own semantically and active voice and middle voice in relation to one another each have their own individual identities as a voice.

¹⁶¹ Eberhard, *Gadamer's Hermeneutics*, 15.

¹⁶² Eberhard, *Gadamer's Hermeneutics*, 23.

Benveniste's shift in perspective for voice away from a strictly active/passive framework that Eberhard takes up further is a welcome change especially in how Benveniste thinks of the middle voice as a 'medium' in which and by which something takes place and comes about. Moreover notions of 'internalizing' and 'externalizing' conceptualizations of voice is an advancement for understanding voice that adds an important dimension to voice operations and grammatical transitivity and has been taken up by others to describe voice distinctions.¹⁶³ However, difficulties still persist in this approach that need some resolution. In the active voice, or external diathesis, the subject is, in Eberhard's words, "separated from the action" thus putting the subject more in control of the process, directing the process from outside the process. Locating the subject as outside of and separated from the process makes it difficult to conceptualize how the subject can still 'do' the process and perform it which requires that the subject be involved in the process. For example, in the clause, "*the hunter killed the lion*," the subject's involvement somehow in the act of killing is what gives such a clause its potentially vivid imagery. To say that the subject is outside the process is also to imply some kind of detachment from the process, whether this is physical or emotional, and that the process is accomplished apart from the subject. But more difficulties in conceptualization arise if one says that the subject is in control of the process while at the same time outside of the process. Certainly in the active voice the process is not happening to the subject, but the subject still plays a role, an agentive one, in bringing the process about.

¹⁶³ See below on R. Aubrey's study. Also voice as 'internal' or 'external' and the middle as 'medium' are developed further in the methodology for this present study, but in a slightly different way.

By contrast, in the middle voice, or internal diathesis, according to Eberhard, the subject located within the process allows the process more or less to happen to the subject, which relinquishes control of the process as the process befalls and envelops the subject. Put into these terms, the contrast between active and middle becomes too dependent upon differences in volition on the part of the subject. That the subject being inside the process is merely allowing the process to happen to itself as a recipient of the process seems too passive-like in its orientation. At the same time, Eberhard states that internal diathesis does not “shortchange the subject by emphasizing the verb.”¹⁶⁴ It appears that Benveniste still allows for an agentive sense in the subject as the subject is interior to the process, when he says, the subject is “le siège” of the process and “le lieu,” and the subject “est bien intérieur au procès don’t il est l’agent.”¹⁶⁵ The subject performs its action within its action and this is the difference from the passive voice, which, as defined by Eberhard, merely has the action happening to the subject. But this internal view of the middle voice is still difficult to conceptualize in distinction from an active voice sense of the subject performing the process. Again, in ‘*the hunter killed the lion*,’ the hunter’s physical action of killing seems also to be within the sphere of the verb because of the subject’s involvement in this process by doing the killing, and in doing so, being “inside his or her action.” M. H. Klaiman seems to observe this as well in that we have to allow for the occurrence that “an entity can be perceived as affected in virtue of performing, not undergoing, certain actions.”¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁴ Eberhard, *Gadamer’s Hermeneutics*, 15.

¹⁶⁵ Benveniste, “Actif et Moyen dans Le Verbe,” 172.

¹⁶⁶ Klaiman, *Typology*, 28.

Framing voice according to internal and external diathesis helps to move our understanding of voice forward from simply an agentive subject for both active and middle voices with the middle voice merely having some added features or special interests for the subject such as benefit or more participation. Internal diathesis rightly emphasizes more of the subject's undergoing of the process, moving more in the direction of its *pathos*, 'suffering,' or 'experience' of the action as the basis for middle voice. But by putting the focus on the location of the subject in relation to the verb, that is, the 'where' question, does this mean there is no 'what' question that needs answering? It is appropriate to ask *what* the subject is doing exactly in that location, namely its role. But a potential problem that arises from Eberhard's framework in describing the subject's role is trying to define agency in terms of locality of 'outside' and 'inside' the process. In other words, it becomes more complicated to account for a 'separated' Agent in the active voice that stands external to the process.

S. Kemmer, *The Middle Voice* (1994)

Kemmer analyzes numerous modern-day languages and their middle voice marking patterns, but takes a different approach toward the middle from more syntactic views of 'detransitivization' prevalent in the generative tradition at the time. She puts emphasis on a semantic basis for defining the middle, asserting that the middle "has a clearly discernible semantic core," and thus distinguishes various middle voice situation types from one another (e.g. verbs of grooming/body care and other verbs of bodily movement; emotion; cognition; perception, spontaneous events). Taking a scalar approach to transitivity, as opposed to the more traditional binary, transitive/intransitive division,

Kemmer locates the middle voice along a semantic transitivity scale or continuum according to the principle of “relative distinguishability of participants” which concerns “the degree to which a single physico-mental entity is conceptually distinguished into separate participants.”¹⁶⁷ This is based on the lexical meaning of the verb ranging from highly transitive, maximally distinguishable, two-participant event types, to one-participant event types that show low transitivity. At opposite poles of this continuum are active (voice) events of the two-participant transitive type on one end and the one-participant, intransitive type on the other. According to Kemmer, the direct reflexive middle is the true center point on this continuum since there is a conceptual separation in the reflexive typically grammaticalized as two entities (two-participant event) but at the same time both roles are filled by only one entity (one-participant event) (e.g. ‘*He warms himself by the fire*’).

Further, Kemmer introduces into the discussion the terms, Initiator and Endpoint, as ‘macroroles’ that designate the beginning and end of the verbal process in relation to voice. Moving up the continuum toward greater distinguishability of participants, Initiator and Endpoint increasingly separate out into distinctive entities. Moving further down the continuum toward one-participant events, Initiator and Endpoint converge into one entity in which the agentive entity (Initiator) becomes also the affected entity (Endpoint).¹⁶⁸ The various middle situation types operate somewhere between the reflexive middle center point and one-participant (active voice) event types on the

¹⁶⁷ Kemmer, *The Middle Voice*, 66; see also, Kemmer, “Middle Voice, Transitivity, and the Elaboration of Events,” 211, where Kemmer states that participant distinguishability is key to middle voice meaning whereby “different schematic aspects of a situation are separated out and viewed as distinct by the speaker.”

¹⁶⁸ Kemmer, *Middle Voice*, 50–51, 72–73.

continuum. This region on the continuum also shows “lower degrees of elaboration of events” and this is what distinguishes reflexive middles from other middles. Movement closer to the extreme pole of one-participant events means that certain semantic details of an event diminish to the point of not being expressed depending on its relevance, thus there operates in middle voice systems the notion of ‘granularity,’ which is “the level of precision at which a speaker conceptualizes an event.”¹⁶⁹

Kemmer’s work makes a strong case for a semantic grounding of the middle voice and how middle systems in languages throughout the world convey alternative conceptualizations of participant and event structures as a whole.¹⁷⁰ This study insightfully advances our understanding of middle voice systems among today’s modern languages, but at the same time its potential to advance our understanding of the ancient Greek voice system in particular is limited. Kemmer sets up an opposition between active and passive within an active-middle-passive three-voice arrangement based on whether the “chief participant” volitionally initiates an action or is affected instead. The various middle voice categories operate in between this opposition since chief participants can both initiate and be affected. This set-up comes with its share of difficulties especially since Kemmer seems to make the assumption throughout that middle situation types are far off to the active voice side. It appears that in every middle category put forth, the chief participant is always the Initiator of an action (to lesser degrees in a ‘spontaneous event’ and ‘facilitative’ use) just like in the active voice. This helps to explain why in Kemmer’s view middle situation types are semantically mapped in between transitive and

¹⁶⁹ Kemmer, *Middle Voice*, 209.

¹⁷⁰ Kemmer, *Middle Voice*, 247.

intransitive active constructions since the variable in this arrangement is primarily just the Endpoint.

Further difficulties result from the lack of clarity on how the middle voice relates to and is distinguished from the active voice. On the transitivity continuum, any distinctions (if any) between an intransitive active event and middle situation type appear to conflate into the same function when Kemmer says, “one-participant events, in which what might conceivably be treated as distinct roles of Initiator and Endpoint are filled by one essentially indivisible entity,” but states elsewhere that the middle marker “has the basic function of indicating that the two semantic roles of Initiator and Endpoint refer to a single holistic entity.”¹⁷¹ These are all parts that are indistinguishable on Kemmer’s continuum of ‘relative distinguishability of participants’ and no discussion is offered to try to distinguish between them. In fact Kemmer seems actually to promote such indistinguishability on this point when Kemmer also suggests that this is how deponent verbs came about and that deponency is “a natural by-product of middle systems,” yet their prevalence is peculiar since there is “no principled reason for the existence of deponents” cross-linguistically.¹⁷² Before the development of middle systems in most languages, verbs appeared as unmarked one-participant intransitive verbs, according to Kemmer. Eventually a semantic equivalent in the form of middle marked verbs developed alongside these (active voice) intransitive verbs resulting in “sets of two competing forms, one marked, one unmarked.” Over time, the unmarked intransitive form falls out of use, “thus resulting in a deponent MM [middle marked] form.”¹⁷³ This is

¹⁷¹ Kemmer, *Middle Voice*, 204, 66.

¹⁷² Kemmer, *Middle Voice*, 33.

¹⁷³ Kemmer, *Middle Voice*, 238–39.

based on the larger premise that as middle systems develop, middle marking verbs spread out to situation types that have properties of low elaboration of events which include intransitive active events. If this is the case, the resulting differences between the active and middle voices in this regard are not clarified and Kemmer does not make such discussion a focal point because of the intent to focus on the semantic properties of the middle voice alone.

R. Allan, *The Middle Voice in Ancient Greek* (2003)

Kemmer's study has been highlighted here also because a decade later, R. Allan's *The Middle Voice in Ancient Greek* appeared which to a large extent adopts Kemmer's semantic approach towards defining and distinguishing the various types of middle voice uses. Allan first calls attention to an issue with applying to ancient Greek the view that the middle voice operates at lower levels of "distinguishability" as Kemmer asserts, in that this can too easily be taken to mean that middle voice systems operate according to valence reduction and detransitivization of its clausal predicates. This leads to the mistaken notion in ancient Greek, according to Allan, that verbs occurring only in middle/passive forms are detransitivized one-participant verbs which frequently appear to break this rule by functioning with two participants. This has been, in Allan's view, a leading cause for calling middle/passive-only Greek verbs pejoratively, "deponent," since such verbs appear to have 'laid aside' their active forms while still functioning at higher degrees of transitivity. But according to Allan, there is no historical evidence that verbs ever went through a process of 'laying off' their grammatical features. Deponent verbs have been relegated prematurely into this category simply on the basis of not having

active voice counterparts morphologically. It has been overlooked that deponent verbs are semantically diverse and they occur in many of the same semantic classes that non-deponent middle and passive verbs occur in. In this regard, deponency should be dispensed with by grouping deponent verbs together with all other middle and passive verbs so that they might “be integrated into the polysemous structure of the middle voice, just like the other (oppositional) middle usage types.”¹⁷⁴

Allan populates Kemmer’s middle categories using ancient Greek verbs from Homeric and Classical writings and also adopts the view that voice alternations can be described as markings of departures from “the prototypical transitive event.”¹⁷⁵ Allan draws upon the work of P. J. Hopper and S. Thompson whose notion of prototypical transitivity is defined by a cluster of semantic properties some of which Allan adopts specifically. But the underlying principle that there are various degrees of transitivity that characterize the properties of a clause, of which voice is a part, is what Allan builds his study on. Allan calls the middle voice an encoding of a choice of clausal subject that is “a complex network category” and “a polysemous network of interrelated meanings.”¹⁷⁶ Adopting Kemmer’s middle situation types, Allan distinguishes eleven middle uses in ancient Greek: (1) spontaneous process, (2) mental process, (3) body motion, (4) collective motion, (5) reciprocal, (6) direct reflexive, (7) indirect reflexive, (8) perception, (9) mental activity, (10) speech act, and (11) passive middle. The various middle types and uses in ancient Greek all share the semantic quality of “subject-affectedness” of the verbal process. The notion of subject-affectedness subsumes each of

¹⁷⁴ Allan, *The Middle Voice*, 52.

¹⁷⁵ Allan, *The Middle Voice*, 6–8.

¹⁷⁶ Allan, *The Middle Voice*, 7, 57. See also Hopper and Thompson, “Transitivity in Grammar and Discourse,” 251–99.

the different types of middle uses and each specific category elaborates in some way on this prototypical and abstract meaning of the middle voice.¹⁷⁷ Allan applies a ‘prototype theory’ which is a graded approach to evaluating middle meaning. Some category members are considered to be exemplary of middle uses and all other categories find their place on a ‘semantic map’ that reflects the degree to which a category resembles a prototype. A prototype category is determined by two main categories: its token-frequency and its number of connections to other categorical members. Those categories with the highest numbers in these two areas are considered prototypical. Allan concludes that from among all the middle use categories, the mental process middle, body motion middle, and indirect reflexive (beneficiary) middle are the strongest candidates for exemplary middle uses, with mental process middles taking the top spot as the prototypical middle use in Homeric and Classical Greek. These findings also differ from Kemmer’s findings in that the middle voice in ancient Greek is not characterized primarily by reflexive middle uses such as the grooming/body care category which, as Kemmer argued, tends to be the more typical basis for middle voice in other mostly modern Indo-European languages.¹⁷⁸

‘Allan’s study closely considers how the lexical meaning of a verb classifies a verb into one of the middle categories, devoting a significant amount of space to comparative word studies of verbs, and attempting to clarify differences in meaning among active, middle, and passive voice from a more lexical standpoint. At the same time, however, Allan runs into a number of typical problems and struggles to resolve these due in part to the grammatical framework in which he operates. From the very start

¹⁷⁷ Allan, *The Middle Voice*, 57–58.

¹⁷⁸ See Kemmer, *Middle Voice*, 146; Allan, *The Middle Voice*, 121–24.

of this study, there are significant disjunctions between form and function when morphological distinctions are set up between the active, middle, and passive voices. The active and middle voices are marked with their respective inflectional endings and the passive voice, formed with the suffix $-(\theta)\eta-$, is found only in the aorist and future stem.¹⁷⁹ But later on Allan states that “the Greek middle voice also includes the canonical passive” and “the centre of gravity of the Greek middle voice is located more in the direction of the passive.”¹⁸⁰ If on a morphological level three voices are differentiated, it becomes increasingly difficult to see how form coincides with its respective function. Allan shows how middle endings can take on passive uses and form passive clauses that are virtually identical to an external agent-participant, specified or not, that is characteristic of the passive voice in the aorist and future stems.

Moreover the passive voice $-(\theta)\eta-$, overlaps with middle voice uses in four to five main categories, according to Allan, showing no difference from middle voice function in these uses. This occurs at earlier stages in the Homeric writings and moving into the Classical writings. Allan argues that the five middle categories that $-(\theta)\eta-$ originally occurs in are stronger patientive-like categories (collective motion, mental process, spontaneous process, passive, and to a lesser degree, body motion). Allan shows through numerous examples that the passive voice form does not necessarily express passive meaning such as the passive $-(\theta)\eta-$ imperative form in which it is clear that no external agent is implied in these uses. This appears to be the result of the $-(\theta)\eta-$ form gradually expanding its reach and the abstract meaning of the $-(\theta)\eta-$ “can best be characterized in relation to the notion of prototypical patient.” These five middle categories have at least

¹⁷⁹ Allan, *The Middle Voice*, 1.

¹⁸⁰ Allan, *The Middle Voice*, 124.

one of the four essential properties of the prototypical patient: (1) inanimacy, (2) non-volitionality, (3) presence of an external initiator, and (4) internal change of state.¹⁸¹ The primary distinction Allan makes between the aorist $-(\theta)\eta-$ forms and the sigmatic aorist middle forms is that whereas the $-(\theta)\eta-$ forms are oriented toward the subject as patient, the aorist middle forms are oriented toward the subject as agent.¹⁸² The aorist middle uses show volition and animacy most of all on the part of the subject as agent, and the remaining middle categories (reciprocal, direct reflexive, perception, mental activity, speech act, and indirect reflexive) that the $-(\theta)\eta-$ form supposedly does not occur in, at least in earlier stages of the language, all have a stronger sense of agency by the subject. Given that the aorist $-(\theta)\eta-$ form gradually replaces the sigmatic middle aorist form entirely in the historical development of the language, the aorist $-(\theta)\eta-$ form is on a track to move beyond the more patientive middle categories and also to take on the supposedly more agentive middle categories originally occupied by the middle aorist form. This would mean that at some point the $-(\theta)\eta-$, in the aorist tense-form at least, occurs in all eleven middle voice categories. It may be postulated based on Allan's work, that by Hellenistic times, the aorist $-(\theta)\eta-$ 'passive voice' form had expanded its range of uses such that it could conceivably perform every type of middle voice function in the language in addition to its passive uses.

Furthermore, according to Allan, most middle categories, excluding spontaneous process, mental process, and passive middle, are "semantically middle" categories

¹⁸¹ Here Allan draws on Langacker, *Foundations of Cognitive Grammar*, 285.

¹⁸² Allan, *The Middle Voice*, 176. For the future stem (ch. 4), Allan revives the argument advocated by F. Blass in 1892 that the primary distinction between the future middle and the future passive $-(\theta)\eta-$ is aspect. Whereas the aorist middle and passive both operate within the perfective aspect, the future stem operates in both aspects with future middles having an imperfective sense of continuous action and future passives having a perfective sense of completed action with more telic meaning.

because the subject plays both an agentive role (Initiator) and a patientive role (Endpoint) in regard to the verbal process. In this regard the middle voice is located in the ‘middle’ on an imaginary continuum with active and passive voices at opposite poles, in which the subject plays only an agentive role in the active voice or only a patientive role in the passive voice. However, as shown above, the passive voice $-(\theta)\eta$ - form does not show clear distinctions between form and function thus making “semantically middle” a term that turns out to be just another way of saying that the role of the grammatical subject in a supposedly middle clause is really only semantically ambiguous at best. In other words, no category is *semantically* middle if it has no distinctive meaning of its own as a ‘middle’ function. If all it does is showcase how the subject plays some kind of active voice role on the one hand (agent), and then at the same time some kind of passive voice role on the other (patient) (or put differently, when the subject first acts as Initiator of the process followed by acting as Endpoint of the process), then middle voice has no meaning of its own. This means that the opposing roles of affected subject and agentive subject constantly co-exist in all middle categories except for the passive middle use. This complicates the notion of subject-affectedness for defining middle voice since middle voice includes the opposing notion of agency of the subject and any middle function appears to have only a pragmatic status.

Allan’s middle categories describe the subject playing some combination of active and passive voice roles making the middle voice a category in which the subject plays two roles instead of one, but neither role belongs exclusively to the middle voice nor does playing these two roles conflate into a single role that may be identified as distinctive *semantically* from the active and passive roles. Across the eleven categories of middle

voice usage, it is still unclear what the actual semantic role of the subject is in the middle voice and how to reconcile the 'middle' characteristic of the subject performing two opposing roles. It is difficult to pinpoint basic differences in the role of the subject between middle voice and active voice in Allan's descriptions, since both seem to express an animate agent. The only difference may be some kind of 'add-on' role in the middle voice such as beneficiary or experiencer, that distinguishes the middle from the active with features such as reflexivity, reciprocity, and mental perception, thus creating a kind of 'enhanced active voice.' In other words, the middle voice is characterized, for example, as subject as 'agent with heightened involvement,' or 'agent with special benefit,' or 'agent with perceptive experience,' in which focus remains on the subject as initiator of the action with an additional kind of experience.

On the other hand, it also appears that the semantic role of the subject is a patientive role since, as Allan puts it, "the middle voice can be defined as a marked coding of a departure from the prototypical transitive [clause]" in which the verb is in the active voice.¹⁸³ Allan seems to be on better footing here, as this squares with the distinctive subject-affected character of the middle voice that Allan emphasizes, and it brings out certain categories such as the mental process middle in which the agent, though present, tends to be backgrounded. All eleven middle categories are established in Allan's study as exhibiting subject-affectedness in which Allan says "the subject is very much like a patient" whereby "the subject, in some way or other, undergoes an effect of the event."¹⁸⁴ Overall, in all categories the subject conforms to the general nature of subject-affectedness since the subject is also in this kind of role (including related roles of

¹⁸³ Allan, *The Middle Voice*, 19.

¹⁸⁴ Allan, *The Middle Voice*, 18–19.

beneficiary, recipient, experiencer, undergoer) at some point in the verbal process and may also conform to at least one of the four criteria above specifically for the semantic role of patient. But given all this, at the same time the agentive and animate features of the subject in the middle voice still hold a prominent place in Allan's middle categories.

Allan draws upon the work of W. Croft,¹⁸⁵ who introduces "contextual neutralization" in regard to various types of markedness values (structural, behavioural, frequency) in a text. In ancient Greek, the active voice, as the "unmarked member of a privative opposition," occurs in certain syntactic contextual environments even though from a semantic point of view the marked middle value could also occur in the same context.¹⁸⁶ Provided that the subject is adequately inferable from the syntactic context, the subject benefits somehow from the action so the middle voice does not need to be used and instead the unmarked active voice is used. This shows, according to Allan, that the active voice cannot be regarded as simply the absence of subject-affectedness, but is rather, at the most, neutral to subject-affectedness in that contexts can govern whether in the active voice a more agentive sense of the subject is conveyed or a more subject-affected sense is conveyed. Moreover, since the inflectional endings of the $-(\theta)\eta-$ forms are the same forms used for the active voice, this indicates that, according to Allan, active endings themselves can be used in various contexts of high subject-affectedness. The active voice is unspecified, therefore, in regard to the semantic feature of subject-affectedness and context can have a neutralizing effect on the active voice making it incorrect to say that a verb in the active voice means simply the absence of subject-affectedness.

¹⁸⁵ Croft, *Typology and Universals*, 64–91

¹⁸⁶ Allan, *The Middle Voice*, 24

It is difficult to know, first of all, what Allan means by 'context' here and what constitutes the formation of a context. This makes it also difficult to accept that context, whatever this entails, is so determinative that voice choices, namely the active voice and its signalling markers, merely concede to contextual factors at least to some degree. In a sense Allan creates another kind of deponent category whereby active forms in certain contexts lay aside their active meanings in favor of middle/passive meaning to denote subject-affectedness in that context. This produces an even more ambiguous relationship among the voices in that subject-affectedness, which is definitively a feature of the middle and passive voices, can be marked morphologically by all three voices. An event type that does not involve subject-affectedness is expressed only by the active voice, according to Allan, but since the active can also express subject-affectedness at times, the inflectional markings themselves of the voice system become even more unreliable for clearly marking the role of the subject. Neutralization, as Allan applies it, only adds more to the mystery of what the different voices in Greek mean due to the polysemous nature of the middle voice. Allan's study allows lexical and contextual factors to exercise greater power over voice function, in particular what exactly the role of the subject is. The difficulty with this is ascertaining any sense of a basic, logical, and consistent systemic operation for voice reflected in its morphology, encoded in its forms, that is at work in the language regardless of lexical meaning of the verb and contextual factors coming into play in the grammar of the language. Allan's study focuses only on the middle voice, but the study would be enhanced if more steps were taken to clarify how the overall voice system works as a grammatical system, utilizing its formal realizations.

in order to gain better idea as to what the voice forms encode and how these uses play themselves out in clausal configurations.

R. Aubrey, “Motivated Categories, Middle Voice, and Passive Morphology” (2016) More recently, Allan’s semantic approach for Homeric and Classical Greek has found fresh application for Hellenistic Greek in Aubrey’s study on voice. This study can be noted for its clear articulation of perennial problems for ancient Greek voice that have arisen especially in regards to the meaning of the $-(\theta)\eta-$ form. It offers helpful explanations of voice distinctions for Hellenistic Greek in light of recent research in the field of linguistics and argues throughout for the reclamation of middle voice meaning in order to give this voice stronger footing for its place in the overall voice system. This study’s heavy dependence upon Allan’s work, however, makes it also susceptible to the same weaknesses that Allan’s study demonstrated. Aubrey follows Allan’s distributional pattern for the so-called passive aorist $-(\theta)\eta-$ which was restricted originally to five middle voice categories or event types: spontaneous process, body motion, collective motion, mental process, and passive.¹⁸⁷

Aubrey also makes the claim, following Allan, that the original five passive aorist categories were more patient-like in their orientation and the other categories such as reflexive and reciprocal, among the others, were more agent-like in their orientation. These typically are signalled by the (sigmatic) aorist middle forms, thus showing a ‘division of labor’ among all the categorical uses between the aorist middle form and the aorist passive form. The implication from Allan’s study is that by Hellenistic times, the

¹⁸⁷ Aubrey, “Motivated Categories,” 594.

aorist $-(\theta)\eta-$ had expanded its range of function to include all of Allan's middle categories, both agent-like and patient-like, while the division of labor between the middle and passive forms was gradually disappearing as the $-(\theta)\eta-$ encroached upon the aorist middle forms.¹⁸⁸ Aubrey treats the $-(\theta)\eta-$ form according to each of Allan's categories, one by one in some detail (except for indirect reflexives; and passive middles are basically covered through the wider discussion), and tries to show how the $-(\theta)\eta-$ can be more agent-like in its usage or more patient-like in its usage for Hellenistic Greek taking examples from the New Testament and the Septuagint. Aubrey associates the subject in the role of agent as an energy source and "an external cause that brings about a change to a second participant."¹⁸⁹ In light of this, there are four event categories Aubrey calls more patient-like (spontaneous process, motion, collective motion, and mental process) because the distinguishing feature in such clauses of these types is that there is no external cause involved in these events. These narrow the focus onto the subject as patientive participant and in each of these categories the energy for the event is *internal* to the subject. An event involving internal energy means, "the one who induces the change is also the one who undergoes the change" and the $-(\theta)\eta-$ event "conflates the energy source and energy endpoint roles onto a single focused participant."¹⁹⁰

However, in several of the examples provided by Aubrey for these patient-like categories, it is not entirely clear where the "energy source" really is, or whether it should be taken into account that there may be more than one "energy source" at work for the verbal process. For example, in Spontaneous Process types, an example provided by

¹⁸⁸ Aubrey, "Motivated Categories," 572–73.

¹⁸⁹ Aubrey, "Motivated Categories," 594.

¹⁹⁰ Aubrey, "Motivated Categories," 598, 601.

Aubrey is, καὶ πρηνῆς γενόμενος ἐλάκησεν μέσος καὶ ἐξεχύθη πάντα τὰ σπλάγχνα αὐτοῦ (And falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his internal organs spilled out [Acts 1:18]). Here it is true that ἐξεχύθη πάντα τὰ σπλάγχνα αὐτοῦ can be read as having an internal energy source in the subject, πάντα τὰ σπλάγχνα αὐτοῦ, in which (certainly not a normal function!) internal organs are portrayed as inducing their own “spilling out,” and there is certainly a patientive feature to the subject manifesting the act of “spilling.” In this regard, energy source and energy endpoint roles conflate onto a single focused participant, as Aubrey says. But even in this reading, it is difficult to accept that the internal organs as subject are the *only* energy source involved here, initiating the verbal process in the portrayal of this experience. The energy source for this action also can be portrayed as external to the subject of the clause, as having been caused by something else beyond the internal organs themselves. The previous two clauses before this one, πρηνῆς γενόμενος and ἐλάκησεν μέσος, have as subject the person Judas, specifically his body, engaging in the processes of falling and bursting open. Judas’s body engaging in these processes can be read as the external cause or energy source for his internal organs spilling out, especially with the use of the active voice in ἐλάκησεν. These two clauses open up the option that the last clause has a passive sense in that by Judas’s body falling and bursting open, his internal organs, a particular part of his body, were caused to be spilt. This kind of “clause complexing” in a stretch of discourse is a common feature of language use and directly affects interpretations of voice. Categorizing this clause as a Spontaneous process type with middle voice use, as Aubrey does, is not necessarily wrong, but it runs the risk of precluding a passive use of voice.

Further, the category, Collective Motion, has the example, ἐγένετο δὲ παροξυσμὸς ὥστε ἀποχωρισθῆναι αὐτούς ἀπ’ ἀλλήλων... (There was a sharp disagreement, so they separated from each other... [Acts 15:39]). Here again αὐτούς can be energy source for the process of separating, but at the same time, especially with the connector, ὥστε, these two clauses also can be linked together as cause and effect in that the separation was because of the sharp disagreement which had just taken place. And in the Mental Process type, an example is provided, γενομένης δὲ τῆς φωνῆς ταύτης συνῆλθε τὸ πλῆθος καὶ συνεχύθη (At this sound, the crowd gathered together and *became* confused [Acts 2:6]). The crowd can certainly induce its own confusion, but it makes more sense that something external to the crowd caused their confusion, in this case, a strange sound. So the clause, γενομένης δὲ τῆς φωνῆς, having a participle that can be interpreted as causal, can be read as external cause of the crowd’s confusion in this clause. The interpretive nature of agency seen in these examples, whether in the form of a specific agent or some other feature of agency in the clause, makes it difficult to accept Aubrey’s sweeping statements that such instances “have no external agent that brings about the collective event” or that the action takes place “spontaneously by internal energy” and does so “by omitting any kind of agent in the syntactic expression.”¹⁹¹

Among all the examples provided by Aubrey, internal causality can be seen, but there is also room for more interpretation such as the three noted here. Type of agency in a clause varies, whether internal or external, and sometimes it is difficult to determine if it is one or the other especially since external agency at times can be left to implication as in another example given, ἐλυπήθησαν σφόδρα (They were greatly distressed [Matt

¹⁹¹ Aubrey, “Motivated Categories,” 599.

17:23]). The external cause in this verse is that the disciples were greatly distressed by what Jesus had just told them concerning the events about to take place. The author here may have thought that stating the cause of their distress in this clause would be overly redundant because it is already clear from the previous verses why the disciples felt this way. It is unclear in Aubrey's argument whether it is presumed that the biblical author only wanted to convey grammatically internal cause in this case and not include a statement that implies external agency. Because there is inconsistency from clause to clause, as these examples show, it makes it difficult to designate categorical groupings based on agency. What is consistent among each of these process types in these examples is the subject playing the role of affected participant that undergoes the process and any further distinctions should be made instead on this basis according to the semantics of the verb.

The next section on more agent-like events for the $-(\theta)\eta$ - middle voice usage is even more problematic. Among these process type categories (Direct Reflexive, Reciprocal Events, Mental Activities, Speech Acts, and Perception), "the primary figure in the event is more agentive, playing a volitional role in the activity, causing a change to take place."¹⁹² According to Aubrey, as middle event types, again this change occurs to the same participant, the subject, on which the scope of attention narrows and the roles of energy source and energy endpoint for the event conflate into this single participant. The same participant simultaneously causes the process and is affected by it.¹⁹³ As with the first group of more patient-like event types, these event types are grouped according to the supposed location of agency in the clause. Rather than internal to the process, agency

¹⁹² Aubrey, "Motivated Categories," 602.

¹⁹³ Aubrey, "Motivated Categories," 602–3.

is more explicit to the subject as agent, showing no difference in this regard from the agentive role of the subject in the active voice. But the variability of agency again presents a problem in that in some cases the so-called agent-like character of these event types is not clear. In the Direct Reflexive process type, the example is given, τότε ὁ Παῦλος παραλαβὼν τοὺς ἄνδρας τῇ ἑχομένη ἡμέρᾳ ἀγνισθεὶς εἰσῆει εἰς τὸ ἱερόν σὺν αὐτοῖς (Then Paul took the men, and the next day, having purified himself, he entered the temple with them [Acts 21:26]). The translation offered here by Aubrey for ἀγνισθεὶς, “having purified himself” is questionable. The absence of a reflexive pronoun in the Greek text not only makes reflexivity only implied here, if at all, agency can be interpreted as diminished to the point that all that is being conveyed by this word is that Paul and the men are purified. Who did it or how it was done is unnecessary information. Moreover a passive reading is also possible for ἀγνισθεὶς in which the aorist could take on an English perfect gloss as “having been purified” to convey perfective aspect of complete action thus reducing the portrayal of agency even more. Similarly, in the Mental Activity type, in the example, Ὡμοσεν κύριος, καὶ οὐ μεταμεληθήσεται (The Lord swore an oath and will not change his mind [Heb 7:21]), a more passive reading is equally justifiable in these clauses for μεταμεληθήσεται as, “his mind will not be changed (by something),” or “the Lord will not allow his mind to be changed (by something).” Likewise we have to be careful as to how much an English translation might influence the interpretation of the location of agency. In another example given, καὶ ἐμνήσθη ὁ Πέτρος τοῦ ῥήματος Ἰησοῦ εἰρηκότος, translated as, “and Peter remembered the statement Jesus had spoken [Matt 26:75],” “remembered” is certainly a legitimate translation for ἐμνήσθη that conveys a stronger sense of the subject’s volitional act.

However, “was reminded of” is just as legitimate an English rendering for the same Greek word that reduces the sense of agency and volition of the subject, putting more emphasis on Peter as affected subject and the immediate circumstances surrounding Peter (rooster crowing) that caused Peter to remember.

There is considerable interpretive variability as to how agency may be portrayed in the Greek language especially as features of the wider discourse are taken into consideration. Such variability is further complicated by occurrence whether something is internal or external causality, both may be minimized in the clause to different degrees. All this makes it difficult to sort middle voice event types strictly according to where agency might appear to be located in the clause. Aubrey’s groupings (following Allan) do not hold up well on this basis, putting too much stock in agency as the defining feature for voice distinctions. Trying to sort middle event types on a sliding scale of more agent-like to more patient-like falls right back into the faulty three-voice arrangement for voice that has proven to be so problematic for understanding voice. Framed this way, Aubrey’s conception of middle voice appears to coincide with the ancient notion of *mesótēs* whereby an event marked middle, in this case with the $-(\theta)\eta-$ form, moves back and forth between active voice (agentive role) on one end and passive voice (patientive role) on the other, taking on a blend of some kind between the two depending on the semantics of the verb and the interpretation of other features such as volition. Moreover, Aubrey provides no discussion on the distinctions semantically between so-called more agent-like middle event types and the numerous intransitive verbs in the language that are frequently marked active voice in which the same kind of conflation of roles appears to occur: the subject performs the action with volition as source of the process, but due to

intransitivity, the subject seems also to experience and undergo the process and act as its endpoint (e.g. body motion verbs marked active voice). If there are middle event types that are so-called more agent-like in which the subject is playing the exact same role of agent as in the active voice, then how is the active voice distinguished semantically from the middle voice? From ancient times to studies on voice today, the middle voice has been defined and redefined over and over using terms such as *pathos* and *mesótēs*, among others, to help clarify their meanings, but many questions still remain open.

Conclusion

In the history of the ancient Greek language, formulations of a two-voice system with an active-middle opposition for verbal voice can be traced throughout with relatively strong consistency from the earliest beginnings of the language up through the close of the Classical period. But further conceptualizations of such a two-voice system remain murky when notions of passivity or a passive voice specifically, are factored in. During these earlier stages, the $-(\theta)\eta-$ form came into usage, but again, grammatical treatments have struggled to define more precisely how this voice form's function is distinguished from middle voice function. Sometime during the Hellenistic period, in the course of further grammatical developments of voice, attempts to establish more explicitly a three-voice arrangement of voice took hold that seemed to reinterpret the earlier two-voice system. The impetus for this was in large part to accommodate major discrepancies that arose in voice, but at the same time this rendered voice an increasingly complicated component to the grammar of the language. Major discrepancies continued to arise between form and what exactly a form signals, producing seemingly endless lists of

ontological categories that themselves do not pinpoint specific grammatical occurrences. Ancient grammarians continued to struggle to sufficiently explain the operations of voice and in particular to define the middle voice (*mesótēs*) adequately, as indicated by the ongoing invention of new terminology. This struggle has been passed down into the modern era and the same kinds of discrepancies that presented themselves in ancient times have also showed up in many grammar books and specialized treatments on ancient Greek voice leading up to the present day.

Today, the field of linguistics continues the discussion on *diáthesis* or voice among languages, both ancient and modern, around the world. There is currently a widespread lack of consensus in the field as to the nature and characterization of voice and its application cross-linguistically, since voice can be considered from multiple angles—morphologically, syntactically, or at a discourse level. Although the field of linguistics may be heavily saturated with studies on voice by the many linguists and scholars who have led the way in this discussion, this scholarly work has entered into biblical studies to only a small extent. Its overall impact on the Greek of the New Testament has remained minimal despite the growing number of linguistic theories, frameworks, and solutions that continue to be put forward on voice. Even today, much confusion still exists in ancient Greek studies that leads to failure to isolate specific grammatical phenomena according to forms that signal such phenomena, including the nature of subjecthood, verbal processes with or without object participants, and the influence of lexical semantics, to name a few.

The remaining chapters of this study, beginning with the next one, mark a link between the two fields of biblical studies and linguistics. The next chapter introduces a

linguistic theory and approach that has yet to be applied to ancient Greek voice in a full-scale treatment of voice and the following chapter is a continuation from the next one that presents a model of ancient Greek voice based on this theory. This method has the potential to open up new perspectives on voice that have yet to be formulated and advanced, as well as to provide a robust understanding of language in general for building a solid foundation that any further advancements in our understanding of voice in ancient Greek can stand on.

PART TWO

METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCING SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL LINGUISTICS FOR A THEORY OF LANGUAGE AND GRAMMAR

Introduction

In this chapter, relevant principles and key concepts of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) will be described that will provide the foundational linguistic theory to construct the interpretive model of voice for ancient Greek offered in the next chapter. This study applies a well-established linguistic theory on the belief that linguistic “phenomena show up best if illuminated by a general theory.”¹⁹⁴ The theory presented here is known as systemic theory in which various models interpret language according to meaning as choice. It is both a functional theory of human language in general and a particular description of the grammar of modern English. There is a fair amount of diversity that exists today in SFL. This study, however, follows primarily the path of linguist Michael A. K. Halliday, who is both the originator of what came to be known as SFL and still its major influencer. In both theory and description, SFL continues to be applied to many other languages today by many linguists taking a functional approach. In what follows, broad categories of language will be explained from an SFL perspective, categories that will be relevant to gaining as accurate a description as possible of Greek voice. This will lead into descriptions of two specific models of voice from SFL, the transitive and

¹⁹⁴ Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 53.

ergative models, that together will provide an explanatory basis to work from to establish the proposed two-voice system of ancient Greek.

Language as System

When the New Testament documents were written, those who penned them used the popular language of the day, Greek, to produce *texts*. As instances of living language in use, texts manifest the resources of language for making meaning. When any human verbal language is uttered or written down, including ancient Greek during its time, this phenomenon occurs in forms of sounds, words, and sentences, but these are only realizations of text; they do not constitute the text itself, for text is essentially a semantic concept.¹⁹⁵ A text is made up of meanings as a semantic unit, expressed or coded in sounds or written symbols. It is a multi-faceted linguistic phenomenon that ‘means’ in many different ways and it is what listeners and readers of language engage with.¹⁹⁶ The meaning of a text may be something trivial such as asking someone if a seat is taken, or it may be rich and complex as in a moving eulogy given during a memorial service. Over the course of their long existence, the New Testament texts have been vigorously read and heard as written documents, in order to apprehend what these texts mean. But the pertinent question here is a linguistic one: how do what these texts mean reveal the linguistic *system* of ancient Greek? And how then does the linguistic system in turn enable a better understanding of what these texts mean? A text is a window on the complex system of meaningful relationships that exist within language. A text serves the purpose of ‘specimen’ in this regard, that is, text seen as *product*, an output of meanings

¹⁹⁵ Halliday, *Language as Social Semiotic*, 135.

¹⁹⁶ Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 3; Halliday and Hasan, *Language, Context, and Text*, 10–12.

and thus a means by which the grammatical features of language may be taken into account, investigated, and described, in order to better understand how language ‘means’ when it is in use.¹⁹⁷

Text is an instance of a larger underlying semiotic system at work and a spoken or written text reveals the properties of this system of language. Any text can make sense to its listener or reader only if there is first of all access to and acquisition of the semiotic system that lies behind a text. Words that are uttered or written simply transport meaning to the hearer or reader and meaning is realized through shared grammatical, syntactical, and lexical features of the language that reflect a system of linguistic relations.¹⁹⁸ Text in this regard is also the instance of a continuous *process* within a system that involves semantic choices, and moving through a systemic network of meaning potential, with each set of choices setting up the next set.¹⁹⁹ In other words, language as process is the actualization of making meaning by making choices that are located in systems and realized in forms of text. Language viewed in this way belongs to *semiosis*—the process of how meaning is generated, conveyed, and understood. This occurs in a complex system of meaningful relationships and to view language as system is, according to Halliday, to account for “the occurrence of one rather than another from a number of like events.”²⁰⁰ S. E. Porter states “that language production may usefully be discussed in terms of its opposing choices. . . This implies that when one element is selected, other

¹⁹⁷ Halliday, *Halliday’s Introduction*, 4

¹⁹⁸ Lyons, *Theoretical Linguistics*, 52.

¹⁹⁹ Halliday and Hasan, *Language*, 10.

²⁰⁰ Halliday’s first full description of system was put forth in his original ‘scale and category’ theory of language. See Halliday, “Categories of the Theory of Grammar,” 52–72. Halliday builds upon the work of his mentor, J. R. Firth, who had been developing the concept of system to display relationships of choice in the structure of language. See Firth, “A Synopsis of Linguistic Theory,” 168–205.

similar elements in the language are not selected.”²⁰¹ The semiotic process of producing text is a process of making meaning through choosing and selecting what to make use of from among a set of options in the coordinated system of language. Systems are constructed around choice in the form of oppositions or semantic contrasts. The underlying principle governing this process of choice is an ordering of language that is *paradigmatic*, based on sets of mutually defining contrastive features.²⁰² As Halliday puts it, “Text is meaning and meaning is choice, an ongoing current of selections each in its paradigmatic environment of what *might have* been meant (but was not)” (italics original).²⁰³ Semantic systems and their innumerable subsystems are built upon this paradigmatic principle and these system networks are a means of modelling language behavior. They comprise a range of mutually exclusive options including an entry condition to access a system that is itself a paradigmatic option that belongs to a prior system. Once an entry condition is satisfied by being selected, a system opens up with more options to choose from. As selections are made, more sets of options open up leading to more selections and so on, thus creating an environment of ongoing choice characterized by previous choices that have already been made.²⁰⁴ Systems are interrelated in this regard and exercise a principle of dependency as choices open up further choices in order to progress through a system along its various possible paths.

²⁰¹ Porter, *Idioms*, 22.

²⁰² Some of Halliday’s early and foundational formulations of this are in Halliday, “Categories of the Theory of Grammar,” 52–72; Halliday, “Chain and Choice in Language,” 84–87; Halliday, “Some Notes on ‘Deep’ Grammar,” 106–17; Halliday, “Linguistics in the Description of Language,” 21–55; and Halliday, “Language as Social Semiotic,” 108–26.

²⁰³ Halliday, *Language as Social Semiotic*, 137.

²⁰⁴ Nesbitt and Plum, “Probabilities in a Systemic-Functional Grammar,” 7. See also, Fawcett, “System Networks, Codes, Knowledge of the Universe,” 135–79, esp. 138–53. For an evaluation of various kinds of system networks, see Fawcett, “What Makes a ‘Good’ System Network Good?,” 1–28.

As choices are made within a system, the language user travels through a vast network of systems taking different routes through this network based on what choices are made. As one moves through these systems, the language user makes increasingly specific semantic choices, leading towards greater refinement of choice, progressing from broader choices to more specific ones. Choices are continually made toward greater specificity until a grammatical realization is arrived at.²⁰⁵ This process of choice characterizes the generation of texts and moves in the direction of increasing semantic delicacy. “Delicacy is the scale of differentiation, or depth in detail.”²⁰⁶ It operates on a cline, according to Halliday, that shows increasing degrees of semantic distinctions. A spoken or written text is the process and product of such paradigmatic systemic selections of delicate choice, expressed through sound or writing, and these paradigmatic relationships constitute the foundational relations of language.

The linguistic system that stands behind a text is the *meaning potential* of language represented as the various paradigmatic options available to be selected. Systems represent unrealized meaning as sets of potential choices. Text as an instantiation of language is a specific realization of a language’s meaning potential. The fewer options there are to choose from when saying or writing something, the less potential there is for meaning. Conversely, the greater the number of options available, the greater potential there is for meaning. This kind of interdependency means that system and text are related to each other through instantiation because when language produces an instance of text, it is an instance of meanings created by systems. Text as process is an active phenomenon in that creating text is the living process of ‘*linguaging*’

²⁰⁵ Porter, *Verbal Aspect*, 9.

²⁰⁶ Halliday, “Categories of the Theory of Grammar,” 72.

that is constantly reflecting the system network while at the same time reshaping and refining it. The relationship between system and text is a relationship in which one is always interpenetrating the other. The process of producing text also determines the system and “every pass through the system, actualizing in structure the system potential, imperceptibly recasts it,” also affecting how subsequent choices are made in the system.²⁰⁷ Just as language is living and constantly evolving, so are its resources for making meaning, the semantic systems that lie at the heart of language.

Language as Structure

Language understood as system is a way of organizing language at multiple levels—in the semantic system itself, at the level of its wordings, then into both spoken and written forms. The wordings of language are, to be more precise, its lexicogrammar.²⁰⁸ Not only is the lexicogrammar a complex system network, it is also a compositional structure that is an important resource for making meaning in language use. In language processing, once a systemic selection is made towards the production of text, it exhibits at the same time *syntagmatic* ordering of language as a result of paradigmatic choice. When communicating, what a person means is bound up with choice, yet choice also implies relationship in which an utterance is meaningful only as it collocates, or relates to and is defined by, other constituents chosen in the system. This kind of organization shows how the various individual constituents that have been chosen according to the system work

²⁰⁷ Nesbitt and Plum, “Probabilities in a Systemic-Functional Grammar,” 9. See also, Hjelmslev, *Prolegomena to a Theory of Language*, 24.

²⁰⁸ The term ‘lexicogrammar’ is preferable over simply ‘grammar’ in order to maintain the important feature in systemic linguistics that vocabulary and grammar are never mutually exclusive components of language, but always work together to produce meaning (see below section, ‘Lexicogrammar’).

together with each other to form a functional configuration on a different axis—the structural one—whereby each constituent has a distinctive role to play with respect to the meaning of the text, brought about through semantic choice. In this regard, the language structure is the realization of the systemic choices made prior to the formation of a text's structure and the linguistic system behind a text is a reflection of a text's structural arrangement. Meaning resides in the systemic patterns of choice and structure is the organization of a text's meanings, not its primary source for generating meaning. The defining characteristic of language is a network of systems, therefore, and not an inventory of structures.²⁰⁹ Structural relations are a configuration of functions derived by the process of realizing selections made from systems. How the constituents of a text are organized structurally is a direct manifestation of the systemic choices that were made. Thus syntagmatic patterning is secondary to paradigmatic patterning and explaining the structures of language is rather a means towards identifying deeper patterns of systemic relationships.²¹⁰

A text's structure is made up of multiple levels in a form of order called *constituency*, whereby larger units of language are made up out of smaller units. Constituency is structured according to the principle of *rank*, hierarchy that situates units on a scale.²¹¹ The rank scale produces a compositional structure in the lexicogrammar beginning with the smallest unit of meaning and moving up into larger ones. The rank

²⁰⁹ Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 23. For more on the relationship between structure and system, see Gleason, Jr., "Relation and Process," 195–221.

²¹⁰ For an early statement on this that at the time was taking a sharp turn away from more transformational generative views of language popularized by Noam Chomsky, see Halliday, "Some Notes on Deep Grammar," 106–17, here 112; see also Butler, *Systemic Linguistics*, 46.

²¹¹ For early formulations, see Halliday, "Categories of the Theory of Grammar," 56–63; Halliday, "Linguistics in the Description of Language," 27–29; see also Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 7–10. For a critique of the rank scale and summary of the debate over its legitimacy, see Fawcett, *A Theory of Syntax for Systemic Functional Linguistics* (Appendix C), 309–38.

scale is an accumulative structure whereby each rank level is made up of one or more units of the ranks below it. The scale is built according to (1) morpheme, (2) word, (3) phrase/group, and (4) clause.²¹² The clause is at the top of the rank scale consisting of all the constituents at each rank of the scale below the clause. Beyond the clause rank, clauses frequently join together to form clause complexes, combinations of clauses that have the potential to multiply in size, producing larger units of discourse.²¹³

The compositional structure made up of the constituents of the rank scale is the manifestation of systems operating at each rank level and the systemic choices that are made. Every systemic choice made for a given instance of text is represented at the clause level. The clause is the place where meaning comes into full formation as lexicogrammatical wordings that give language its functional identity in the act of communication. In other words, in languages whose structural make-up consists of levels of constituency, language was never intended for communication using only disconnected morphemes, words, or phrases in order to express meaning. The lexicogrammatical energy of language is always striving towards the clause unit in the form of clausal configurations of text, for language is designed to function at the clause level and be expressed in clausal forms. This is where the central processing of the lexicogrammar takes place since “it is in the clause that meanings of different kinds are mapped into an integrated grammatical structure.”²¹⁴

²¹² ‘Clause’ is preferable as a grammatical term rather than the use of ‘sentence’ which applies more to a unit of orthography that is based on the spoken language but quickly moves into its own conventions. This results in creating much indeterminacy for linguistic analysis. ‘Clause’ offers more grammatical precision as the primary unit where language’s writing and sound systems realize or represent the lexicogrammar.

²¹³ Complexes may in fact form at every rank level not just at the clause rank. There are phrase and group complexes, word complexes, and even morpheme complexes.

²¹⁴ Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 10.

Metafunction

The clause is a composite entity and the kinds of meaning it expresses can be grouped into three general categories, each having its own distinctive meaning called 'metafunction.' The three metafunctions of language are the (1) *ideational*, (2) *interpersonal*, and (3) *textual*.²¹⁵ The overall meaning of a given clause comprises these three lines or strands of meaning that form their own functional configurations of the clause. For the clause to be functional in this regard means to equate it with how language is actually used in everyday situational contexts. The semantic system is the 'code' of language and it is simultaneously the meaning potential. The use of language is its 'behaviour' and this is "the actualization of that potential in real life situations; in other words, 'code' equals 'potential for behavior.'"²¹⁶

The metafunctions are also a three-dimensional way of viewing language in its entirety with the notion of language function encompassing the semantic system as well as its formal expression. Function is interpreted "not just as the use of language but as a fundamental property of language itself."²¹⁷ This is realized in three different kinds of meaning that run through the whole of language and within the clause itself. Each metafunction represents both a structural and systemic dimension, construing a distinctive strand of meaning, within a threefold pattern of meaning.

²¹⁵ See Halliday, "Language Structure and Language Function," 173–95, for an early description of the metafunctions. Originally these functions were called 'components to the grammar' as 1) 'extra-linguistic experience,' 2) 'speech functions,' and 3) 'discourse organization.' See also Halliday, "Options and Functions in the English Clause," 81–2; Halliday and Hasan, *Language, Context, and Text*, 16–23. In further developments of SFL the metafunctions vary in their number and type depending on how the notion of metafunction is conceived among different branches of SFL. See for example Fawcett, *Theory of Syntax*, 50–51, who develops eight metafunctions. For a review of different perspectives, see Gregory, "Meta-Functions in Systemic Linguistics, 94–106.

²¹⁶ Halliday, "Language as Code and Language as Behaviour," 5–6.

²¹⁷ Halliday in Halliday and Hasan, *Language, Context, and Text*, 17.

The ideational metafunction is the line of meaning that configures the clause as a representation of human experience. It serves the expression of ‘content,’ as we use language to express our representations of the world that we experience every day, whether this is the outside physical world, which includes interacting with other people, or the mental world of our own consciousness.²¹⁸ We engage ourselves in the world, including the world of our minds, and as a human phenomenon, our experiences are transformed into meaning that resides within ourselves. Language is used to reflect upon our experiences—to describe actions, persons, events, states, and other entities involved in our experiences. According to Halliday, the ideational metafunction is about how we then “order our experience when we want to deal with it linguistically; we split it up into discrete entities which interact with each other.”²¹⁹ This means that experiential systems in the language create role-type structures among the constituents of a text whose function is to represent experiential meaning. The ideational metafunction encompasses these experiential semantic systems pertaining to one’s physical and mental environments, and language as the representation of ongoing human experience is one of the fundamental threads of language function that runs throughout the whole of language.

Language in Context

Since texts are the realization of the meaning potential that resides in the systemic options available, they also reflect the nature of the contexts that influence how choices are made through the system network. Text, in other words, is also an instance of language

²¹⁸ Halliday, “Language Structure and Language Function,” 174–75.

²¹⁹ Gregory, “Meta-Functions,” 98, reviewing Halliday’s 1979 article, “Modes of Meaning and Modes of Expression.”

functioning within various contexts as a process of making meaning. Language systems interface with other semiotic systems that exist outside of language and these contextual factors act as a 'semiotic habitat' for the production of texts that shape the various patterns of instantiation of text.²²⁰ These semiotic systems create an environment of meanings, both linguistic and non-linguistic, such that when members of a human community engage in this semiotic environment and then interact with one another, meanings are exchanged and transferred from person to person. As a human phenomenon, this embodies a *context of culture* as environments of knowledge and experience in which various socio-semiotic systems have their origin and generate ideational, interpersonal, and textual meanings in language. "The social context of the linguistic code is the culture. . . A culture is a configuration of semiotic systems."²²¹ Within this, *contexts of situation* develop that are more specific semiotic constructs in which meanings are exchanged as instantiations of the context of culture. Contexts of situation are categorized according to specific contextual properties or variables that focus on language behaviour: 1) what is going on in the situation (*field of discourse*), 2) who is involved in the situation (*tenor of discourse*), and 3) what role language is playing in the situation (*mode of discourse*).²²² The formation of texts is based on the principle that all texts operate in socio-semiotic situations and these contexts produce text types and registers, that is, functional varieties of language, which is fundamentally

²²⁰ Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 31–42.

²²¹ Halliday, "Language as Code," 8.

²²² See Halliday and Hasan, *Language, Context, and Text*, 3–34; Halliday, *Language as Social Semiotic*, 27–35, 60–64, 108–11, 142–45; cf. Brown and Yule, *Discourse Analysis*, 27–67, esp. 35–38. For some of Halliday's early views on context see Halliday, McIntosh, and Strevens, *The Linguistic Sciences and Language Teaching*, 37–40, 87–94. In SFL, the notion of social context applies to the whole of language, system and expression, or code and behaviour together. It does not apply only to the verbal utterance of language as an environment that surrounds a verbal event in which context refers merely to the 'situation of the utterance.' See Lamb, "Semiotics of Language and Culture," 71–100.

characteristic of the system of language.²²³ Registers, as variations in the instantiations of text, represent the ways of using language in different contexts and therefore exhibit systemic probabilities of language. In other words, certain systemic choices are more likely to be made by the user of a language based on the context or situation type of a communicative act. This in turn affects the path that is taken through a given system to produce text.

As language systems interface with environments of meaning that exist outside of language, the systems of language organize meaning linguistically in order for language to do what it does: to construe human experience and communicate its meanings in a given context. Contextual factors, therefore, have a constraining effect on how meaning is configured into semantic content and how choices are made systemically, producing specific registers or types of text that exhibit distinguishing features of text. A constraining effect on meaning does not mean restricting the number of options available in the system, but rather influencing choice in certain ways as one travels through the network, which then shows up as distinctive patterns of text. Related to this is the notion of *co-text* which is the immediate text environment that surrounds a given instantiation of text. Whereas the wider environment of culture and situation constitutes context, “the internal structuring of the text constitutes the co-text.”²²⁴ Co-texts can also have a constraining effect on systemic choice and the kinds of configurations of meanings that come about as texts are produced. This occurs in the development of discourse as clauses are generated one after the other, creating “a set of mutually relevant texts” that together

²²³ Halliday and Hasan, *Language, Context, and Text*, 29–43; Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 4, 28–29, 71–73; Halliday, McIntosh, Strevens, *Linguistic Sciences*, 75–77, 87–94.

²²⁴ De Beaugrande, *Text, Discourse, and Process*, 12.

produce “a progression of occurrences” in communication.²²⁵ As meanings are expressed in a clause, these meanings and their configurations can affect how subsequent clauses are produced as a chain of clauses is generated. Through the progression of occurrences, discourse meaning is created that transcends the boundaries of an individual clause by making a set of clauses that forms semantic and grammatical relations. These relations enable *cohesion* to take place among clauses whereby connections of continuity are maintained between constituents as resources of discourse for the establishment of discourse meaning.²²⁶ In a clause that follows another clause, for example, certain information may be left unspecified since the information can be presumed from the previous clause. This is an instantiation of the system of ellipsis that indicates continuity by forming a cohesive link to the contents of a clause that has occurred before it.²²⁷

Language as Stratification

Language is made up of complex system networks operating at different levels or strata that are intrinsic to the function of language. At the outermost stratum, there are semiotic systems outside of language that operate at the stratum of context. As human beings engage in these cultural and situational contexts, that which goes on outside of language

²²⁵ De Beaugrande, *Text*, 2; Brown and Yule, *Discourse Analysis*, 46–50.

²²⁶ When language is spoken of in terms of discourse and attempts are made at ascertaining meaning beyond the level of the clause, Halliday reminds us that, “[d]iscourse analysis has to be founded on a study of the system of the language. At the same time, the main reason for studying the system is to throw light on discourse—on what people say and write and listen to and read.” See Halliday, *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*, xxii.

²²⁷ The four primary lexicogrammatical systems of cohesion include conjunction, reference, ellipsis and substitution, and lexical organization. They originate in the textual metafunction as a kind of grammatical formatting of text. See Halliday, *Introduction to Functional Grammar*, 287–318; Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 593–658; also Hasan, in Halliday and Hasan, *Language, Context, and Text*, 70–96. Not all of these categories will be treated in-depth in this study on voice, nor will all the dimensions of how context may influence choices for voice be explored. This is beyond the scope of this study. However, voice contributes to the cohesion of text and this will be considered along with co-text on the basis of systemic choices that are made for voice.

has the potential to transform into linguistic meanings at the next level, the content stratum. In order to express meaning (ideational, interpersonal, and textual) by means of language, contextual meaning must first be transformed into linguistic semantic content. On this particular plane of language, there are two tightly interrelated systems that subdivide this stratum into two distinct strata, the semantic stratum and the lexicogrammatical stratum that together comprise the content stratum. To transform contextual meaning into linguistic meaning involves moving from the stratum of context to the stratum of semantics and then again to the stratum of wording and forms called the lexicogrammar.²²⁸ On the content level, semantics is the highest stratum within language that interfaces with the contextual environments of one's world—the cultural and situational contexts. These meanings transform into linguistic meaning at the semantic stratum as experiential, interpersonal, and textual meanings, each with their own system network that represents how meaning might be configured, and each in turn transforms into wordings at the lexicogrammatical stratum. Wordings then transform further into spoken or written forms realized through either phonology (spoken language), namely the organization of speech sounds into audible forms and structures, or orthography (written language) and its ordering of written formal structures and their systems.

The entire stratified linguistic system is embedded in context and each stratum is a kind of progressing realization of meanings, originating in social context, until formal expression occurs at the final stratum. Paradigmatic ordering exists at every stratum, each having its own system network of choices. Not only do contextual meanings greatly affect the progression through systems of language, there is a very close relationship

²²⁸ Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 24–27, 42–43; Halliday, “Language as Code,” 11–16.

between semantics and wording at the content stratum. Meaning is realized by distinctive lexicogrammatical patterns based on semantic relationships that become the defining feature of what takes place at the lexicogrammatical stratum. It is at this stratum that meanings are produced in forms of text by being transformed into words and organized into various patterns. The systems of metafunction at the semantic stratum have their output at the lexicogrammatical stratum which is organized according to the semantic stratum, and forms a unified structure of text out of the different strands of meaning as the realization of choices. Hasan states that “it is the function of the lexicogrammatical stratum to map these structures one onto another so as to form a single integrated structure that represents the output of all metafunctional components simultaneously.”²²⁹

The Lexicogrammar

A viable theory of grammar is one that describes grammatical categories in reference to what a text means rather than in reference to strictly formal distinctions.²³⁰ Taking this approach “tightens up” the relationship between meaning and function in a grammatical description of language, and promotes the features of a system, explicated by the grammar, as being defined by their semantic properties. A language’s grammar is about how a language works, that is, its functionality, and in a systemic approach, the lexicogrammar is the central processing unit of language, as well as “the powerhouse where meanings are created” in order to be expressed.²³¹ This occurs at the content stratum where both semantics and lexicogrammar coincide. As meaning is processed by

²²⁹ Hasan quoting Halliday in “The Grammarian’s Dream,” 184.

²³⁰ Halliday, *Halliday’s Introduction*, 10.

²³¹ Halliday, *Halliday’s Introduction*, 22.

moving through each stratum beginning with context, when arriving at the lexicogrammatical stratum, systemic choices are realized in meaningful forms. According to Halliday, effective descriptions of language “must account for contextual as well as formal patterns. But it is essential to realize that the formal patterns of language are themselves meaningful.”²³² The lexicogrammar, in other words, is a “semantically significant grammar,” reflecting the meanings of paradigmatic choices, taking systemic ordering as its most fundamental category, and structure “as the realization of complexes of systemic features.”²³³

More traditionally, grammars have been constructed according to descriptions of syntagms or arrangements of word classes into sequences, making this the starting point for explaining the functions of language. This typically involves identifying the surface items in a given arrangement of text by sorting them into word classes (e.g. ‘noun’ and ‘verb’) and then moving into more relational terms (e.g. ‘subject’ and ‘predicate’; ‘transitive’ and ‘intransitive’) in order to represent syntagmatic relations, both linearly (e.g. ‘adjective followed by noun’) and non-linearly (e.g. ‘head-modifier relation’).²³⁴ More structurally-based approaches to grammar have relied on this method, but linguists for a long time now have observed the limitations of this approach and have identified clear distinctions between so-called ‘surface structure’ and ‘deep structure,’ in which ‘deep structure’ in language moves into territory of language that is “a much more abstract representation of grammatical relations and syntactic organization.”²³⁵ Systemic theory recognizes deeper structures within language to be semantic configurations that

²³² Halliday, McIntosh, and Stevens, *Linguistic Sciences and Language Teaching*, 40.

²³³ Halliday, “Deep Grammar,” 88–100, here 94.

²³⁴ Halliday, “Deep Grammar,” 88.

²³⁵ Halliday quoting Chomsky, in “Deep Grammar,” 106.

have been formed by systems of 'deep paradigms.'²³⁶ Language has an internal make-up that enables it to hold together opposing contrasts of meaning. These are the systemic options that characterize grammar and make its existence in language possible. Since semantic systems form the basis for grammar, then as Hasan has put it so emphatically, "such system networks ARE the grammar."²³⁷

A systems-based approach to grammar means that the process of putting meaning into specific forms at the content stratum has its output at some point along a lexicogrammatical cline or continuum, formed by lexis on the one end and grammar on the other, both working together and complementing each other to produce meaning.²³⁸ Together the lexis and grammar of language comprise the production of forms (hence the compound term, 'lexicogrammar') and constitute a variable range of possibilities for meaningful choice. The notion of a single continuum for the formation of the wording of language creates a close relationship between grammar and lexis, both working together to produce meaning in the clause.²³⁹

On the lexicogrammatical cline, language is capable of simply naming things and sorting these things into categories. This forms the repertoire of vocabulary or lexis that language holds. At the same time simple to complex grammatical sequences form the

²³⁶ Halliday, "Deep Grammar," 91.

²³⁷ Hasan, "The Grammarian's Dream," 185.

²³⁸ Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 7, 64–69; Hasan, "The Grammarian's Dream," 184–211. For early conceptions of a lexicogrammatical cline, see Halliday, "Categories," 58–61; Halliday, McIntosh, and Stevens, *Linguistic Sciences*, 21–24.

²³⁹ Unfortunately there is a major division that is still entrenched in language study today, exemplified in the classic image of the dictionary in one hand and the grammar book in the other. This perpetuates the false oversimplification that the dictionary deals with meaning while the grammar book deals with form. Meaning and form were never meant to be divorced, however. In a systemic approach, "form is part of meaning, not opposed to it, and both grammar and dictionary are concerned with meaning." See Halliday, McIntosh, and Stevens, *Linguistic Sciences*, 22–23, 37–40; Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 64–65.

grammatical component of language. On one end of the cline, a single lexical item may be chosen to convey meaning or, moving towards the other end of the cline, a sequence of wordings may be used to grammaticalize meaning by sorting these into word classes and enabling relationships among other lexical items.²⁴⁰

Lexical: Paradigmatic Axis

On the lexical end of the continuum, the paradigmatic axis orders words by forming lexical groups or *open sets* according to shared semantic features (also known as semantic fields) that can theoretically comprise a very large number of items. As items of a set, their relationships to each other are based on systemic contrasts which means that while words may be grouped into sets based on some semantic feature they all share in common, together they create a paradigmatic ‘menu of options’ for the user to choose from. Selecting one lexical item, therefore, means not selecting another item from among the set of options. In this regard, the paradigmatic axis on the lexical pole is the most delicate end of the lexicogrammar and lexical usage becomes constrained by lexicogrammatical choices.²⁴¹ The paradigmatic axis locates systems of increasing lexical delicacy in language in which lexical sets may have related subsets, which may have their own subsets, and so on. Sets and their subsets are often related to each other through variations of further lexical refinement such as kinds or types of a lexical item (hyponymy), or more specific parts of a lexical item (meronymy), or words having an opposite sense (antonymy).

²⁴⁰ Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 58–59; see also Halliday, “Class in Relation to the Axes of Chain and Choice in Language,” 95–105.

²⁴¹ Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 61; see also Hasan, “The Grammarians’ Dream,” 184–211.

Lexical: Syntagmatic Axis

On the syntagmatic axis of the lexical end, individual words show syntactic relationships through *collocation*. Here words tend to be chosen in the system based on the presence and selection of other words. That is, words show tendencies towards ‘keeping company’ with certain other words and when a particular word is chosen, the probability of another word being chosen to function together with that other word increases greatly. When words collocate, their meanings are conditioned by each other, having their individual meanings modified based on how they are functioning together and affecting meaning in a text.²⁴²

The syntagmatic axis of wording at the lexical end of the lexicogrammatical cline is also a step closer toward the grammar end because the collocation of lexical items involves multiple words entering into functional relationships with each other for the production of meaning. As soon as an individual word has its own meaning conditioned in some way by another word or more than one word, as is the case when words collocate, words have entered into a grammatical relationship of some kind with each other. When this is so, meaning in a text modulates to some extent in which the production of meaning moves beyond individual lexical meanings only toward a grammaticalization of meaning.

²⁴² Halliday’s mentor, J. R. Firth, stressed the importance of a collocational level in language also referring to collocations as “habitual or customary places” of a word. See Firth, “A Synopsis of Linguistic Theory,” 12; Halliday takes up Firth’s view on this in Halliday, “Lexis as Linguistic Level,” 158–72.

Grammar: Paradigmatic Axis

The same two axes that are on the lexical end of the cline—paradigmatic and syntagmatic—are also present at the grammar end of the cline. Moving along the cline from the lexical end toward the grammar end, meaning is increasingly conditioned by grammaticalization, revealing a complex network of systemic options belonging to the grammar of language, realized at many points along the lexicogrammatical cline. On the paradigmatic axis at the grammar end, there are many contrastive semantic features available for selection in order to modify how meaning is construed. Every grammatical category of a language, semantic and formal (for example, the categories of ‘negation,’ or ‘person,’ or ‘tense’), is organized according to *closed systems* because there is a much smaller and more fixed number of mutually exclusive terms and choices (the system of ‘number,’ typically has only two choices: singular and plural).²⁴³ Moreover, when meaning is grammaticalized it requires more generality than lexical meaning since the options available in closed systems must be applicable to all wordings that would utilize that particular system (the system of ‘number’ must apply to all verbs and nouns in a language). Although closed systems of grammar may involve more generalizations and smaller system networks, it is through grammatical descriptions of language that a greater number of linguistic phenomena can be accounted for.

A systemic grammar is one that brings to the fore grammaticalized meaning (grammaticalization), since it is a natural and necessary feature of language that meaning is grammaticalized to some extent and thus construed in networks of interrelated

²⁴³ Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 62–64; Halliday, “Deep Grammar,” 88–98. See also Halliday and Martin, *Readings in Systemic Linguistics*, 18–20; Hudson, *English Complex Sentences*, 44.

contrasts.²⁴⁴ “So in making a description of any language,” says Halliday, “we try to bring as much as we can within the framework of the grammar.”²⁴⁵ This occurs up and down the rank scale, from morpheme to clause, whereby there are semantic systems of the grammar that open up a host of options for the different kinds of grammatical relationships that may be entered into among constituents. This is the principle of *exhaustiveness* in which everything in the wording of the lexicogrammar is seen as having some grammatical function at every rank.²⁴⁶ As an example, Halliday says, “If we can account for the prepositions of English by grammatical statements, we shall have said a great deal more about them, and about the way they work, than we can do by entering them in the dictionary.”²⁴⁷

Grammar: Syntagmatic Axis

Finally, the syntagmatic axis on the grammar end exhibits *structure*: meaningful configurations of functions that have been chosen in the systems of the paradigmatic axis as “an ordered arrangement of elements in chain relation.”²⁴⁸ This structure produces a syntagm or sequence of lexical items that are identified according to word classes.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁴ Halliday, *Introduction to Functional Grammar*, xix-xx; Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 67–68.

²⁴⁵ Halliday, “Linguistics in the Description of Language,” 23. This is also what Halliday referred to when he coined the phrase, “the grammarian’s dream” in 1961 in his “Categories,” stating that it would be desirable “to turn the whole of linguistic form into grammar, hoping to show that lexis can be defined as ‘most delicate grammar.’” See Halliday, “Categories,” 267. In other words, Halliday’s ‘dream’ is to be able to move along the lexicogrammatical cline towards the lexis end, never at any point on the cline ‘exiting’ grammar and then ‘entering’ lexis, thus no longer having to treat grammatical categories and lexical items separately. Only then can lexis truly be seen as ‘most delicate grammar.’

²⁴⁶ Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 84; Halliday, “The Concept of Rank: A Reply,” 118–26, here 120.

²⁴⁷ Halliday, “Linguistics in the Description of Language,” 23.

²⁴⁸ Halliday, “Class in Relation to Chain and Choice,” 97; Halliday, *Introduction to Functional Grammar*, 37.

²⁴⁹ Word classes are also known as ‘parts of speech’ which is a mistranslation of the Greek term, *méroi lógou*, which is more accurately rendered ‘parts of the sentence.’

Lexical items are grouped into word classes to help distinguish their potential and distinctive range of grammatical function so that meaning is not restricted to individual word meanings, but generated according to how each constituent functions with another within a stretch of text. Classes are defined syntactically as “sets of items that have the same potentiality of occurrence.” And word classes are one of the most long-standing and fundamental components of language study that makes a grammar operational since class is what “enters into relations of structure and of system in language.”²⁵⁰ Though word classes operate at the grammar end of the lexicogrammatical cline, at the same time they span the entire lexicogrammatical cline by categorizing words on the lexical end according to conceptual categories that an individual word represents and what its lexical meaning refers to (e.g. things and persons—*nouns*; actions and states—*verbs*; qualities—*adjectives*). Then on the grammar end, words that belong to a certain class have the potential to take on grammatical features, including morphological form changes based on systemic options that occur within that particular class (e.g. nouns, verbs, and adjectives typically undergo various conjugations unique to their own classes and word types).²⁵¹ Thus, classes sort words into categories according to a wide lexicogrammatical range taking into account semantic and grammatical considerations in order to provide more functional categories for words.

However, simply identifying the word class of a constituent within a structure of text among a chain of classes provides hardly anything for ascertaining how meaning is being construed in a particular clausal configuration. Word classes must be specified

²⁵⁰ Halliday, “Class,” 95, 97; Halliday, *Halliday’s Introduction*, 74–76; Halliday, *Introduction to Functional Grammar*, 30–32. For a brief history of the development of word class in linguistics, see Robins, “The Development of the Word Class System of the European Grammatical Tradition,” 185–203.

²⁵¹ Halliday, *Halliday’s Introduction*, 58–61.

further, moving into function, interpreted according to semantic categories that take into account the systemic operations that are at work producing the structural arrangements in the language. This means that individual constituents, each belonging to different word classes, must be classified into semanto-syntactic categories that construe meaning as a whole clausal structure, producing clausal meaning as a “total configuration of functions.”²⁵² What emerges is a particular kind of functional configuration (structure) based on the kinds of relationships among the constituents as the result of paradigmatic choice (system). Unique kinds of meaning are embodied within the structure of the clause, configured according to distinct semantic categories that belong to each of the three metafunctions.

The System of Transitivity

The systemic output of the ideational metafunction creates a distinctive structure that configures the clause as representation of human experience manifested in a form of text. In this kind of configuration of a clause, there are essentially three components: (1) a verbal *process*, (2) *participants* involved in the process, and (3) *circumstances* associated with the process.²⁵³ Any given configuration of a clause consists of at least the first two components—process and participant—and optionally includes the third of circumstantial elements. In the process-participant relationship there is always one inherent participant involved in the process and typically this is the grammatical subject of the clause. “[T]he concepts of process, participant, and circumstance are semantic categories that explain in

²⁵² Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 83.

²⁵³ Halliday and Matthiessen, *Construing Experience*, 52–64, 177–222; Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 220–24; Halliday, *Introduction to Functional Grammar*, 101–2.

the most general way how phenomena of our experience of the world are construed as linguistic structures.”²⁵⁴ These three semantic categories work together to create a configuration put together from a variety of systemic options in language. Such configurations are the product of choices available in the system network where meaning potential resides. The lexicogrammar allows for a variety of ways in which the configuration of a clause might be created and organized among these semantic categories while employing specific words (lexis) within a given configuration (grammar).

The underlying semiotic system that operates within the ideational metafunction, providing the lexicogrammatical resources to produce this kind of ordered configuration, is the *system of transitivity*. Halliday first described transitivity of the clause as being “concerned with the type of process expressed in the clause, with the participants in this process, animate and inanimate, and with various attributes and circumstances of the process and the participants.”²⁵⁵ This broadens out the definition of transitivity to involve much more than just the verbal process transferring onto another constituent, acting as complement or object, according to more traditional terminology. In the system of transitivity, a so-called ‘transitive verb’ or ‘intransitive verb’ has more to do with characterizing the whole clause, whether a process stays within the domain of the inherent participant (intransitive) or moves beyond it (transitive). Transitivity involves all the constituents of the clause in which each one interacts to varying degrees with the others to produce clausal meaning. Transitivity is about who or what causes the action of the verb in the clause, who or what is affected by it, and what other qualities, attributes,

²⁵⁴ Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 224.

²⁵⁵ Halliday, “Notes on Transitivity and Theme in English—Part 1,” 7.

and circumstances are presently attendant upon these interactions. Each constituent in this structure has a function that contributes to representing experience through language. In other words, any configuration of constituents incorporates participants interacting with a process in some way, and circumstances of time, space, cause, and manner, among others, are attendant upon the process yet not directly involved with it in the same way participants are.²⁵⁶ Processes, participants, and circumstances “provide the frame of reference for interpreting our experience of what goes on.”²⁵⁷ In so doing, the process is the most central constituent in the configuration, and it is what determines the core characterization of a particular clausal configuration, but all three semantic categories together contribute to clausal meaning.

Moreover, the relationship between the categories of process and participant is such that a process always operates in relation to another participant. The primary participant in relation to the verbal process is known as the subject participant. Defining this participant is not easy and cannot be referred to only as a single undifferentiated concept. Instead it may be best to think in terms of the notion of subject or ‘subjecthood.’ Related to this the subject can also be the “nub of the argument” of a clause on which the truth of its argument rests; it is the participant on which something is predicated and held responsible for the validity of the clausal proposition.²⁵⁸ The subject of a clause has, generally speaking, centered on (1) that which is the concern of the stated message, (2)

²⁵⁶ Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 213.

²⁵⁷ Halliday, *Introduction to Functional Grammar*, 101.

²⁵⁸ Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 78–79, 225,

that on which something is predicated,²⁵⁹ and (3) the doer of the action.²⁶⁰ Related to this the subject can also be the “nub of the argument” of a clause on which the truth of its argument rests; it is the participant on which something is predicated and held responsible for the validity of the clausal proposition.²⁶¹ These are three distinct functions of the subject and sometimes a single entity of a clause embodies all three definitions, at other times each definition is distributed among three different entities of a clause. In this study, whenever subject is referred to, the possibility is left open that sometimes only one definition applies, or two apply, or even all three apply to a single entity. For purposes of voice, the subject is the participant that is always in closest relationship to the verbal process and this involves to some degree one or all three definitions of subject. It may be that the process occurs only as far as this subject participant, thus remaining within its domain only. But in addition to the subject participant, other participants can become involved with the process. It can extend out toward other participants as well, which means that the process carries the potential that these participants are also affected by the process in some way.²⁶² The system of voice specifies what participants do, that is, the role they play in relation to the process. Participants take on more specific roles and the process, as the most central constituent of the clause, defines these participant roles more precisely in order to produce clausal meaning.

²⁵⁹ In other words, it can be the “nub of the argument” of a clause on which the truth of its argument rests; it is the participant held responsible for the validity of the clausal proposition. See Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 78–79, 225.

²⁶⁰ In the Western grammatical tradition, these have been called Psychological Subject, Grammatical Subject, and Logical Subject, respectively. For more on the history of the Subject, see Seuren, *Western Linguistics*, 34–37, and Covington, *Syntactic Theory in the High Middle Ages*.

²⁶¹ Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 78–79, 225.

²⁶² When another participant of the clause designates the extended domain of operation for the process but is not affected by the process itself, this participant is called *Range* (see ‘Additional Participants’ below).

The Transitive Model

Clausal configurations of the system of transitivity can be described according to the *transitive model* as an interpretive approach to the clause in which the configuration of process and participant(s) constitutes the experiential center of the clause.²⁶³ In the transitive model, clauses are also particularized according to process type. The process types are semantic categories that define more precisely how the process interacts with various participants by initiating different types of participant syntactic roles that depend on the kind of verbal processes at work. However, voice is a grammatical system in which processes operate with voice (if this is an option for a process), regardless of process type. In other words, voice is a system that stands independently of process types in so far as a verbal process having voice at all is not dependent on certain process types. But the kind of voice used and signalled on a verb can be influenced by the kind of process a verb is. Process types apply to some extent in this study to help differentiate participant functions, e.g. the kinds of Goal that a clause may have.

Further, the classification of 'noun' moves into a semantic functional identity as participant, and 'verb' moves into its semantic functional identity as 'process.'²⁶⁴ There is always one participant directly involved in the process in some way and the process may extend to other participants as well. This participant in close relationship to a process of a clause is *Agent*, construed as the constituent that initiates and brings about the unfolding

²⁶³ Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 220–22, 332–36.

²⁶⁴ Then processes are sorted into process types. The major process types are the material, mental, and relational processes, with minor types as the behavioral, verbal, and existential processes. The 'material' process-type forms the configuration, Actor + Process + Goal, but because this configuration is restricted to material clauses only, participants shift into other roles according to other process types that produce different participant-process configurations. For example, there is Sensor + Process + Phenomenon (Mental clause); Carrier + Process + Attribute (Relational clause); Behavior + Process (Behavioural clause); and Sayer + Process + Receiver (Verbal clause); and Process + Existent (Existential clause). See the summary of process types in Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 310–11.

of the process as the source of causality. Causality in a clause involves the output of energy that brings the process about. Agent acts as the cause of the process and the source of energy in order to manifest the process. Agent, in other words, is the participant that acts as the *startpoint* of the process and the one that performs the process. This is a participant in the role of grammatical subject in the clause and this kind of clause in the transitive model brings out the causality of the process explicitly. From Agent the process extends either as far as only Agent itself (traditional intransitive clause) or out to another participant, *Goal* (traditional transitive clause). Goal is the participant to whom the process is extended and affected by the process. If a clause has a stated Goal, the process is always directed toward the Goal as the process moves outward away from the Agent that acts as the power source for the process to occur. When a Goal is present, it is the participant affected in some way by the Agent's performance of the process.

Different types of Goal emerge depending on the type of process at work in a clause.²⁶⁵ The first type is 'Goal as impact' which produces a transformative clause. The process has a direct effect upon this participant resulting in a change of state in the participant. In this kind of representation, a pre-existing participant is construed as being transformed in some way by the process in which the outcome of the process shows a clear difference between the initial state and the final state of the participant. The second type is 'Goal as creativity' which produces a creative clause. This type of Goal is the creative result of the process. Rather than a change of state occurring in an already existing participant, this type of Goal means the participant is brought into existence by the process, not having existed prior to the process occurring. The outcome of the process

²⁶⁵ See Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 230–33; Halliday, *Introduction to Functional Grammar*, 101–12; Halliday and Matthiessen, *Construing Experience*, 150–53, 167–68.

is the participant itself as the product of the process unfolding. The third type is ‘Goal as phenomenon’ which produces a mental clause.²⁶⁶ This participant is not necessarily affected by the process in that it undergoes any sort of material change of state or enters into a created state as a result of the process. Instead focus is more on Agent that becomes involved in a sensory, emotive, or cognitive experience as a result of ‘targeting’ the process at this Goal. This Goal-participant is still involved in the process, having the process extended towards it just like the other two types of Goal, only that the impact is felt instead by the Agent and impinges upon the Agent as a participant that has been endowed with consciousness. As a result, any change of state in the Agent is a mental or emotive one that involves the world of the Agent as a conscious being. The Goal as Phenomenon is a person, thing, or act that is sensed—it is felt, thought, wanted, or perceived by the Agent, having an effect upon the senses of the Agent as a result of focusing on this Goal and in this regard, it is affected by the process.²⁶⁷ At the same time, however, some process types construe the process as having an impact on both Agent and Goal to some extent rather than on Goal only and Agent performing the process, or on Agent only and Goal unaffected by the process. Sometimes process types do not allow for clear distinctions between the roles of Agent and Goal as to the extent of impact on a participant. The grammatical system of voice, therefore, which stands independently of lexical variations, complements this occurrence by helping to clarify meaning and usage of a process.

²⁶⁶ Mental clauses are based on mental process types which are processes of sensing and perception (see Halliday, *Introduction to Functional Grammar*, 106–12). In this type of clause the configuration is specifically Sensor + Process + Phenomenon (that which is sensed), but for some consistency in terminology only, this is modified into an Agent + Process + Goal configuration with the understanding that when this type of Goal occurs, Agent functions in a Sensor role and Goal functions in a Phenomenon role.

²⁶⁷ Halliday and Matthiessen, *Construing Experience*, 137–41.

The Agent + Process +/- Goal configuration comprises the experiential center of the transitive model as a particular kind of lexicogrammatical output of the semantic system of transitivity. Regardless of process types, the first participant, Agent, is the participant directly involved in the process that supplies an initial output of energy to begin participant engagement in the process in order to bring it about. The second participant, Goal, if there is one, is affected by the process in some way and undergoes the process to varying degrees.²⁶⁸

Additional Participants

The transitive model also accounts for oblique participants (indirect objects in more traditional terms) in the clause whose role is to benefit in some way from the process that occurs. Whereas Goal is the participant that the process extends toward, has an impact on, and finds its outcome in, *Recipient* and *Client* are participant roles that benefit from the process in some way.²⁶⁹ This does not necessarily mean the process is always a positive or beneficial one, but that these participants receive something from the process as or when the process finds its endpoint in the Goal. Recipient is the participant that the 'goods' of the process are given *to*, denoting a transfer of the Agent's possession of goods to the Recipient. Client is the participant that the 'services' of the process are done *for*.²⁷⁰

²⁶⁸ Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 221, 224, 226, 249, 251, 261.

²⁶⁹ Halliday, *Introduction to Functional Grammar*, 131–33; Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 237–39.

²⁷⁰ See Webster, *Studies in English Language*, 19–27. Client tends to also be more restricted than Recipient because there can be a fine line between Client and various circumstances of cause (see circumstances section below).

Goal, Recipient, and Client are all affected by the process in some way; Recipient and Client construed as benefactive roles in the clause and Goal construed as the main outcome through a kind of extension of the process toward it. In contrast to this, *Range* is a different kind of participant that is not construed as beneficiary or endpoint of the process. The process is not directed toward, 'done to,' or 'done for' a Range participant in the same way as the other participants, but rather specifies the domain over which the process takes place as a participant that relates more indirectly to the process.²⁷¹ Range designates the boundaries or extent to which the process occurs without the intent of construing the process as having a final impact on this participant. For example, in the clause *follow the path*, the process *follow* does not impact the path but rather *the path* marks out the domain that *follow* operates in. In this sense, Range is not affected by the verbal process like other participants, but rather delimits its scope of action. "[Range] does not participate in the process operationally; it does not bring about or act out the process."²⁷²

Like Goal, a Range participant frequently appears immediately after the verbal process in a given configuration, but a distinction is made semantically when the process and other participants become involved, leading to, in some cases, the same word interpreted as either Goal or Range. A participant is Goal when the intent by the speaker/writer is to construe the participant as affected by the process; the participant is Range when the intent is to construe the participant more circumstantially, that is, by still

²⁷¹ Halliday, *Introduction to Functional Grammar*, 134–37; Halliday and Matthiessen, *Construing Experience*, 157–59, 168–72; Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 236–43, 346–49; Webster, *Studies in English Language*, 27–32. Range is Halliday's original designation for this participant. In further developments of SFL, the term *Scope* is used more prominently in the transitive model and Range for the ergative model. The two are essentially synonymous in function, however. For purposes of clarity, Range will be used in this study for both models.

²⁷² Halliday and Matthiessen. *Construing Experience*, 168–69.

expanding the process itself in some way when the process extends only as far as the Agent (traditional intransitive clause). The process may be expanded in different ways by Range. It may construe the process itself as a whole in which the process cannot be adequately conveyed without a participant that further defines the process. For example, in *John takes a rest*, the process extends only as far as the Agent, *John*. The process *take* by itself does not convey the process of *rest* which is what is intended to be represented in this clause. The Range participant *a rest* is needed in addition to the process *take* to expand the process and then correctly convey the intended process. Here a *rest* is construed as part of the process itself. It cannot be Goal because it is not meant to be affected by the process *take* but rather specify the process. Range is the participant least involved in the process in the sense that it plays no role in either the causality of the process (Agent), its actualization (Goal), or benefit from the process (Recipient and Client). Range tends to shade into the epiphenomenal, as an interpretive category that emerges from patterns of use when meaningful lexicogrammatical resources are used a certain way for construing experience. And in terms of the experiential structure of the clause, Range also moves out to the periphery where the circumstance component of the clause configuration operates.²⁷³

Circumstances

Circumstantial constituents differ fundamentally from process and participants in that they are optional components of the clause, not obligatory ones, whose function is to augment the experiential center of the clause in some way. While every clause has at least

²⁷³ Halliday, *Introduction to Functional Grammar*, 136.

one participant that is directly involved with the process, a clause may or may not be augmented circumstantially which gives circumstances a more peripheral role by not being directly involved with the process.²⁷⁴ Circumstances are optional in the semantic system of meaningful choices a user makes to represent experience and is therefore also optional in its expression through grammatical structure. When employed, circumstantial elements expand the process-participant configuration in some way but do not alter the basic experiential statement asserted by the process-participant center of the clause. Moreover circumstances are only attendant on the process itself which means they play an adjunct role in the clause. In this role, circumstances frequently include other participants, but these participants are involved in the process only indirectly since the participant is typically realized by a nominal group that is inside a prepositional phrase and allowed into the clause only through the intermediary of a preposition.²⁷⁵ In the grammar of a clause as representation within the system of transitivity, circumstantial functions create a 'semantic space' that expands the experiential core of the clause. This occurs in the transitive model as well as in the ergative model (see below) as circumstances stand outside of any particular core configuration.

Circumstantials primarily *enhance* the clause in various ways through (1) extending the unfolding of the process through distance, duration, or frequency of time or space; (2) locating the process in place or time; (3) describing the manner or the way in which the process unfolds, and this is done through (a) the means whereby a process occurs, (b) the quality of the process, (c) comparison of the process to something else, or

²⁷⁴ Halliday, *Introduction to Functional Grammar*, 137–44; Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 221, 310–32; Halliday and Matthiessen, *Construing Experience*, 172–76, 217–22.

²⁷⁵ Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 310–12.

(d) the degree to which the process takes place; (4) describing why the process occurs (cause) in terms of (a) the reasons or existing conditions that lead to the process unfolding, (b) the purpose or intended conditions behind the process occurring, or (c) on whose behalf the process occurs;²⁷⁶ and (5) specifying (a) on what the process depends or is contingent upon to happen through necessary or possible conditions that must be applied, (b) conditions that fail or 'fall through' (concession), or (c) the absence of conditions (default).

Circumstantials also *extend* the clause through accompaniment or joint participation in the process of two or more elements (comitative) with the option of showing contrast among these elements (additive). And circumstantials *elaborate* on the clause by specifying the role of an indirect participant in the process construed either as a guise, 'what as?' or as a product, 'becoming what?' Finally, circumstances can augment the clause by projecting additional verbal matter, namely that which is described, referred to, or narrated. It can also project the clause from a particular angle such as a given source of information that the clause arises from or from a certain viewpoint that the information of the clause represents.

The Ergative Model

The ergative model interprets the clause from a different angle in that rather than a linear 'extension and impact' approach to the clause according to the transitive model, the ergative model takes a more nuclear approach to interpreting the clause. Whereas the transitive model has as its one participant in closest relation to the process, Agent, that

²⁷⁶ The benefactive role of Client overlaps with these types of circumstance of cause (e.g. 'He bought a gift *for her*' can fulfill 4a and 4b above).

which initiates the process, the ergative model focuses instead on the participant affected by the process, *Medium*, that realizes the process.²⁷⁷ The experiential center of the clause in this model becomes (1) the process and (2) a participant that *actualizes* the process as a result of causality. This participant, Medium, and the process together form the process-medium nucleus of the clause through which the process is realized.²⁷⁸ The Medium is the ‘conduit’ through which the process comes into existence and arrives at actualization. It is the element of the clause that the process finds as its endpoint. It embodies the action as ‘host’ of a process.²⁷⁹ Every process is accompanied by an inherent Medium-participant that always participates directly in the process since all processes need to be realized. As Halliday puts it, “the Medium is the nodal participant throughout: not the doer, or the [external] causer, but the one that is critically involved, according to the nature of the process.”²⁸⁰ A change of state in the Medium by the process is the result of causality—the source of energy that brings about the process and, in turn, its actualization in the Medium.

According to an ergative view of the clause, causality can be internal to the process-medium nucleus, represented as self-engendering and involving Medium only. Thus a clause can be formed by the process-medium nucleus alone since both causality and actualization of the process is achieved. At the same time more options are available

²⁷⁷ Halliday and Matthiessen, *Construing Experience*, 149–54. Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 341–45; Halliday, *Introduction to Functional Grammar*, 146–49. The role of Medium also generalizes across all process types and participants.

²⁷⁸ Halliday originally used the term ‘Affected’ for this participant (Halliday, “Notes—Part 3,” 119–20; Halliday, “Language Structure and Language Function,” 187–88) but ‘Medium’ is preferable since it captures the process as an actualizing one. ‘Affected’ conveys the idea of the participant as an object, that is, the sense of doing something *to* a participant rather than the participant bringing the process to fruition. It also tends to run counter to the ergative notion of internal causality of the process as a possible transitive function (see below). See also Webster, *Studies*, 117.

²⁷⁹ Thompson, *Introducing Functional Grammar*, 140.

²⁸⁰ Halliday, *Introduction to Functional Grammar*, 147.

to the process-medium nucleus like a series of concentric circles that emanate from this center point. Additional participant and circumstantial functions can become involved that augment the process-medium nucleus and contribute to portraying the experience of the Medium. In this regard, causality also can be external to the process-medium nucleus—yet still internal to the clause as a whole—by means of another participant interpreted as being in an agentive role. Ergativity is defined by this contrastive feature of the process-medium relationship: it conveys the ‘work’ of a process as being caused internally and self-generating—represented as happening by itself—or caused externally by some form of agency.²⁸¹

Further, since the ergative model interprets the clause according to what actualizes a process, causality takes on a lesser role in the clause. Causality of a process is construed as being diminished in prominence as to how agency is represented in an ergative clause. Since a feature of agency is represented as internal to the Medium, which embodies the actualization of a process, agency is reduced in this regard yet still present. Agency may also be represented in this reduced way by being conveyed indirectly through attendant circumstances. Whereas a typical transitive organization of a clause expresses causality of the process externally and prominently by Agent, an ergative organization of a clause is based on an internal view of causality, construed as being implied in the medium-process nucleus, secondary in function to the primary role of actualization of the process by the Medium.

²⁸¹ Halliday, *Introduction to Functional Grammar*, 144–48; Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 341–43; Halliday and Matthiessen, *Construing Experience*, 153–55; Thompson, *Introducing Functional Grammar*, 139–42.

Additional Participants

The ergative model may also add participants to its process-medium experiential core. Recipient and Client perform benefactive roles in the ergative model and there is also the role of Range which either specifies the process itself or designates the domain in which the process takes place (see Transitive Model above). Range designates the boundaries or extent to which the process occurs without the intent of construing the process as having an impact on the participant. Since Medium is the endpoint of the process, Range is a participant that stands outside of the process-medium nucleus, but not as a participant that experiences the impact by the process since the process actualizes in the Medium. Rather, the role of Range is to specify the scope that delimits the process as it is actualized in the Medium. The Range adds more specificity to the process, helping to construe the process itself as Process + Range. The Range helps to “effect” the process because the process by itself might be too general in meaning or by itself the process does not make any sense and thus requires an object participant to further specify and determine how the verb is used.²⁸² In doing so, this adds further description and meaning to the process by providing a circumstantial element of extent to the clause.²⁸³

Further, as noted above, a clause can be formed by the process-medium nucleus alone which means that the experiential statement or proposition of a clause can be asserted legitimately with only the process-medium relationship and no external feature

²⁸² This is akin to how an adverb adds more description to a verbal idea. But a Range participant is a nominal fulfilling this kind of descriptive role to the verbal process, and thus it does not play a role that is affected by the process. O. Jespersen calls such verbs “light verbs” that need further defining. See Jespersen, *A Modern English Grammar*, 117. An even earlier statement is made by H. Poutsma, *A Grammar of Late Modern English*, who in 1926 called such verbs vague in meaning that required an “effective object” participant to supply more information for the use of the verb. Although these verbs seem to take an object, they are intransitive in meaning.

²⁸³ Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 345–48.

of agency. However, an external feature of agency may be selected as an option that adds to the process-medium nucleus another participant that performs a causal role to the process, namely the role of indirect agent.²⁸⁴ This kind of agency may be expressed external to the process-medium nucleus through another specified participant of the clause, or through an unspecified, implied participant. When a participant is specified, it is typically done through a circumstantial element realized by a prepositional phrase that is interpreted as the causal feature of agency involved in the process indirectly.²⁸⁵ This kind of configuration involves a participant that is represented as indirect agent and source of energy/causality for the process. This agentive participant is only indirectly involved in the process because it belongs to a circumstance in the clause. These kinds of configurations involve a closer relationship between participants and circumstances in which the line between participant and circumstance is not so sharply drawn as it is in the transitive model.²⁸⁶ Here the ergative model complements the transitive model by enabling more participant-like functions in the clause among elements that have circumstantial properties.²⁸⁷ In the transitive model, the notion of extension characterizes a typical transitive configuration of the clause and this is a linear interpretation that tends to emphasize sharper distinctions between participants and circumstances. An ergative

²⁸⁴ A lowercase 'a' is used here to distinguish it from Agent in the transitive model marked with an uppercase 'A' as discussed above. See Halliday, *Introduction to Functional Grammar*, 147; Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 342–43, 349–50; Halliday and Matthiessen, *Construing Experience*, 154–57.

²⁸⁵ By contrast, Agent in the transitive model is always directly involved in the process. Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 311–13.

²⁸⁶ The exception here being the participant Range in the transitive model that also readily construes circumstances and to some extent Client.

²⁸⁷ The complementarity involves the various process types as well. Since the transitive model particularizes according to process types, the ergative model generalizes across each of the process types and their participant roles by centralizing the common feature of causality among all the types of subject participant roles into the semantically neutral role of agent. See Halliday, "Language Structure and Language Function," 187; Halliday, *Introduction to Functional Grammar*, 147; Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 333–34, 342–43.

organization of the clause, however, is a nuclear interpretation in which participants and circumstances demonstrate more mixture in their functions in relation to whether the cause of the process is internal or external.²⁸⁸

In an ergative approach the boundaries between participants and circumstances are less defined and there is more indeterminacy between how participants and circumstances contribute to the meaning of the clause. Using a series of concentric circles, a clause nucleus of process-medium at the center can have an inner ring of participants (Agent, Beneficiaries, and Range), and an outer ring of circumstances. But the line between participants and circumstances is finer in an ergative approach than the division set forth in the Transitive Model.

To illustrate further, in the clause, *Peter came out from the house*, the prepositional phrase, *from the house* is a circumstance of location signalling a spatial relationship and place of origin for the process, *came out*, according to a transitive interpretation. Here *from the house* is a prepositional phrase that expresses a circumstance of the clause. In the clause, *a noise came out from the house*, however, the same phrase, *from the house* could be given a participant status in addition to a circumstantial status. This is because in the semantics of the clause, the phrase could also be interpreted as having a feature of agency in that *house* in this case produces a noise that travels outwards since noises are typically caused by something. *House* becomes a participant to the process, namely agent, since in addition to signalling location, it is also interpreted as the start point of the process and its cause. The first clause, however, does not convey a sense that the house in any way caused Peter to come out. (There may in

²⁸⁸ Halliday, *Introduction to Functional Grammar*, 149–50; Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 339–43, 347–48.

fact have been something in the house that caused him to come out but this is not suggested grammatically in this clause.) Whereas a transitive interpretation would mark *from the house* as only a circumstance of location in both examples, since both *Peter* and *a noise* would be Agent, an ergative interpretation would mark *house* in the second example as more than just a circumstance of location, but also as an additional, albeit indirect, participant, that is the cause of the process actualized in the Medium, *a noise*. The agent, *house*, is an indirect participant to the process because it stands within a circumstantial element (prepositional phrase) in the clause even though its causal feature gives it more involvement with the process than a typical circumstance. This interpretation of greater involvement in the process by an indirect, circumstantial participant is made possible by the role of Medium as an alternative semantic category of participant for the grammatical subject in which all constituents of a clause are directed towards the experience of the Medium participant.

Conclusion

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) approaches the study of language with an emphasis on comprehensive lexicogrammatical text analysis. Applying the principles of SFL to text analysis means engaging in descriptions of the system of language that lies behind a text. The descriptions of the system of language and the rigorous models of language that SFL supplies account for various behaviors of language when applied through text analysis. The principles and models of grammar that belong to SFL are part of a general theory of language that sees grammar as a semantic system network of meaning potential. Emphasis is placed on a paradigmatic ordering of language and

meaning generated through systemic choice. To analyze instances of text means to move from instantiation and realization towards a theory of language systems that remains a constant theoretical entity. Pursuing a robust linguistic theory that is grounded foremost on language as system is an attempt at explaining the multiple instantiations of these systems that occur in the form of texts. Perhaps it goes without saying that the purpose of any grammar of language is one that concerns meaning—to decode texts of the language in the pursuit to understand what a text means. Yet until the question of how language goes about creating and expressing meaning is adequately addressed by attempting to abstract this process through both theoretical principle and actual language usage, a grammar of language tends to forfeit its explanatory power and purpose.

The two models used in this study, the transitive and ergative models, are comprehensive models from among those of SFL.²⁸⁹ The transitive and ergative models in this theoretical approach represent two different perspectives of viewing the clause within the overall system of transitivity. They both concern causality by putting emphasis on the notion that all processes are brought about somehow and they must also find their endpoint somewhere. The ergative model complements the transitive model by providing the other participant role in the clause that is semantically opposed to the role of Agent in the transitive model. This is the role of Medium. Together Agent and Medium form the two opposing roles of inherent participants directly involved in a process, creating a particular alignment between the two that exhibits a fundamental ergative feature of language. Moreover these two models are highly explanatory ones that effectively

²⁸⁹ For a summary of further research within SFL see Matthiessen, "Lexicogrammar in Systemic Functional Linguistics," 824–30. See Halliday, "Ideas About Language," 15–34; cf. Caffarel, Martin, and Matthiessen, *Language Typology: A Functional Perspective*.

broaden out the notion of transitivity and are quite capable of handling a wide array of clausal constructions and their complexities. They allow for a full spectrum of the lexicogrammatical cline, incorporate and define participant roles more precisely, and interpret a wide variety of circumstances associated with a process. In the next chapter, these two models, grounded in the theory of language and grammar within an SFL framework, will provide the basis for developing a working model of the ancient Greek voice system.

MODELLING THE ANCIENT GREEK VOICE SYSTEM

Introduction

In the previous chapter, a functional theory of human language was put forth as well as a particular description of grammar that together comprise a foundational linguistic theory known as Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). The language principles, concepts, and categories of this theory form the methodological basis for the construction of an interpretive model of voice for ancient Greek. Voice is one particular grammar system within a vast network of systems that comprise the grammar of the ancient Greek language as a whole. To gain a better understanding of voice as a particular system of the language, it helps to locate voice in the context of the whole language. The following is meant to be a continuation of the previous chapter by taking SFL theory and setting up a theoretical voice system for ancient Greek as a viable model that can be applied to the NT texts. Transitivity, as a central feature of the grammar of Greek, continues to be the focus in this chapter as it pertains to voice. The transitive and ergative models discussed in the previous chapter are adapted for ancient Greek, including the principles of SFL theory that form the basis for a better understanding of the Greek voice system.

The chapter opens with discussion that applies the principles of SFL to ancient Greek with emphasis on the systemic and structural components of the language. This will sketch out how Greek might be conceptualized both as a language as a whole and as a particular grammar that offers a description of the language. The next section

continues the discussion on transitivity by offering a particular model of the system network of voice. It envisions a language user travelling through the system of voice. It describes the various options that become available in this system and considers how meaning is produced through the selections that become formally expressed in the language. Next, with a model for the system network of voice in place, it is helpful to take a closer look at alignment systems as they pertain to Greek, with special focus on the basic syntactic system Greek uses—a nom-acc system. It follows from this that formulations of voice in ancient Greek have been made based on a nom-acc system, but this has presented its own difficulties in attempts to model voice according to this alignment patterning. As a conclusion to this chapter as well as an introduction into the next section of this study, some general descriptions of voice operating primarily according to an ergative system will be offered. How this happens will be the aim of the next three chapters further illuminating the nature of the voice system as a manifestation of specific alignment patternings. The modelling done in this chapter will provide the basis to describe and interpret in the following chapters what takes place in the systemic operations of the language as it pertains to verbal voice.

Ancient Greek as Language System and Language Structure

We meet the ancient Greek language today in the form of written texts. As a stage of the Greek language that is long past, the Koiné no longer has native speakers in existence for anyone to interact with Greek as a spoken language. The written texts that come down to us as ancient documents are linguistic phenomena—outward expressions of meanings that manifest the underlying semantic system at work in the use of language. This system

is the meaning potential of the language that provides the paradigmatic options available for selection in the production of meaning. The written texts of Greek are instantiations of the language and also realizations of its meaning potential that reside in its vast system network. Texts express three distinctive kinds of meaning as *metafunctions* of language—ideational, interpersonal, and textual—and these functions are built into the semantic system of Greek.

When we encounter a given stretch of text, it meets us as a text that exhibits the language at work within situational contexts. It is text that has been conditioned by its extra-linguistic context for making meaning. This context helped to determine the kind of route the user of the language took through the system network of the language, influencing choice, and moving toward increasing semantic delicacy. Finally the user arrived at a grammatical realization and produced a particular kind of contextually-embedded text. Interfacing with its extra-linguistic context, the language system construes meaning by organizing contextual meaning linguistically, transforming it into linguistic semantic content organized into metafunctions, transforming it again into wordings at the level of the lexicogrammar, and then again into formal expression as written forms of text. When markings on a page are in forms of individual letters of the Greek alphabet (including accent marks), these letters, either on their own or in combination with other letters, together form morphemes, the smallest units of meaning in a language. These letters group into larger units of meaning as words; words combine into word groups, word groups form into clauses, and clauses follow one after another to form larger blocks of discourse. A distinctive compositional structure to a Greek text is the result, conceptualized as a hierarchical rank scale whereby the constituents on this

scale manifest the systemic choices that have been made within the underlying lexicogrammatical systems.

Greek demonstrates these systemic and structural features by way of a simple example. In the clause, οὕτως γὰρ ἠγάπησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν κόσμον “For God so loved the world” (John 3:16), ὁ θεὸς, is a word group that is the product of a choice made from within the closed systems of case, gender, and number. The same is true for τὸν κόσμον, but it represents a different selection from among the paradigmatic options available among these three systems. Each of these two word groups is modified by specific final morphemes as inflectional endings that have been selected from the case, gender, and number systems. The word, ἠγάπησεν, is in a form also modified by morphemes but these represent different kinds of systemic output. The morphemes in this word signal selections within the systems of person, number, tense/aspect, voice, and mood. The word, οὕτως is an adjunct and also acts as a cohesive tie to previous clauses in the discourse. A translation for οὕτως as “thus so” or “in this manner/way” makes either anaphoric reference to previous clauses of the text or cataphoric reference pointing to the following *hina* clause. In any case, this indicates that the clause does not exist independently of its co-text. This word group, put together with the other two word groups, forms a clausal configuration. At the clause level a conjunction is given, γὰρ, that manifests a choice to form a clause complex by connecting this clause to words and clauses that come before this one in the text. This word functions cohesively to maintain continuity among various units of language, to build structure into the text, indicating further that this clause does not stand alone but is part of a larger group of clauses that produce discourse meaning.

As both system and structure involve the wordings of text, meaning has its output along a lexicogrammatical continuum as both lexis and grammar are complementary ends on this continuum working together to produce meaning. A sharp divide does not exist between lexis and grammar. In this Greek text, several individual lexical units have been selected to convey meaning but they originate from different points along the lexicogrammatical cline and also move along this cline. Toward the furthest point on the lexical end of the cline, the lexical units, ὁ θεός, τὸν κόσμον, and ἠγάπησεν belong to lexical open sets along the paradigmatic axis, but their meanings have been conditioned by grammaticalization as they move toward the grammatical end along the paradigmatic axis. The forms of these lexical units realize selections in the closed systems of case, gender, and number for ὁ θεός and τὸν κόσμον, and person, number, tense/aspect, voice, and mood for ἠγάπησεν in order to construe the meanings of these individual lexical items as parts that contribute to whole clausal meaning. The adjunct, οὕτως, sits on the syntagmatic axis of the grammatical end of the cline because, though it is indeclinable (it does not undergo any morphological change as a result of grammaticalization), οὕτως enters into a grammatical relationship with the words it modifies, thus modulating in this way the meaning of the clause. Likewise, the articles, ὁ and τὸν, have a demonstrative “pointing” function for nouns and substantives to represent, refer, or specify. But unlike οὕτως, they are declinable, highly affected by closed systems of grammar, and in this regard are further down the grammatical end of the cline. And γὰρ is another indeclinable lexical unit whose function is also syntagmatic by joining other units together.

The systemic selections that this stretch of text exhibits produce a syntagmatic ordering whereby all the constituents chosen in this text operate in relationship to each

other to produce clausal meaning. Each constituent has a role to play in the clause and this is also the product of systemic choice. Along the syntagmatic axis on the grammar end of the continuum, each unit belongs to a word class to clarify each unit's distinctive range of grammatical function in relation to other units in the stretch of text: οὕτως: *adverb*; γὰρ: *conjunction*; ἠγάπησεν: *verb*; ὁ: *article*; θεός: *noun*; τὸν: *article*; κόσμον: *noun*. The clausal structure produced as a result of systemic choice also forms a sequence of these lexical units (syntagm) as a configuration of functions. However, in order to construe meaning as a whole clausal structure among these lexical units, these word classes move into more specific semanto-syntactic categories for a particular kind of functional configuration governed by one of the three metafunctions. Any given Greek clause is a highly composite entity that can be viewed in a three dimensional way comprising the three metafunctions as three strands of meaning in a clause.

The ideational metafunction²⁹⁰ is the line of meaning in a clause that involves the representation of human experience and how a person orders and reflects upon one's experiences linguistically. Porter adds that "subject matter, semantic domains, and participants constitute the basic semantic material of the ideational metafunction."²⁹¹ Voice in ancient Greek belongs to this metafunction because it contributes to the construal of meaning by representing experience primarily in how the subject participant relates to the verbal process without neglecting the experience of all other participants of a clause.²⁹² Although voice belongs primarily to the ideational metafunction, there is also

²⁹⁰ The focus here is on only one metafunction, the ideational metafunction, since this is primarily the metafunction that pertains to verbal voice.

²⁹¹ Porter, "The Ideational Metafunction and Register," 152.

²⁹² By contrast, the interpersonal metafunction sees the clause as an exchange that utilizes language to enact social relationships as a communicative dynamic between speaker and listener. The textual metafunction sees the clause as a message that enables the construction of text to occur such as

some interaction with the textual metafunction since this metafunction enables the other two to occur and voice seems to play a part in creating texture in discourse.

The semantic system of the ideational metafunction creates a distinctive configuration of the clause consisting of (1) a verbal *process*, (2) *participants* involved in the process, and (3) *circumstances* associated with the process. The underlying semantic system at work for this configuration is the *system of transitivity* that involves a broader definition of transitive relations in which all the constituents of a clause work together to produce clausal meaning. In other words, each constituent is involved by playing its own part and interacting with other constituents in realizing meaning. Within the system of transitivity, meaning construed in terms of the ideational metafunction produces specific roles for the words that have been grouped according to word classes. Now nouns become participants in this system, verbs become processes, and prepositions along with other adjuncts can expand the experiential core of a clause as circumstantial constituents. In the Greek clause, ὁ ποιμὴν ὁ καλὸς τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ τίθησιν ὑπὲρ τῶν προβάτων ‘The good shepherd lays down his life on behalf of the sheep’ (John 10:11), the ideational function of this clause is to represent linguistically a particular experience involving a shepherd and his sheep. The verbal process in this clause is τίθησιν, the main participants are ὁ ποιμὴν ὁ καλὸς and τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ, and the circumstance associated with the process is ὑπὲρ τῶν προβάτων. Beginning with the process, τίθησιν, as the central constituent in this clause for construing clausal meaning, transitivity takes place among the constituents of this clause as each one interacts with the verbal process and each

organizing its information, the flow of discourse, and grammatical and semantic continuity so that textual cohesion can be realized. See Thompson, *Introducing Functional Grammar*, 26–35.

other. Both participants are directly involved in the process because they both contribute to the manifestation of the verbal process itself. The genitive pronoun, αὐτοῦ, realizes a selection in the system that the participant, τὴν ψυχὴν, is also in a particular relationship of belonging or possession to the participant, ὁ ποιμὴν ὁ καλός. There is a circumstance realized by a prepositional phrase that attends to this interaction taking place in the experiential core of the clause that optionally augments this core in the form of the phrase ὑπὲρ τῶν προβάτων. Because it is a circumstance, the added participant, τῶν προβάτων, is indirectly involved, but it benefits from the verbal process and the interaction taking place among the two participants that are directly involved in the process. Thus, the transitive operations taking place involve all the parts of the clause and each constituent in this configuration has a role to play in representing this particular experience linguistically. All three semantic categories—process, participant, and circumstance—work together to produce clausal meaning in the form of configurations that are the product of choices made in the system network.

The verbal process is always the central constituent in a clause or configuration because without a verbal process, a given stretch of text has not yet fully reached “clausehood.”²⁹³ Once the verbal process has been determined in the system, it needs at least one participant to be involved to form the experiential center of clausal meaning. Participants are involved in the process in some way and “every experiential type of clause has at least one participant.”²⁹⁴ There is always one necessary participant that has

²⁹³ Sometimes in Greek there is no verb stated, but instead a linking verb or ‘to be’ verb is implied. These are relational clauses that should still be called full clauses because the verbal process is there, only unstated.

²⁹⁴ Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 221. A verb such as χαίρειν in the NT, for example, is usually glossed as “Greetings!” and has no stated subject. It is an infinitival form that expresses active voice, and by having voice, it means the verbal process refers to an implied subject. This subject initiates calling or saluting the addressee. Usually, but not always, this occurs in a way that communicates a sense of

the closest relationship to the process among all participants (if there is more than one participant in a clause). This primary participant involved in the verbal process is the subject of the clause in relation to the verb. The involvement of any other participant in a clause is predicated upon this role of the subject and its direct relationship to the verb as the two together form the nucleus of a clause. This subject-verb relationship is the basis for voice alternations in the grammar. In the following section, syntactic relationships as they pertain to voice are discussed in further detail. These relationships manifest choices that are made within the system network of voice in order to help further construe experiential meaning linguistically.

The System Network of Voice

In language production, word groups move into relationships with each other and systemic choices produce various syntactic roles that are grouped according to general classes of the grammar (nouns, adjectives, verbs, prepositions, etc.). As word groups of different classes enter into the system of transitivity, they realize semanto-syntactic categories created by the system of transitivity as word groups take on the status of process, participant, and circumstance. These three categories realize transitivity, but more specifically as realizations of ergative and nominative-accusative systems that belong to the system of transitivity of Greek. Each of these systems has its own marking system on either participants or processes in order to express its patternings. The nom-acc system of Greek is expressed by marking participants according to an inflectional case system (nom./voc., acc., dat., gen.), in which options open up in the system to distinguish

value, honour, importance, and sometimes praise. In such forms, a finite verbal idea with subject and verb, "I greet," is nominalized as an infinitival form, construing the verbal process as "Greetings."

transitive roles, resulting in functional differentiation among participants. It is voice, however, that further defines and specifies what these functional roles are, namely as semantic roles, and how participants in such roles interact with each other. In a nom-acc system, the entry condition for its case system is *participant* and selections made for each participant are expressed by case forms.²⁹⁵ When a participant of a clause has entered into the status of “subject,” this is typically realized by the nominative case, but not always. The nominative case designates or “names” the participant that holds this particular subject function, which sets it apart from other participants because of its close and direct relationship to the process. If the clause has a verb and therefore signals voice, then this opens up options in the system for voice roles that are even more specific participant roles (Agent, Goal; Medium, Range), which will be taken up in more detail below. In Greek, an ergative patterning is expressed by marking the verbal process with different voice inflectional endings (e.g. $-\mu\alpha\iota$ paradigm, $-\omega$ paradigm, including the $-(\theta)\eta$ - tense formative) and this is a manifestation of transitivity. Whereas Greek uses a nom-acc system to designate general transitive roles, a shift or split takes place in the language, utilizing an ergative system when voice operations are selected in the lexicogrammar to specify transitive roles.²⁹⁶ Voice, as a manifestation of an ergative system, further defines the semantic roles the participants of a clause play with special emphasis on the role of the subject in the clause. The language user arrives at the system of voice in the language

²⁹⁵ Circumstances also select for case, but more precisely, it is the participant that belongs to the circumstance that realizes case.

²⁹⁶ It is common for a language to demonstrate such functional “splits” as an occurrence of transitivity. These can occur in different ways along several lines including voice (e.g. tense/aspect, number, person, clause coordination, or other syntactic criteria). See Dixon, *Ergativity*, 70–110; DeLancey, “An Interpretation of Split Ergativity and Related Patterns,” 626–57; Comrie, “Ergativity,” 329–94. In light of this, it would be inaccurate, however, to call Greek a “split-ergative” language because its primary alignment system is not ergative, but nominative-accusative, having only retained certain features of ergativity.

network when a clause has a verb to express voice, and once a participant has been established in the subject role of the clause, realized by the case-marking system (if the subject is not expressed in the verb itself).

Entering into the voice system in the grammar means shifting from a nom-acc system realized by syntactic roles and its case system, towards more specific semantic roles, governed by the verbal process. Voice operates according to an ergative system, in contrast to a nom-acc system, which makes no distinction between different kinds of subject. And as linguist Jessica Coon has emphasized, languages that demonstrate such split features, exhibiting both accusative and ergative systems, are not limited to ergative patterning languages only. These occur in nom-acc systems as well, only that “these split-conditioning characteristics are obfuscated in nominative-accusative patterns.”²⁹⁷ Voice in ancient Greek signals its ergative patterning by marking the verb, not nominals, thus enabling it to still work in conjunction with a nom-acc system, and not in place of it. The configuration of an ergative system enables the language user to define further nom-acc transitive roles based on the participant in the clause the verbal process *affects* and on which it has an impact, while special attention is given to the subject’s role in this.²⁹⁸ And having an affected participant means that the verbal process is caused by something and it originates from a source. Thus, voice is a system of causality and affectedness in relation to the subject of a clause, and entry into this system is based on the condition of *causality*. In the lexicogrammar, however, the term used is *agency*, which refers to the cause and source of the verbal process.

²⁹⁷ Coon, *Aspects of Split-Ergativity*, 7, 186.

²⁹⁸ See Klaiman, “A Typology of Voice Systems,” 33; Bauer, *Archaic Syntax*, 36.

When the language user enters the voice system within the larger system network, two mutually exclusive and opposing clause types open up first, *Affected* clause and *Unaffected* clause. In an *Unaffected* clause, it is systemically encoded that the subject is not affected by the process, but rather the process proceeds from the subject, potentially affecting another participant or multiple participants if these exist in a clause. This subject role and its corresponding clause type, *Unaffected* clause, are realized formally in the verb by selecting from among the active ending paradigms, both primary and secondary.

In an *Affected* clause, it is systemically encoded that the subject is affected by the verbal process as to the process entering the domain of the subject. This subject role and its corresponding clause type, *Affected* clause, are realized formally by selecting from among the middle/passive ending paradigms, primary and secondary. This includes the $(\theta)\eta$ - tense formative in aorist (with active endings) tense and future tense.²⁹⁹

These two clause types make use of two opposing semantic roles of the subject—Agent and Medium.³⁰⁰ Agent belongs to *Unaffected* clauses and is the role in which the subject is the startpoint and cause of the verbal process. Sometimes the lexical semantics of the verb construe the subject participant as affected, in which the verbal process extends only as far as the subject itself. This lexical feature, however, is not encoded in the subject role itself of Agent acting as cause (startpoint) of the process. Medium, on the other hand, belongs to *Affected* clauses and is the role in which the subject is the endpoint

²⁹⁹ The peculiar presence of additional forms in the aorist and future tense-forms will be addressed in chapters six and seven.

³⁰⁰ In a traditional ergative marking pattern, the subject as Agent would be realized by the ergative case, that is, the nominal that ‘works’ in an agentive role to bring about the process as source of energy or power for the process. And Medium would be realized by the absolutive case, as that which displays the resultant completion or totality of the action.

and realization of the verbal process. These two paradigmatic options realized as opposing clause types, represent causality and affectedness encoded in the two voices for ancient Greek, active voice and middle-passive voice.³⁰¹

Furthermore, when the option of *Affected* clause is chosen, this opens up two further options, *Middle* clause and *Passive* clause. In a *Middle* clause, the subject is Medium and here the user enters into the system pathway, “Middle.” In this use, agency is portrayed as *internal* to the Process + Medium core of the clause, but not encoded in the role of Medium. Lexical semantics construe the subject participant as having a feature of agency, causing the process, even though this is not encoded in the subject role itself of Medium actualizing the process. This is the middle use of the middle-passive voice. In a *Passive* clause, the subject is also Medium and the user enters the system pathway called “Passive,” but unlike Middle clauses, agency is *external* to the Process + Medium core of the clause, whether or not agency is made explicit. This is the passive use of the middle-passive voice.

Ergativity in Greek, expressed through voice according to an ergative alignment system, enables two fundamentally opposing roles for the subject to co-exist, according to the participant that is affected by the verbal process. From this point of view, an ergative voice system allows the subject to be either an affected or non-affected participant, adding more definition to this role and other roles of a clause. Voice in Greek operates on the basis of “the participant to which accrue the principal effects of the action.”³⁰² To this end, in an ergative system, there is differentiation between the kind of

³⁰¹ This study treats the middle and passive uses as comprising one voice.

³⁰² Klaiman, *Typology*, 47. As Klaiman also observes, the principle of affectedness vs. unaffectedness is fundamental to voice systems of languages around the world. It is applicable to ancient Greek as well, as other studies on Greek voice have already shown (e.g. see Allan, *The Middle Voice in*

subject at work in a given clause type and this can be seen by applying the Transitive and Ergative models of SFL. The Transitive model helps to show how the subject performs an agentive role that causes a verbal process to occur. The verbal process can then extend beyond the Agent subject to affect a Goal participant, or it may not. The Ergative model helps to show how the subject performs in a role that is affected by the verbal process, actualizing the process and realizing it. The Ergative model lays emphasis on how the verbal process remains within the domain of the subject and the verbal process, which together form the nucleus of a clause. Both the Transitive and Ergative models are meant to be explanatory models that describe the different operational parts to the voice system.

The whole voice system, as argued in this study, operates according to an ergative alignment system, whose fundamental distinction from a nom-acc system is having two opposing functions of the subject in both form and function. The Transitive and Ergative models help to bring this out and explain how ancient Greek voice is an ergative system by utilizing one model for each of these two functions of the subject, as each operates within its own type of clause in regard to voice.

Active Voice (The Transitive Model)

When the language user selects *Unaffected* clause, the user enters the system pathway, “active voice.” In regard to the role of the subject, this is also the pathway of “unaffectedness” as the contrastive feature to “affectedness” of the subject in the role of Medium (see below). In the system of transitivity, the configuration of process and participant(s) constitutes the experiential center of a clause. There is always one primary

Ancient Greek). Differences in analysis emerge, however, in how affectedness vs. unaffectedness are interpreted as functional, semantic features in a given clause.

participant with the closest relationship to the process and from here the process may or may not extend to other participants. In the active voice, this one primary participant is the Agent, and the selection in the active voice in regard to the subject is *+Agent*. the relationship between the Agent and the verbal process forms the nucleus of an active clause. The role of Agent is the participant that causes the process to occur which can include a sense of volition and control by the subject towards the process as well. By choosing the system pathway of the active voice, the role of Agent as causality for the process is portrayed explicitly in a clause.

In the active voice, the Agent causes and initiates the verbal process, but depending on the lexical semantics of the process, the process can actualize in the Agent alone and not in another participant. This is the option of Agent and *-Goal*, in which there is no other participant to which the process extends. In such cases, the process does not extend out of the Agent + Process nucleus but remains within it, thus conveying the process as also coming about through the Agent or happening to the Agent. This occurrence more traditionally would be called an intransitive verb. In the active voice, actualization of the verbal process in the Agent is not encoded grammatically into the role of Agent, but rather is due to the lexical semantics of the verb. In such cases, the Agent realizes or maintains final embodiment of the process in addition to its role of causality. But this final realization of the process is minimized in its portrayal of the Agent's involvement in the process in order to bring forth the Agent as the startpoint of the process. As a voice function, the Agent has a primary causal role to the process, to put into the foreground the source of origin and causality of the process and to bring this out explicitly in the role of Agent in the clause.

In an *Unaffected* clause, if the process extends out from the Process + Agent nucleus of the clause to another participant, then further opposing options open up in the active voice, +*Goal* and +*Range*.

There is no additional morphological form on the verb to differentiate these options, but the presence of another participant in the clause indicates that +*Goal* or +*Range* has been selected. A participant is Goal or Range depending on how the meaning of the verb is portrayed by the clause. The role of Goal typically marked by the accusative case, though not always, is the participant that stands within the experiential centre of the process as affected most directly by the process and the Agent. The Goal is the participant through which the process actualizes. When the process moves out from the Agent, the impact of the process is on the Goal.³⁰³ In contrast, the role of Range is a participant involved in the process when the process moves out from the Agent, but the meaning of the verb construes it such that the process has no impact on this participant. The use of terms such as, Goal and Range, distinguishes between two kinds of object roles in more traditional terminology. It does so by clarifying that not every object is affected by the verbal process. Whereas Goal is the affected participant, perhaps akin most closely to what is thought to be the traditional object role, Range differs by expanding the process itself in some way (also marked typically by the accusative case in Greek). But it does so more circumstantially, by either specifying and defining the process further or marking out the domain in which the process occurs. Here voice

³⁰³ There may be more than one Goal in a clause and depending on the type of process of a clause, there are different types of Goal as well: Goal as Impact, Goal as Creativity, and Goal as Phenomenon (see chapter 3).

overlaps closely with case in which Range marks out the boundaries or extent of the process.³⁰⁴ In this regard Range also can be expressed by any of the oblique cases.

An example of active voice clauses that have participants as Goal is *πατάξας δὲ τὴν πλευρὰν τοῦ Πέτρου ἤγειρεν αὐτὸν* “And striking the side of Peter, [the angel] woke him” (Acts 12:7). Two verbal processes in the active voice, *πατάξας* and *ἤγειρεν* each have an impact on its Goal, *τὴν πλευρὰν τοῦ Πέτρου* and *αὐτὸν* by changing the state of these participants. Since an ergative patterning orients the clause towards the affected participant, here as two Goal participants, the reader’s attention is directed towards the processes coming about through these participants. By contrast, a participant that is Range is in *δι’ ὑπομονῆς τρέχωμεν τὸν προκειμένον ἡμῖν ἀγῶνα* “Let us run with endurance the race set before us” (Heb 12:1). The participant “race” in this active clause, marked accusative case, is not affected by the process of “run” in that some kind of change can be observed in this participant by the process like in the first example. Rather, due to the meaning of the verb, the affected participant is the subject, “us” who “runs the race” in this clause, orienting the reader toward the subject. Thus, “race” marks out the scope of the process; it designates the domain or arena in which the process “run” takes place. The clause is an active voice clause to show grammatically that agency to the process is fully embodied by the subject. However, there is also an intransitive idea here in that the participant, “τὸν προκειμένον ἡμῖν ἀγῶνα,” read as, *lit.* “the put-before-us race,” helps form the entire verbal idea embodied by the subject by further specifying the process of running, rather than being affected by it.

³⁰⁴ See discussion on case below.

Further, if Goal is selected in the system, this opens up two additional options *+Indirect Goal* and *-Indirect Goal*. These options may be added once Goal has been selected and established in the clause. If *-Indirect Goal* is selected, no additional participants involved in the process besides Goal are added to the clause. Goal is the only participant in the configuration that actualizes the process. If *+Indirect Goal* is selected, this opens up two more options, *+Recipient* and *+Client*.³⁰⁵

Typically marked by the dative case in Greek but not limited to this case, both these roles are similar to the role of Goal in that they are participants affected by the process. Their relationship to Goal, however, is a step removed by being affected by the process more indirectly, usually in terms of some kind of advantage or disadvantage attributed to this participant or a circumstantial feature. Each of these roles is construed as affected by the process in slightly different ways in contrast to Goal as the role most directly affected by the process. The primary role is Recipient, which is the participant that the “goods” of the process are given *to*, as in *καὶ κατέκλασεν τοὺς ἄρτους καὶ ἐδίδου τοῖς μαθηταῖς* ‘and he broke the loaves and gave (them) *to the disciples*’ (Mark 6:41). Here, as in most clauses with an indirect participant, there is another participant, here *τοὺς ἄρτους*, that the Recipient “receives” due to the meaning of the verbal process. In some cases, however, the meaning of the verbal process can allow for an interpretation of this participant as Client, who is the participant that the “services” of the process are done *for* as in *ἔστησαν αὐτῷ τριάκοντα ἀργύρια* ‘They placed (set out) *for him* thirty pieces of

³⁰⁵ Selection of *+Indirect Goal* modulates the clause into a traditional ditransitive clause, in which an additional object participant is involved, a third role in addition to Agent and Goal. These are also called “extended transitive clauses.” Having more than one Goal participant is always a subtype of traditional transitive clauses and does not belong to an intransitive category (Dixon, *Ergativity*, 6, 114, 120–23). This is important for interpreting configurations in the middle-passive voice, especially the theta/eta form later on in this study.

silver' (Matt 26:15). Although this example $\alpha\upsilon\tau\tilde{\omega}$ also could be Recipient, which could translate roughly as 'They put *to him* thirty pieces of silver,' it is possible to lay emphasis also on the process ("service") that was done for the participant, that is, the act of 'placing, setting out' the money for him. In any case, in these participants +*Indirect Goal* is encoded even though these additional roles can overlap closely with circumstantial roles of the clause as the line between these participants and circumstances is not strictly drawn. Other factors besides lexical meaning need to be considered as well such as relationship to co-text, in order to help determine if these participants, Recipient or Client, have been chosen in the system.

Middle-Passive Voice (The Ergative Model)

When the language user chooses the system pathway, "affectedness" in regard to the role of the subject, Medium, the user enters the pathway of the "middle-passive voice."³⁰⁶

This is the contrastive feature to "unaffectedness" of the subject embodied in the role of Agent in the active voice.³⁰⁷ In so-called ergative or split-ergative languages, a distinction is maintained between an affected subject of intransitive verbs and an unaffected subject of transitive verbs, generally speaking, and typically this distinction for each kind of subject is realized formally through different markings on the subject nominal.

Typologically, an ergative alignment patterning has to do with the meaning of the verbal

³⁰⁶ This study would prefer to call this voice simply, "Middle Voice," because this designation refers to the defining role of Medium for this voice in which the subject acts as a *means* through which the process can be actualized. However, "Middle-Passive" is used to recognize the option of passivity that also comprises this voice and plays a significant part, since it too is defined by Medium as its role of the subject.

³⁰⁷ To say the role of the subject in the middle-passive voice is "affected" is certainly not saying anything new as many have advanced this term long before this study. This study acknowledges especially Kemmer, *The Middle Voice*, and Allan, *The Middle Voice in Ancient Greek* in addition to Greek grammars that employ this terminology. To at least gain a general sense of what voice in Greek is about, "affectedness vs. unaffected" in regard to the subject is still a valid and useful notion.

process as this is what determines whether or not a verb takes an object, according to traditional grammar. Accordingly, ancient Greek utilizes a nom-acc system because it does not make any formal distinctions between subjects of transitive and intransitive verbs. However, Greek does not limit the relationship between subject and verb to a nom-acc system. There is more to this relationship that is manifested through voice which uses an ergative system to make distinctions that further define this relationship.

In nom-acc systems and abs-erg systems in languages, including active languages, the alignment patterning manifested by a language has to do primarily with the meaning of the verb. There is always a semantic basis for process and participant relations.³⁰⁸ Voice in Greek does not neglect this as a verb's meaning factors into the route that is taken in the voice system network, but at the same time voice is not limited by a verb's meaning. Theoretically, instead it enables a user to convey the subject as affected or unaffected regardless of the meaning of the verb, though some verbs do appear in only one voice. In both form and function, displaying affectedness of the subject is what distinguishes an ergative alignment system most from a nom-acc system and voice makes this distinction more salient. Formally, in a nom-acc system there is only one inflectional marking that stands for different roles of the subject. Since Greek uses this system for its syntactic distinctions, voice makes separate sets of options available to signal the different and contrastive roles for the subject, laying emphasis on the various portrayals of the subject. In this regard, the middle-passive voice underscores the ergative character of voice, although the active voice is also an integral part of an ergative patterning.

³⁰⁸ Dixon, *Ergativity*, 7; Bauer, *Archaic Syntax*, 11–14.

In the middle-passive voice, the option, +*Medium*, is chosen for the role of the subject. The Medium is the one primary and obligatory participant in an ergative patterning with the closest relationship to the verbal process and together Process + Medium forms the nucleus of clausal meaning in the middle-passive voice. Medium is the role that actualizes the process. It is the role in which the process comes to its endpoint. The subject in this role becomes the host and final embodiment of the process in which the process comes to its realization. The middle-passive voice makes it grammatically explicit that the end of the process manifests in the subject as Medium.

Middle Uses

In the pathway, *Affected* clause, which identifies the middle-passive voice, the process finds its endpoint in the subject participant. This results in the startpoint of the process splitting into two further options, *Internal* agency and *External* agency in relation to the Process + Medium core of the clause. *Internal* agency produces a *Middle* clause and in this use the entire process from its startpoint (causality) to its endpoint (affectedness) comes about through the Medium, occurring within the domain of this participant. In this option agency is portrayed as internal. In middle uses, the subject actualizes the process as Medium, in whom the process comes about, but the Medium is also responsible for initiating the process. However, in this use, the subject is not playing two roles here as Medium and Agent. To do so would mean that in this option two opposing roles are encoded simultaneously and made equally grammatically explicit in the subject. Rather, in the conceptualization of the middle, there is a difference between the explicit role of Medium and the same participant having a feature of agency due to the lexical semantics

of the verb or how the user wants to portray the verbal idea. Whereas in the active voice, the primary role of the subject is the Agent and the subject therefore encodes causality, in the middle use the Medium does not encode causality, but causality is interpreted as occurring in the Medium due to the meaning of the verbal process. In middle uses, emphasis is put on the subject participant as affected most directly by the process, realizing the process within the domain of the subject. Thus any agency, which is based on unaffectedness, is portrayed as internal to the Process + Medium core. Though agency is present and included in the subject and the meaning of the clause, there is no special attention drawn to this agentive feature. Agency is conveyed but minimized since the greater intent is to convey the final endpoint of the process finding its actualization in the Medium. To say agency is internal to the Medium and Process also means that the process is represented as self-engendering or self-caused.³⁰⁹

Although agency is present in the Medium, agency may be minimized to the point that the language user wants full focus of the clause on the final result of the process in the subject. By using a middle clause configuration the user can convey that the agency of the process involves the properties of the subject itself for enabling the process to occur, including such emotive features as volition, control, and animacy of the subject, among others.³¹⁰ Thus, a clause can be formed by the Process + Medium nucleus alone

³⁰⁹ See Eberhard, *Gadamer's Hermeneutics*, 23; Benveniste, "Actif et Moyen dans Le Verbe," 172; Klaiman, *Typology*, 28; Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 342–43.

³¹⁰ To use a different kind of example, in English, the metallic and water-bearing properties of "pipes" as subject in the clause, *the pipes froze quickly* can help to portray "pipes" as self-causing the process in addition to "pipes" being directly affected by the process of freezing and the final embodiment of the process. This configuration can construe this experience as self-causing with "internal" causality even though it may be understood that there are also other "external" factors of agency involved (freezing temperatures, lack of insulation, etc.) that cause the pipes to freeze.

(as in the example used above) since here both agency and actualization of the process (affectedness) take place.

In *Middle* clause types having *Internal* agency, the focus of the clause is on the Medium + Process core of the clause, in which causality and affectedness both are fulfilled. When *Middle* clause is selected, another option opens up, +*Range* and – *Range*. If +*Range* is selected, the clause is expanded beyond the Process + Medium nucleus to include a participant, *Range*, that either specifies the process or designates the domain in which the process occurs without the intent of construing the process as directly affecting or having a final impact on this particular participant. In a Medium + Process + *Range* construction, the process finds its endpoint and realization in the Medium as the participant most affected by the process, but further specification of the scope of the process may be expressed by the *Range* as in δέξασθε τὸν ἔμφυτον λόγον “Receive *the implanted word*” (Jas 1:21). Here the participant, τὸν ἔμφυτον λόγον augments the Process + Medium core, δέξασθε, by further specifying the process itself. This means that *Range* extends the process in some way, typically marked by the accusative case, but does so more circumstantially rather than being a participant that the process directly affects. “Implanted word” is not directly affected by the act of receiving, its status does not undergo any change. Rather change occurs in the subject in relation to this verb, with reference to the “implanted word” that adds further description to the process, “receive.”³¹¹ In this example voice also overlaps closely with case because

³¹¹ Configurations such as these also have been identified as “extended intransitive” clauses when a middle use aligns with an intransitive meaning of the verbal process and an additional participant involved, forming two core roles and not just one. In these clauses, the subject is affected by the process, typically marked as an intransitive subject, but an object participant, marked in the dative case, though not always, specifies *what* it is that the process refers to. This participant also is non-obligatory and can be omitted. See Dixon, *Ergativity*, 122–24. This configuration type is attested in several modern languages around the world, marking an affected subject in relation to the process. Examples include,

Range is a participant that marks out the boundaries or extent of the process. This same function of Range occurs in the active voice as well as discussed above.

Passive Uses

The other option of *Affected* clauses is *External* agency in relation to the Process + Medium core. This produces a Passive clause of the middle-passive voice that is different in function from the middle uses. Both middle and passive uses share the commonality of subject as Medium, but passive uses differ from middle uses in that they convey a transitive idea. Although passive uses belong to the middle-passive voice and the subject is in the role of Medium, in passive uses the Medium is affected by a separate agentive participant, whether stated or unstated, that is not the subject participant. Agency is portrayed as external to the Process + Medium core of a clause, typically through a circumstance (prepositional phrase). Moreover, in passive uses external agency is always present, but whether or not it is grammatically expressed as an agentive feature is optional.

In passive uses, agency to the process is external, coming from outside the experiential centre of the clause, the Process + Medium core. Two further options open up in this pathway, *+Specified Agency* and *–Specified Agency* for the realization of agency in passive clauses. These options belong to the broader category of Circumstantial Agency.

If *+Specified Agency* is selected, a causal participant is stated and specified in the clause through a circumstantial element that augments the experiential centre, typically

among others, Tongan (Churchward, *Tongan Grammar*) and Tibetan (Chang and Chang, "Ergativity in Spoken Tibetan," 29).

realized in Greek by a prepositional phrase as in παρακαλούμεθα αὐτοὶ ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ “We ourselves are being comforted *by God*” (2 Cor 1:4). Agency is established in this clause by a circumstance of Manner that is interpreted as agentive to the process. The process of “comforting” is not caused by the subject in addition to the subject undergoing the process, but by another participant instead. Because it belongs to a circumstance, the agentive participant ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ is involved in the process only indirectly. This part of the system network shows how there is more indeterminacy between how participants and circumstances interact to contribute to the meaning of a clause. The boundaries between participants and circumstances are less defined. This enables a greater mixture of function between participants and circumstances in which the line is not so hard and fast between the two categories. This causal participant in a circumstance is interpreted as an indirect agent that supplies the causality for the process. More participant-like functions can occur in the clause among elements that have circumstantial properties and more circumstantial-like properties can be expressed among participants. It is a matter of interpretation whether the participant in a circumstantial element is an indirect agent or simply part of a circumstance. The circumstance may augment the clause by adding more circumstantial information to it without a feature of agency present, just providing some further description to the scope of the process. This would mean causality is internal to the subject, making such configurations middle. If the participant in the circumstance, however, has a causal idea in relation to the process, as providing a separate source from which the process then affects the Medium, then the participant is a specified indirect agent.

Further, key to passive uses is a transitive idea, defined here in the narrower sense of a participant causing a process which then transfers onto another participant. In this regard, a passive use may very well be derived from an active voice configuration (although this is not always necessary) in which the Goal participant in an active clause becomes the Medium in a passive clause and the Agent is indirectly expressed through a participant belonging to a circumstance.³¹² Returning to the example above, παρακαλούμεθα αὐτοὶ ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ, the active voice transitive idea from which this clause is derived would be “God comforts us.” Passive uses can be syntactically derived configurations from conceptualized transitive clauses expressed by the active voice when this voice contains a Goal participant. Passive uses in Greek can “split” between nom-acc patternings and ergative patternings as to the kind of derived passivity, i.e. derived transitivity, that is portrayed by the middle-passive voice.³¹³ Most common are passive clauses derived from a nom-acc patterning. Signalled by the middle-passive forms, the theta/eta form especially, in these configurations the subject as Medium is expressed by the nominative case, just like the active voice, unless the subject is built into the verbal form itself. Agency is expressed by a circumstance that has a participant interpreted as indirectly supplying causality to the Medium + Process core. In these clauses the transitive idea is maintained in which the circumstantial nominal is interpreted as causing the verbal process to affect the subject.

³¹² Reasons for using such a derived configuration in the language may be to depersonalize a clause (Bauer, *Archaic Syntax*, 36) or for discourse coordination, especially in maintaining the prominence of the subject (Dixon, *Ergativity*, 12–13), or topic continuity or focus (Rijksbaron, *Syntax and Semantics*, 141).

³¹³ A helpful discussion for seeing occurrences of passivity between ergative and nom-acc systems is in Dixon, *Ergativity*, 6–18.

At this point in the system network, another option is available, *-Specified Agency*, in which a feature of agency that belongs to a circumstantial element of the clause is not stated in the clause nor is it specified. In such cases, agency to the process is still present, including a transitive idea, however, causality is exophoric to the clause. It lies entirely outside of the clause, having already been stated elsewhere in the co-text or left to implication from the discourse as in *παρεγίνοντο καὶ ἐβαπτίζοντο* ‘They were coming out and being baptized’ (John 3:23). For both these processes, the subject is Medium (‘They’), actualizing the acts of ‘coming out’ and ‘baptizing, (*lit.*)washing.’ The first process is middle use in which agency is internal to the Medium and the second process is passive use in which agency occurs external to the Medium. The people are not baptizing themselves but it is being done to them by an indirect agentive participant left unstated. A clue to the selection of *-Specified Agency* is that the clauses that come just before this one in this verse describe John the Baptist as being located at a body of water, Ἦν δὲ καὶ ὁ Ἰωάννης βαπτίζων ἐν Αἰνῶν ἐγγυὸς τοῦ Σαλείμ (John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim), making it unnecessary for the writer to specify indirect agency in this clause as to who is doing the baptizing.

When the language user enters into the pathway, *Passive* clause, which opens up the options, *+Specified Agency* and *-Specified Agency*, the user enters the route of passive use of the middle-passive voice. In this part of the system Medium is the affected entity only, having no feature of agency at all within the Process + Medium nucleus, thus altering to some degree the construal of Medium and the whole middle-passive clause. In passive uses, the process actualizes in the Medium, but another participant acts upon the Medium to bring this about. This function may be called passive use because of this

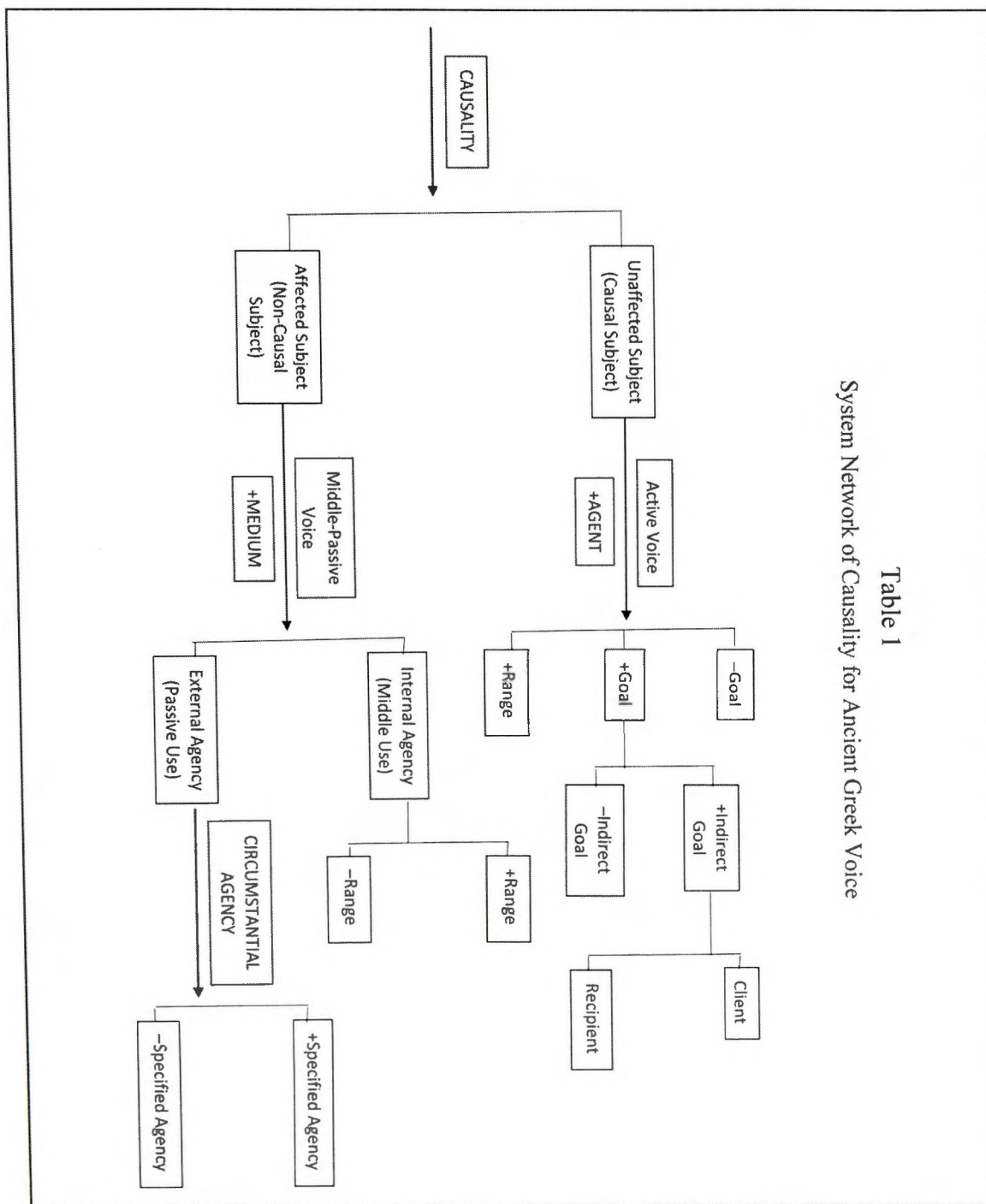
passive nuance brought to Medium, but understood on the basis that passive is one way of construing the Medium as both middle and passive voices together comprise the same voice domain.

Whether or not “passivity” is activated in the middle-passive voice network and its system pathway is taken, the semantic role of Medium remains fundamentally unchanged. This participant actualizes the verbal process as endpoint for the process and the ergative notion of affectedness with special focus on the experience of the subject is consistently maintained. Passivity may be seen as an optional pathway that can be taken within the system network whose meaning potential enhances the middle-passive voice by adding more specificity to how the Medium might be affected. In this way passivity, expressed through configurations derived from the active voice, is a feature that increases the capabilities of language expression and fulfils what is characteristic of verbal voice: it supplies further specification as to the kind of relationship participants have to the verbal process and among each other. According to a systemic-functional depiction of voice, the role of Medium is a constant element in both middle and passive uses, while in both uses agency is the variable.

Finally, the causality of a process may often be portrayed as intentionally ambiguous in the middle-passive voice to bring out the opposite end of the process, that is, its final actualization in the subject as Medium. Causality, specified as an agentive feature to a clause, is either internal to the role of Medium within the Process + Medium nucleus of the clause (middle use), or causality is put out to the periphery of the clause as part of an optional circumstantial element that contains a participant interpreted as having a feature of agency and involved only indirectly (passive use). There is a distinction that

emerges in the middle-passive voice between these two “locations” of agency depicted in Medium participant clauses, one being internal to the experiential core of the clause and the other being external to it. This distinction helps to conceptualize the middle-passive voice as a single semantic domain based on the role of Medium that may be nuanced by such shifts in agency.

Table 1
System Network of Causality for Ancient Greek Voice



Having described a system network for voice according to the tenets and models of transitivity in SFL, an alignment system upon which the grammar of voice operates must be properly identified. As noted in chapter one, languages recognize and “distinguish between clauses that involve a verb and one core noun phrase (intransitive clauses) and those that involve a verb and two or more core NPs (transitive clauses, including ditransitive as a subtype).”³¹⁴ Linguists have identified three general alignment systems, active, ergative, and nom-acc, that all languages utilize in order to organize subject—verb—object relations. Ancient Greek utilizes a nom-acc system in its grammar, but an ergative system is also at work specifically for operations of voice. The next section first offers some description of Greek’s nom-acc system, followed by a brief discussion on how difficulties have arisen in modelling the grammar of voice by restricting formulations of voice to a nom-acc system only. Finally, the chapter will conclude by stating that a shift in alignment systems from nom-acc into ergative is what enables the grammar of voice to operate, thereby setting the stage for Part Three of this study which offers an analysis of voice in the NT.

The Nominative–Accusative Alignment System of Ancient Greek

In a nom-acc system, there is one main syntactic split or pivot that occurs between participants. This occurs between selections in the system that realize participants as—traditionally speaking—subject and object. The split makes clear where the subject/object distinction lies in a clause. In Greek finite clauses, this split would take place between the participant in the nominative/vocative case and the other three (oblique) cases. Realizing

³¹⁴ Dixon, *Ergativity*, 6.

a nom-acc system, the case system signals the subject as a kind of agent or doer, and the objects, direct and indirect, as that which receive the action somehow. It can be observed in modern Greek grammars that attempts are made to proceed on the assumption that there is one general *macrorole* of each case form that all the different uses of a case fall under in order to demonstrate a constant function of each case form. Any further specification of roles is defined by the meaning of the verb, according to the production of semantic classes or domains.³¹⁵ Generalized case roles of subject, direct object, and indirect object form syntactic relations among each other, realizing a nom-acc system in which the clause is oriented toward the subject as the unmarked participant, not making any semantic distinctions formally that reflect the type of verb.

Among these participant roles marked by their respective endings, the nominative case typically is the case that holds the closest and primary relationship to the verbal process in a given transitive configuration.³¹⁶ Naming the participant in the nominative case marks this primary split. The nominative participant enters into its close relationship to the verbal process and performs its role that belongs to the nominative case.

³¹⁵ In modern grammars, definitions of participant functions realized by case usually correlate closely to syntactic categories of English. It typically goes something like this. Among the five cases available in the case system, participants can become subject participants, typically expressed by the nominative case, or direct object participants, usually expressed by the accusative case (although by no means exclusively), be participants that may qualify or restrict other participants marked by the genitive case, specify a certain kind of relationship among participants, especially indirect object, as marked by the dative case, or a participant may be addressed directly using the vocative case. Rodney Decker draws a close correlation to English by stating that the Greek nominative and accusative cases “are parallel to the subjective and objective cases in English.” The subjective case in English is for the subject as doer of the action of the verb and the objective case is for the direct object as that which receives the action of the verb (Decker, *Reading Koine Greek*, 34.) Granted, this is an introductory teaching textbook designed to make such grammar concepts easier to understand for students. But the seeds that produce difficulties later on lie in what these simplified explanations assume.

³¹⁶ As noted above, in Greek the subject is not always stated in a separate word in the nominative case, but is often built into the verb formally because verbs are also inflected for person. Despite this occurrence, the *role* of the nominative case is still in effect. The following discussion on the nominative case assumes both kinds of formal expression of the subject.

Traditionally this distinction has designated the nominative case as the subject case among all the cases, but the notion of subject is a multifaceted and complicated designation. Ancient grammarians called the nominative case the *naming case* because it can be the role of the clause that holds the main idea.³¹⁷ It can be used to direct attention to the main theme or topic of a clause, to shift the topic, or to make special reference to a particular element in the text. In this regard uses of the nominative case show various forms of expansion in the NT.³¹⁸ Defining the meaning of the nominative case by narrowing it down to a single definition is quite difficult, if not impossible, given its range of uses. Porter takes the approach that at best all we can do is circumscribe the nominative case's fundamental meaning as that which simply designates a nominal idea in order to allow for its many different uses.³¹⁹ As noted in chapter one, the development of Greek into a nom-acc alignment system stabilized the syntax of the language by providing a consistent marking pattern to accommodate a wide range of lexicogrammatical options among clausal participants. Greek demonstrates the natural tendencies of languages to develop toward "evolutionarily stable categories" in which "frequently used patterns sediment into conventionalized patterns."³²⁰ But this also has led to a highly generalized formal system for this stage of Greek in which one case form

³¹⁷ Robertson, *Grammar*, 456; see also Grimes, "Signals of Discourse Structure in Koine," 151–64.

³¹⁸ (1) In a predicate nominative construction, a participant in the nominative case can be joined with another participant also in the nominative by an equative or linking verb (relational process); (2) a participant in the nominative case can stand as an appositive to another participant in the nominative case to further specify, clarify, or describe another participant in the nominative case; (3) the general nominal notion can also expand into its own constructions that hold more independent status grammatically. These are often seen in various introductory formulae in the NT such as titles, addresses and salutations whereby the nominal idea may form its own clause typically with the verb 'to be' implied from the text (e.g. Rom 1:7). So-called independent uses of the nominative occur in many environments, both biblical and extra-biblical. See Porter, *Idioms*, 83–87; Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 40–48.

³¹⁹ Porter, *Idioms*, 83–84.

³²⁰ Evans and Levinson, "The Myth of Language Universals," 444–45.

represents a multiplicity of functions. This lack of formal distinction for a wide range of functions is a significant feature of all the Greek cases, and the nominative case has the responsibility of designating the role of the subject in a given clause. But in a nom-acc system, no formal distinctions are made on the subject participant to indicate differing roles.³²¹

Furthermore, the basic role of the oblique cases is to extend in some way the verbal process (if the process extends out towards another participant) with the accusative case being the typical case for this role among the three. In a nom-acc system, the nominative participant is the unmarked participant and together with the verbal process they form the nucleus of the clause, which may or may not extend out beyond its nucleus toward other participants. If the process does extend outward, the other participants are the marked participants that accommodate the process by acting as a limit to its extension in some way, accomplished through different roles marked by their respective cases. In this regard, the line between the categories, participant, and circumstance, in a given configuration can become blurred as the process is extended and limited in a wide variety of ways. The accusative case, as the primary case role for this, limits the extension of the process with a participant and this participant may be seen as specifying the “boundary” of the process as in *οἱ ὄχλοι ἐδόξασαν τὸν θεὸν* “The crowd glorified *God*.” (Matt 9:8). The process, *ἐδόξασαν*, extends out toward *τὸν θεὸν* and is bounded by this participant. Likewise, the dative case can also limit an extension of the process when the process

³²¹ The various uses of a case form are not differentiated formally in the case system and the development of the case system of Greek suggests that by the Hellenistic period, the case system had streamlined some of its formal variations. Those who argue for an eight-case system say that at one time the case system did show more formal distinctions among the cases, noting the genitive (ablatival uses) and dative (instrumental and locative uses) cases in particular. If so, this further suggests that the case system was evolving toward less formal explicitness while maintaining its variegated uses. But by the time of Hellenistic Greek, there seems to have been at most five inflected cases in use. See Porter, *Idioms*, 80–83.

extends to an additional secondary participant in a benefactive role to the process such as in ἀλλὰ [ὁ πατήρ] τὴν κρίσιν πᾶσαν δέδωκεν τῷ υἱῷ “But the Father gives all judgment *to the Son*” (John 5:22). When the verbal process does not extend outward but remains within the subject-verb nucleus as with intransitive verbs, the dative can also still specify a boundary to the process, however more circumstantially as in οἱ δὲ ἄλλοι μαθηταὶ τῷ πλοιαρίῳ ἦλθον “Then the other disciples came *in the boat*” (John 21:8). The genitive case typically limits or restricts another participant and not the process directly, but at times it does this as well as in θάνατος αὐτοῦ οὐκέτι κυριεύει “Death no longer controls *him*” or “Death no longer has control *over him*” (Rom 6:9). As this second translation suggests, the genitive case can also mark the extent of the process more circumstantially like the dative case. And the accusative case does this as well by marking a circumstance of extent of time as in τοσαῦτα ἔτη δουλεύω σοι “For so many years I have been serving you” (Luke 15:29). For the oblique cases, their basic function is to extend the process as well as limit this extent through both participants and circumstance. In addition to this basic function that all of the oblique cases share, these cases have developed into their own specialized uses that characterize further each case and distinguishes one from the other.

Formulations of Voice According to a Nom–Acc System

There are numerous indicators throughout treatments of Greek grammar, both ancient and modern, that voice has been interpreted too strictly according to a nom-acc alignment system. This is not to say that voice makes no use at all of this system, rather the issue at hand is that voice is a feature of the grammar that must operate according to an alignment

system since it deals with syntactic relations of the clause, and the kind of system it uses needs clarifying. Voice involves case roles, but arguably voice has been overly dictated by these roles realizing a nom-acc system. More traditional approaches to modelling voice have taken their cue from the nom-acc case system and its transitive functions, and thereby continue to view voice through this lens. According to traditional grammar, the case system realizing a nom-acc system has been the primary system for establishing the syntax of the language—how words relate to each other—but formulations of voice have been unduly forced into this framework, understood to a large extent in terms of the various relational roles that a nom-acc case system sets up especially in regard to the role of the subject.

Greek uses a nom-acc system for subject—verb—object syntactic relations making it easy to assume a portrayal of the subject as a role that is more or less fixed as doer or agent of the action of the verb. Discrepancies in the grammar of voice between form and function can be attributed to the assumption that active and middle voices³²² share the same basic role of the subject as doer of the action with differences between the two being a matter of emphasis—middle voice emphasizing the subject and active voice the action of the verb or its situation.³²³ Emphasizing and deemphasizing elements of a clause are characteristic of voice, but framing the grammar this way, however, means voice is more about stressing participant *over* process or vice versa, based on criteria from the lexical semantics of a verb. The result potentially downplays syntactic form and

³²² Since I return here to “traditional” treatments of voice, I utilize its corresponding terminology of active *voice*, middle *voice*, and passive *voice*, rather than the preferable active voice and middle/passive *uses*.

³²³ Examples of grammars that endorse this interpretation of voice are Decker, *Reading Koine Greek*, 226–28; Black, *Learn to Read New Testament Greek*, 13; Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 414–15.

the function it realizes by giving too much attention to lexical semantics and the conceptualization of events in a given clause.

Moreover, voice is a phenomenon that involves, as Porter puts it, “who does what action to whom, and how”³²⁴ with special focus on the subject. A generally fixed subject role as doer of the action of the verb according to a nom-acc framework means a stronger tendency towards a semantic degradation of the middle voice. A verb marked with middle form having a subject participant in the nominative case can all too easily be taken as foregoing its middle meaning in favour of active meaning as an interpretation of the middle that results from operating within a nom-acc system. One prominent grammar says, although the middle has different nuances, the general rule of thumb is to “equate the middle with the active.”³²⁵ This carries over into verbs in $-(\theta)\eta$ - conjugations that also have been interpreted as foregoing middle/passive meaning for active meaning due to the subject performing the action. Overall this has created the situation in the grammar in which a choice needs to be made between so-called deponent middle/ passive verbs and so-called true middle/ passive verbs largely based on lexical criteria but on other individualized factors as well.³²⁶

The active voice appears to work the easiest according to a principle of extension and it fits rather comfortably when the subject is marked in the nominative case as the doer of the process that can extend out toward another participant. In the active voice the subject does the action with a separate complement participant that receives this action in the object role (if this participant is present). From this, it also has been assumed that the

³²⁴ Porter, “A Register Analysis of Mark 13,” 230.

³²⁵ Mounce, *Basics of Biblical Greek*, 126.

³²⁶ For a good example of this, see Wallace’s treatment in *Greek Grammar*, 428–30.

transitive patterning of the active voice forms the basis for formulations of the entire voice system, thereby obscuring other important contrastive features of voice. Difficulties arise especially for the middle voice in this framework, however, and this is where standard descriptions and explanations of voice begin to fall short when it comes to the sharper contrastive alterations of the subject that characterizes these voice functions. To compensate for this, deponency has entered the grammar for both voices, which as a grammatical category has become dubious and problematic.³²⁷

Interpreting middle voice according to a nom-acc patterning means the middle voice is distinguished from the active and passive voice in that there is only one participant that fulfils both subject and object roles. This has been regarded as the primary function of the middle and is often called the “dynamic middle.” In the clause, *καὶ ἀπελθὼν ἀπήγγξατο* ‘and going out he hanged (himself)’ (Matt 27:5), the subject (Judas) does the action of hanging and the subject is construed as the direct object of the process by being the only participant directly involved in the process and directly affected by the process. R. Allan says verbs that convey this kind of body motion “involves an animate entity that volitionally brings about a change of state to himself. Thus, the subject is both agent and patient.”³²⁸ As the translation here indicates, this construction can also be interpreted as having a conceptual separation typically grammaticalized as two entities (two-participant event) using a reflexive pronoun, “himself,” whether specified or not. At the same time both roles of subject and direct object are filled by only one entity (one-participant event). Here, “a single physico-

³²⁷ See discussion on deponency in chapter 2.

³²⁸ Allan, *The Middle Voice in Ancient Greek*, 76.

mental entity is conceptually distinguished into separate participants.”³²⁹ This is a reflexive use in which the process is construed as being done upon oneself.³³⁰ These examples demonstrate, however, that a discrepancy arises between form and function for the middle and passive uses regarding these subject and object roles. In Greek, there is only one inflectional form that both middle and passive uses share for differing roles of the subject.³³¹ This becomes complicated when traditional grammatical treatments give the impression that the middle voice in its “dynamic middle” function appears closer in kind to the active voice in that the primary role of the subject is to perform the action just like the active voice and then the direct object role is secondary to this being taken up in the subject as well. Allan states as the main definition of what he calls the direct reflexive middle type, that this “involves a human agent that volitionally performs an action on him or herself.”³³² Moreover there seems to be even closer overlap between active and middle if the verb in the active voice is intransitive in which the verbal process remains within the domain of the subject. In the passive use, by contrast, the primary role of the subject is not agentive at all in the passive, but receptive, making the primary role of the subject a kind of direct object role.

Matters are complicated further when a middle clause includes another participant in an object role, typically marked in the accusative case, as in *καὶ προσκαλεῖται τοὺς*

³²⁹ Kemmer, *Middle Voice*, 66; see also 50–51, 72–73.

³³⁰ Traditionally grammars have put forward this type of middle as the primary use of the middle voice, but its usage is actually rare and there is a larger consensus today that no longer accepts this as the main middle use. The NT shows a relatively consistent preference for active voice constructions that explicitly state a reflexive pronoun such as in John 21:7, *καὶ ἔβαλεν ἑαυτὸν εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν* “and he threw himself into the sea.” See Porter, Reed, and O’Donnell, *Fundamentals of New Testament Greek*, 121–22. For an early statement, see Moulton, *Study of New Testament Greek*, 120.

³³¹ The aorist and future tenses each have additional forms using the *-(θ)η-* tense formative that have traditionally been called aorist passive and future passive forms. Their functional contribution will be addressed in chapter 7.

³³² Allan, *The Middle Voice in Ancient Greek*, 88.

δώδεκα “He calls the twelve” (Mark 6:7). Again, in traditional treatments, this clause is taken to be very similar to an active voice clause. Jesus is the subject doing the calling and the twelve are the direct object marked in the accusative case. An interpretation of the middle voice in this clause construes the subject as also acting in reference to itself as an indirect object/patient that indicates to whom the process is done.³³³ Another example of this type is λαβὼν ὕδωρ ἀπενίψατο τὰς χεῖρας “taking water, he washed (his) hands” (Matt 27:24). The subject (Pilate) is regarded as basically agentive and he does the washing, an action actualized in the direct object, τὰς χεῖρας. But since the verb is marked middle, in addition to its agentive role, the subject is represented as playing an indirect object role as well by taking on some benefactive role of advantage or disadvantage that infers some kind of recipient-like quality of self-interest. Thus, the middle voice represents the action as Pilate washing his hands *for his own benefit or for himself*.

It is not difficult to see how the case roles that realize a nom-acc system, as traditionally conceived, of subject, direct object, and indirect object are at work in how the three voices are interpreted grammatically. Configuring voice according to traditional case roles not only produces serious discrepancies between form and function in voice, the grammar that is meant to account for these transitive occurrences becomes faulty among all the voices, especially the middle use. According to more traditional approaches, virtually every grammar emphasizes the subject-focused and subject-affected nature of the middle voice as they rightly should. As Decker states representatively for typical grammatical analyses, in the middle voice “the subject performs the action but

³³³ The NIV translates this clause, “Calling the Twelve *to him...*” (emphasis mine).

with a self-interest nuance.”³³⁴ But in middle configurations such as the examples above that interpret the clause the way they do, in which the subject shifts from playing a subject + direct object role to a subject + indirect object role due to the presence of another object-participant, the “kinks” become evident. The middle use is not represented well grammatically as the subject-affected voice when the subject is represented as doing the action, which is no different than in the active voice, and the subject then plays only an indirect object role rather than a direct object role. It is problematic to define middle use according to the subject as the affected participant when in actuality it is frequently only in an indirect object role, which is grammatically secondary to the direct object as the participant directly affected by the process. In this regard, an intransitive active voice clause, in which the action of the verb affects the subject, without a direct object participant that is directly affected, can potentially show more subject-affected characteristics than in the middle voice.

When the subject is also playing a lesser, indirect object role, this role overlaps with a circumstantial role of the clause. This puts the role of the subject outside of the experiential center of the clause altogether. In the clause, ἐκτίσατο χωρίον “He acquired a field” (Acts 1:18), the experiential center comprises the subject (Judas) performing the verbal process, ἐκτίσατο, which is carried over to χωρίον, forming a transitive clause that, though a middle clause, its transitive idea resembles an active configuration. Among these constituents experiential meaning is sufficiently represented linguistically as a participant/process–participant configuration. To add to this by inference that Judas purchased a field *for himself*, or *for his own benefit* because of the middle marking of the

³³⁴ Decker, *Reading*, 227. “Self-interest nuance” is also taken up in Mounce, *Basics of Biblical Greek*, 230–31.

verb, is to say the middle voice merely enhances the clause circumstantially by adding some kind of peripheral causal element to the subject-object experiential core. Whether or not this is added to the clause, the main proposition of the clause remains the same that Judas purchased a field. This is hardly a subject-focused, subject-affected clause grammatically as to what the middle forms encode. It is hard to see what exactly the middle voice is supposed to convey when describing the relationship of the subject to the verbal process. When Robertson says that the middle voice means “the subject is acting in relation to himself somehow,”³³⁵ it is difficult to be any more specific beyond this, “somehow.” The subject is merely inferred as playing an indirect object/circumstantial role which makes it difficult to pinpoint what the intention might be in using the middle voice to express such indirect involvement to the process. Is it to suggest some particular reason for the process, a purpose of some kind, or the subject acting on his own behalf? If so, how is this determined? This opens up the middle voice to subjective interpretations of the text every time such middle clauses occur that clearly move beyond what the grammar itself provides. In traditional approaches, despite this clause being middle, the grammar still portrays *χωρίον*, not the subject, as the participant most directly affected by the process, rendering this clause no different than a typical transitive clause in the active voice. This would be an example of deponency. The subject is involved, but beyond its agentive role, its involvement appears to be inconsequential, which does not bolster the subject-affected nature of the middle use. In this way, following a strictly nom-acc approach to the grammar of voice adds another complication to discrepancies between form and function. This means that in addition to a lack of morphological distinction to

³³⁵ Robertson, *Grammar*, 804.

differentiate middle and passive functions, the grammar also renders voice as having a lack of functional distinction between active and middle voices despite two separate morphological paradigms for each voice.³³⁶

Although grammars on syntax attempt to move beyond generalized case roles of participants such as subject and object, and specify the various uses of a case, the flip side of this is that formal indicators alone become harder to rely on for determining a case's function. And this has also carried over into voice function. Wallace discusses specific uses of each case as involving affected or phenomenological meaning, i.e., meaning in its "real life" environment, affected by "contextual, lexical, or other grammatical intrusions."³³⁷ Similarly, Porter immediately concedes that the fundamental meaning of a case form that is essential to what the case does is continually restricted or refined by relations to other words (syntax) and the larger linguistic context.³³⁸ Voice, with its emphasis on the subject, has also been affected by the various "grammatical intrusions" that affect the nominative case and its role of the subject. Wallace in his discussion of the nominative case acknowledges that the lexical semantics of a verb modify to a certain degree the role of the subject. However, Wallace proceeds to connect this to voice and then concludes that such variations "do not necessarily imply an active role on the part of the subject, even though the verb is active [voice] (and transitive). Thus one cannot say that the subject of an active verb is necessarily the doer of the action."³³⁹ This observation

³³⁶ Allan, throughout his different categories for semantic uses of the middle, states that a given category is semantically middle because the "subject is both the initiating entity (Initiator) and the affected entity (Endpoint)" (Allan, *The Middle Voice in Ancient Greek*, 76). While this statement may be valid for defining the middle voice, there is still too much emphasis on the subject as agent and volitional doer of the process in Allan's treatment, which results in a lack of clarity as to how a middle categorical role of the subject is any different from a subject's role with an intransitive verb in the active voice.

³³⁷ Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 2.

³³⁸ Porter, *Idioms*, 82.

³³⁹ Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 39.

by Wallace raises the question that if the subject of a verb marked active in form is not the doer of the action—running counter to Wallace’s basic definition for the active voice—then what other roles can the subject of an active verb be? Determining this means factoring in individual lexical semantics and other grammatical features such as context on a case by case basis. It also suggests that the verbal voice inflectional markings on the verb in all voices really hold little fundamental meaning of their own. Aubrey states that “formal changes to voice marking are motivated by differences to the conceptualization of events.”³⁴⁰ In this view, voice forms realize clausal semantics originating from the verbal process. Thus, one cannot be confident defining with any consistency the function the forms signal because so many other factors continually “intrude” on their basic meaning.

The net result is that the case system, realizing a nom-acc system, ends up undermining voice and its own grammatical operation in the language, disrupting any attempt at a defining the role of the subject from a systemic point of view. “Grammatical subject” is too general a term to describe adequately more specific functions of this participant in relation to the verb. By not specifying the role of subject further, it makes this role liable to changes brought on by individual lexical meanings, contextual factors, and other semantic and syntactic conceptualizations in a clause. These override any consistent function of the voice forms, thus making it unclear what the grammatical system for voice, realized by subject roles, really is.

³⁴⁰ Aubrey, “Motivated Categories,” 603.

An Ergative Alignment System for Voice

Chapter one described how an ergative system allows for different transitive patternings that show a contrast to a nom-acc organization. Chapter three provided linguistic models to help describe these different patternings, and earlier in this chapter a system network was put forth for voice based on these models. Both nom-acc and ergative systems realize their organizational patterns through their own case markings on participants, exercising a principle of extension and restriction. In ancient Greek, however, only a nom-acc case system is used to mark nominals, not a typical ergative-absolutive case system. Ergative functions are realized instead through markings on the verb and this produces a syntactic organization of the clause by marking out certain boundaries of clausal operations and, by marking these extension patterns in the clause, it also “chalks the field” of transitivity. In this way the marking systems of both nom-acc and ergative systems at work in the language establish an operational scope for the transitivity of the clause and voice works within this same arena.

A nom-acc system makes no distinctions formally to mark functional differences of the subject beyond a single nominative case marker. This leads Coon and Preminger to say that differences in type of subject do not “catch our attention as readily in a nominative-accusative system as it does in an ergative one.”³⁴¹ Voice is a feature of the grammar that involves syntactic roles of a clause and therefore it must use an alignment system in order to exercise what it is all about—causality and affectedness—among its constituents.

³⁴¹ Coon and Preminger, “Split Ergativity Is Not About Ergativity,” 251.

Voice uses an ergative system, which is also characterized by extension and restriction of the verbal process, but in this system two syntactic “splits” occur between (1) (agentive) subject and (affected) object, and between (2) (agentive) subject and (affected) subject for determining transitive operations of the clause. As an ergative alignment system, clausal operations are oriented towards participants *affected* by the process and this takes place in all voice uses.³⁴² This means attention is directed toward where the impact of the verbal process is most felt. Moreover, by having an affected participant there is at the same time a participant that *causes* this participant to be affected by the verbal process (even if it is the same participant). Causality, as the necessary counterpoint to affectedness, is a way of viewing the role of a participant. It is a functional and semantic property held by a participant that acts as the source of energy and catalyst for the process to occur. It initiates and sets into motion the unfolding of the process that impresses the process onto something or someone. The participant that causes the process also holds some degree of control and volition that can be exercised over the verbal process and directed at the affected participant.³⁴³ An ergative basis for voice lays emphasis on the participant affected by the verbal process and this opens up options for differing roles of the subject by linking an intransitive subject with a transitive object, as both participants function as the affected participants of a clause.³⁴⁴

³⁴² Allan’s study rightly stresses subject-affectedness as a central component in the grammar of voice, referring to the middle voice specifically, but Allan does not adequately situate this idea within an overall grammatical system. An ergative view enables the notion of affectedness to be better situated within a wider semantic system that governs subject—verb—object relations.

³⁴³ This view of causality is not to be confused with the so-called causative active (ergative active) use of the active voice (see Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 411–12). This will be addressed in the next chapter, “The Active Voice.”

³⁴⁴ Dixon, *Ergativity*, 6–8; Klaiman, *A Typology of Voice Systems*, 30, 46–47.

Furthermore, in a systemic approach, voice morphology realizes choices made within the semantic system at the grammar end of the lexicogrammatical cline. This takes precedence over the lexical semantics of the verb, irrespective of the various participant roles that the semantics of a verb might induce. A verb such as πιστεύω (I believe, trust), for example, has a subject in the role of Sensor in a clause due to how the semantics of this verb conveys a cognitive personal experience the subject undergoes. But if the verb is marked active voice, its grammatical function is always agentive in an ergative patterning in contrast to an affected role, which means the subject's causal role to the process is made explicit regardless of the verb's meaning. That being said, it also appears that in Greek there are verbs whose lexical semantics have influenced the grammatical system to the point that, due to their lexical meaning, they tend to inflect in only one voice or at least mostly in one voice. So-called *medium tantum* (middle-only) verbs such as βούλομαι, δύναμαι, πορεύομαι, χαρίζομαι, λογίζομαι, εργάζομαι, ἔρχομαι, γίνομαι, ἄλλομαι, and so-called *passivum tantum* (passive-only) verbs such as, ἐγενήθην and ἀπεκρίθην, all have properties in their lexical semantics that when inflected for non-active voice, push the locus of affectedness of the process onto the subject.

However, voice is a grammatical system that expresses the functional roles of the participants when verbs are marked for voice in a clause. In other words, voice inflections do not simply reflect the lexical semantics of a verb and their clausal conceptualizations. There may be some influence from verbal semantics at times, but there is an entirely separate function, realized by voice forms that belongs to lexicogrammatical meaning of the clause as the output of this system when voice is signalled by verbal forms. All verbal processes can be accommodated by this system and they operate within this system, not

dictating the system. Even for verbs inflected for only one voice, their lexical meaning fits into a certain established route in the semantic system that accounts for such lexical meaning, being realized therefore as meaning that comes about through an ordered system of voice.

Conclusion

This chapter applies the principles of Systemic Functional Linguistics towards constructing a description of the grammar of ancient Greek and offers a specific approach toward understanding the language's voice system in particular. It is a semantic system that arises from the ideational metafunction and the system of transitivity therein, manifested as an ergative alignment system. As a particular system of transitivity, the system of voice is ordered on an ergative basis that enables two opposing semantic roles of the subject to operate. Each of these two roles is at the center of its respective voice as the system networks show, offering a symmetric and contrastive portrayal of the relationship between subject participant and verbal process.

The model of voice presented in this chapter is meant to provide an interpretation of voice that emphasizes what functions voice forms encode, regardless of the semantics of the verb. The meaning of a verbal process still plays an integral part in the utilization of voice, but semantic roles that further define and nuance voice uses have their *start* in the ideational metafunction that produces these roles located in the network system model presented in this chapter. This means that the subject participant roles of Agent and Medium and what these mean in function, are always encoded by their respective voice

forms. A particular verb's meaning can further specify these, but not change their basic function.

Although Greek displays its syntactic relations according to a nom-acc system, formulations of voice have been stifled by neglecting to bring forth the ergative features that are also present in the language's grammar. The roles of subject, direct object, and indirect object, marked by their respective case forms, have become fixtures in Greek grammar. But closer examination of these roles reveals that the case system, realizing a nom-acc system, is not meant to be the main modelling framework for voice. As realizations of a nom-acc system, these roles conflate the operating principles that set voice apart for Greek, making it difficult to keep key differences of its semantic system of transitivity clear. These limitations elucidate further that the properties of a nom-acc system, especially the role of subject, can only form the basis for voice to a limited extent. Nonetheless, two alignment systems are at work simultaneously as closely associated systems within the greater system of transitivity. The voice system determines more precisely the transitive relationships among the participants in relation to the process, standing apart especially as an ergative semantic system that pivots from a nom-acc system, thereby expanding the syntactic capabilities of the grammar.

PART THREE

VOICE ANALYSIS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

ACTIVE VOICE

Introduction

In this first chapter of Part Three, an analysis is offered of instantiations of verbal voice in the NT that express specifically active voice meanings. Representative examples of various active voice clauses from the NT texts will be examined and the purpose of this analysis is to observe active voice occurrences within a broad coverage of usage according to the principles of SFL that have been discussed in the previous chapters. My intention in this chapter and the next two of this analysis is to demonstrate, through analytical engagement with specific texts, a linguistically well-grounded approach for interpreting how Greek employs its voices.

First, an attempt to define the Greek active voice will be made guided by the transitive model presented in chapter 3, specifically in terms of how the role of the subject is construed for the active voice. Following this, I will analyze specific NT texts by identifying and discussing various active voice configurations that occur in the NT, demonstrating a wide range of active voice uses that are evident in the language. Analysis will treat selections of text that exhibit more frequent occurrences, but attention will be given as well to examples of active clauses that are less common or warrant special attention.

Active Voice: Subject as Agent

Voice is the speaker/writer's grammatical portrayal of the role of the subject according to an ergative alignment pattern that is predicated upon causality (startpoint) and affectedness (endpoint) in relation to the verbal process. A central part of establishing a consistent grammar of the ancient Greek voice system is defining more precisely the syntactic role the subject plays in relation to the verbal process. It is insufficient to say simply that in the active voice the subject is the participant of the clause that does, performs, or experiences the verbal process. Descriptors such as these that are utilized extensively among grammatical treatments of voice hold some value, but are not precise enough for defining the functions of Greek active voice. As designations for the syntactic role of the subject, they can too easily blur crucial distinctions between the active and middle-passive voices.

To say that in the active voice the subject performs or does the action of the verb needs to be further clarified because in the production of clausal meaning, so often both subject and object participants together perform or do an action. For example, in the English sentence, *the earthquake shook the city*, the participant, *the earthquake*, is the grammatical subject of the sentence that performs the act of shaking. But *the city* also performs the act of shaking, perhaps even more explicitly than *the earthquake* does, because *the city* visibly manifests the shaking action that occurs underground. This describes the subject as the participant that performs the verbal process, but without further qualification. It is necessary, therefore, to be more specific as to what syntactic roles mean. The difference between the subject participant performing an action versus an object participant performing an action is that when the subject performs an action, the

subject *initiates* the action typically with some kind of volition involved (though not always) whereas when an object participant performs an action it does so without first causing the action, typically without a sense of volition, and instead performs an action in a patient-like way by undergoing it or being affected by it. Either way, both participants are involved in manifesting the action and it could be said that each makes their own kind of contribution to the overall performance of the verbal process. To return to our example, *the earthquake*, a sudden and violent movement of the earth's crust, *causes* intensive vibrations and shaking, and *the city* is the participant through whom these actions are realized. Clausal transitivity may thus be described as a phenomenon that involves all the participants of a clause, each contributing in their own way to clausal meaning. For Greek verbal voice, therefore, rather than say that the role of the subject in the active voice is to do or perform a verbal process, more is gained by specifying that the subject acts as the original energy source, startpoint, and cause of a verbal process (including intransitive verbs) precisely because this is *not* the role an object/patient participant plays in a clause. Analysis of verbal voice needs to keep role distinctions between participants clear, requiring that analytical terms used to describe voice reflect these sharper distinctions, which are primarily syntactic ones, arising from the lexicogrammatical system of the language.

Voice operates according to an ergative patterning, which is to say that focus is put on the participant *affected* by the verbal process of the clause. To say that a participant is affected by a process means that voice conveys a dynamic, transformative change of state of a participant. In the active voice, the role of Agent depicts the subject performing the verbal process, but more specifically as the *original energy* of a verbal

process that enacts the unfolding of the process (*energeia*). Causality is the output of energy that resides in the Agent. This participant initiates the process as the causal source of energy, acting as startpoint of the process, regardless of the lexical semantics of the verb.³⁴⁵ Agent is also the primary participant of the clause in the active voice that is directly involved in the verbal process and it is the only participant with a causal role in the clause. Another participant directly involved in the process is the Goal, if this participant is present in a clause. If it is, this is the participant to whom the process is extended, acting as the endpoint of the process. If a Goal is stated, the energy of a process is always directed toward the Goal as the process moves outward away from Agent, which acts as the energy source for the process to occur. Goal is the participant affected in some way by the Agent's enactment of the process and Goal is the participant through which the process actualizes.³⁴⁶ Moreover, Goal is directly involved in the process, but to call it the "direct object" can be misleading. The role of direct object typically means that it is the participant that receives the action of the verb or the participant that the verbal process is "done to." This is not precise enough and can result in blurring distinctions between Goal participants and Beneficiary participants (see below). Both these

³⁴⁵ In chapter 2, the ancient notion of *energeia* was introduced. This term was used by the ancient grammarians to describe voice according to the kind of *verbal idea* that is conferred onto the subject. (Intransitive active voice verbs, for example, were sometimes *pathos* and not *energeia*.) In this study, however, *energeia* is used to help describe the semantic idea contained in the role of the *subject* for the active voice. This is a role that is consistently Agent, regardless of whether a verb is transitive or intransitive.

³⁴⁶ A helpful analogy for Goal is to think of a ball entering a net as it does in soccer or basketball. When this occurs, a 'goal' is scored. Likewise, the functional role of a participant as Goal is that the verbal process 'enters' the Goal participant and actualizes in it, thereby affecting this participant, and in doing so this participant undergoes a change of state.

participant role types “receive” the verbal process in a certain way, therefore clarification is needed to distinguish the two roles.³⁴⁷

Whereas the subject in the middle-passive voice has its primary grammatical relationship to the verbal process based on affectedness (Medium), in opposition to this, Agent is the role of the subject in the active voice based on unaffectedness of the verbal process in relation to the subject. Sometimes the lexical semantics of the verb construes the subject participant as affected, even though this is not encoded in the subject role itself of Agent acting as cause of the process. The Agent + Process +/- Goal configuration comprises the experiential centre of active voice clauses whereby the startpoint of the process is encoded in the Agent. Agent is the participant directly involved in the process that supplies an initial output of energy to begin participant engagement in the process. The participant second to Agent but also directly involved with the process is Goal, if there is one in a clause. Other optional participants are involved with the verbal process to a lesser degree also by not having causal roles. These additional participants, Recipient or Client, are affected indirectly by the process in some way to varying degrees. A verbal process marked active voice produces an active clausal configuration potentially involving all three semantic participant roles, Agent, Goal, and Beneficiary, as an outworking of the semiotic system of transitivity that provides the lexicogrammatical resources for the different types of clauses to occur.

³⁴⁷ The problem with the category ‘direct object’ becomes evident in Greek grammar treatments of double accusative clauses in which there is no case differentiation between participants that supposedly receive the action of the verb. Various strategies have been employed to help distinguish functions between accusatives such as person object—thing object distinctions, object—complement relationships, articular—*anarthrous* noun distinctions, identifying different parts of speech for the participants, word order, and semantic verb classes, among others. Not only is it challenging to apply all these criteria, attempts to do so often lead to many exceptions to these so-called rules of engagement.

In an ergative system, the active voice does not encode the subject as affected, making affectedness defocused and reduced regarding the subject. The subject plays instead the role of Agent that explicitly causes the process to occur and potentially affects other participants. In the role of Agent, the subject participant contributes only partially to the process coming about by fulfilling the causal component to the verbal process and the overall experience. In the system network, once the role of Agent is selected for the subject, then the user is in the active voice. If another participant is involved, the participant most directly affected is Goal, and it fulfils the other component to the verbal process unfolding, that is, its actualization. As a result, the process moves outward from Agent as source and this affects the Goal participant. The Goal is the participant the verbal process is focused upon in order to actualize the process. This type of configuration that has an affected Goal stated can occur in different ways depending on the meaning of the verb, resulting in different types of active voice clauses.

Transformative Clauses

Mark 1:8: ἐγὼ **ἐβάπτισα** *ὑμᾶς* /ὕδατι./ αὐτὸς δὲ **βαπτίσει** *ὑμᾶς* /ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ./ (I baptized you with water, but he will baptize you in the Holy Spirit.)³⁴⁸

In the first of these two clauses, ἐγὼ is Agent that causes the verbal process, **ἐβάπτισα**, marked active voice. These two constituents, as process and Agent participant, form the nucleus of the clause. The process then extends out toward a second participant, *ὑμᾶς*, who is directly involved as Goal that the process affects. This participant is affected specifically as “Goal as transformation” since *ὑμᾶς* conveys a pre-existing participant

³⁴⁸ Verbal Process—Bold; Agent—Underline; Goal—Italics; Medium—Underline; Beneficiary—Italics and Underline; Range—Bold; Circumstance—Slashes. If the subject (Agent or Medium) is inside the verb, the verb will be emboldened and underlined.

that undergoes a change of state as a result of the process. This participant has been “transformed” by the process of baptize by moving from an unbaptized status into a baptized one. Together, ἐγὼ ἐβάπτισα ὑμᾶς forms the experiential center of operation as Agent + Process + Goal. The clause is also further augmented by a circumstance, ὕδατι, marked in the dative case to show a relationship to the verbal process of accompaniment or instrument.

The second clause of this verse is joined to the first clause by the conjunction, δὲ. This clause goes on to mirror the configuration of the first clause in which αὐτὸς is Agent to the process, βαπτίσει, and the same directly involved participant is repeated, ὑμᾶς, as Goal, again transformed by the process of baptize. A contrast between the two clauses is achieved through a different circumstance, ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ, which also conveys a relationship of accompaniment or instrument.

Luke 22:17: **λάβετε** τοῦτο καὶ **διαμερίσατε** /εἰς ἑαυτούς./ (“Take this [cup of wine], and divide [it] among yourselves.”)

This verse offers an example of an affected Goal participant that undergoes a transformation by being divided up among the disciples. The disciples initiate both active voice processes, λάβετε and διαμερίσατε, as Agent, and the cup of wine as Goal manifests the process by going from Jesus’s cup into many cups around the table. The active voice in this verse lays focus on the Goal as the affected participant, the cup of wine that is now in the hand of each disciple. Even though a Goal is not made explicit in the second clause, the same Goal from the previous clause is assumed. This also helps to set up the following verse in which Jesus uses the cup of wine to illustrate his point: λέγω γὰρ ὑμῖν, [ὅτι] οὐ μὴ πίω ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν ἀπὸ τοῦ γενήματος τῆς ἀμπέλου ἕως οὗ ἡ βασιλεία

τοῦ θεοῦ ἔλθῃ. (“For I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.”)

In the perfect tense-form (stative aspect), the Goal enters a state of being conveyed by the verbal process and initiated by the Agent:

Matt 9:22: θάρσει, θύγατερ· ἡ πίστις σου **σέσωκέν σε**. (Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well.)

This clause portrays the woman’s faith as Agent that causes her body to heal, initiating a transformation into a healthy condition. The woman (σε), specifically her ill physical state, now enters a healed, (*lit.*) preserved, state of being, as she is the participant that actualizes the process.

Matt 13:46: εὐρών δὲ ἓνα πολύτιμον μαργαρίτην ἀπελθὼν **πέπρακεν** πάντα ὅσα εἶχεν καὶ ἠγόρασεν αὐτόν. (...and finding one pearl of great value, [he] went and sold all that he had and bought it.).

The participant, πάντα, is qualified by a relative clause, ὅσα εἶχεν, and therefore πάντα ὅσα εἶχεν taken together comprises the Goal. The verbal process in the stative aspect puts focus on the Goal, all the man’s possessions, by portraying their change into a different state, that is, a “sold” state of being, brought about and initiated by the man as Agent.

Creative Clauses

Matt 1:16: Ἰακώβ δὲ **ἐγέννησεν** τὸν Ἰωσήφ /τὸν ἄνδρα Μαρίας./ (And Jacob became the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary.)

In this clause, Ἰακώβ is Agent acting as the initial cause of the process **ἐγέννησεν**. Ἰακώβ and **ἐγέννησεν** together form the nucleus of the clause as process and primary participant, and this process also extends to another participant, τὸν Ἰωσήφ, This

participant is affected by the process as a type of Goal that is the creative result of the process, having been brought into existence by the process itself and Agent. Rather than the process affecting an already existing participant as in transformative clauses, a creative clause portrays this participant as not existing prior to the process occurring, resulting in τὸν Ἰωσήφ being a creation of the unfolding process. The Goal is extended further by another accusative + genitive noun group, τὸν ἄνδρα Μαρίας that stands in apposition to the first noun group. This noun group is a circumstance of Role that elaborates upon the Agent + Process + Goal experiential centre by adding that the Goal, τὸν Ἰωσήφ, is also in the role of husband to Mary.

John 4:46: ὅπου ἐποίησεν τὸ ὕδωρ /οἶνον./ (Where he had made the water into wine.)

As another double accusative configuration, here there is some overlap between transformative and creative clauses. The Agent, Jesus, causes the Goal, τὸ ὕδωρ, to change its physical state forming a transformative clause, but the Goal is extended further by an additional accusative, οἶνον, that augments this experience as a circumstance of Role. It is the final “product” that has been created not having previously existed until Jesus made it by turning the water into it, and as a circumstance, it elaborates on the Agent + Process + Goal core.³⁴⁹

Mental Clauses

Matt 2:2: εἶδομεν γὰρ αὐτοῦ τὸν ἀστέρα /ἐν τῇ ἀνατολῇ./ (For we saw his star in the east.)

³⁴⁹ See also Matt 2:10: ἰδόντες δὲ τὸν ἀστέρα ἐγάρησαν χαρὰν μεγάλην /σφόδρα./ (When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.)

In this clause, Agent is built into the verb itself expressed in the first person plural and together with the process, εἶδομεν, produces a mental active clause. This is a process type of sensing and perception. The active voice encodes the subject as causing the process, but due to the lexical semantics of this process, the Agent is also construed as a conscious being in a Sensor role, undergoing a sensory experience by focusing the process on the Goal, αὐτοῦ τὸν ἄστέρα, which is Phenomenon, that which is being sensed. By targeting this Goal, the impact of the process is ultimately felt by the Agent. The Goal in this type of clause is not necessarily affected by the process in that it undergoes any sort of material change of state (transformative clauses), although sometimes this does happen, or is produced as a result of the process (creative clauses). Rather, this Goal as Phenomenon is affected by the Agent and process because the process is directed towards it, focused onto it, being actively perceived by the Agent. It is directly involved in the sensory experience of the Agent, having an effect upon the senses of the Agent. Therefore this involvement makes it an affected participant as the focus is put onto this participant as Goal. The lexical semantics of the process add an element of affectedness to Agent in mental clauses, but the intent for active voice is to convey a volitional act by a conscious being who initiates the process.

This clause is also further enhanced by a circumstance, ἐν τῇ ἀνατολῇ, which adds more information to the experiential centre of Agent + Process + Goal (Sensor + Process + Phenomenon), specifying a particular location for the sensory experience. Mental clauses are in closer approximation to traditional intransitive verbs due to their lexical semantics in that the process ultimately comes about through the subject participant. However, mental clauses have a Goal participant involved that, though this

participant does not undergo any changes, it is still affected by the process by being portrayed as the target of the process as the subject participant experiences the process as Sensor.

1 Thess 4:2: **οἴδατε** γὰρ τίνας παραγγελίας ἐδώκαμεν ὑμῖν /διὰ τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ./ (For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus.)

Two clauses in this verse come together to create a combination of configurations. The first clause is a mental clause in which Agent in the second person plural (you) initiates a cognitive experience of knowing directed towards Goal as Phenomenon, τίνας παραγγελίας (what instructions). This type of Goal is affected by being the focus of the mental process and acting as an intermediary for the process, which ultimately returns to and affects the Agent's cognition. The same Goal also becomes the Goal for the verbal process of the next clause, ἐδώκαμεν, implying a relative clause that has the Goal of the first clause as antecedent, but with a completely different Agent (we). Two different Agents share the same Goal, but since the processes are also different, the second clause is a creative clause type in which the Goal, τίνας παραγγελίας, portrays this participant as spoken words (perhaps also written down) to the people which came into existence by the Agent. Finally, both clauses are enhanced by a circumstance of Manner, διὰ τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ, that specifies the means through which the instructions came about.

Verbal Clauses

Acts 11:16: ἐμνήσθην δὲ τοῦ ῥήματος τοῦ κυρίου ὡς **ἔλεγεν**· Ἰωάννης μὲν ἐβάπτισεν ὕδατι, ὑμεῖς δὲ βαπτισθήσεσθε ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ. (And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.')

In verbal clauses, frequently the Goal is projected as an entire directly quoted text or as text that is reported on indirectly. Then what is said can be categorized further into

different parts of the clause. What is said is the spoken or written material of a verb of saying and the active voice enables this to project from the Agent that “speaks,” portraying the Goal participant as all the spoken or written verbiage that is expressed. In this sense, verbal clauses are a kind of creative clause type in that the actions of saying create spoken or written text. In this example, the primary clause is the clause of “saying,” *ὡς ἔλεγεν* (the subordinating clause of *ἐμνήσθην δὲ τοῦ ῥήματος τοῦ κυρίου*) that represents Agent + Process. The secondary clause is the quoted text itself represented as Goal. Together both clauses form an Agent + Process + Goal configuration when they come into relationship with one another.

Rom 10:9: *ὅτι ἐὰν ὁμολογήσῃς / ἐν τῷ στόματί σου/ κύριον Ἰησοῦν.* (Because if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord.)

Verbal clauses also occur as a single clause in which here an accusative participant, the Goal, *κύριον Ἰησοῦν* is projected from the process type of saying, *ὁμολογήσῃς*, as either directly quoted text, (“Jesus [is] Lord” or “Lord Jesus”) or as text that is reported on indirectly (“that Jesus [is] Lord”). The Goal, *κύριον Ἰησοῦν*, may be read as a head noun, *Ἰησοῦν*, modified by a Classifier, *κύριον*, that qualifies the identity of Goal, or *κύριον* could also be read as a circumstance of Role.

In each of these types of clause configurations (transformative, creative, mental, and verbal), distinguished by the meaning of the verb, the Goal of the process is the affected participant by either undergoing a change of state (transformative), by becoming the product of the process (creative), being the target that enables the experience of the subject (mental), or by being the spoken or written manifestation of the process (verbal). The various clausal portrayals of the experience of the Goal participant in particular is a key distinctive of the active voice because it is the non-subject participant most directly

affected by the process that moves out from the subject's domain. Since the Goal is the affected participant, the subject is in the role of Agent, causing the process to occur by enabling it or being its source of origin. Both Agent and Goal construe the transitive operation of a clause in roles of causality and affectedness, and through these specific roles offer an active voice representation of how the verbal process comes about to convey meaning.

Additional Participants

In addition to Goal, more participants can be affected by the verbal process as it extends out beyond the Agent + Process nucleus of a clause. In the voice system network, +*Indirect Goal* can be selected once the entry condition Goal has been satisfied. These additional participants are affected by the process less directly than Goal but are still considered to be involved within the experiential domain of the clause. These participants differ from Goal in that they benefit in some way from the Goal realizing the verbal process. This does not necessarily mean the process is always a positive or beneficial one, but that these participants receive the Goal as “goods” or “services” from the Agent once the process finds its endpoint in the Goal.

Agent + Process + Goal + Recipient

Clauses with Recipient

Rom 1:11: ἐπιποθῶ γὰρ ἰδεῖν ὑμᾶς, ἵνα τι μεταδῶ χάρισμα ὑμῖν πνευματικὸν /εἰς τὸ στηριχθῆναι ὑμᾶς./ (For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you.)

The subordinating clause of this verse has as Goal, *τι χάρισμα πνευματικόν* (some spiritual gift), and each word is marked in the accusative case. The Agent is formally built into the verbal process, *μεταδῶ*, in the first person singular. The Agent causes the process of “impart” and initiates this action which affects the Goal, producing a creative clause in which *τι χάρισμα πνευματικόν* is brought into actualization by the Agent, not having existed among the audience prior to the Agent performing this act. The Recipient of this clause is *ὑμῖν* which signals a collective beneficiary participant to the process after the process affects the Goal. The Recipient receives the spiritual gift that comes about through the act of the Agent imparting it. The clause is extended further with a causal circumstance of Purpose, *εἰς τὸ στηριχθῆναι ὑμᾶς* (in order to strengthen you/for your strengthening) using an infinitive inside the circumstance.

Acts 2:28: *ἐγνώρισάς μοι ὁδοὺς ζωῆς*. (You made known to me paths of life.)

This mental clause is part of a citation that comes from Ps 16 as part of Peter’s speech to the crowd in the book of Acts. Agent in this clause is God, who affects the Goal as Phenomenon, *ὁδοὺς ζωῆς* (paths of life), by causing the process “know.” The participant as Recipient is *μοι* (to me) whom the process benefits after the Goal is affected by the process. The Recipient is involved in the process like Goal but as an additional participant to Goal. Further, though the process is a mental one involving a cognitive act of knowing, this mental clause does not convey so much the Agent as undergoing the knowing who targets the Goal, though this can still occur, but rather the Recipient participant, *μοι*, undergoing the knowing. Agent is being depicted in this clause as causing the Goal to register in the mind of the Recipient. The meaning here may be brought out as “paths of life” functioning as “goods” that are given to the Recipient by

coming into knowledge of it, specifically for this person, by means of the Agent, who, it may be assumed, already knows the Goal, but who reveals this Goal to the Recipient.

Double Accusative Configurations Having Two Goals

Clauses with two accusative participants has one participant as Goal, realizing the process, that is also specified further by another Goal adjacent to it, also realizing the process. But these clauses also can be a kind of Recipient clause in which one accusative participant is the direct Goal of the process and the other undergoes the process as an indirect Goal participant.

Luke 12:12: τὸ γὰρ ἅγιον πνεῦμα διδάξει ὑμᾶς / ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ ὥρᾳ / ἃ δεῖ εἰπεῖν. (For the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what is necessary to say.)

This is a verbal clause in which two accusative participants occur. The first participant, *ὑμᾶς*, can be Goal in terms of being taught or caused to learn by the Agent, thus undergoing the process. The relative clause, *ἃ δεῖ εἰπεῖν*, forms the second Goal that further specifies the first Goal. This clause represents what is being taught, that is, the content of the teaching, and what is produced by the action of teaching. It too actualizes the verbal process *διδάξει* whose Agent is *τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα*. At the same time, the participant, *ὑμᾶς*, can be Recipient to the process. It is the participant to whom the process of teaching occurs, the one who benefits from the process and the content of teaching. The process is then enhanced by a circumstance of Time, *ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ ὥρᾳ*.

Matt 27:31: Καὶ ὅτε ἐνέπαιζαν αὐτῷ, ἐξέδυσαν αὐτὸν τὴν χλαμύδα καὶ ἐνέδυσαν αὐτὸν τὰ ἱμάτια αὐτοῦ. (And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him.)

In this transformative clause, a contrast of verbal processes is made explicit by the prepositional prefixes of both verbs between taking clothes off and putting clothes on. The participant, αὐτόν, referring to Jesus, is Goal as the one who undergoes a change of state due to the two processes, ἐξέδυσαν and ἐνέδυσαν. The next two participants, τὴν γλαμύδα and τὰ ἱμάτια αὐτοῦ are also Goals that actualize the processes, but further specify what happens to the first Goal, αὐτόν. These two participants also undergo a change of state and materialize the verbal process. In this regard, these two participants can be Goal while the two occurrences of αὐτόν are in the role of Recipient to the process in each clause as the one to whom the process of putting clothes on and off is done.

Matt 22:43: λέγει αὐτοῖς· πῶς οὖν Δαυὶδ /ἐν πνεύματι/ καλεῖ αὐτόν κύριον; (He said to them, “How is it then that David, in the Spirit, calls him Lord?”)

In verbal clauses such as this one, the first Goal is αὐτόν as the participant that is targeted by the process. This is specified further by the next Goal, κύριον, as the content of what is spoken or called out. Here the Agent, Δαυίδ, initiates the process, καλεῖ, and what he says or calls out is, κύριον, as direct speech. At the same time, while this is Goal of the process, actualizing what is called, who he says this to is αὐτόν, acting also as the Recipient of the act of saying, as an indirect Goal.

John 15:15: οὐκέτι λέγω ὑμᾶς δούλους. (No longer do I call you servants.)

Here again, as a verbal clause, ὑμᾶς and δούλους are Goals in which the first Goal, ὑμᾶς, undergoes the process of being spoken to and what is said directly is δούλους, the second Goal, that further specifies the first Goal. The first Goal also can be the Recipient as Indirect Goal read as “No longer do I say, ‘servants’ *to you*.” However, this clause also can be read as, “No longer do I say, “you are servants.” In this case, the

two accusative participants δούλους and ὑμᾶς are Goals that together express what is said by the Agent and they are linked as an embedded relational clause.

Agent + Process + Range

The semantics of a verbal process create configurations containing additional participants that may not be affected by the process, either directly or indirectly, but rather they designate the domain in which the verbal process occurs. These participants are very close in kind to circumstances by expanding upon the verbal process in various ways. Unlike circumstances, however, these Range participants supply necessary, not optional, information to complete the representation of the experience. Range participants, to reiterate, do not represent any affectedness by the process.

One of the functions of the Range participant is to help “build up” or “fill out” the portrayal of an experience represented by the verbal process by adding more detail and specification to the verbal process itself. This kind of addition to a verbal process occurs frequently in the language also through verbs that carry prepositional prefixes. When verbs attach these prefixes, the verb meanings are nuanced in a way that adds more definition to the process. These prefixes expand the verbal process in various ways, most typically adding a “how?” feature to the verbal process. Likewise, Range participants do this to the verb by expanding the process in some way, adding specification to the process, and thus exercising their circumstantial feature as participants. Both enhance the overall meaning of the verbal process as a whole semantic unit.

Heb 12:1: δι' ὑπομονῆς **τρέχωμεν τὸν προκείμενον** ἡμῖν ἀγῶνα. (Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.)

The verbal process, *τρέχωμεν*, in the active voice, is extended by the participant, *ἀγῶνα*, in the accusative case, which is itself further modified by the participle, *τὸν προκείμενον*. This participle adds more description to *ἀγῶνα*, as “lying before/in front.” The lexical semantics of the process produces a portrayal whereby the process “run” extends only as far as the Agent itself, who manifests the process in itself. The participant, *τὸν προκείμενον ἀγῶνα*, therefore, is not directly affected by the process as Goal, rather it designates the Range or limits within which the process, *τρέχωμεν*, operates.

Luke 2:44: *νομίσαντες δὲ αὐτὸν εἶναι ἐν τῇ συνοδίᾳ ἤλθον ἡμέρας ὁδόν*. (But supposing him to be in the group they travelled a day’s journey.)

The main Range participant is *ὁδόν*, marked by the accusative case, and it designates the course that the Agents, Mary and Joseph, travelled, not the Goal as a participant that is directly affected by the process *ἤλθον*. The verbal process extends only as far as the subject participant itself. The Range participant is qualified by the genitive, *ἡμέρας*, which indicates in time how far the Agents went on the road and together the phrase *ἡμέρας ὁδόν* comprises the Range. As a configuration with a material process type, this clause is not showing that the road or journey transforms its status somehow by Mary and Joseph travelling, as the role of Goal would indicate, rather it shows the course and extent of their travelling.

Circumstance as Indirect Goal

Configurations expanded by circumstances may be interpreted as having a participant that is indirectly affected by a process, playing a Beneficiary role as indirect Goal. In such cases this participant stands outside of the Agent + Process core of a clause as a

secondary addition to the main experience of the subject and verb. Circumstances augment a clause and are considered generally to add non-essential information to the experiential centre of a clause, that is, a clause can stand legitimately without any circumstantial information. Circumstances also minimize the affected nature of the circumstantial participant in a clause by not representing any change that the circumstantial participant might undergo. The main focus of a clause in the active voice is on the subject participant as Agent initiating and causing the process, and any participants directly involved, but the circumstantial participant can be at most indirectly involved.

Client Clauses

Col 4:13: μαρτυρῶ γὰρ αὐτῷ ὅτι ἔχει πολὺν πόνον ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν καὶ /τῶν ἐν Λαοδικείᾳ/ καὶ /τῶν ἐν Ἱεραπόλει./ (For I bear him witness that he has much labor for you [He has laboured much for you] and for those in Laodicea and Hierapolis.)

2 Thess 1:3: Εὐχαριστεῖν ὀφείλομεν τῷ θεῷ πάντοτε περὶ ὑμῶν, ἀδελφοί (We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers.)

In each of these two verses, there is an additional participant as Client who benefits from the verbal process and Goal in that these clauses portray this participant as receiving the “services” of the verbal process. The Client participants, however, are indirect participants that occur within a circumstance of the clause in the form of prepositional phrases, ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν and περὶ ὑμῶν. These are circumstances of Cause, since the process is done on behalf of another participant and the purpose for the verbal process is expressed. But these circumstances also overlap with the role of Client by specifying how this participant is benefitting from the process after the process affects a Goal. In the first example the Client benefits by having the process and Goal, ἔχει πολὺν πόνον, done

on their behalf, the church. In the second example, the Client benefits by being the purpose for the process and Goal of Εὐχαριστεῖν. The service done for the Client is the “thanks” that is given to the Recipient, τῷ θεῷ.

Eph 1:5: προορίσας ἡμᾶς /εἰς υἰοθεσίαν διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ/ εἰς αὐτόν. (He predestined us for adoption to/for himself through Jesus Christ.)

Following the Process + Goal core, προορίσας ἡμᾶς, this clause contains three prepositional phrases that extend the Agent + Process + Goal centre as circumstances. The phrase, διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, is a circumstance of Instrument that specifies the means through which the process might be accomplished. There are also two εἰς phrases, εἰς υἰοθεσίαν and εἰς αὐτόν, whose interpretations may be figured more accurately through the role of additional participant, Client. Whereas εἰς υἰοθεσίαν may be rendered as “for the purposes of adoption,” εἰς αὐτόν may be differentiated from the first use of εἰς as having specifically a beneficial role to αὐτόν, namely God himself. Rather than using an Indirect Goal as Recipient, the use of Client in conjunction with a circumstance in this clause to show benefit suggests that this clause means God predestines through Christ for the purpose of adoption particularly *for* God rather than merely seeing those who are adopted as being given *to* God. In either case, God receives from the process, but God rendered as Client here seems to stress that by predestining his people, God stands to benefit and there is some advantage that goes to God as a result, thus bringing into sharper view God’s purposes rather than human purposes.

Matt 5:45: ὅτι τὸν ἥλιον αὐτοῦ ἀνατέλλει ἐπὶ πονηροὺς καὶ ἀγαθοὺς καὶ βρέχει ἐπὶ δικαίους καὶ ἀδίκους. (For he makes his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust).

In these clauses, the circumstances expressed by the ἐπὶ prepositional phrases specify the location of the verbal processes which involve participants. Since these

participants are part of circumstances in the clauses, focus is not on the processes unfolding in order that their status changes as directly affected participants, rather their role is to designate where the process occurs. The main experience here is the Agent in these clauses as God (πατὴρ ὁ ὕμῶν τοῦ ἐν οὐρανοῖς) causing these processes to occur. The affected participant in the first clause is the Goal, τὸν ἥλιον αὐτοῦ, because its perceived movement in the sky captures its realization of the process, ἀνατέλλει. In the second clause, God again is Agent causing the process of rain, βρέχει. However, the participants in the ἐπι circumstances, πονηροὺς καὶ ἀγαθοὺς and δικαίους καὶ ἀδίκους, can be interpreted as Beneficiaries to the process, acting as indirect participants, specifically in the role of Client because the processes which produce sun and rain are being done for them and from which they receive benefits.

Further, these clauses may be translated as “He rises his sun on the evil and good, and he rains upon the righteous and unrighteous.” This is a somewhat awkward rendering and it often gets smoothed out into a translation such as the one above. But the translation offered here conveys more conceptually what is taking place in this clause, in that the agency of the Agent is the underlying transitive effect from Agent to Goal. Causality, in other words, is what voice expresses, making it unnecessary to have a special category in the grammar for so-called causative processes that are emphasized in a translation.³⁵⁰

³⁵⁰ This common translation of this verse that explicates causal language such as “causes,” “makes,” etc., exemplifies the so-called category of “Causative Active Voice.” According to this grammatical category, the subject is portrayed as not being directly involved as the grammatical subject, but rather the ultimate source behind the verbal process. Often occurring with -ω and ἴζω verbs, this usage is meant to “free up” the grammatical subject slot so it can be filled by a subject that is portrayed as actually performing the action, hence in this example above, “the sun rises”. To use another example, the verb, ποτίζω, may be read ergatively in that a person as subject does not “grow” a plant, the plant itself does the growing. A person or something (sunshine, rain, etc.) therefore only causes the plant to grow. This distinction acknowledges so-called ergative verbs of the grammar, but it also may be more of an issue of English language semantics and smoother translation rather than a true function of Greek syntax. In a systemic-functional approach to the active voice, the subject as Agent minimizes any misconstruals by not

Agent + Verbal Process Only (–Goal)

When the paradigmatic axis on the lexical end of the lexicogrammatical continuum intersects with the paradigmatic axis on the grammar end of the continuum, a process may not extend beyond the Agent + Process nucleus of a clause and therefore not affect other participants. In these configurations, other participants in addition to Agent are not present in a clause (except for non-affected Range participants, see above). When this occurs, affectedness by the process is still present, but “internalized” in the Agent due to the lexical semantics of the process. Conceptually the Agent causes the process to occur, but the process extends only as far as the Agent itself. Affectedness is not encoded in the Agent, produced only by the meaning of the verbal process, resulting in affectedness being defocused and minimized. This brings forward the volitional and causal act of Agent in relation to the other constituents of the clause that the active voice conveys, marking Agent the original source of energy and initial cause of the verbal process for the entire clause.

Eph 4:13: μέχρι **καταντήσωμεν** οἱ πάντες /εἰς τὴν ἐνότητα τῆς πίστεως καὶ τῆς ἐπιγνώσεως τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ./ (Until we all attain to unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God.)

The conjunction, *μέχρι*, joins this clause to the previous clause, moving into a transformative clause here but with no Goal participant. The meaning of *καταντήσωμεν* conveys bodily movement in which the subject moves from one point to another in physical time and space. Here it is more figurative in that the movement is from a status of lack of unity and understanding among believers toward a status of unity and

divorcing causality of the subject participant as Agent and its direct involvement with the process, leading also to a clearer sense of the role of Goal that fulfills the action of the verb.

knowledge. The active voice conveys οἱ πάντες as cause and startpoint of this movement into a different status. Εἰς τὴν ἐνότητα τῆς πίστεως καὶ τῆς ἐπιγνώσεως τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ is a circumstance of Location that specifies the direction and destination, but as a circumstance it is not directly affected by καταστήσωμεν. Thus the process only extends as far as the Agent itself. Lexically, καταστήσωμεν conveys the Agent as manifesting the process in which it is only οἱ πάντες that realizes this process thereby maintaining focus on the subject participant in regard to the process. Grammatically, οἱ πάντες is the Agent in which the process originates and οἱ πάντες causes the action and drives the process to attain unity and knowledge. This is the focus of the clause for voice, while the affectedness of the Agent manifesting the process is defocused.

1 Tim 2:15: ἐὰν μείνωσιν /ἐν πίστει καὶ ἀγάπῃ καὶ ἀγιασμῷ μετὰ σωφροσύνης/ (If they continue in faith and love and holiness, with self-control.)

The Agent causes the process, μείνωσιν, to occur and a medial feature is present semantically in that the process of “continue” is carried out only by the Agent. The process extends only as far as the Agent itself. The rest of the clause is a circumstance of Location realized by the preposition, ἐν, taken figuratively as specific qualities in which the Agent is to remain.

Heb 6:9: εἰ καὶ /οὕτως/ λαλοῦμεν. (If we speak in this way.)

Here a verbal clause has a medial feature selected by not projecting direct or indirect speech that would add a Goal to the configuration. Rather, the process of speaking is portrayed as focused on the Agent only, coming about through it, enhanced by a circumstance of Manner, οὕτως, that adds a quality to the process.

Mark 5:14: Καὶ οἱ βόσκοντες αὐτοὺς ἔφυγον καὶ ἀπήγγειλαν /εἰς τὴν πόλιν καὶ εἰς τοὺς ἀγρούς/ (The herdsmen fled and made report in the city and in the country.)

The process, ἔφουγον, is embodied by the herdsman only, as the ones actualizing the process. The second process, ἀπήγγειλαν, a verbal process type, has no text stating what they said or reported, thus the process is portrayed as actualizing only in the herdsman. The circumstances, εἰς τὴν πόλιν and εἰς τοὺς ἀγρούς, augment the clause by specifying the place where they were going and thus are not affected by the processes, affectedness remains in the subject.

Active Voice Participial Configurations

In ancient Greek, participles, as verbal forms, have verbal voice. In these forms, causality and affectedness among participants is in effect whereby the verbal process of the participle has its cause in a participant of the clause and the process is realized in a participant as well. The participle, also called a verbal adjective, gives the language a capability to expand significantly its range of function for communicating meaning. The participle takes a semantic verbal idea and enables the use of this verbal idea to occur in places where typically other word classes would occur such as nouns, adjectives, adverbs, and other finite verbs. The verbal basis for the participle means that it grammaticalizes verbal aspect (present, aorist, perfect, and future tense-forms) and voice (active and middle-passive), but as a non-finite form, the participle is not limited by person nor does it have mood. Its ability to take on nominal and adjectival properties means that it also marks case, number, and gender. That the participle does not indicate mood or person shows its usual function of being dependent on a main finite verb in a clause that expresses these two verbal features. The participle in this regard frequently plays a supportive role to a main clause, forming a dependent clause, but it is not limited to this

role, having the capability for independent uses as well especially when the participle takes on participant roles. The participle spans all three basic components to the clause: participants, process, and circumstances. This means that the participle can function in the role of any one of these components. It may be a participant itself, or attribute something to a participant as a verbal process, or expand upon the participant and process core of a clause as a circumstance.

Active Participle as Participant: Substantival Uses of the Participle

Agent

As a very common use of the participle, substantival uses in the active voice take a verbal idea and construe it as a participant that plays the role of Agent. In this role, the verbal process can be caused to extend out to affect another participant and this affected participant realizes the process of the participle.

Rom 3:5: μή ἄδικος ὁ θεὸς ὁ ἐπιφέρων τὴν ὀργήν; (That God is unrighteous, as the one who inflicts wrath?)

The verbal process, ὁ ἐπιφέρων, realized as an articular participle, has been nominalized to become a participant in the role of Agent. This Agent is now an entity that brings about or inflicts τὴν ὀργήν, the Goal participant that realizes the process. The verbal process is directed to the Goal, which manifests the process, whose energy source is the Agent, ὁ ἐπιφέρων. Moreover, the substantive participle takes a verbal process and nominalizes it into a participant that adds further description and qualification to ὁ θεός, “God, the inflictor,” as one who causes τὴν ὀργήν.

2 Pet 1:3: /διὰ τῆς ἐπιγνώσεως/ τοῦ καλέσαντος ἡμᾶς /ἰδίᾳ δόξῃ καὶ ἀρετῇ./ (Through the knowledge of him who called us (in)to his own glory and excellence.)

Sometimes the agentive substantive participle in the active voice can be found inside a circumstance. Here τοῦ καλέσαντος is a genitive participle that qualifies the participant, τῆς ἐπιγνώσεως, by adding further characterization to it. As a participle, the verbal process nominalizes into a participant that acts as Agent initiating the process “call.” Moreover, as a verbal clause type, this participle has an affected feature whereby the process extends only as far as the Agent itself due to lexical semantics. The participant, ἡμᾶς, is the Recipient of the process, acting as indirect participant and not as a direct participant. The process is fully manifested in the Agent who realizes this process of calling. As Recipient, ἡμᾶς does not manifest any of these actions that involve calling or summoning that the subject participant causes and does, the Recipient only receives these actions. Taken together, τοῦ καλέσαντος ἡμᾶς, “the one who called us,” may be said to be an embedded clause in this circumstance that further defines τῆς ἐπιγνώσεως. Finally, ἰδίᾳ δόξῃ καὶ ἀρετῇ, marked by the dative case, is another circumstance that augments this embedded clause with specific qualities that act as a location into which τοῦ καλέσαντος ἡμᾶς is directed.³⁵¹

Goal

Matt 6:5: Καὶ ὅτι φιλοῦσιν /ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς καὶ ἐν ταῖς γωνίαις τῶν πλατειῶν/ ἐστῶτες προσεύχεσθαι. (For they love standing and praying in the synagogues and at the street corners.)

In this mental clause, the love of the hypocrites is directed towards the participle, ἐστῶτες, the Goal as Phenomenon, in which the active voice shows that such action is

³⁵¹ See also Rom 1:25; 4:24.

intentional and initiated by the hypocrites as Agent to the process. The participle (including the infinitive) is Goal as Phenomenon because it is the focus or target to which their love is directed, but the process itself is a sensory experience by the subject as Sensor. It is where exactly these men love to stand and pray, specified by the circumstances, ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς καὶ ἐν ταῖς γωνίαις τῶν πλατειῶν, that cast them as men of reproach.

Rev 19:20: ἐν οἷς ἐπλάνησεν τοὺς λαβόντας τὸ χάραγμα τοῦ θηρίου. (By which he deceived those who had received/took the mark of the beast.)

The participle, τοὺς λαβόντας, is an embedded relative clause, “those who received/took,” acting as Agent to the Goal, τὸ χάραγμα τοῦ θηρίου, showing volition on the Agent’s part to take the Goal. The use of active voice with the verbal process, τοὺς λαβόντας, suggests that the Goal, τὸ χάραγμα τοῦ θηρίου, by being taken, is transformative, which changes into a different form, one that can affix to the human body. Further, here the participle is also a Goal itself, affected by the process, ἐπλάνησεν, forming a transformative Goal as those that have been deceived, further specified by the participle, which identifies who these persons are.

Beneficiary

The substantive participle can be the Beneficiary of the verbal process, taking a verbal notion as the Recipient of the Goal, which actualizes its process, initiated by a different Agent.

1 Thess 1:7: ὥστε γενέσθαι ὑμᾶς τύπον πᾶσιν τοῖς πιστεύουσιν /ἐν τῇ Μακεδονίᾳ καὶ ἐν τῇ Ἀχαΐᾳ./ (So that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia.)

The participle, τοῖς πιστεύουσιν, modified by the Classifier, πᾶσιν, nominalizes the verbal idea, “believe,” and it becomes a participant that benefits from the Agent + Process + Goal experiential core, γενέσθαι ὑμᾶς τύπον. The Beneficiary, πᾶσιν τοῖς πιστεύουσιν, is the indirect Goal to the process, but its more specific function can be either Recipient or Client. As Recipient, the believers receive the example given to them. As Client, the act of setting an example has been done for them or on their behalf, which they are then to follow. More strictly speaking, πᾶσιν τοῖς πιστεύουσιν leans towards being a Client participant because a specific service has been done for them rather than a tangible or intangible thing they receive into their possession. Finally, the clause is augmented by a circumstance of Location, designating specific places where πᾶσιν τοῖς πιστεύουσιν are.³⁵²

Active Participle as Process: Qualifier Uses of the Participle

Participles can take a verbal idea and further describe a participant. They attribute something to a participant, having an adjectival function in this regard, but as a verbal process, and by having voice, aspect, case, gender, and number, participles also can signal and operate as a truncated clause, which acts as a Qualifier to the verbal process.

Modifying the Agent

1 Pet 2:5: καὶ αὐτοὶ ὡς λίθοι ζῶντες. (You yourselves like living stones.)

³⁵² See also 1 Cor 14:22.

The subject participant in this clause is αὐτοὶ that is further classified as λίθοι by the comparative particle, ὡς, which creates an equal relationship between the two participants. The participle, ζῶντες, is in the active voice, to which the subject participants αὐτοὶ and λίθοι are Agents. The adjectival component to participles can modify a participant, but rather than a simple adjective (Epithet) describing the participant, the participle acts as a kind of concentrated phrase or clause (Qualifier). Here, the participle, ζῶντες, in the active voice, describes λίθοι as “stones *with life*” (phrase) or as “stones *that cause or give life*” (clause) portraying λίθοι as the source that contains or causes life.

Modifying the Goal

Luke 23:2: τοῦτον εὑραμεν διαστρέφοντα τὸ ἔθνος ἡμῶν. (“We found this man/one misleading our nation.”)

The participant, τοῦτον, is the Goal of the Agent + Process core, εὑραμεν, producing a transformative clause whereby the Goal participant experiences a change of state by becoming “found.” The participle, διαστρέφοντα, further modifies the Goal by describing what this participant was doing, διαστρέφοντα, thus creating an embedded clause that acts as a Qualifier, “who was misleading.” And in this embedded clause the participle is active voice, making it a Qualifier as Agent of the clause extended by another Goal, τὸ ἔθνος ἡμῶν, that is the affected participant of the clause.

Modifying the Recipient

Luke 5:7: καὶ κατένευσαν τοῖς μετόχοις / ἐν τῷ ἑτέρῳ πλοίῳ/ τοῦ ἐλθόντας συλλαβέσθαι αὐτοῖς· (They signalled to their partners in the other boat to come help them.)

In this verse, the participle, ἐλθόντας, agrees in gender and number with the Recipient τοῖς μετόχοις (masculine plural). The accusative participle is likely an accusative of respect that modifies this participant by further describing what the Recipient does, also answering why the Recipient is being signalled. The participle is also in relationship to the infinitival clause, συλλαβέσθαι αὐτοῖς (*lit.* “to seize with them”), which specifies the participle further. The genitive article, τοῦ, makes the infinitive into a substantive that adds purpose to the preceding process of signalling their partners and to the participle, ἐλθόντας. And a circumstance of Location, ἐν τῷ ἑτέρῳ πλοίῳ, expands the process, adding more description to it by locating where the other fishermen are. Thus, the message of their signal, the verbal process, κατένευσαν, is “They signalled to their partners in the other boat *in regard to coming in order to grab [the nets] with them.*” Or to convey the substantive idea of the infinitive, “...for the seizing [of the nets] with them.”

Active Participle as Circumstance: Expansion Uses of the Participle

Participles function like circumstances by expanding a clause in various ways, adding further description to the experiential core of a clause. As verbal adjectives, participles take a verbal idea and qualify a verbal process and its subject participant, further specify, describe, or add something new. Participles realize this role differently than prepositional phrases do in a circumstance because participles are verbal processes that can configure into a full clause, presupposing a subject participant (Agent in the active voice; Medium in the middle-passive voice), enabling them to enter into a clause complex relationship

with its preceding or main clause. This relationship is usually one that is *hypotactic*, that is, the clause that expands the other clause is dependent in some way upon the other clause, and the participial clause signals this supportive role. A few of these occurrences are given below, but not all uses are provided.

Manner (Means)

Heb 2:3: πῶς ἡμεῖς ἐκφευζόμεθα τηλικαύτης /ἀμελήσαντες/ σωτηρίας; (How shall we escape by neglecting such a great salvation?)

The active participle, ἀμελήσαντες, expands the middle-passive clause, πῶς ἡμεῖς ἐκφευζόμεθα, modifying it by taking up the verbal idea of “to neglect” and qualifying the finite verb, ἐκφευζόμεθα, with an enhancing clause of Manner that describes the means by which escaping could occur. The idea here is that by employing such means of neglecting or being careless regarding a great salvation, escape will fail. The subject participant of ἀμελήσαντες is assumed to be the same as ἐκφευζόμεθα, but the active voice of ἀμελήσαντες adds an agentive feature to it as cause of this process. The Goal, τηλικαύτης σωτηρίας, is affected by the process, being devalued, rendered useless, or allowed to suffer.³⁵³

Cause (Reason)

2 Cor 5:14: ἡ γὰρ ἀγάπη τοῦ Χριστοῦ συνέχει ἡμᾶς, /κρίναντας/ τοῦτο, ὅτι εἶς ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀπέθανεν, ἄρα οἱ πάντες ἀπέθανον· (For the love of Christ controls us, [causing us] to judge this (=decide) that one has died for all, therefore all have died.)

It is because of the first clause, ἡ γὰρ ἀγάπη τοῦ Χριστοῦ συνέχει ἡμᾶς, that the Goal participant, ἡμᾶς, of this clause, can arrive at a conclusion realized and projected by

³⁵³ See also Luke 1:3.

the following ὅτι clause. The active participle here, κρίναντας, forms an entire clause and acts as a causal link between the first clause and the ὅτι clause, “. . . [giving reason] to make judgment regarding this. . .” The Goal participant of the first clause, ἡμᾶς, becomes the Agent in the participial clause. The ὅτι clause then projects what has been judged or decided.³⁵⁴

Cause (Purpose)

Luke 13:7: ἰδοὺ τρία ἔτη ἀφ’ οὗ **ἔρχομαι** /**ζητῶν**/ καρπὸν ἐν τῇ συκῆ ταύτῃ καὶ οὐχ εὕρισκω· (“Look, for three years now I have come [for the purpose of] seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I find none.”)

The active participle, ζητῶν, supplies the cause for coming to the fig tree, more specifically the purpose and intention for coming. The volition of the subject as Agent is brought forth in the active voice, looking specifically for fruit, represented as Goal as Phenomenon in this mental clause. The sensory experience of seeking fruit is a willful one in which the active participle expands circumstantially upon the act of going out.

Cause (Result)

2 Thess 2:4: ὥστε αὐτὸν εἰς τὸν ναὸν τοῦ θεοῦ **καθίσει** /**ἀποδεικνύντα**/ ἑαυτὸν ὅτι ἐστὶν θεός. (So that he takes his seat in the temple of God, [resulting in] proclaiming himself to be God.)

The active participle, ἀποδεικνύντα, expands the clause by adding a circumstance of Result whereby the act of proclaiming himself God, caused by the subject as Agent from the previous clause, αὐτὸν, is confirmed by the previous sacrilegious act of taking

³⁵⁴ See also, Luke 4:16: Mark 9:17.

his seat in the Temple. Taking his seat in the temple causes the message to be sent to all what he thinks of himself.

Location (Time)

Mark 12:20: ἑπτὰ ἀδελφοὶ ἦσαν· καὶ ὁ πρῶτος ἔλαβεν γυναῖκα καὶ /ἀποθνήσκων/ οὐκ ἀφῆκεν σπέρμα· (There were seven brothers; the first took a wife, but when/after he died, he left no offspring.)

This is a common use of a participle in which the clause, ὁ πρῶτος ἔλαβεν γυναῖκα, is enhanced by the participle, ἀποθνήσκων, by emphasizing the time period of the process. The Agent to the participle is ὁ πρῶτος from the previous clause. This Agent has an affected feature in which the process extends only as far as the subject participant himself. The active voice conveys the process originating in him, that is, for whatever reason his own body decided to stop living. This clause does not intend to convey linguistically external agency to this process, that something else or someone killed him. The circumstance of Time expands this clause by offering more explanation that after this process occurred, there is no possibility of offspring coming from this person.

Active Voice Infinitival Configurations

Infinitives increase the functional range of a finite verb, granting it a non-finite status that allows it to nominalize a verbal notion and to perform a substantival function in a clause. Like participles, infinitives are able to express what a full clause would, conveying verbal action in relation to a subject participant, and in doing so, express voice. But as non-finite verbs, they are not bounded by a grammatical subject in a clause, so infinitives demonstrate relationship to a subject through other finite verbs involved with the

infinitive or by acting as the subject itself of a clause. Infinitives can function as a modifier to participants and processes in various ways and can have other participants involved in its verbal process. Like participles, infinitives span all three components of the clause—participants, process, and circumstances—and they can take on any one of these roles to contribute to the meaning of a clause.

Active Infinitive as Participant: Substantival Uses of the Infinitive

Agent

Phil 1:21: *Ἐμοὶ γὰρ τὸ ζῆν* Χριστὸς καὶ *τὸ ἀποθανεῖν* κέρδος. (For me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.)

Two articular infinitives, *τὸ ζῆν* and *τὸ ἀποθανεῖν*,³⁵⁵ are in the active voice and they take a verbal idea each and express them as substantives that convey the processes as non-finite nominal abstractions. These verbal processes are nominalized as participants of the clause, forming relational clauses with other participants; *τὸ ζῆν* equates with Χριστὸς and *τὸ ἀποθανεῖν* with κέρδος, producing a predicate nominative. The speaker, Paul, is the implied Agent for these infinitives (Paul is the one who “lives” or “dies”) and Ἐμοὶ refers to Paul as well, but as the Recipient of these infinitival relational clauses. As an infinitival configuration, the purpose is not to convey the Agent causing “living” or “dying,” as a finite clause would. The substantival infinitive may be read as a clause, “the one who lives (i.e. Paul),” in which the Agent is implied, but by giving this verbal idea a non-finite character, “the one who lives” is nominalized into a concept that would be

³⁵⁵ There is no significant difference in meaning between an infinitive that has the article and one that does not. See Porter, *Idioms*, 194–95.

brought into English as “to live,” or simply “living” with the assumption that there is an agentive subject involved.

Rom 7:18: **τὸ** γὰρ **θέλειν** παράκειται **μοι**, τὸ δὲ κατεργάζεσθαι τὸ καλὸν οὐ· (For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out.)

The infinitive, τὸ θέλειν, is in the active voice in a substantival function and the implied Agent again is Paul. The infinitive conveys “the one who is willing (i.e. Paul),” which is construed as a nominalized concept as “willingness,” and it is specifically Paul’s willingness that arises from himself. In this regard, τὸ θέλειν causes the process, παράκειται, which means “lie before or beside” in the sense of to be close at hand or close by. This may be rendered woodenly as “willingness lies close beside me” as Paul is the Recipient of this occurrence in his use of μοι. Unfortunately for Paul, he is not able to bring forth the goodness that ought to result from his willingness.

Goal

Phil 4:10: Ἐχάρην δὲ ἐν κυρίῳ μέγανως ὅτι ἤδη ποτὲ **ἀνεθάλετε τὸ** /ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ/ **φρονεῖν** (I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived [your] concern for me.)

Nominalized from the verb φρονέω and realized as a cognitive entity, τὸ φρονεῖν is the actualization of the process, ἀνεθάλετε, in which an active voice articular infinitive realizes the finite verbal process as Goal. The active voice of τὸ φρονεῖν means its subject participant is agentive as causing the concern or thinking. It refers back to the Agent of ἀνεθάλετε in which the subject participant that causes ἀνεθάλετε (“you” *pl.*) is the same participant that causes thought or concern, usually translated as “your concern,” but could also be understood as “you revived your [cause for] concern for me.” This is

enhanced by a circumstance of Cause, ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ, that describes further the process realized in the Goal as occurring on Paul's behalf.

Eph 4:28: ἵνα **ἔχη μεταδιδόναι τῷ χρείαν ἔχοντι**. (So that he may have something to share with anyone in need.)

The active infinitive, μεταδιδόναι, is the Goal participant affected by the finite process, ἔχη, as that which the subject is in possession of. The infinitive conveys a verbal process of “giving a share or a portion” and this verbal idea is nominalized into a participant that may be rendered as “a part to give” or “something to share.” Marked in the dative case, τῷ χρείαν ἔχοντι forms an embedded clause (“to those having need”) that acts as Recipient to the infinitival process.

Beneficiary

2 Pet 2:6: καταστροφῇ **κατέκρινεν** ὑπόδειγμα μελλόντων **ἀσεβεῖν** τεθεικῶς (He condemned [them] to extinction, making an example [of them] of what is about to happen to the ungodly.)

This verse refers to the cities Sodom and Gomorrah which God condemned and destroyed. The active infinitive, ἀσεβεῖν, holds a substantival function, portraying the verbal process as a participant in this clause. The active voice of this infinitive gives it agency and may be expanded as “the ones who cause themselves to be ungodly” in which Agent of this infinitive are those people who volitionally practice ungodliness. The infinitive takes this verbal idea and nominalizes it into the role of Recipient. These people are about to experience the same fate as the inhabitants of the two former cities, receiving the same judgment and punishment.

Active Infinitive as Process:
Qualifier Uses of the Infinitive

Modifying the Agent

Rev 12:7: Μιχαήλ καὶ οἱ ἄγγελοι αὐτοῦ **τοῦ πολεμῆσαι** /μετὰ τοῦ δράκοντος./ (Michael and his angels [went forth] fighting with the dragon.)

The nominative case of the subjects, Μιχαήλ καὶ οἱ ἄγγελοι αὐτοῦ suggests they are Agents to the active infinitive. Also later in this verse, Μιχαήλ καὶ οἱ ἄγγελοι αὐτοῦ are Agents to the active verb, ἐπολέμησεν. As Agents and subject participants, they are given more description here by the articular infinitive, τοῦ πολεμῆσαι, a verbal process with a nominalized verbal idea that qualifies these substantives as angels that go to war.

Modifying the Goal

Luke 9:16: εὐλόγησεν αὐτοὺς καὶ **κατέκλασεν** καὶ ἐδίδου τοῖς μαθηταῖς **παραθεῖναι** /τῷ ὄχλῳ./ (He said a blessing over them, then he broke [them], and gave [them] to the disciples to set before the crowd.)

An active infinitive, παραθεῖναι, modifies the Goal, αὐτοὺς, which refers to the fish and loaves of bread Jesus multiplies. The Goal's status is transformed by a series of active processes: blessed (εὐλόγησεν), broken (κατέκλασεν), and given out (ἐδίδου). The infinitive, παραθεῖναι, adds further description to the Goal by specifying what happens next to the bread and fish. This is expanded further with a circumstance of Place, τῷ ὄχλῳ, specifying where the food goes. (It is also possible to read τῷ ὄχλῳ as Recipient.) Here the infinitive modifies the Goal and not the Recipient, τοῖς μαθηταῖς. The Recipient is agentive to the infinitive in the active voice, causing the verbal process, but it is not the disciples that are "set before" the crowd of people, it is the bread and fish.

Further, this use of the infinitive also can show close similarities to circumstantial uses of the infinitive such as purpose or result. But at the same time there is an important distinction. A qualifying use of the infinitive is slightly different than an infinitive acting as a circumstance of Purpose/Result. Here a qualifying use modifies more specifically the Goal participant rather than expand upon the verbal process. Circumstantial uses attend primarily to the verbal process.

Active Infinitive as Circumstance:
Expansion Uses of the Infinitive

Cause (Purpose)

Luke 4:16: καὶ ἀνέστη /ἀναγνῶναι./ (And he stood up [in order to] read.)

The Agent and Process core of this clause expressed in ἀνέστη is augmented by an active infinitive, ἀναγνῶναι, that acts as a circumstance of Purpose, asking why and for what did the Agent stand up. This circumstance is expressed as a single word infinitive functioning as a kind of collapsed prepositional phrase in which the nominalized verbal idea of ἀναγνῶναι is represented as a conceptual participant in this phrase as “reading” or “to read.” The active voice of ἀναγνῶναι carries over the Agent from ἀνέστη whereby the Agent that causes himself to stand up also causes himself to read.³⁵⁶

John 1:33: καὶ γὰρ οὐκ ᾔδειν αὐτόν, ἀλλ' ὁ πέμψας με /βαπτίζειν ἐν ὕδατι./ (I myself did not know him, but he who sent me [in order to] baptize with water...)

If the subject of an infinitive happens to be different from the subject of its preceding verbal process that the infinitive expands upon, the subject of the infinitive is

³⁵⁶ See also John 1:33, 4:7, 7:35; Eph 4:3; Titus 2:6.

usually expressed in the accusative case in order to keep the distinction between subject participants clear. The voice of the infinitive clarifies the role this participant plays in relation to the infinitive.

As an infinitival clause of Purpose, in which the infinitive expands on the preceding clause, ἀλλ' ὁ πέμψας με, the participant, με, is Goal of ὁ πέμψας but also performs an agentive role for the next clause, βαπτίζειν ἐν ὕδατι, causing baptizing to occur.

Cause (Result)

Mark 2:2: συνήχθησαν πολλοὶ /ὥστε μηκέτι χωρεῖν/ μηδὲ τὰ /πρὸς τὴν θύραν./ (Many were gathered together, [resulting in] making no more room, not even for those at the door.)

The infinitive, χωρεῖν, conveys the verbal idea of “making room” nominalized as a participant belonging to a circumstance of Result expressed by a ὥστε prepositional phrase (frequently used for circumstances of Result in the NT). This circumstance is modified further by μηκέτι as another circumstance (Extent) that specifies the distance of making room, adding that it is not possible to go any further. The implied Agent of this infinitive is those many gathered, stated from the previous clause. And among those gathered, another Agent is specified in the next clause. Even at a specific location of the house, πρὸς τὴν θύραν, a circumstance of Place, no more room is possible to be made by those at the door, a participant expressed as an accusative plural, τὰ, which acts also as Agent to the verbal notion of χωρεῖν, “and not even the ones at the door making room.”³⁵⁷

³⁵⁷ See also, Heb 2:8: γὰρ /ὑποτάξαι/ [αὐτῷ] τὰ πάντα οὐδὲν ἀφῆκεν αὐτῷ ἀνυπότακτον. (Now as a result of putting everything in subjection to him, he left nothing outside his control.)

Rom 6:6: ἵνα καταργηθῇ τὸ σῶμα τῆς ἁμαρτίας, / τοῦ μηκέτι δουλεύειν/ ἡμᾶς τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ· (In order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, [with the result that] we would no longer serve sin.)

Here again a circumstantial infinitive has a genitive article, expanding upon the previous clause. This infinitive conveys the result that sin is no longer served, and the genitive article serves as a marker to specifically modify “the body of sin” by expanding on this participant with more circumstantial description. The Agent, ἡμᾶς, marked in the accusative, which extends the infinitive, no longer serves sin precisely because the body of sin has been nullified.

Cause (Reason)

Luke 8:6: καὶ φυὲν ἐξηράνθη /διὰ τὸ μὴ ἔχειν/ ἰκμάδα. (But it withered away, because of not having moisture.)

A circumstance of Reason is realized by the prepositional phrase, διὰ τὸ μὴ ἔχειν, in which the active articular infinitive τὸ ἔχειν is a nominalized verbal notion expressed as a participant that is further modified by ἰκμάδα that acts as Goal to the process. The active voice of the infinitive refers back to the plant as Agent that withered and agency for the infinitive is focused onto the plant itself as source of its dried up condition.

2 Cor 2:13: οὐκ **ἔσχηκα** ἄνεσιν τῷ πνεύματί μου τῷ / (διὰ τὸ) μὴ εὐρεῖν με Τίτον τὸν ἀδελφόν μου./ (I did not have rest in my spirit there *because of* Titus my brother not finding me/because of my not finding Titus.)

In some clauses the circumstance of Reason is only implied, leaving out the explicit preposition and article. However, its presence is still indicated when compared to similar configurations such as the preceding example above (Luke 8:6). As an infinitival circumstance that augments the preceding finite clause, a circumstance of Reason adds “because of...” and not just “because.” If this were read as a causal conjunction only

(because), then the infinitival configuration here would have to be read as a separate finite clause joining to the preceding finite clause through an implied $\delta\iota\acute{\alpha}$ as a conjunction. Configured as two separate finite clauses is usually how English translations render this verse: “I did not have rest in my spirit there [because] I did not find Titus my brother.” The infinitival configuration in the Greek, however, does not suggest this reading. Rather, it suggests that additional information expands the proposition of the main finite clause by answering why, instead of stating a new proposition. This circumstance of Reason therefore is realized by the implied preposition, $\delta\iota\acute{\alpha}$, plus participants that form the entire prepositional phrase.

Further, determining which accusative participant is agentive in this infinitival construction can be difficult. If $\tau\acute{\iota}\tau\omicron\nu$ is agentive to the verbal idea of $\epsilon\upsilon\pi\epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu$ in the active voice, it causes the process of finding, and $\mu\epsilon$ further modifies $\epsilon\upsilon\pi\epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu$ in a Goal-like role. If $\mu\epsilon$ is agentive, it is a Deictic of possession, translated woodenly as “my not finding” in order to maintain the nominal sense as a participant, and $\tau\acute{\iota}\tau\omicron\nu$ is in a Goal-like role. This makes the participant, $\mu\epsilon$, part of the nominalized verbal idea of “not finding” and $\tau\acute{\iota}\tau\omicron\nu$ an accusative of respect understood as, *lit.* “because of my not finding in regard to Titus my brother.” (This is typically smoothed out into “because I did not find Titus my brother.”) Moreover, in comparison to other similar constructions in the NT, word order factors in here. In most cases, the accusative participant that comes first is agentive to the infinitive, causing the process to occur, and the second accusative is in a Goal-like role. This would mean the more likely reading is that Paul could not find Titus.³⁵⁸

³⁵⁸ See Reed, “The Infinitive with Two Substantival Accusatives,” 1–27.

Location (Time)

Acts 8:6: /έν τῷ ἀκούειν αὐτοῦς καὶ βλέπειν/ τὰ σημεῖα ἃ ἐποίησεν. (When they heard him and saw the signs that he did.)

Two infinitives τῷ ἀκούειν and βλέπειν reside in a circumstance of Time, realized by a ἐν prepositional phrase that asks when the process occurred. The first active and articular infinitive, τῷ ἀκούειν, nominalizes the verbal idea as a participant put as, “in their hearing (=when they heard).” The second infinitive is anarthrous but an article may be assumed from the previous infinitive. This infinitive extends the ἐν prepositional phrase, also nominalized as a participant in this circumstance, and followed by a Goal participant as Phenomenon, τὰ σημεῖα, that are the focus of the process of seeing.

Indirect Discourse (Projection)

Frequently infinitives are used in direct and indirect discourse in mental and verbal clause types. Infinitives project a verbal process as a nominalized concept that may involve a sensory experience, a thought, or something said.

1 Cor 8:2: εἴ τις δοκεῖ ἐγνωνκέειν τι. (If anyone thinks that he knows something.)

Mental clauses such as these also can be read as two distinct finite clauses as this translation shows. The first is a mental clause represented in εἴ τις δοκεῖ, in which τις is the Agent of the active finite process, δοκεῖ. This clause then “projects” a second clause that represents the content of consciousness of the mental clause. The projected clause, ἐγνωνκέειν τι, is the *idea clause* that states what it is that the subject participant thinks. This clause is also in the active voice and the logical Agent is the same as the first clause, τις. In this configuration, however, the idea clause is an infinitival clause in which ἐγνωνκέειν nominalizes the mental process of ‘know’ and τι further specifies what is

known. Thus, the infinitival clause works like a nominal phrase that conveys two participants, “knowing” and “something,” and they act as the projected idea of the preceding mental clause, adding content and specificity to its preceding mental process, δοκεῖ.

In verbal process type clauses that involve speaking, the same kind of projected clause occurs as a projected saying clause expressed by an infinitival clause.

Acts 19:31: παρεκάλουν μὴ δοῦναι ἑαυτὸν /εἰς τὸ θέατρον./ (They were urging [him] not to give himself over to the theatre.)

The first clause, παρεκάλουν, is the verbal clause that projects through indirect discourse the content of what was being said (Verbiage), realized by the infinitival clause, μὴ δοῦναι ἑαυτὸν. The infinitive nominalizes the process “give” into a participant that is further specified by another Goal participant, ἑαυτὸν. However, in this example the Agent of μὴ δοῦναι is not the same Agent as παρεκάλουν. The Agent is Paul implied through the reflexive pronoun, ἑαυτὸν, who can give himself over. And both the Sayer clause and the Verbiage clause are expanded by a circumstance of Location in εἰς τὸ θέατρον.

Active Complementary Infinitives (Catenative Configurations)

There are certain verbal processes in the language that, by nature of their semantics, tend not to be used by themselves and require another verbal process to “complete” the verbal idea. Verbs that perform this complementary role are typically infinitives. In this way, infinitives of catenative configurations share a common feature with Range participants in the grammar. Whereas Range participants are noun groups usually realized by the

accusative case, infinitives are verbal processes. However, the noun-like element of infinitives that construes a verbal process as a participant enables an infinitive to function something like a Range in relation to the verbal process.

One of the purposes of a Range participant added to a verbal process is to put the process into “effect” because the process by itself might be too general in meaning or by itself the process does not make any sense and thus requires an object participant to further specify and determine how the verb is used.³⁵⁹ Infinitives serve this function as well in the language and its similarity to what Range does can be seen especially when the infinitive is read as a nominal helping to construe the verbal process as a whole. The infinitive preceded by a finite process is parallel to a Process + Range syntactic unit in which the complementing infinitive is the Range, specifying the “what” of the initial finite process but not as an affected constituent. Both Range and infinitives offer an added component to a verbal process by helping to “fill out” the verbal process itself, adding something more to it, and providing more specificity. Catenative configurations have verbal voice and each verb will have its own voice with respect to the other process. In the active voice, the Agent of the initiating process in a catenative pair is also the Agent of the infinitive.

Acts 26:5: προγινώσκοντές με ἄνωθεν. ἐὰν θέλωσιν μαρτυρεῖν. (Knowing me for some time, if they are willing to testify...)

The initial finite verb, θέλωσιν, is active voice with its subject participant as Agent acting as source of their willingness. The active infinitive, μαρτυρεῖν, “completes”

³⁵⁹ Recall from chapter three that linguists have identified verbs that are ‘light’ or ‘vague’ in meaning and need to be further defined. These verbs take an ‘effective object’ to add more specification to their meaning and use.

the verbal idea by specifying further what exactly their willingness is regarding, and both verbs together result in forming a single verbal idea. Since both verbs are in the active voice, the subject, which is the same for both verbs, is also Agent for both.³⁶⁰

John 6:6: αὐτὸς γὰρ ἤδει τί ἔμελλεν ποιεῖν. (For he [already] knew what he was about to do.)

The catenative pair, ἔμελλεν ποιεῖν, are both active voice and they form a subordinating clause in reference to the preceding clause whose Goal participant, τί, is also the antecedent Goal of the catenative group actualizing the processes, “He was about to do [what].” The Agent for both the finite verb and the infinitive is αὐτὸς that causes the processes, both taken together as a single verbal unit. The process, ἔμελλεν, is an example of a verb that requires a second verb to complete its verbal process since it cannot stand alone.

Mark 9:11: ὅτι λέγουσιν οἱ γραμματεῖς ὅτι Ἠλίαν δεῖ ἐλθεῖν πρῶτον; (“Why do the scribes say that first Elijah must come?”)

This is a common configuration that is typically labeled as a catenative construction. The finite verb, δεῖ, adds a modal element to the infinitival verbal idea, conveying a sense of necessity that the infinitival process must occur, “it is necessary to come.” This catenative configuration is a projection of indirect discourse using a verbal process type, λέγουσιν. The clause following this summarizes the content, offering the main point of what the scribes teach. It is arguable, however, that this configuration is not a simple catenative clause since Ἠλίαν is in the accusative case. This ensures the clause is not read as Elijah the Agent causing the verb, δεῖ, as in “Elijah makes it necessary to

³⁶⁰ See also Gal 1:10; John 5:18 διὰ τοῦτο οὖν μᾶλλον ἐζήτουν αὐτὸν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι ἀποκτεῖναι. (This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him); Luke 23:20: πάλιν δὲ ὁ Πιλάτος προσεφώνησεν αὐτοῖς θέλων ἀπολύσαι τὸν Ἰησοῦν. (Pilate addressed them once more, desiring to release Jesus.)

come.” Rather the Agent of δεῖ assumes what is written in Torah and this necessitates Elijah’s coming. Thus, Elijah is Goal to this verb and the infinitive, ἐλθεῖν, is a Qualifier, modifying Ἡλίαν by specifying what he does, ἐλθεῖν πρῶτον, configured as a nominalized verbal process. Put this way, the meaning is, “[The Scriptures] necessitate Elijah to come first.”

Conclusion

In an ergative patterning for verbal voice, a functional distinction is made between two types of subject. A subject that initiates the verbal process, and a subject that is affected by the verbal process. This subject-verb relationship is also characterized by what the verb confers onto the subject participant. The verb confers onto the subject a semantic role that arises from the system network of voice, expressed by the voice forms of the verb. The verb also confers its lexical meaning onto the subject, producing different kinds of clauses that show how the subject performs its role. In the active voice, the subject participant is in a role that causes, produces, or initiates the verbal process or state and this role is called Agent. In this role, the subject participant acts as the originating source of energy for the verbal process (*energeia*), and this is signalled by the active voice forms on the verb. The volitional and causal characteristics encoded in the subject as Agent remains consistent throughout a wide variety of clausal types and configurations, including clauses in which a feature of affectedness is present in the Agent due to the lexical semantics of the verbal process. A process may extend only as far as the subject itself (intransitive verbs) or the process actualizes in another participant that is not the subject participant (intransitive verbs). The process can “move out” beyond the domain

of the subject participant into the domain of other participants who are both directly and indirectly involved, resulting in changes to their status. Moreover, the active voice brings out different types of Goal when a process affects another participant, resulting in different clause configurations characterized by various process types.

This role, Agent, however, is only a partial contribution to the overall performance of the verbal process among the participants involved for expressing clausal meaning when other participants are involved in the verbal process. It is only partial because in an ergative patterning, the clause is oriented towards the affected participant in relation to the verbal process. A change comes about in this participant as a result of the process actualizing in it. This brings the participant, Goal, into the transitive operation and, together, Agent and Goal supply a verbal process with the most directly involved participants in whom the startpoint (energy source) and endpoint (actualization) of the verbal process have their place. Other participants such as Recipient and Client are participants involved in the process indirectly who benefit from the process in some way. And circumstances enhance a clause with other participants indirectly involved, adding further description to a process. To this extent, the active voice contributes significantly to the transitivity taking place in a clause by involving the experience of all the participants in an active clause, each contributing to clausal meaning by playing their own part in the verbal process.

MIDDLE-PASSIVE VOICE

Part 1: Middle Uses

Introduction

This chapter continues the analysis of NT texts but shifts focus onto middle-passive voice clause configurations. The same general format utilized in the previous chapter will continue throughout this chapter. First a brief summary of the middle-passive voice will take place, continuing the approach used in this study that adopts specifically the ergative model of SFL. This will move into discussion of one component of the middle-passive voice, the middle voice, which will be the focus of the remainder of this chapter. Specific texts will be analyzed using representative examples of various types of middle voice clause configurations from the NT texts. As in the previous chapter, the purpose of this analysis is to observe these particular occurrences within a broad coverage of usage and to demonstrate a linguistically well-grounded approach to interpreting how Greek employs its middle voice through analytical engagement with specific texts of the NT. At times analysis of active clauses will be revisited in order to help draw a contrast with middle voice usage and to clarify its functions.

Middle-Passive Voice: Subject as Medium

As stated in the previous chapter, voice is the speaker/writer's grammatical portrayal of the role of the subject according to an ergative alignment pattern that is predicated upon causality (startpoint) and affectedness (endpoint) in relation to the verbal process.

Whereas the active voice portrays the verbal process proceeding from the subject participant as cause, the middle-passive voice portrays the verbal process moving into the subject participant, entering its domain, and being realized in the subject participant as it acts in an endpoint role for the verbal process. In this way the middle-passive voice conveys specifically the experience of the subject as the affected participant of the verb, creating a portrayal of heightened involvement of the subject. Like the active voice, the middle-passive voice expresses grammatical meaning within the larger closed semantic system of verbal voice that stands independently of a verb's lexical meaning. At the same time, however, both grammar and lexis operate together along the same continuum and voice demonstrates this constant interplay that takes place. Lexical meaning of a verbal process may be construed in different ways grammatically through voice, opening up options for how the whole clause, including especially its subject, is portrayed.

In the system network, *middle-passive voice*, the language user enters the pathway of *affectedness* regarding the role of the subject. This contrasts with the feature *unaffectedness* of the subject embodied in the role of Agent in the active voice. The term *middle-passive* carries two distinct voice functions or uses, middle and passive (each to be defined further below), hyphenated as one voice in order to show that both these functions share the defining characterization of this voice as the subject undergoing the verbal process. Together *middle* and *passive* uses form one *middle-passive voice* in which

both uses have in common the fundamental feature of subject-affectedness and more specifically, subject as Medium.³⁶¹

The role of the subject in the middle-passive voice is the role of Medium and this role portrays the subject acting as *the means* through which the verbal process comes to actualization.³⁶² The subject as Medium plays host to the verbal process as the affected participant through which the verbal process occurs. Any other participants that might be involved in the verbal process help to define the process further that finds its final expression in the subject. To play the role of Medium that actualizes the verbal process means this role is not limited to, nor defined by, vague notions of the subject merely doing an action, performing an action, or experiencing a state of being. These notions are already built into this role and describe only in part how this role of Medium is cast. Medium is a subject-role that describes what the subject does as a participant that fully realizes a process, particularly in contrast to the active voice and its subject-role of Agent.

In the system network of voice, once the subject is selected as acting in the role of Medium to the process, the clause is in the middle-passive voice regardless of any feature

³⁶¹ Calling this voice simply "Middle Voice" would be preferable because this title conveys rather well the defining role of Medium for this voice in which the subject acts as a *means* through which the process can be actualized. "Agentive Middle" and "Non-Agentive Middle" (passivity) in regard to the subject would then be terms that describe more specific functions that belong to this voice in regard to differences in agency which is secondary to the subject role of Medium. Terms such as these, however, are cumbersome to use for text analysis. "Middle Voice" is also a term that can include the helpful notion of *pathos* used earlier in this study to define the role of the subject as undergoing or "suffering" the process as a means to actualizing it. Similar to the term, "Middle Voice," this voice could also be called "Medium Voice" simply because the subject role of Medium and all that this role entails is what is central to this voice. Nonetheless, the term "Middle-Passive" is applied here as a term for this voice in order to reduce potential confusion over labels since "Middle Voice" and "Passive Voice" are terms well-established in Greek grammar that refer to differences in agency. These terms are retained in this study to differentiate agentive functions of this voice on the premise that together both voices belong to and comprise one voice domain.

³⁶² This is similar to the portrayal of 'Goal' in the active voice in which the verbal process actualizes in this participant. Medium is a better term for describing the subject participant actualizing the process because it does not entail conceptually an initiated 'trajectory' of the verbal process from the subject that 'Goal' suggests.

of agency or, more specifically, where exactly agency might be located in a clause. Agency, in other words, is not a prerequisite for determining whether or not the middle-passive voice is activated. The middle-passive inflectional markings signal middle-passive voice regardless of how agency might be portrayed (“internal,” “backgrounded,” “diminished,” etc.). At the same time, how agency is portrayed in the middle-passive voice is a function of this voice that distinguishes this voice further between middle and passive uses. But regardless of how agency might be portrayed, this voice is always at minimum one general voice, the middle-passive voice, as signalled by the middle-passive endings on the verb and the role of the subject as Medium. In this voice, middle and passive uses can occur as specific agentive interpretations of the clause, but the role of Medium for the subject remains the same among both uses.

In the active voice, causality, the startpoint of a verbal process, is explicitly brought forth in the subject. By contrast, in the middle-passive voice causality is secondary to the realization of the process, making the endpoint of the process explicit instead and the verbal process arrives at this endpoint in the subject only. In order to do this, causality is minimized or non-existent in the subject altogether, intending not to be the focus of the middle-passive voice. The defining characterization of the middle-passive voice is not based on the agency of the subject, nor is agency primary, even though agency is still a necessary part of any portrayal of a verbal process. The experience represented by a middle-passive clause configuration is subject-affectedness, that is, the portrayal of the verbal process manifesting itself in the subject, and therefore it is in the role, Medium. This puts focus on the process arriving at its endpoint, thereby defocusing the startpoint of the process, agency, in a given representation. The

hyphenated term *middle-passive* is meant to show that for this voice the explicit expression of causality is *not* what defines this voice. If it does, middle use and passive use joined together could not be representing one voice because they each portray causality quite differently. By merging the middle and passive uses into one voice, while still maintaining their individual functions, what they both hold in common—subject-affectedness and the role of Medium—are emphasized. Together they represent one voice based on their shared commonalities rather than representing two separate voices based on their individual differences. Thus, the term *middle-passive* refers to the whole voice domain embodied in the role of Medium that stands regardless of where agency might be located in a clause or how agency might be portrayed.

The middle-passive voice finds its experiential core in the Medium + Process relationship and for the subject to be Medium in this relationship means that any causal feature that might be selected in the system network is a semantic feature added to Medium that may be selected further down the system network once the subject enters the role of Medium. In other words, causality is not systemically encoded in the Medium unlike Agent in the active voice in which causality is automatically encoded. When the user selects the role of Medium for subject and enters its pathway, it has at this point already entered into the domain of the middle-passive voice. The user is not required to make further selections regarding causality in order to enter the domain of this voice. Selections of causality are secondary selections in this regard that provide further specifications once Medium has been selected that may in turn modify the construal of Medium to a degree. This is important because generally in grammar treatments of the middle and passive, a reader/listener has to make a decision first as to where causality

might be—“internal” to the subject as middle use or “external” to the subject as passive use—before one can say which use the writer/speaker is using to represent the process. However, prior to making such a decision, the listener/reader is basically forced into a position of being inconclusive as to the voice of the verb and the clause as a whole, even though a specific inflectional marking is clearly attached to the verb. This is a problem in the grammar of voice involving form and function because this approach diminishes the effectiveness of the middle-passive forms by not signalling a specific use, but only signalling at most that the clause is “non-active voice.” Even with a middle-passive marking indicated, a decision on which use—middle or passive—remains pending until agency is located and a tentative choice in the least is made.

Often it is hard to determine causality, if not impossible at times, and this ambiguity may even come across to varying degrees as deliberate on the part of the writer/speaker because their intention in using the middle-passive voice may not be to convey causality at all, only the realization of the action. The writer/speaker’s travel through the system network means that choices involving causality are made further down in the system pathway and are choices of increasing semantic delicacy expressed as specifically middle uses or passive uses. They are also increasingly optional choices, adding to the main Medium + Process clausal nucleus to enhance a clause. Causality is certainly part of this voice, but the primary use is to bring out the affected subject and the endpoint of the process, thereby minimizing any causality. The user still has options to specify causality as to where it comes from or what it is, but this is not necessary, nor is establishing causality a prerequisite for conveying the subject’s role.

In sum, the middle-passive voice has essentially four defining characteristics, each related to each other: 1) the subject-affected nature of this voice contained in the notion of *pathos*, in which the subject is portrayed as fully experiencing the verbal process; 2) the endpoint of a process is emphasized in the subject participant, not its startpoint, thereby actualizing the process in the role of Medium; 3) Causality of the verbal process is still present, but it is an optional and minimized feature in order to bring forth the realization of a process; 4) Causality also varies in its location, occurring either in the Medium itself (middle use) or outside the Medium and in some other participant whether specified or not (passive use).

In the previous chapter it was shown that the active voice involves different types of clauses (transformative, mental, verbal, creative) defined according to the type of Goal participant in which the process finds its actualization. This is predicated upon the meaning of the verbal process itself and such clause types operate in the middle-passive voice as well. However, in this voice the manifestation of the process is not in a Goal participant, but rather in the subject participant only, thus different clause types in the middle-passive voice focus on the Medium + Process core (ergative model) and not Process + Goal component (transitive model). In the following sections, analysis focuses on middle clauses specifically, within the domain of the middle-passive voice, whereby the subject is Medium and causality to the verbal process is represented as originating in the Medium.

Transformative Clauses

Matt 26:20: Ὅψιας δὲ γενομένης ἀνέκειτο /μετὰ τῶν δώδεκα./ (When evening came, he was reclining [at table] with the twelve.)

This process, ἀνέκειτο, occurs only in the middle-passive voice in the NT and is used in a way to mean “to recline or sit at table” usually for a meal. This verb conveys physical movement in which the subject participant changes his bodily posture and shape by moving into a reclining position most likely on the floor. This middle clause portrays Jesus embodying this process in the role of Medium, reclining at table and experiencing this process. Jesus is the participant whom the process affects and finds its realization in as the process remains within the domain of the subject. In this clause Jesus is not being acted upon as to be made to recline by some other participant, which would be a passive sense. This clause is middle because there is a feature of agency added to the Medium. Jesus causes his own self to recline at table with the Twelve. This self-causation as startpoint of the process, however, is minimized in order to bring out the image of Jesus manifesting the act of reclining. This clause is augmented by a circumstance of Accompaniment expressed by μετὰ τῶν δώδεκα.

Phil 2:15: ἵνα γένησθε ἄμεμπτοι καὶ ἀκέραιοι, τέκνα θεοῦ ἄμωμα μέσον γενεᾶς σκολιᾶς καὶ διεστραμμένης, /ἐν οἷς/ φαίνεσθε ὡς φωστῆρες /ἐν κόσμῳ./ (That you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world.)

There is much description here regarding the subject participant (“blameless,” “innocent,” “without blemish,” “children of God”) that fills out the character and identity of those to whom Paul is addressing. Paul describes here the kind of people these believers can be, and in fact are, and the middle use of φαίνεσθε contributes to this by keeping the focus on the experience of the subject. The middle-passive voice represents

the subject-affectedness of this process and these people embody the process of shining as Medium to this process. The act of shining actualizes in these people so that they are as lights in a dark world. In this sense causality of the process is minimized in order to bring out the manifestation of shining more fully. Though minimized, causality is represented in this clause as existing in the Medium, so that this clause represents causality as something self-engendering to the Medium. As Paul makes clear, their own innocence and blamelessness due to their right conduct in the world causes them to shine as lights in the world. Paul compares them to shining stars and when stars shine against the darkness their sparkle comes across as self-causing. In the same way, this middle clause portrays these people as the source of their own shining in which a feature of agency of the process exists in their Medium role due to lexical semantics.

The same verb occurs in the active voice in John 1:5: καὶ τὸ φῶς /ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ/ φαίνει, καὶ ἡ σκοτία αὐτὸ οὐ κατέλαβεν. (The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.) In this construal of the same verbal process, light as Agent causes shining to occur in a certain place (darkness) as expressed by a circumstance of Location, ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ. The intention here, in contrast to the middle-passive voice, is not to focus on the subject's experience, that is, on the light's experience of shining. Rather the active voice puts focus on the process moving out from the subject toward something else, a specific location. This circumstance element is important in this verse, becoming part of the focal point of the clause that extends the verbal process. The circumstance provides an extension of the process beyond the subject, even though the process remains in the subject (The darkness does not shine. It is only the location where the light shines).

The active voice contributes to this with a transitive idea, showing the process originating in the subject participant, then moving out from here into another place.

Acts 5:30: ὁ θεὸς τῶν πατέρων ἡμῶν ἤγειρεν Ἰησοῦν ὃν ὑμεῖς **διεχειρίσασθε κρεμάσαντες** /ἐπὶ ξύλου./ (The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed [by means of] hanging him on a tree.)

This verse describes what the subject participant, ὑμεῖς, carried out, conveyed by the middle use of διεχειρίσασθε, depicting the people as enacting Jesus' death. The process, διεχειρίσασθε, agrees in person and number with ὑμεῖς, the participant that embodies the act of slaying. This participant is Medium and affected by the process in the sense that the act of killing is fully realized by this participant. This is followed by an active voice participle, κρεμάσαντες, with a circumstantial use of Manner that focuses on the people's agentive role in causing Jesus to hang on a tree. The use of the active voice here keeps focus on the subject participant as Agent to this process.

By contrast, Gal 3:13 has ὅτι γέγραπται· ἐπικατάρατος πᾶς **ὁ κρεμᾶμενος** /ἐπὶ ξύλου./ (For it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree.")

The same verbal process, here as a substantival participle, is in the middle use in this verse in order to portray the subject's experience of hanging on a tree. The subject as Medium is the affected participant embodying the process. There is no intention here to convey any external agency to the process, either through active voice, as shown above, or passive voice, even though external agency may be involved.³⁶³ At the same time this does not mean the intention is to convey that the person caused his own hanging on the tree. To say that in the middle use agency is minimized in the Medium means the image this text intends to bring out is the Medium manifesting this process.

³⁶³ This verb also has passive uses expressed by its theta/eta form. See Matt 18:6 and Lk 23:39.

Luke 5:7: καὶ κατένευσαν τοῖς μετόχοις ἐν τῷ ἑτέρῳ πλοίῳ τοῦ ἐλθόντος **συλλαβέσθαι** αὐτοῖς· (They signaled to their partners in the other boat to come help them.)

Acts 26:2: ἔνεκα τούτων με Ἰουδαῖοι συλλαβόμενοι [ὄντα] /ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ/ ἐπειρῶντο διαχειρίσασθαι. (For this reason, the Jews, seizing me in the temple, tried to kill me.)

Two middle uses of this verbal process are shown in these verses. Both focus on the subject carrying out the process and may be rendered in both uses as “taking part in,” “seizing,” or “laying hands on together.” The idea is to picture, in the first verse, the physical act of all the fishermen trying to hoist up the nets and, in the next verse, a group of Jews physically grabbing Paul. The middle use conveys the process itself being initiated by each Medium participant, “partners” and “Jews,” but more so, the process actualizing in each participant.

Active voice uses of the same verb put focus rather on what is seized or laid hold of and the experience of the Goal to the process. John 18:12 has, Ἡ οὖν σπεῖρα καὶ ὁ χιλιάρχος καὶ οἱ ὑπηρέται τῶν Ἰουδαίων συνέλαβον τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ ἔδησαν αὐτὸν. (So the band of soldiers and their captain and the officers of the Jews arrested Jesus and bound him.) What is happening to Jesus as the affected participant by the Agents is the focal point of the discourse.³⁶⁴

James 1:15: εἴτα ἡ ἐπιθυμία **συλλαβοῦσα** τίκτει ἁμαρτίαν, ἡ δὲ ἁμαρτία ἀποτελεσθεῖσα ἀποκύει θάνατον. (Then desire, taking hold of [the person], gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.)

³⁶⁴ See also Luke 1:24: /Μετὰ δὲ ταύτας τὰς ἡμέρας/ συνέλαβεν Ἐλισάβετ ἡ γυνὴ αὐτοῦ. (After these days his wife Elizabeth conceived [a child].) The verb used in this way requires an affected Goal participant—a new baby growing in the womb. But compare with Luke 1:31: καὶ ἰδοὺ συλλήμνη /ἐν γαστρὶ/ καὶ τέξῃ υἱὸν καὶ καλέσεις τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦν. (And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus.) Here future middles are used, focusing on Mary’s experience and what will happen to her.

This verse, read in light of the previous verse, 1:14, assumes a person is what ‘desire’ as Agent lays hold of. When this happens, the sin and death that result also involve the person, encompassing the harmful effects on the person.

Luke 1:66: **ἔθεντο πάντες οἱ ἀκούσαντες** /ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτῶν/ λέγοντες· τί ἄρα τὸ παιδίον τοῦτο ἔσται; (All who heard laid up [what they heard] in their hearts, saying, “What then will this child be?”)

Luke 9:44: **θέσθε ὑμεῖς** /εἰς τὰ ὦτα ὑμῶν/ τοὺς λόγους τούτους· ὁ γὰρ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου μέλλει παραδίδοσθαι εἰς χεῖρας ἀνθρώπων. (“Put these words into your ears: The Son of Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men.”)

Luke uses this verb in a middle clause only twice in his Gospel. The purpose is to draw attention to the experience of the subject, showing the subject undergoing a change of state because of what they are hearing. In the first verse, the hearers form questions in their hearts and in the second verse the command is for those listening “to take in” Jesus’ words. In both verses, the circumstance of Location that augments each clause enhances the overall portrayal of the subject’s experience because it is the subject’s “heart” and “ears” that are involved, keeping focus on the subject’s affectedness.

Luke also has in the active voice (Luke 6:48), ὁμοίως ἐστὶν ἀνθρώπῳ οἰκοδομοῦντι οἰκίαν ὃς ἔσκαψεν καὶ ἐβάθυνεν καὶ **ἔθηκεν** θεμέλιον ἐπὶ τὴν πέτραν· (He is like a man building a house, who dug and went deep and laid the foundation on the rock.) Also Luke 21:14: **θετε** οὖν /ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ὑμῶν/ μὴ προμελετᾶν ἀπολογηθῆναι· (Place it therefore in your hearts not to meditate beforehand how to answer.)

In both cases the active voice draws attention to the Goal, as to what is “put forth.” In doing so, creative clauses come about in which the Goal is something that was previously not there before. In the first clause, θεμέλιον is created as something newly constructed by the man as Agent and the notion of “foundation” becomes the focal point

for the rest of the passage. In the second clause, what is produced is a different kind of disposition prior to an upcoming interrogation, *μη προμελετᾶν ἀπολογηθῆναι*, acting as Goal that the person as Agent causes. And this disposition or mindset is part of the focal point of Jesus' teaching in this passage.

Creative Clauses

Matt 8:24: ἰδοὺ σεισμὸς μέγας ἐγένετο /ἐν τῇ θαλάσῃ/ (Behold, a great storm came about on the sea.)

This clause presents a clear use of the Medium *σεισμὸς μέγας* being created. The middle sense of *ἐγένετο* paints a mental picture of ominous clouds swirling as wind, waves, and rain increase their intensity, all portrayed as a self-causing process with internal agency. This is augmented by a circumstance of Location realized by a prepositional phrase, *ἐν τῇ θαλάσῃ*.

Mental Clauses

Luke 14:31: Ἦ τις βασιλεὺς πορευόμενος ἐτέρῳ βασιλεῖ συμβαλεῖν εἰς πόλεμον οὐχὶ καθίσας πρῶτον **βουλευσεται**: (Or what king, going out to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and deliberate?)

The verbal process, *βουλευσεται* from the active verb, *βουλεύω* (to take counsel, plan), forms mental clauses, but has no active voice uses in the NT. Here it is in the future tense-form and middle use in which the Medium is *βασιλεὺς*, a participant who will carefully consider his options for battle, acting also as the cause of this process. *βασιλεὺς* as the Medium is affected by the process as the one engaging in and actualizing this process. The endpoint of the process finds its host in the Medium, *βασιλεὺς*, as this process is realized by the subject participant only. The middle use means that the

Medium is not being acted upon in any way by another participant and instead a feature of agency is in the Medium, construing the Medium + Process nucleus of the clause as self-causing. The causal element in the king as Medium is also minimized in the middle use in order to represent more explicitly the endpoint of the process by putting focus on the king actualizing this process rather than the king only starting this process.

Eph 3:18: ἵνα ἐξισχύσητε καταλαβέσθαι σὺν πᾶσιν τοῖς ἁγίοις τί τὸ πλάτος καὶ μῆκος καὶ ὕψος καὶ βάθος. (That you may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth.)

The meaning of this infinitive in the middle use forms a mental clause in terms of a cognitive ‘seizing’ that takes place. Middle use keeps the process in the subject’s domain as the Medium experiencing it.

By contrast, active voice use of this verb takes on a more physical, bodily meaning as in Mark 9:18: καὶ ὅπου ἐὰν αὐτὸν καταλάβῃ ῥήσσει αὐτόν (And whenever it seizes him, it throws him down.) Active voice is a more physical act of ‘seizing’ which then brings into the process a Goal participant that is affected as the one that is seized by the Agent, drawing attention to this participant.³⁶⁵

Luke 13:28: ἐκεῖ ἔσται ὁ κλαυθμὸς καὶ ὁ βρυγμὸς τῶν ὀδόντων, ὅταν ὄψησθε Ἀβραὰμ καὶ Ἰσαὰκ καὶ Ἰακώβ καὶ πάντα τοὺς προφήτας ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ. (In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God.)

This verbal process is a mental process as a sensory experience of the eyes. The middle use here keeps focus on what the subject will go through. Jesus is speaking to his opponents and he paints a dismal picture of what will happen to these people. The act of seeing the Patriarchs in the Kingdom of God will affect the subjects and beholding this

³⁶⁵ See also John 1:5, καὶ ἡ σκοτία αὐτὸ οὐ κατέλαβεν in which the active voice maintains focus on the subject as light that is not ‘seized’ (=overwhelmed and put out) by darkness.

sight as Medium to the process draws a contrast between the subject seeing, but then not participating, ἐκβαλλομένους (also in the middle use).

The same verb in the active voice by contrast moves the emphasis onto the Goal participant as in Luke 21:2: **εἶδεν** δέ τινα χήραν πενιχρὰν βάλλουσαν ἐκεῖ λεπτὰ δύο. (And he saw a poor widow put in two small copper coins.) There are many uses of this verb in the active voice (over three hundred verses in the NT) in which focus is on what is seen and the subject is Agent, causing the sensory perception to occur. In this passage, Jesus sees a poor widow making a tithe offering and this woman becomes the example of a lesson on faith in God in the rest of the discourse. Although as a sensory experience of seeing, Jesus is the one who experiences the act of seeing, it is the Goal as Phenomenon that his sight is fixed on and the active voice makes this participant salient in the text.

Luke 20:11: **προσέθετο** ἕτερον πέμψαι δοῦλον· (He resolved to send another servant.)

Acts 12:3 Ἴδὼν δὲ ὅτι ἀρεστόν ἐστιν τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις, **προσέθετο** συλλαβεῖν καὶ Πέτρον. (When he saw that it pleased the Jews, he agreed to arrest Peter also.)

The meaning of this verb appears to show differences depending on voice usage. Middle meaning has a mental element that lays focus on the subject as Medium. This has connotations of being favourable towards, siding with, assenting to, consenting to, agreeing, or bringing oneself to do something. Also in both these examples, the process is “completed” by an infinitive that conveys the physical action that proceeds from the initial mental process making explicit what action is produced (πέμψαι and συλλαβεῖν).

In the active voice, however, the clauses are creative clauses in the sense of adding something tangible or intangible by the Agent that did not exist prior. This also brings about a Goal participant, which is what is added. However, both active and middle meanings share a common sense of “to establish” whether this is something in one’s

mind or a physical entity. This includes adding more time as in Matt 6:27: τίς δὲ ἐξ ὑμῶν μεριμνῶν δύναται προσθεῖναι /ἐπὶ τὴν ἡλικίαν αὐτοῦ/ πῆχυν ἕνα; (And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life?) Or adding more faith as in Luke 17:5: Καὶ εἶπαν οἱ ἀπόστολοι τῷ κυρίῳ· πρόσθεε ἡμῖν πίστιν. (The apostles said to the Lord, “Increase our faith!”).

Verbal Clauses

Acts 26:32: Ἀγρίππας δὲ τῷ Φῆστῳ ἔφη· ἀπολελεύσθαι ἐδύνατο ὁ ἄνθρωπος οὗτος εἰ μὴ ἐπεκέκλητο /Καίσαρα./ (And Agrippa said to Festus, “This man could have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar.”).

The middle use construes this verbal clause as the subject participant having been the one that is fully affected by the process. The pronoun, “he,” in the verb, which refers to Paul, is in the role of Medium. This role represents Paul as affected by the process in terms of having been the only participant through whom the verbal process came about. The act of appealing or calling is done entirely by the subject. Paul as the Medium to the process hosts the verbal process as the one who actualizes the act of appealing to Caesar. The prepositional prefix on this verb suggests that Καίσαρα is not an object participant as Goal to the process, but a participant inside a circumstance of Location stating where Paul made his appeal. Moreover, agency of the verbal process is also a feature located in the Medium since this clause represents Paul as the one who took the initiative to request a hearing with Caesar himself. However, as a middle clause, agency, though present, is also portrayed as minimized in order to maximize the representation of Paul as having brought this process to its realization.

Eph 2:17: ἐλθὼν εὐηγγελίσατο εἰρήνην ὑμῖν τοῖς μακρὰν καὶ εἰρήνην τοῖς ἐγγύς. (He came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near.)

In this verse, the middle use of the verbal process, εὐηγγελίσσατο, maintains the thread running through the second chapter of Ephesians of all that Jesus has accomplished on behalf of believers. Among these things, Jesus has also announced the gospel of peace and the middle voice underscores the subject as Medium bringing all this about. The prefix -εὐ qualifies the verbal idea as to the kind of announcement it is, and this may have led to usage that implies a Goal participant is involved, such as “good news,” “glad tidings,” “gospel,” specifying the process of “proclaiming” and “announcing.” This would mean that in this clause the accusative, εἰρήνην, extends this process, εὐηγγελίσσατο, like a genitive would as “he preached the good news *of peace*” and the participants marked in the dative case are Recipients.³⁶⁶

Similarly, the active voice use of this verb also extends the verbal process with an accusative as in Rev 10:7: ἐτελέσθη τὸ μυστήριον τοῦ θεοῦ, ὡς εὐηγγέλισεν τοὺς ἑαυτοῦ δούλους τοὺς προφήτας. (The mystery of God would be fulfilled, just as he announced [good news] to his servants the prophets.) Since the meaning of the process, εὐηγγέλισεν, implies a Goal participant, read as “good news,” it is likely that τοὺς ἑαυτοῦ δούλους τοὺς προφήτας in the accusative case functions here as a Recipient, the one to whom the good news is preached. But the use of the accusative case is to show that the Recipient is also the affected participant in this clause, albeit indirectly. God is the source as Agent with emphasis on the servant prophets being affected by the good news coming to them. Their coming into knowledge of the gospel, having it proclaimed to them is the focus here, specifying how the mystery of God is fulfilled.

³⁶⁶ See Additional Participants below.

Another comparison of two uses of this verb, illustrated by an infinitive with a common Medium, is Luke 1:19 and Rev 14:6.

Luke reads: καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ ἄγγελος εἶπεν αὐτῷ· ἐγὼ εἰμι Γαβριήλ ὁ παρεστηκὼς ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἀπεστάλην λαλῆσαι πρὸς σὲ καὶ εὐαγγελίσασθαί σοι ταῦτα· (And the angel answered him, “I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I was sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news.)

Rev 14:6: Καὶ εἶδον ἄλλον ἄγγελον πετόμενον ἐν μεσουρανήματι, ἔχοντα εὐαγγέλιον αἰώνιον εὐαγγελίσαι ἐπὶ τοὺς καθημένους ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς καὶ ἐπὶ πᾶν ἔθνος καὶ φυλὴν καὶ γλῶσσαν καὶ λαόν. (Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and language and people.)

Here two verbal process type infinitives are compared, active and middle uses. In the middle use, the focus is on the angel’s engagement in the process, embodying the proclamation itself, and speaking specifically to Mary. This includes what he says to Mary throughout this passage in which he gives her the details of the good news. The active voice use infinitive on the other hand shows the angel that has the gospel in its possession as Agent causing good news to go forth onto the people of the earth who are in the role of Recipient. But this angel is not being portrayed here as doing anything more than this, as doing any of the actual announcing itself like the angel in the previous example does, only causing it to happen throughout the world.

Additional Participants

In the middle-passive voice, when there are participants involved in a clause that add to the Medium + Process core, the role of these participants is to either (1) be affected indirectly by the process as Beneficiaries that receive the ‘goods’ of a verbal process, or (2) expand the verbal process, becoming part of the process itself, by adding more specification to the process, or (3) augment the Medium + Process core circumstantially

with a participant that belongs to a circumstance. All types of additional participants can occur together in a clause.

Beneficiary

Mark 5:16: **διηγήσαντο** αὐτοῖς οἱ ιδόντες πῶς ἐγένετο τῷ δαίμονιζομένῳ καὶ περὶ τῶν χοίρων. (Those who had seen it described to them what had happened to the demon-possessed man and to the pigs.)

This is a verbal clause of reporting in which οἱ ιδόντες is Medium to the process, διηγήσαντο, in the middle use. This means focus is on the portrayal of the witnesses initiating a report and describing the situation in detail. The focus is on the subject's experience. This creates a picture in the reader's mind of word getting around fast over what just happened. The remainder of the verse, beginning with the particle, πῶς, represents what was described by the witnesses as to the 'topics' of their reporting. In this verse the Process + Medium core is expanded by a Recipient, αὐτοῖς, that receives the description of the report itself and benefits by being made aware of what happened.

Rom 8:32: πῶς οὐχὶ καὶ σὺν αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα ἡμῖν χαρίσεται. (How will he not also with him graciously give us all things?)

This verb, χαρίσεται, has a monosemic idea of 'to give,' but can be modified in its meaning either adverbally, "give graciously, freely" or by a nominal, "give favour, kindness." In this transformative clause, the Medium + Process core is expanded by potentially three different participant types: ἡμῖν (Recipient), σὺν αὐτῷ (Circumstance participant; see below), and τὰ πάντα (possible Range or Circumstance; see below). The middle use conveys the Medium as source of the process as well as actualizing the process, emphasizing that this process is carried out by the subject only. If τὰ πάντα is read as a circumstance of Matter, then the Recipient, ἡμῖν, receives grace or favour as in,

“to grant favour to us *with respect to* all things;” If τὰ πάντα is read as Range, then this is what the Recipient receives, as in “to give all things.”

Range

In traditional grammar, the middle voice can often be difficult to distinguish in function from the active voice due to the presence of a participant in an object or patient slot of a clause. These participants are typically, though not always, in the accusative case acting as direct objects to the verb. Traditional approaches to voice view the active voice in such a way that these accusative participants have the process extended out to them, receiving the “impact” of the process, that is, being acted upon by the subject and process. In an ergative approach, however, a middle clause can have the exact same clausal *structure* as an active voice clause, but *functionally* the accusative participant is in a different kind of role to the process, that of Range, and the subject as well plays a different role, Medium.

Rom 8:32: πῶς οὐχὶ καὶ σὺν αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα ἡμῖν χαρίσεται. (How will he not also with him graciously give us all things?)

Returning to the same example from above, τὰ πάντα can be read as Range to the process χαρίσεται helping to construe the process itself, specifying what is freely or graciously given. The focus here is on the experience of the subject who graciously gives and provides. Since the middle use in this clause makes the subject Medium as the affected participant, through whom the process is realized, the participant, τὰ πάντα, is the unaffected participant to the process. This participant does not undergo any change of state in relation to this process. It is, rather, part of the process itself, adding to the

meaning of the process by specifying it, and helping to maintain focus on the experience of the subject who fulfils the process of giving graciously.

Matt 27:35: Σταυρώσαντες δὲ αὐτὸν **διεμερίσαντο τὰ ἱμάτια αὐτοῦ**. (And when they had crucified him, they divided his garments among them.)

The subject of *διεμερίσαντο* is also subject of the active participle, *Σταυρώσαντες*, and the wider discourse leading into this verse focuses on what the soldiers did to Jesus. In this verse they crucify Jesus and then divide up his garments. The Medium in this clause is the soldiers and as a middle clause, the verbal idea of dividing up is fully realized in the soldiers. There is topic continuity in this clause to the previous clause that states that the soldiers had also just crucified Jesus. Middle use maintains the focus on what the soldiers do, spotlighting their actions. This also makes τὰ ἱμάτια αὐτοῦ the Range participant, portrayed here not as the affected participant which would lay focus on the garments themselves being divided up. Rather, focus is on the subject's experience, the soldiers engaging in this process of dividing, and τὰ ἱμάτια αὐτοῦ adds specificity to this process, becoming part of the process itself, "divided his garments." By adding a Range participant, the middle use provides a fuller portrayal of the subject's involvement in the process.

Moreover, the Range participant is important with this verbal process because it helps to maintain a distinction from passive voice uses in which the subject is the one divided. This example is a middle use because the soldiers cause the process to occur, but this is minimized to bring out the endpoint of the process, their experience and actualization of dividing the garments.

A similar example is Luke 12:13: διδάσκαλε, εἰπέ τῷ ἀδελφῷ μου **μερίσασθαι** μετ' ἐμοῦ **τὴν κληρονομίαν**. ("Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with

me.”) Jesus’ response to this statement in the next verse concerns being an arbitrator between the two brothers, suggesting that the matter here is what is right personal behaviour among two brothers and not so much their inheritance itself. The middle infinitive, *μερίσασθαι*, maintains focus on the subject’s experience, what the brother does or does not do, whether or not he engages in the act of dividing. The brother as Medium directs the reader/listener’s attention to this participant as fulfilling the verbal idea, and not the inheritance itself as fulfilling the verbal idea. The Range participant, *τὴν κληρονομίαν*, is the unaffected participant here, specifying only what the matter concerns, what is divided, since without this specification the process would be too general to be functional.

By contrast the active voice use puts focus on the Goal participant being divided up as in Mark 6:41: *τοὺς δύο ἰχθύας ἐμέρισεν* πᾶσιν. (He divided the two fish among them all.) The experience of the Goal, *τοὺς δύο ἰχθύας*, as the affected participant is what makes this entire event of feeding so many people a miraculous one. As an active clause, Jesus as Agent causes this to occur, but since the affected participant is *τοὺς δύο ἰχθύας*, this clause directs attention to the two fish as the participant realizing the verbal process and being divided (=multiplied) into many more fish.

Also, Luke 22:17 has *λάβετε* τοῦτο καὶ *διαμερίσατε* εἰς ἑαυτούς: (“Take this [cup] and divide it among yourselves.”) The first clause, *λάβετε* τοῦτο directs the reader/listener’s attention to the cup, specifically the wine, that Jesus hands to the disciples. The next clause, as an active clause, maintains this attention on the cup and its contents being divided up among the disciples. Attention is not directed onto the subject participant fulfilling the act of dividing up the wine. And Acts 2:45 has two active

clauses: *καὶ τὰ κτήματα καὶ τὰς ὑπάρξεις ἐπίπρασκον καὶ διεμερίζον αὐτὰ πᾶσιν* (And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all.)

The first active clause directs attention to what is being sold (belongings), and the second active clause maintains this continuity as to the affected participants involved by keeping attention on the money that comes directly from the belongings being sold.

The verb *μεταπέμψω* (to send for, summon) occurs nine times in the NT and only in the middle-passive voice. This verb is an example of how more traditional approaches to voice set up ambiguity in distinguishing this verb's middle form from active voice uses. It appears that the subject does the action of "summoning" like an active voice Agent even though it is in middle-passive voice form, especially when there is an object participant following the verb. Acts 10:5 has, *νῦν πέμψον ἄνδρας εἰς Ἰόππην καὶ μετάπεμψαι Σίμωνά τινα* ὃς ἐπικαλεῖται Πέτρος: (Now send men to Joppa and bring one Simon who is called Peter.) This second clause in this verse exercises middle function because the subject participant of the verse, Cornelius, represented as Medium, is portrayed as initiating the process, but he is also the affected participant in this middle clause undergoing and actualizing the entire verbal process of summoning, calling, or fetching.

The reader/listener is invited to picture what might be happening for the subject participant as he engages in the process of summoning someone (e.g. getting a letter or message prepared, choosing the person who will go to call the person and deliver the message, etc.). Cornelius is the one responsible for bringing about the verbal idea as portrayed in this middle clause. The Range participant is *Σίμωνά τινα*, which extends the process by specifying who exactly is being summoned. But even though Simon is the one

being summoned, the accusative in the clause, and the participant that the process extends to or is limited by, he is not being portrayed as the affected participant in this clause. Rather this participant helps to construe the process itself, adding more specificity to the process in which the process is more precisely “send for a certain Simon.” The Range is not in a voice role that conveys any kind of transformation or change of state this participant might undergo in regard to the process, *μετάπεμψαι*. Simon will change his status by going with the men, but this is a different verbal process and a different clause. He has no engagement at all with the specific process *μετάπεμψαι*, only the subject does, Cornelius. Simon does not engage in the sending and summoning itself. Further, the participant, *Σίμωνά τινα*, could also be read as belonging to a circumstance of Time and Location whereby the prepositional prefix on the verb *-μετά* conveys the idea that Cornelius is to “send *after a certain Simon*.” The idea here is that Simon is already located somewhere and Cornelius will send men to look for him, and they will arrive where Simon is after Simon has already been there.

Another example of a verbal type of process whose middle form is often read as active voice³⁶⁷ is in Acts 13:17, *ὁ θεὸς τοῦ λαοῦ τούτου Ἰσραὴλ ἐξελέξατο τοὺς πατέρας ἡμῶν*. (The God of this people Israel chose our fathers.) The verbal type of process here means “to say or call out” and it is the subject participant, *ὁ θεός*, as Medium that is affected by and actualizes the process and not the participant the process is directed towards. The Medium is not the one chosen, but rather the one who does the choosing and thus holds a feature of agency making this a middle clause. Medium also is restricted by the genitive case phrase, *τοῦ λαοῦ τούτου Ἰσραὴλ*, and offers further specification of a

³⁶⁷ Or a deponent middle form.

participant, ὁ θεός, and its identity. As a verbal type of process, the middle use is modified by a Range participant, τοὺς πατέρας ἡμῶν, that does not actualize the act of verbally calling out or choosing, as only the subject does this, making it the affected participant to the process. The Range specifies what the verbal process is directed towards or to what extent the process goes forth. The participant, τοὺς πατέρας ἡμῶν as Range together with ἐξελέξατο construes the process as a single verbal unit of meaning, ἐξελέξατο τοὺς πατέρας ἡμῶν, “chose our fathers.” The process is both enacted by God and fulfilled by him as the only one involved in bringing this process about.

The opening of the book of Acts (1:1) has, **Τὸν μὲν πρῶτον λόγον ἐποισάμην** περὶ πάντων, ᾧ Θεόφιλε, ὃν ἤρξατο ὁ Ἰησοῦς ποιεῖν τε καὶ διδάσκειν. (In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach.)

In what functions here as a brief author’s introduction, the process, ἐποισάμην, in the first person singular, portrays the author Luke as having made an account of all that Jesus has done and taught. This is conveyed using the middle-passive voice which puts Luke into the role of Medium to the process. Luke is portrayed here as affected by the process in the sense of hosting the process and being the one through whom the process of making an account has come about. This portrayal is specifically middle use since the process is not being done to Luke as acting upon him, but he represents the cause of the process, as the one who has initiated this undertaking, the one who conceived it, performed the legwork, and wrote this document. The middle use does not emphasize here Luke producing a physical book itself, though he did this, but rather all that Luke did as manifestation of the verbal process. The middle conveys this by keeping focus on the subject’s experience of the process, expanded by the Range participant, Τὸν μὲν πρῶτον

λόγον, but portrayed here not as the affected participant. Rather it represents another use of Range, that of specifying the process by designating the domain in which the process takes place. The English translation given above captures this even though in the Greek the clause does not start out with a circumstance of Location expressed through a prepositional phrase, but rather an accusative participant in relation to the process.

For its clausal type, this is a creative clause, but Luke is not trying to convey so much that he produced a physical book, but rather, as expanded further by the circumstance of Matter, *περὶ πάντων*, and the rest of the verse and passage, he is drawing attention to what he did *in* the book. The book itself as Range contains what Luke did and it is the specific medium through which his work is shown.

By contrast, active voice uses of this verb focus on the Goal as the creative and physical manifestation of the process as in Heb 1:2: δι' οὗ καὶ ἐποίησεν τοὺς αἰῶνας. (Through whom also he created the worlds.) Portrayal of the subject's experience is limited to just the cause of the process and the active voice brings out the Goal as manifestation of the process.

The use of a Range participant in middle mental clauses helps to fill out the sensory experience of the subject that is part of the semantics of the verbal process. John 1:32 says, Καὶ ἐμαρτύρησεν Ἰωάννης λέγων ὅτι τεθέαμαι τὸ πνεῦμα καταβαῖνον ὡς περιστερὰν ἐξ οὐρανοῦ. (And John bore witness: "I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove.")

John, as Medium, recounts in this verse what happened to him and his state of experiencing with his own eyes the sight of the Spirit. The process begins in John and extends out toward the participant, τὸ πνεῦμα, whom John sees. But this participant is not

represented in this clause as affected by the process, only John is, because “seeing” is occurring only by him and he embodies this act. The role of τὸ πνεῦμα is Range, which helps to construe the process itself by adding more specificity to John’s experience of seeing. With the Range participant involved, the verbal process as a whole is τεθέαμαι τὸ πνεῦμα and not just τεθέαμαι. If this were the active voice, the clause would represent John as Agent (Sensor) that “targets” the Phenomenon participant, making this the affected participant of the clause by the subject, that is, affecting the status of this participant in some way even though the mental experience of the process is experienced by the subject only as Sensor. The middle use by contrast does not indicate at all any possible change in the status of the Range participant, enabling focus to be fully on the Medium experiencing the process, further defined by the Range, which finds its endpoint in John.

Likewise, Mark 6:20 has, ὁ γὰρ Ἡρώδης ἐφοβεῖτο τὸν Ἰωάννην, εἰδὼς αὐτὸν ἄνδρα δίκαιον καὶ ἅγιον (for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man). Ἡρώδης is Medium to the process, ἐφοβεῖτο, and this process extends out toward the participant, τὸν Ἰωάννην. Herod performs the process specifically as the participant affected by the process in the role of Medium through whom the process comes about.

In this clause, the participant, τὸν Ἰωάννην, is in the role of Range in which John is not affected by the process because the experience of fearing occurs entirely in Herod, who has an emotive reaction to John. As a mental clause, Herod’s reaction originates in him but this kind of self-cause is minimized in the middle use in order to represent more

fully Herod actualizing a fear of John and giving embodiment to this fear, maintaining focus on the Medium.

John is the object of Herod's fear, but since John does not experience the process, John is the unaffected participant. As Range, John is the participant that helps to construe the process itself by further specifying the process, adding more description to what Herod is experiencing. Moreover, a verb such as φοβέω is semantically general and requires the use of another participant to help define and describe the meaning of the process. In this use of φοβέω the meaning of this particular process is incomplete without a separate participant that contributes to this process's meaning to help form a single semantic unit.

Verbs that imply a reflexive use³⁶⁸ can be helpful in understanding the functional role of Range. Matt 27:24 has, λαβὼν ὕδωρ ἀπενίψατο τὰς χεῖρας ἀπέναντι τοῦ ὄχλου. (He [Pilate] took water and washed [his] hands before the crowd.)

In this verse Pilate symbolically washes himself and the Range, τὰς χεῖρας, specifies what exactly of himself he washed. The accusative participant is specifying the extent of the process and so it can be included in the representation of the process itself, making "washed hands" the complete verbal process. The middle use is also about portraying the *totality* of the verbal process (startpoint to endpoint) occurring in the Medium participant. The whole process of washing hands from start to finish occurs in the Medium alone, realized by the Medium. The process and Range together designate what the totality of the verbal process entails or encompasses, defining the scope of the

³⁶⁸ A verbal idea is reflexive when the action is performed by the subject and conveys a sense that the action is simultaneously performed on the subject as well.

process itself, and in the middle use, this entire scope of the process unfolds in the Medium.

Circumstantial Participants

The middle clause can be augmented by a circumstance that contains an additional participant. At most this participant is indirectly involved in the verbal process, but similar to Range, it adds further description to the process and especially to the experience of the Medium.

Rom 8:32: πῶς οὐχὶ καὶ /σὺν αὐτῷ/ τὰ πάντα ἡμῖν γαρίσεται; (How will he not also with him graciously give us all things?)

Returning once again to this verse in Romans, σὺν αὐτῷ augments the middle clause as a circumstance of Accompaniment that helps to fill out the experience of the Medium. This circumstance extends the clause with an additive participant, suggested by the first part of this verse³⁶⁹ and read as, “How will he not, *as well as* him (Jesus), grant favour in all things to us.”

In an ergative patterning of voice, at times the distinction between a circumstantial participant and a Range participant is indeterminate. When a verbal process is extended by an accusative in the middle use, the role of this participant is often Range, but sometimes it can be read as a circumstantial participant.

Matt 27:24: λαβὼν ὕδωρ ἀπενίψατο τὰς χεῖρας ἀπέναντι τοῦ ὄχλου. (He (Pilate) took water and washed [his] hands before the crowd.)

Using the same verse from the previous section above, the Range participant as noted in this middle clause, τὰς χεῖρας, further specifies the process, ἀπενίψατο, forming

³⁶⁹ Rom 8:32: ὅς γε τοῦ ἰδίου υἱοῦ οὐκ ἐφείσατο ἀλλ' ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν πάντων παρέδωκεν αὐτόν (He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all...)

a whole semantic unit of the process that actualizes in Pilate. However, τὰς χεῖρας also can be read in this verse as augmenting the process with a circumstance of Manner. The meaning in this verse is that Pilate takes water to symbolically cleanse himself of all guilt concerning what is about to happen to Jesus. In this sense Pilate figuratively washes himself, or more specifically, his conscience. He does not bathe his whole body in front of the crowd, he performs this act of cleansing by washing only his hands. So this verse can be read as “Taking water, he washed [himself] *by means of [washing] (his) hands* in front of the crowd.” This is obviously a cumbersome translation, but it attempts to bring out the meaning of the verse at another level by utilizing another functional role of an accusative participant in the middle voice, that of circumstantial participant.

Middle Voice Participial Configurations

When a participle is in the middle-passive voice, it conveys the verbal process actualizing in the participant the participle modifies, typically the Medium. Or if the participle is a participant itself in the clause, the verbal process is realized through this substantival participant.³⁷⁰

Middle Participle as Participant: Substantival Uses of the Participle

Medium

2 Cor 5:5: ὁ δὲ κατεργασάμενος ἡμᾶς εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο θεός. (He who has prepared us for this very thing is God.)

³⁷⁰ See chapter 5 for a fuller introduction to participial functions as they relate to transitivity and voice.

In this relational clause, the middle participle, ὁ κατεργασάμενος, is linked to θεός in equal relationship whereby the participle stands substantively for θεός, adding more description to it. This makes θεός the referent for the Medium of the middle participle as the participant through whom the process of preparing comes about. The middle participle is also further defined by a Range participant, ἡμᾶς, making ὁ κατεργασάμενος ἡμᾶς the whole process itself and forming together the Medium + Process core, “the one who prepares us.”³⁷¹

Goal

1 Thess 1:10: ἀναμένειν τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν, ὃν ἤγειρεν ἐκ [τῶν] νεκρῶν, Ἰησοῦν τὸν ῥυόμενον ἡμᾶς / ἐκ τῆς ὀργῆς τῆς ἐρχομένης./ (To wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus, who delivers us from the wrath to come.)

The process, τὸν ῥυόμενον, acts substantively in apposition to the Medium itself, Ἰησοῦν, the affected participant who embodies the process, and Goal of the previous clause. Jesus is Goal because he is the participant that God raised from the dead, referring back to the antecedent, ὃν, corresponding to the accusative case of Ἰησοῦν. The middle participle is also further defined by a Range participant, ἡμᾶς, making τὸν ῥυόμενον ἡμᾶς the process itself and forming together the Medium + Process core, “Jesus, the one who delivers us.”³⁷²

³⁷¹ See also Rev 6:2.

³⁷² See also Matt 4:24: καὶ προσήνεγκαν αὐτῷ πάντας τοὺς κακῶς ἔχοντας / ποικίλαις νόσοις/ καὶ /βασάνοις/ συνεχομένους. (And they brought him all those suffering various diseases and afflicted with pains.); 2 Tim 2:25: ἐν πραύτητι παιδεύοντα τοὺς ἀντιδιατιθεμένους. (Correcting his opponents with gentleness.)

Range

Heb 6:9: Πεπίσμεθα δὲ περὶ ὑμῶν, ἀγαπητοί, τὰ κρείσσονα καὶ ἐχόμενα σωτηρίας, εἰ καὶ οὕτως λαλοῦμεν. (Though we speak in this way, yet concerning you, beloved, we feel sure of better things—things that belong to salvation.)

The Range participant, τὰ κρείσσονα, specifies the middle use process, Πεπίσμεθα, by adding what the experience of the Medium is in regard to, that is, “the better things.” Then the middle participle, ἐχόμενα, elaborates further on this Range participant, expanding the Range, which is the implied Medium of the participle as in, “(the better things) that pertain to salvation,” or “the better things that manifest salvation.”

Beneficiary

Luke 1:50: τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ εἰς γενεὰς καὶ γενεὰς τοῖς φοβουμένοις αὐτόν. (His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.)

The middle participle, τοῖς φοβουμένοις, extended by a Range participant, αὐτόν, forms its own Medium + Process core as “those who fear him.” Its role in the wider context is Recipient to the implied process here of “given” by receiving God’s mercy as in, “his mercy (is given) to those who fear him from generation to generation.”

Middle Participle as Process:
Qualifier Uses of the Participle

Middle participles can take a verbal idea to describe a participant. In middle uses, the verbal idea of the participle is actualized through the modified participant as Medium.

Modifying the Medium

1 Pet 1:7: ἵνα τὸ δοκίμιον ὑμῶν τῆς πίστεως πολυτιμότερον χρυσίου τοῦ ἀπολλυμένου.
(So that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes.)

When a middle participle modifies another participant by describing it using a verbal process, this participant being modified is Medium to the participle. Here, χρυσίου, which is compared to one's faith in this verse, is qualified by the middle genitive participle, τοῦ ἀπολλυμένου, as "gold that perishes." The process of decay can be fully realized in gold, which, though very resilient, is still perishable.³⁷³

Middle Participle as Circumstance: Expansion Uses of the Participle

Middle participles can add further description to the Medium + Process core by adding various circumstantial expansions to the clause. The verbal idea of the participle is realized through the Medium participant as realization of the process. Also, participles can form their own clauses, enabling them to enter into a clause complex relationship with its preceding or main clause whose subject participant is modified by the circumstantial middle participle.

Location (Time)

1 Cor 1:7: ὥστε ὑμᾶς μὴ ὑστερεῖσθαι ἐν μηδενὶ χαρίσματι /ἀπεκδεχομένους/ τὴν ἀποκάλυψιν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. (So that you are not lacking in any gift, [while] you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ.)

The middle participle, ἀπεκδεχομένους, expands the first clause of the verse, ὥστε ὑμᾶς μὴ ὑστερεῖσθαι ἐν μηδενὶ χαρίσματι, which is itself a middle clause, with a

³⁷³ See also Mark 11:20; John 11:31; Jude 23.

circumstance of Time by forming its own middle clause that enhances the first clause. This creates a clause complex between the two clauses as a main clause followed by a subordinating clause whereby ἀπεκδεχομένους enters into a hypotactic or dependent relationship to the first clause. The middle use portrays the process actualized in the subject participant as Medium from the first clause, ὑμᾶς.³⁷⁴

Manner (Means)

Eph 4:1: Παρακαλῶ οὖν ὑμᾶς ἐγὼ ὁ δέσμιος ἐν κυρίῳ ἀξίως περιπατῆσαι τῆς κλήσεως ἧς ἐκλήθητε (I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called.)

Eph 4:2: μετὰ πάσης ταπεινοφροσύνης καὶ πραύτητος, μετὰ μακροθυμίας, /ἀνεχόμενοι/ ἀλλήλων /ἐν ἀγάπῃ./ (With all humility and gentleness, with patience, [by means of] bearing with one another in love.)

Verse 1 is stated here to show how verse 2 is a circumstantial expansion itself of verse 1 consisting of a few circumstances of Accompaniment expressed by μετὰ phrases. The final circumstance of the verse is expressed by a middle participle, ἀνεχόμενοι, extended itself by both a Range participant, ἀλλήλων, and a circumstance of Place. This participle forms its own clause that refers back to verse 1, to produce a clause complex. It enhances verse 1 with a circumstance of Manner, specifically expressing the means by which one walks in a worthy manner. This may be read as, "...to walk in a manner worthy of the calling...by bearing with one another in love."

Middle participles also appear as a substantive participant inside a circumstance that expands the Medium + Process core of a clause.

³⁷⁴ See also Mark 3:5: καὶ /περιβλεψάμενος/ αὐτοὺς μετ' ὀργῆς. /συλλυπούμενος/ ἐπὶ τῇ πωρώσει τῆς καρδίας αὐτῶν λέγει τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ· ἔκτεινον τὴν χεῖρα. (After he looked around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, he said to the man, "Stretch out your hand")

Acts 19:4: εἶπεν δὲ Παῦλος· Ἰωάννης ἐβάπτισεν βάπτισμα μετανοίας τῷ λαῷ λέγων /εἰς τὸν ἐρχόμενον μετ’ αὐτὸν/ ἵνα πιστεύσωσιν, τοῦτ’ ἔστιν εἰς τὸν Ἰησοῦν. (And Paul said, “John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who comes after him, that is, [to believe] in Jesus.”)

Here τὸν ἐρχόμενον μετ’ αὐτὸν forms an embedded middle clause inside an εἰς prepositional phrase, “for *the one who comes after him*.” The implied Medium to the process is Jesus who is the circumstantial participant of the εἰς prepositional phrase, actualizing the process, and this participant is also expanded by its own circumstance of Location/Time, μετ’ αὐτὸν.

Middle Periphrastic Configurations

Col 1:6: καθὼς καὶ ἐν παντὶ τῷ κόσμῳ ἔστιν καρποφορούμενον καὶ αὐξανόμενον. (As indeed in the whole world [the gospel] is bearing fruit and increasing.)

Two present participles in this clause forming a periphrastic configuration refer back to its subject from the previous verse in 1:5, τῷ λόγῳ τῆς ἀληθείας τοῦ εὐαγγελίου (“The word of truth of the gospel”). This subject is Medium to the process and the periphrastic configuration portrays the process unfolding and in progress, being realized in the Medium.

Middle Infinitival Configurations

Middle Infinitive as Participant: Substantival Uses of the Infinitive

The infinitive can nominalize its verbal idea and function as a participant in a clause whose middle use conveys the verbal process actualized in it.³⁷⁵

³⁷⁵ See chapter 5 for a fuller description of infinitival functions.

Medium

Rom 7:18: τὸ γὰρ θέλειν παράκειται μοι, τὸ δὲ κατεργάζεσθαι τὸ καλὸν οὐ· (For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out.)

Two verbal processes here, τὸ θέλειν and τὸ κατεργάζεσθαι, are both articular infinitives that each take a verbal idea and convey it as conceptual participants, “willingness” and “outworking.” Nominalizing a verbal process is a key function of the infinitive while bearing in mind that as verbal processes, infinitives also have verbal voice. It is best to see this by expanding the infinitive into a clause consisting of Medium and Process for the middle use. First, the articular middle infinitive of the second clause followed by an articular adjective, τὸ καλὸν, suggests that the infinitive is extended by a Range participant, that specifies what is “worked out,” helping to construe the process as a whole that becomes nominalized as in, “working out goodness,” or “the outworking of goodness.” The middle infinitive and Range together comprise a process whose Medium refers to Paul, the writer.

This middle infinitive, therefore, may be read as a clause in which Paul means, “the outworking of goodness that is realized through me.” This clause that is “collapsed” into the middle infinitive is the Medium of the clause and the verbal process of this Medium is carried over by implication from the first verse, παράκειταί, in which this process, as Paul says, does not actualize in the Medium. This may be read as, “For willingness (*lit.*) lies close to me, but the outworking of goodness does not [lie close to me.]” Finally, Paul, who is describing himself in this verse, is also the stated Recipient in the first clause, μοι, and the implied Recipient in the second clause.

Middle Infinitive as Process: Qualifier Uses of the Infinitive

The infinitive can modify a participant of a clause by nominalizing its verbal idea, adding further description to another participant. An infinitive in the middle use means that the process is actualized in the participant the infinitive modifies.

Modifying the Medium

1 Thess 4:3: Τοῦτο γάρ ἐστὶν θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ, ὁ ἀγιασμός ὑμῶν, ἀπέχεσθαι ὑμᾶς /ἀπὸ τῆς πορνείας./ (For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality.)

The common translation given here for this verse suggests a cataphoric reference for Τοῦτο and the rest of the first clause, γάρ ἐστὶν θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ, ὁ ἀγιασμός ὑμῶν. This means that to what Τοῦτο and its clause refers, comes after the Τοῦτο clause. This is usually made clear in translation with the use of a colon pointing to the reference, “that you abstain from sexual immorality.” However, the first two verses of 1 Thess 4, leading into verse 3 stated here refer to instructions for right conduct. In this way Τοῦτο could be read anaphorically in which Τοῦτο γάρ ἐστὶν creates a relational clause that connects these instructions, referred to by Τοῦτο, to the participant, θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ, ὁ ἀγιασμός ὑμῶν of this verse. This would form one participant as the Medium to the middle infinitive, ἀπέχεσθαι, extended by a Range participant, ὑμᾶς. This process has a sense of “holding one back or away from something” and the infinitive nominalizes this process into a concept rendered something like “a holding back.” These instructions, which are the will of God and sanctification, are qualified by the middle infinitive, describing the

Medium further. This may be read as, “(These instructions) are the will of God, your sanctification, (*lit.*)that hold you back from sexual immorality.”

1 Pet 4:17: ὅτι ὁ καιρὸς τοῦ ἄρξασθαι τὸ κρίμα ἀπὸ τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ θεοῦ· (For it is time for judgment to begin at the household of God.)

Since the infinitive nominalizes a verbal idea, it can function in the same way a genitive participant would modify another participant. Here ὁ καιρὸς is qualified by the middle infinitive whose verbal process occurs in the Medium, read as, “The time of the beginning” or “The beginning time.” The accusative, τὸ κρίμα, extends the infinitive further and specifies what the “beginning time” is in regard to “judgment,” thus functioning as Range to the infinitive, and thereby also extending and delimiting the Medium, read as, “the beginning time of judgment.”

Modifying the Goal

Mark 10:14: ἄφετε τὰ παιδιά ἔρχεσθαι πρὸς με. (“Let the children come to me.”)

The Goal participant, τὰ παιδιά, is described further with the middle infinitive, ἔρχεσθαι, in which τὰ παιδιά is Medium to the present infinitival process, read as, “Allow the children [that] are coming to me.”³⁷⁶

Modifying the Range

2 Pet 3:9: μὴ βουλόμενός τινας ἀπολέσθαι ἀλλὰ πάντα εἰς μετάνοιαν χωρῆσαι. (Not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.)

In this clause, the negated middle participle, μὴ βουλόμενός is expanded by a Range participant, τινας, and the Medium is God, referring back to the previous verses.

³⁷⁶ See also, Rom 15:30, 1 Cor 15:53.

The Range participant itself is further specified by another process, a middle infinitive, ἀπολέσθαι, that describes the Range with a process that the Range acts as Medium to.³⁷⁷

Modifying the Recipient

Jude 3: ἀνάγκην ἔσχον γράψαι ὑμῖν παρακαλῶν ἐπαγωνίζεσθαι τῇ ἅπαξ παραδοθείσῃ τοῖς ἀγίοις πίστει. (I found it necessary to write [a letter] appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints.)

The Recipient, ὑμῖν, is modified by the middle infinitive, ἐπαγωνίζεσθαι, as a process that adds more description to the Recipient, actualizing through it. The Recipient becomes Medium to the infinitival process, being encouraged to embody the process of struggling for the faith.³⁷⁸

Modifying the Circumstance

Acts 28:17: Ἐγένετο δὲ /μετὰ ἡμέρας τρεῖς/ συγκαλέσασθαι αὐτὸν τοὺς ὄντας τῶν Ἰουδαίων πρώτους· (After three days he called together the local leaders of the Jews.)

The middle infinitive in this clause is inside a circumstance, μετὰ ἡμέρας τρεῖς, extending this circumstance by adding a process to it that is nominalized. Since infinitives act as nominalized verbal processes, it can extend a circumstance by adding to it in the form of another circumstantial participant inside the μετὰ prepositional phrase. The infinitive is then extended further by more participants marked by the accusative case which is the case of extension to the process. This creates two accusative participants in which one acts as Medium to the infinitive, αὐτὸν, and the other, an

³⁷⁷ See also, 1 Tim 2:8: Βούλομαι οὖν προσεύχεσθαι τοὺς ἄνδρας ἐν παντί τόπῳ ἐπαίροντας ὁσίους χεῖρας. (I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands.)

³⁷⁸ See also John 13:24 νεύει οὖν τούτῳ Σίμων Πέτρος πυθέσθαι τίς ἂν εἴη περὶ οὗ λέγει. (So Simon Peter motioned [his hand] to him to ask Jesus of whom he was speaking.); also Acts 1:4.

embedded clause, as Range, τοὺς ὄντας τῶν Ἰουδαίων πρώτους, producing a long circumstantial element to the clause.

Mark 2:23: Καὶ ἐγένετο αὐτὸν /ἐν τοῖς σάββασιν/ **παραπορεύεσθαι** /διὰ τῶν σπορίμων./ (One Sabbath he was going through the grainfields.)

A circumstance, ἐν τοῖς σάββασιν, is modified by the middle infinitive, παραπορεύεσθαι. This infinitive is extended by another participant as Medium, αὐτὸν, and this Medium + Process core is also extended by another circumstance (Manner), διὰ τῶν σπορίμων.

Matt 13:2: καὶ συνήχθησαν πρὸς αὐτὸν ὄχλοι πολλοί /ὥστε/ αὐτὸν εἰς πλοῖον ἐμβάντα **καθῆσθαι**. (And great crowds gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat down.)

Clauses augmented by a ὥστε clause produce a circumstance of Cause (Result), which can be extended further by other circumstances and circumstantial participants, including participles and infinitives. The middle infinitive, καθῆσθαι, actualizes in the accusative as Medium, αὐτὸν.

Middle Catenative Configurations

A very common occurrence is for an infinitive to pair up with another finite verbal process and together they form a single verbal idea by means of the infinitive “completing” the first verbal process. There is also a fine line between catenatives and circumstances in which catenative configurations can also easily slide into circumstances. The infinitive also may expand the finite verb usually as a circumstance of Cause (purpose, result, reason).

In catenatives, a verbal process in the middle use actualizes in the subject as Medium.

Acts 25:11: οὐδείς με δύναται ἀποτίς χαρίσασθαι· Καίσαρα ἐπικαλοῦμαι. (“No one can give me up to them. I appeal to Caesar.”)

Both finite verb and infinitive are in the middle use, forming a single semantic verbal process, δύναται χαρίσασθαι, read as, “able to give (over),” in which χαρίσασθαι has a basic meaning of “to give.” The finite verb, δύναται, is semantically general, being specified and “completed” by the infinitive, χαρίσασθαι. This process unit is extended further by a Range participant, με, and actualized in the Medium, οὐδείς, whereby the Medium embodies entirely this process.

Mark 4:1: πάλιν ἤρξατο διδάσκειν παρὰ τὴν θάλασσαν· (Again he [Jesus] began to teach beside the sea.)

The middle use process in this verse, ἤρξατο, occurs very frequently with an infinitival process such as in this verse, “began to teach.”³⁷⁹ This process, ἤρξατο, forms a single semantic unit with the infinitive, ἤρξατο διδάσκειν, and qualifies the infinitive by putting emphasis on the start of the infinitival process unfolding. At the same time the infinitive adds more specificity to the process, “begin.” The middle use puts Jesus in the role of Medium, affected by the process, hosting this process, and actualizing it (endpoint), in which the process comes about entirely through him. The active voice of διδάσκειν conveys that Jesus initiates teaching, read as, “Jesus began [to cause] teaching,” but the middle use of ἤρξατο also holds a feature of agency in which Jesus is the startpoint and endpoint for this verb. Taken together with the infinitive, the middle use of ἤρξατο shows that Jesus initiates and fully embodies the whole verbal idea, “began

³⁷⁹ Occurring mostly in the aorist tense-form throughout the NT (over 80 occurrences) with no active voice forms in the aorist, imperfect, and perfect, and only a couple of active forms in the present tense-form (infinitival forms).

to teach.”³⁸⁰ The use of ἤρξατο with διδάσκειν also can carry connotations of intentionally portraying Jesus as the original source of the actions and teachings, in contrast to someone else who may carry on Jesus’s teaching but is not the original source of them.³⁸¹

Middle Infinitive as Circumstance: Expansion Uses of the Infinitive

Circumstance

John 13:19: ἀπ’ ἄρτι λέγω ὑμῖν / πρὸ τοῦ γενέσθαι, ἵνα πιστεύσητε ὅταν γένηται ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι. (I am telling you [this] now, before it takes place, that when it does take place you may believe that I am he.)

Infinitives that form a circumstance take an article when they follow a preposition. The nominalized middle infinitive in this clause, τοῦ γενέσθαι, acts as a circumstantial participant in a circumstance of Time read as, “before happening.” As a verbal process with voice, the Medium of the infinitive is the implied Goal as Verbiage

³⁸⁰ The verb, διδάσκω, has no middle forms in the NT, only active and a few aorist theta forms. This suggests that a verb like this one, which configures a mental clause, always requires two participants to be involved. One participant is agentive to the process, causing it to occur as the initiator of the process. Another participant undergoes “to teach” which is equivalent to saying this participant “is caused to learn.” See Halliday, *Studies in English Language*, 302; Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 351–52.

³⁸¹ This verbal process, ἄρχω, is an example of a verb that has been cited as having two distinct meanings split between active and middle use with “virtually no overlap in the field of meaning” by the time of the Koine (see Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 415n17). NT usage of this verb is mostly “to begin” in the middle with only a couple of instances in the active voice that convey “to rule.” But this still does not mean the uses do not share a common meaning. Usage of this word that includes literature outside the NT suggests that “to rule” may be a more specific and contextually-based use of “to begin” in that a ruler or leader is the one who “begins” all things in governing a people, acting as the “initiator” by holding headship over a people from whom government proceeds (e.g. enacting laws, making judicial decisions that become laws, commanding an army, etc.). Moreover, the use of active voice for “to rule” suggests that there is usually a Goal participant that undergoes being ruled, as affected by this process. But middle use for “to begin” is a verbal process that occurs entirely in the subject itself that might be further specified by a Range participant.

that refers back to what Jesus talks about in this verbal type clause. The circumstance thus expands this clause as “before [it] happens.”³⁸²

Cause (Purpose)

Luke 2:3: ἐπορεύοντο πάντες /ἀπογράφεσθαι/ ἕκαστος εἰς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ πόλιν. (All went [in order to] register, each to his own town.)

The middle infinitive, ἀπογράφεσθαι, expands the clause, καὶ ἐπορεύοντο πάντες, in which πάντες is Medium to both ἐπορεύοντο and the middle infinitive. The infinitive functions as a circumstance of Purpose to the Medium + Process core of the initial clause, read as, “And all went *in order to* register.” Agency for the infinitival process can be in the Medium, but portrayed outside the Medium as well, incurring a passive reading, “to be registered.”

Role

Heb 2:3: πῶς ἡμεῖς ἐκφευξόμεθα τηλικαύτης ἀμελήσαντες σωτηρίας, ἥτις ἀρχὴν λαβοῦσα /λαλεῖσθαι διὰ τοῦ κυρίου/ ὑπὸ τῶν ἀκουσάντων εἰς ἡμᾶς ἐβεβαιώθη; (How shall we flee away, neglecting so great a salvation, which was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard?)

In the second part of this verse, the middle infinitive, λαλεῖσθαι, nominalizing the verbal process, begins a circumstance of Role, expanding upon the active participle, λαβοῦσα, which modifies the Goal participant of the previous clause, σωτηρίας. This may be read as, “...a salvation, (*lit.*) which taking first (=occurring first) *as something*

³⁸² See also Acts 2:1: Καὶ /ἐν τῷ συμπληροῦσθαι/ τὴν ἡμέραν τῆς πεντηκοστῆς. (When the day of Pentecost arrived.); James 4:2: οὐκ ἔχετε /διὰ τὸ μὴ αἰτεῖσθαι ὑμᾶς./ (You do not have, (*lit.*) because of you not asking.); also 1 Pet 3:7; Rom 1:24.

spoken through the Lord.” The middle use of the infinitive refers to its subject as Medium, σωτηρίας, as that which is spoken.

The Middle-Passive Voice in Opposition to the Active Voice

In the final section of this chapter, an important point about the middle use is discussed with the intention of making it clear that the active and middle uses stand in contrast to each other. In uses of the active and middle, it can still be difficult to distinguish active from middle when, in the active voice, the subject is seen as experiencing the verbal process or being in a state, in which it seems both cause and realization of a process occur in the subject as Agent because the process does not move beyond the domain of the subject. These are active configurations that often lack a Goal participant and result from the lexical semantics of a verb determining the extent of the verbal process in relation to the subject participant. This feature is not encoded in the function of Agent, rather, due to a verb’s meaning, the verbal process does not extend beyond the subject. Such notions of affectedness are realized in active clauses when there is no Goal participant and the verbal process lies entirely within the subject participant.

Voice distinctions, however, require that another question is asked in such cases of the subject alone fulfilling the verbal process in an effort to move beyond simplistic depictions of the subject merely “doing” an action, with no further specification to this. The question voice answers is, what is the subject experiencing the process *as*? Or what is the subject’s state of being *as*? The morphology of the verb clearly marks a choice between Agent or Medium in answer to these questions. So whereas in the active voice the subject as Agent is primarily source or startpoint of the process that does not move

out beyond the domain of the subject, the middle use focuses its meaning on the subject as full realization or endpoint of the process.

Luke's Gospel illustrates well the contrast of subject roles between the active and middle uses when the writer makes use of the verb, ἀγαλλιάω (to rejoice, exult) twice—once in the active voice and once as a middle use. Luke 1:47 has, **ἠγαλλίασεν τὸ πνεῦμά μου ἐπὶ τῷ θεῷ τῷ σωτήρι μου** (My spirit rejoices in God my Saviour), and Luke 10:21 has Ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ ὥρᾳ **ἠγαλλιάσατο** [ἐν] τῷ πνεύματι τῷ ἁγίῳ (In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit).³⁸³

In the active voice clause, the verbal process, ἠγαλλίασεν, is a verb in which the process begins in the subject as Agent but only extends as far as the subject. The writer portrays Mary referring to her spirit, τὸ πνεῦμά μου, a specific part of herself, as causing her to rejoice in God. Mary's spirit is the source of rejoicing, and this rejoicing wells up in Mary, manifested physically and verbally by her. The writer conveys τὸ πνεῦμά μου as Agent causing the verbal process and this process extends only as far as Mary herself, demonstrating the affected feature in the Agent due to the lexical semantics of the verb. The use of the active voice portrays the experience in a way that focuses on where Mary's rejoicing is coming from, the specific part of her being where the verbal process of rejoicing originates.

In the second clause, Luke 10:21, the same verb is used in the middle in which Jesus rejoices over how God's gracious will is unfolding as God chooses to reveal heavenly things to "little children" and not to the wise ones of the world. The use of the middle here focuses on the process manifesting itself in Jesus as Medium to the process.

³⁸³ We will return to this verb and its passive use in the next chapter.

The portrayal of Jesus' act of rejoicing does not put special focus on something that is the cause of Jesus' rejoicing. The middle use brings out the endpoint of the process, the outward physical expression of Jesus rejoicing, accompanied by verbal expressions of gratitude toward God. The cause of rejoicing is minimized in contrast to the previous verse that puts focus on Mary's spirit as the cause. Jesus, on the other hand, is in the role of Medium in the middle use that portrays his whole person engaging in and embodying the totality of the act of rejoicing as the participant through whom the full expression of rejoicing comes about. The process is also a self-engendering one as the act of rejoicing is self-caused by Jesus, that is, he initiates it. Moreover, in the previous verse, the writer's use of the active voice also may be to draw a distinction in the reader's mind between two participants—Mary's spirit and implicitly, Mary's whole person, thus using the active voice to show that her spirit as energy source of the process, initiates the process, and then causes Mary's whole physical self to rejoice.

Juxtaposing these two verses also demonstrates that the middle use belongs closer to the passive use when making interpretations of the grammar, rather than belonging closer to the active voice as more traditional grammar treatments of voice tend to arrange the voices. In an ergative patterning for voice in which the opposition is between Agent and Medium roles, portraying the subject as doing the action cannot be the basis for deciding between voice uses because it is already assumed that the subject does the action in some way in both active and middle uses. Rather, the grammatical portrayal of voice involves the subject in the role of either doing the action *by causing it* (active voice) or doing an action *by being affected by it*, that is, actualizing the process (middle use), and not just performing it. The affected nature of Medium in the middle use is the same in the

passive use and because of this, in the second verse here, a middle reading of Jesus' act of rejoicing is also a matter of interpretation that can vary according to how causality of the process is viewed. Agency may be read as coming from Jesus himself, internal to the Medium as demonstrated above, or the cause of the process comes from outside Jesus, external to the Medium, caused by the Holy Spirit, if the dative [ἐν] τῷ πνεύματι τῷ ἁγίῳ³⁸⁴ is interpreted as causal and not just locative, translated as, "In that same hour, Jesus was caused to rejoice by the Holy Spirit." This prepositional phrase locates Jesus' rejoicing inside or within the "domain" of the Holy Spirit. The use of this ἐν + dative prepositional phrase can have a more specific instrumental use whereby the Holy Spirit is agentive, acting upon Jesus, and creating a circumstance of Manner. Since Jesus is located in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit acts as a source of empowerment for Jesus' rejoicing. This could be read as "Jesus rejoiced by means of the Holy Spirit" in that there is a causal force involved and the Holy Spirit is the instrument of power for Jesus' rejoicing. Or causality might be what Jesus refers to as he reflects upon what he has observed God doing, implying as cause, "by these acts of God taking place through the Holy Spirit" that are discussed in the passage. In any case, the scope of causality for Jesus' affectedness by the verbal process broadens out significantly according to how the wider discourse is interpreted. But whether a middle or passive reading is taken up, Jesus is consistently in the role of Medium. There is no room for interpretation here because this is signalled by the ending on the verb, *-to*, which is a middle-passive marker meant to signal that the subject, Jesus, is in an affected role, that of Medium, actualizing the verbal process. Thus, there is morphological restriction that keeps the middle-passive voice

³⁸⁴ This phrase implies usage with the preposition ἐν because the rest of the phrase is in the dative case and this is the only case with which this preposition occurs.

distinct from the active voice, disallowing interpretive readings of this clause based on semantic construals of the verbal process that conclude there is no difference here from an active voice clause.

Conclusion

As stated in this study, voice involves the subject and verb relationship characterized specifically by what the verb confers onto the subject participant. The verb confers onto the subject a semantic role that arises from the system network of voice, expressed by the voice forms of the verb. The verb also confers its lexical meaning onto the subject, producing different kinds of clauses that show how the subject performs its role. The various forms for the middle-passive voice (-μαι, -μην, and -(θ)η forms) consistently signal that the subject participant is Medium and that the verbal process finds its realization in this participant alone. The middle-passive voice demonstrates an ergative patterning in which the subject is fully affected and in an endpoint role in relation to the verbal process. This is in contrast to the active voice in which the subject is cause, acting in a startpoint role. The defining characterization of the middle use is the subject role of Medium as the affected participant through which the process is realized. This marks a clear opposition to the active voice and its subject participant in the role of Agent.

The purpose of using the middle specifically is to portray the Medium as actualizing the process while causality also occurs in the Medium due to the lexical semantics of the verbal process. Causality is minimized, however, in order to portray the verbal process finding its culmination in the subject participant. This contrasts with the active voice in which the purpose is to portray the subject as Agent explicitly causing the

process to occur thereby actualizing the process in other participants, the Goal participant most directly. The middle use cannot categorically be treated as equivalent to the active voice because the middle intends to portray the *totality* of the verbal process occurring in the subject participant, that is, not just the cause of a process (active voice), nor its realization only (passive use to be discussed in the next chapter). Rather both cause and realization of a verbal process occur in the middle use, creating an entirely intransitive idea as to the kind of clausal operation involved. In the middle use, the entire experience of the process, extended in various ways, comes about fully in the subject. The next chapter continues this discussion by looking at the other component to the middle-passive voice, passivity, as another portrayal of causality to the role of Medium.

MIDDLE-PASSIVE VOICE

Part 2: Passive Uses

Introduction

Passive configurations are treated in this chapter as a specific usage of the middle-passive voice. Both middle and passive uses together comprise the middle-passive voice because they share the same role of the subject. But the passive complements the middle as another way of construing the role of the subject participant. Since the active voice and the middle use of the middle-passive voice have been discussed previously, this chapter on passive uses will help to make the distinctions among the voices clearer, especially in regard to causality and how active, middle, and passive, each offer a different perspective on this. In what follows, first a brief description of the passive use will be provided, taking into account this use's function in relation to the middle and active uses and the middle-passive voice as a whole. Next, various passive configurations will be analyzed and this will lead into discussion and analysis of the theta/eta form as a passive marker that occurs in the aorist and future tense-forms. This is followed by discussion that juxtaposes the passive and middle uses and considers their relationship within the middle-passive voice. Finally, the chapter concludes with remarks on the ambiguity of agency that arises in this voice.

Passive Use: Subject as Medium

When an ancient Greek language user chooses the system pathway of *affectedness* regarding the role of the subject, the user enters the *middle-passive* voice. The term *middle-passive* carries two distinct voice functions, labelled individually as *middle* and *passive*, yet hyphenated to convey that together they form one voice. Both middle and passive uses share the defining characterization of the one voice as a whole that the subject is affected by the verbal process, that is to say, the verbal process actualizes in the subject only. Together both uses have in common the fundamental feature of subject-affectedness and, more specifically, subject in the role of Medium.

In the middle-passive voice, there are three main paradigmatic form endings (-μαι, -μην, and -θ(η)-)³⁸⁵ to signal either middle or passive use. Every time a respective middle-passive form is employed, the subject participant enters the role of Medium through which the process comes about. This applies to passive configurations and, like the middle, the Medium + Process relationship forms the nucleus of the clause. Meaning in a middle-passive voice clause always originates from its experiential centre of Medium + Process. In order to distinguish passive from middle, therefore, it must be determined through usage of the verbal process and the other clausal constituents that for passive use, causality to the verbal process does not originate in the Medium but is external to it, that is, it is external to the Process + Medium experiential centre of the clause. In the system network, when the language user chooses the pathway of *External agency*, this route is the pathway of *passivity*. In this part of the system, Medium is entirely the affected entity

³⁸⁵ The -θ(η)- form is a tense formative that attaches either active secondary endings (aorist) or middle-passive primary endings (future).

only, having no feature of causality at all within the Medium + Process nucleus, but still functioning as the realization of the process.

The distinction of the passive use is that causality originates outside of the Medium and there are three ways to view causality for the passive use, referred to more specifically as various types of agency that occur in relation to a clause. (1) Agency may be external to the Process + Medium centre as an additional circumstantial element to a clause, and this circumstance is specified in text and therefore still internal to the clause as a whole. (2) Or agency may be external to the entire clause, being stated in, or at least inferred by, another clause or series of clauses occupying the surrounding co-text. (3) Finally, agency may be located beyond the wider discourse itself as assumed or general knowledge that goes unstated (e.g. accepted divine causes or human causes). Despite this variability in agency, however, the ergative notion of Medium is consistent in all such configurations and in this regard an *ergative passivity* can be posited. To convey passivity in the middle-passive voice means that the subject is consistently the affected participant represented as Medium, defined as the participant through which the process comes about. Then agency occurs outside the primary Medium + Process core as something else acts upon the Medium to bring the verbal process about.

Ergative passivity construes a passive clause differently than how passive occurs according to a nom-acc patterning as a construction that is derived from an active voice construction. In an ergative passive clause, the form of the verb signals that the subject is affected by the process, no different in this regard from a middle clause. But causality is interpreted in a passive clause as occurring outside the Medium + Process core. In this regard, passive use, maintaining subject as Medium, is selected in the system in contrast

to middle use, not active use.³⁸⁶ In comparison to a nom-acc system, typically there are no formal indicators, either on the verb or a nominal, to signal a middle clause. Middle use is determined more by lexical semantics, whereas passive use is more formally distinguished from the active voice. English, for example, has “the baseball broke the window,” *active voice*, and “the window was broken by the baseball,” *passive voice*. Formal distinctions occur between “broke” and “was broken” to signal active versus passive. But a middle sense of this clause, which might be, “the window broke,” does not have its own verbal form distinct from the active form, nor are there any formal indicators on the subject to signal an intransitive idea.

Further, the hyphenated term, *middle-passive*, that this study’s treatment of voice uses, is meant to show that for this voice, the different expressions of agency that characterize middle and passive uses are not what defines this voice primarily. If it does, middle uses and passive uses joined together could not be representing one voice since they each portray agency differently. The two uses can together represent one voice because middle-passive refers to the whole voice domain of subject-affectedness embodied in the role of Medium that stands regardless of where agency might be located in a clause or how agency might be portrayed. The subject of a passive clause is Medium,

³⁸⁶ Similarly, Allan sees passive uses as a type of middle use according to his “Passive Middle” category. See Allan, *The Middle Voice in Ancient Greek*, 58–59. According to Allan, in addition to subject-affectedness (middle), “an agent-participant is *conceptually* present, but pragmatically deemphasized.” (*italics original*) in a passive use. Allan’s description, however, gives the impression that the passive is more like a type of active use, rather than a middle use, when he states that passive clauses contain instruments, causes, or agents, even though these may not be made explicit very often. But more so, passives seem to be a type of active according to Allan because they start from active clauses in which “the patient is assigned subject-status.” (58) “Patient” comes about from an active transitive clause and when this participant becomes subject in a passive clause, is this what makes it subject-affected? If so, subject-affectedness is a status that is derived from the active voice (This also seems to be the case with Allan’s “Spontaneous Process Middle” type in which the subject is in the role of patient). It is unclear in Allan’s treatment how middle meaning relates to active meaning, and then how passive use fits into this.

no different than a middle clause, whereby the verbal process actualizes in the subject. Whereas in the middle use the cause of the process is internal to the Medium + Process core, in the passive use, the cause of the process is external to the Medium + Process core, originating from a different source. The subject participant manifests a process as Medium in the passive use. Moreover, selecting *passive use* in the system network means that there is no agency in regard to the Medium. Since the option of external agency represents an experience as not having its process caused by the Medium, the writer/speaker chooses to allow questions of external agency (by whom? by what?) open up in the construal of the experience, if only to convey that causality does not originate in the Medium. This selection can be made due to the lexical semantics of the verbal process or based on how the writer/speaker chooses to represent experience with voice. However, the $-\mu\alpha\iota$ and $-\mu\eta\nu$ forms do not make this distinction of agency clear. The theta/eta marker seems to make this distinction clearer due to its high frequency of passive uses in the NT.

Further, in a passive use, two more options open up in the system network, *+Specified agency* and *-Specified agency*. The reader/listener is prompted to consider external agency to the process when a circumstance augments a middle-passive Medium + Process core (*+Specified agency*), expressed typically by a prepositional phrase specifying agency (however, there is room for interpretation here because the circumstance of the clause may portray a circumstance only, that is not agentive to the process). Also, a circumstance is optional and can be entirely absent, leaving external agency unspecified (*-Specified agency*). In this option, external agency is still referred to or assumed as causality is always involved in a process, however, agency is left

undetermined. And again, interpretation is involved because in such cases the wording or form of this selection could be identical to a middle clause in which causality is located in the Medium. Finally, if the writer/speaker does not want to suggest such notions of external agency, passive use is not selected in the system and instead a middle use is taken up, in which both cause of the process and the actualization of the process—its endpoint—are focused onto the Medium participant only.

Specified External Agency

In a passive use, the speaker/writer intends to portray causality as external to the Medium + Process nucleus and experiential centre of the clause. The language makes this explicit by augmenting the Medium + Process core through a circumstance expressed typically by a prepositional phrase. In passive uses, causality is put out to the periphery of the clause as part of a non-essential circumstantial element that contains a participant involved only indirectly with the verbal process. This participant is always *interpreted* as having a feature of agency in relation to the verbal process which means not every circumstance that augments a process is agentive to it. The previous two chapters contained instances of circumstances that attend to the verbal process by augmenting a clause according to a variety of circumstantial types (e.g. Extent, Location, Manner, Cause, Contingency, Accompaniment, Role). In the passive use, each of these various circumstance types may be construed as causal to the verbal process in addition to their regular circumstantial meanings.

In the Greek of the New Testament, there are essentially four kinds of prepositional phrases and one case that augment a verbal process in the passive use in

order to express a circumstance interpreted as having external agency. These are: (1) ὑπό + participant in the genitive, (2) διά + participant in the genitive (less frequently with the accusative), (3) ἐκ + participant in the genitive, (4) ἐν + participant in the dative, or (5) a participant in the dative case with no preposition.³⁸⁷ Each of these figures realizes a circumstance that attends to a process in a clause. They tend not to express causality per se, but rather offer in various ways further descriptions and attendant information that expand upon the verbal process.³⁸⁸

The prepositional phrase, ὑπό + genitive usually expresses a circumstance of Location (*from under, beneath, at*); it can also express a circumstance of Accompaniment to a verbal process (*with*), or it simply limits the process like the genitive case to a nominal (*of*). The phrase, διά + participant in the genitive, expresses a circumstance of Location, depicting a linear motion and specifying where this motion takes place (*through, straight through, throughout*). Or it expresses different kinds of place (*in, in the course of, in the midst of, along, across, at, at a distance of*). This shades into various circumstances of Time such as duration (*throughout, in the course of, from x to y*). This phrase also can express circumstances of Manner with an instrumental sense, describing how or by what means a verbal process comes about (*by, through, by means of, out of, from, of, in, with*). The διά preposition with the accusative case can express agency perhaps the most explicitly as a circumstance of Cause that states reason for the verbal process occurring (*because of, on account of, thanks to, by reason of, for, through, for the purpose of, for the sake of*). But this case occurs less frequently than the genitive case

³⁸⁷ See Porter, et al. *Fundamentals of New Testament Greek*, 141–42.

³⁸⁸ See Halliday, *Halliday's Introduction*, 310–32, for definitions and descriptions of the various types of circumstances.

with this preposition for passive voice. The phrase ἐκ + participant in the genitive expresses a circumstance of Location (*from, out of*), often depicting a certain position or place (*outside of, beyond, apart from*), and also with emphasis on source of origin (*of, out of, by means of, from*) as well as circumstances of Time (*since, at, from, for, after, in, at the end of*). The phrase ἐν + participant in the dative expresses most frequently a circumstance of Location (*in, at, by, near, to, surrounded by, within, near, on, amongst, in the presence of, from, towards*). It also can express circumstances of Time and Manner (instrumental sense), translated with many of the same prepositions (*in, in the time of, during the time of, with, before, from, by, by means of, at, within, after*), whose functional distinctions are helped by usage and co-text. Finally, the simple dative case of a nominal participant, not associated with a preposition, can be used to express the same types of circumstances of Time, Location, Manner, Accompaniment, and Cause to expand upon the verbal process.

Circumstantial elements of a clause serve the purpose of expanding a verbal process in various ways. Each circumstance that augments a clause does so by adding more information to the verbal process by answering different general questions: Time (when?), Location (where?), Manner (how?), Accompaniment (with who/what?) and Cause (why?). To say, therefore, that a circumstantial element expresses causality for the passive use means adding an additional function to what circumstances do in a clause. In passive uses, circumstantial elements can express causality as a particular syntactic occurrence in a clause, producing a different use from what circumstances do primarily by themselves. In any given clause, when a circumstance is stated, realized by a prepositional phrase, the verbal process actualizing in the Medium is expanded upon in

various ways with more information. A passive use becomes evident when the attendant circumstance, whatever its type, is interpreted as agentive to the Medium + Process core, acting as source of the process that comes from outside the Medium + Process core. In comparison to the active and middle uses, in which causality originates within the Agent/Medium + Process core, the portrayal of causality is reduced in the passive, having at most only an interpreted indirect agency to the process, diminishing causality even further than the middle use in its the portrayal of causality for the process. Thus, in a passive clause, focus remains on the subject participant actualizing the process as Medium, bringing forth, in the speaker/writer's portrayal of the experience, the process finding its endpoint in the subject participant.

In the system network pathway of passivity, when a language user expresses a circumstance, realized by a prepositional phrase and augmenting the Medium + Process core, and this circumstance is interpreted by the listener/reader as being causal to the Medium + Process core, then (assuming such an interpretation is in keeping with the user's intentions) the option *+Specified agency* has been realized. The participant in the circumstance must be interpreted as causal for voice in relation to the process as this is not the primary function of circumstances. The option *+Specified agency* is an optional circumstantial component to the clause that portrays the verbal process as caused by a participant indirectly, expressed by a circumstance. This augmentation of the clause with an optional circumstance element is expressed by a participant in one of the forms above, either in an oblique case or by a prepositional phrase.

Further, agency must now come from somewhere else, that is, external to the Medium, and the closest location is the option, *+Specified agency*, in which agency is

specifically stated within the same clause, but through a circumstance that augments the experiential centre that is interpreted as causal. In clauses such as these, the construal of Medium and its clause is altered to some degree in comparison to middle uses, since Medium is now acted upon by some other participant to bring the process about. Nonetheless, Medium's basic semantic role remains the same since the process still comes about through the subject participant.

Mark 14:21: οὐαὶ δὲ τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ ἐκείνῳ /δι' οὗ/ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου **παραδίδεται**.
(But woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed!)

In this transformative clause, the Medium is ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου which undergoes a change of status by being betrayed or (*lit.*) handed over, as the participant through whom this process comes about. The Medium embodies this process, actualizing it, but not by causing the betrayal to happen. A circumstance of Manner is expressed through the prepositional phrase, δι' οὗ, which augments the Medium + Process core by specifying the means through which the process comes about through the Medium, making this clause passive. The participant of this circumstance, referring back to ἀνθρώπῳ ἐκείνῳ, is specified as externally agentive to the process, acting as the cause of the transformative process that is realized in the Medium.

Eph 4:29: πᾶς λόγος σαπρὸς /ἐκ τοῦ στόματος ὑμῶν/ **μὴ ἐκπορευέσθω**. (Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths.)

In this creative clause, the Medium participant, πᾶς λόγος σαπρὸς, realizes the verbal process imperative, μὴ ἐκπορευέσθω, as being that which "comes out." The verbal process is augmented by a circumstance of Location, ἐκ τοῦ στόματος ὑμῶν, which can be interpreted as causal to the process. The prepositional participant, "your mouth," is the originating source from which "corrupting talk" proceeds, making this clause passive.

Such unbecoming words are portrayed here as caused by the mouth or tongue, which creates such utterances. The words themselves cannot be agentive to the process in this instance.

Acts 26:2: Περὶ πάντων ὧν ἐγκαλοῦμαι /ὕπὸ Ἰουδαίων/ βασιλεῦ Ἀγρίππα. (“Concerning all of the things, which I am being accused of by the Jews, King Agrippa.”)

In this verbal clause, the process, ἐγκαλοῦμαι, portrays the process coming about through Paul as Medium, placing focus on his experience as subject, but in a way that the process acts upon Paul. The circumstance of Means, ὑπὸ Ἰουδαίων, augments the process, specifying who else is involved as the means through whom accusations are coming about. This passive configuration conveys “the Jews” as agentive to the process, initiating and causing the process to occur, as well as acting as source of the accusations and charges. Since causality and affectedness are divided among two participants in a passive clause (one participant in a causal role and the other in an affected role), the role of Medium is slightly different than in a middle clause. In passive uses, Paul as Medium means the process bears upon Paul, accusations are being said against Paul, hence he is playing “host” to the entire process as the one taking up the process in himself.³⁸⁹ The agentive circumstantial participant is the one verbalizing such accusations, conveying an image of heaping blame onto Paul, and therefore enacting the process. In this regard, if this clause were an active voice configuration, Paul would be Recipient to the process, suggested by the prepositional prefix on the verb, ἐγ (=ἐν) read as “onto”. The implied Goal to this process is the accusations, blame, and charges that are being “called onto” Paul. The passive configuration here brings out this Recipient role by putting focus on

³⁸⁹ Recall the example from chapter five on the active voice, *the earthquake shook the city*. Here the participant, *city*, also plays “host” to the process of shaking, by being acted upon by the process, embodying it, and manifesting the process, while the Agent participant plays a causal role.

Paul's experience of the process of being accused and his patientive role that he plays in the actualization of the process.³⁹⁰

When a verbal process marked in the middle-passive voice is expanded by a circumstance, this does not automatically mean this circumstance should be read as agentive to the process, specifying external agency. It may only be a regular function of a circumstance and therefore the clause may be middle.

1 Cor 10:10: μηδὲ γογγύζετε, καθάπερ τινὲς αὐτῶν ἐγόγγυσαν καὶ ἀπόλοντο /ὕπὸ τοῦ ὀλοθρευτοῦ./ (Nor grumble, as some of them did and were destroyed by the Destroyer.)

As a similar configuration to the above example, the process, ἀπόλοντο, is augmented also by a ὑπό + genitive phrase, which expresses a circumstance of Means. On the one hand, the ὑπό + genitive circumstance can be read as causal to the process, whose Medium is inside the verb referring to τινὲς of the preceding clause. This would exemplify an ergative passivity whereby the role of Medium realizes the process, but no agency is portrayed in the Medium, rather the Medium is acted upon by the agentive participant of the circumstance, τοῦ ὀλοθρευτοῦ.

On the other hand, however, this verbal process is in the aorist tense-form and uses the middle-passive -μην form. This form has traditionally been called the aorist middle voice form in contrast to the aorist theta/eta form that has been called, "aorist passive." If this traditional voice division based on these two forms were adopted, the meaning of this verb can be read as maintaining an ergative middle sense in that the focus is on the experience of the subject actualizing the process as "perished," "ceased to exist," "lost one's life," in which this process is a highly subject-affected, physiological one that one's own body causes to happen. The bodily experience of dying can occur in

³⁹⁰ See also 1 Cor 10:9.

many ways, but regardless, the process occurs entirely in the subject participant. No other person can participate in the physical process of a person's body dying and the -μην form of the middle-passive voice may emphasize this grammatically.³⁹¹ Read this way, the circumstance that augments this process specifies the way in which the process occurred (“by means of the Destroyer”) among many other ways the process could have happened, and therefore may not be interpreted as causal to the process.

Gal 3:12: ὁ δὲ νόμος οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκ πίστεως, ἀλλ' ὁ ποιήσας αὐτὰ ζήσεται / ἐν αὐτοῖς. / (But the law is not of faith, rather “The one who does them shall live by them.”)

The process, ζήσεται here in the future tense-form uses -μαι forms (traditional future middle forms) and has no theta/eta form in the future tense-form. In the same way as the meaning of ἀπόλωντο in the example above governs voice usage, ζήσεται is a process that actualizes fully in the subject participant alone as no other person can take part in another person's body being alive. This would give this process a middle sense in which causality is in the Medium, who causes life to occur. The augmentation by another circumstance of Means, expressed by ἐν αὐτοῖς, only specifies one of the many ways that life can be maintained, here, by practicing the Law. But at the same time, the

³⁹¹ This verb does not have a theta/eta form in the aorist tense-form, only a -μην form to express middle-passive voice in the aorist. The meaning of this verb may account for this occurrence on the basis that this process occurs fully in the subject alone. Generally, when a verb has a -μην form in the aorist as well as a theta/eta form in the aorist, the -μην form is used to represent agency in the Medium, and the theta/eta form, no agency in the Medium. The meaning of ἀπόλωντο suggests that this division does not happen with this verb, or in other words, no agency in the Medium is impossible, so it only has a so-called middle form.

Another similar example is 1 Cor. 6:11: καὶ ταῦτά τινες ἦτε· ἀλλ' ἀπελούσασθε, ἀλλ' ἡγιασθητε, ἀλλ' ἐδικαιώθητε / ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ ἐν τῷ πνεύματι τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν. / (And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.) This verb also only has -μην forms and no theta/eta forms in the aorist tense-form. The meaning of the verb, “to wash off,” “cleanse away,” can certainly have a sense that only the subject participant performs this process, realizing it, as an act done to oneself, hence a middle use (cf. also Acts 22:16). In this case, the circumstance that augments the process would not be agentive but a circumstance of Location. A verb such as this, however, also can easily slide into a passive sense whereby the ἐν + dative circumstance that follows can be read as causal. This is so especially when it is used also to mean a specifically religious act such as “to baptize,” which is an act that is done to the person by someone else.

circumstance expressed by ἐν αὐτοῖς also may be read as causal to the process in which agency is in ὁ νόμος, the antecedent to αὐτοῖς. This represents the process as actualizing in the Medium and ὁ νόμος being that which causes one to live, because such a person practices the Law. The verb in this example, ζήσεται, and the previous one, ἀπόλοντο, show how there is no clear formal realization systemically between middle and passive uses among the aorist and future tense-forms. Each of these two verbs shares one middle-passive voice form for potentially two distinct functions of agency.

Acts 1:7: οὐχ ὑμῶν ἐστὶν γινῶναι χρόνους ἢ καιροὺς οὓς ὁ πατὴρ ἔθετο / ἐν τῇ ἰδίᾳ ἐξουσίᾳ./ (“It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority.”)

The last clause of this verse is most likely not a passive use, though it could be read this way. The process, ἔθετο, is expanded by a circumstance of Location that is not necessarily agentive to the process, rather it describes the realm of authority that the process belongs to. The Medium, ὁ πατήρ, can be agentive to the process because of the verb’s meaning, and at the same time the Medium carries out this process. God’s authority *per se*, does not necessarily cause him to set into place times and seasons, God himself causes this to happen and the added circumstance that mentions God’s authority clarifies the context in which God enacts the process. The image here is something like, “that which the father has fixed *in the presence of* his own authority,” suggesting that he is authorized and approved to set it up the way he wants to.

Rev 18:15: Οἱ ἔμποροι τούτων οἱ πλουτήσαντες ἀπ’ αὐτῆς ἀπὸ μακρόθεν στήσονται / διὰ τὸν φόβον τοῦ βασανισμοῦ αὐτῆς κλαίοντες καὶ πενθοῦντες./ (The merchants of these wares, who gained wealth from her, will stand far off, in fear of her torment, weeping and mourning aloud.)

The middle-passive process, στήσονται, is extended by the prepositional phrase beginning with διὰ τὸν φόβον which is a circumstance of Cause (Reason). A

configuration such as this one makes clear the important difference between circumstantial cause and verbal voice causality. Most likely, this circumstance is not agentive to the process even though it may appear to specify external agency. Bearing in mind the meaning of the process itself, the physical act of standing is not caused by the merchants' fear of the woman's suffering. The merchants cause their own physical standing in their own bodies. The *διὰ* circumstance rather specifies why the merchants choose to stand far off, providing the reason for their doing so. In this regard, this clause may appear to be a passive clause, but it is middle use, augmented by a circumstance of Cause that is not interpreted for verbal voice causality.

In clause configurations such as those discussed above that use the *-μαι* and *-μην* forms, it becomes evident that there is a degree of interpretation involved in assessing the agentive character of a circumstance in relation to the Medium + Process core. This element of interpretation for causality in the middle-passive voice using these forms suggests that the primary function signalled by the *-μαι* and *-μην* forms is to convey the intransitive notion of the verbal process actualizing in the subject. Agency is secondary to this, being in the least conceptually present, but even though a circumstance is stated, it may not be agentive to the process. The secondary nature of agency in relation to the Medium + Process core is also evident when a circumstance is not stated at all in a clause and agency is left unspecified. An external causality to the process is assumed and still conceptually involved, but again the primary intransitive idea is brought forth regarding the process coming about through the Medium. In passive uses, a transitive idea can still

be interpreted as taking place in a clause, but this may be de-emphasized or reduced, when using especially the $-\mu\alpha\iota$ and $-\mu\eta\nu$ forms.³⁹²

Unspecified External Agency

Unspecified external agency is the next step in the gradual minimization of the portrayal of agency in the middle-passive voice. In middle uses, agency is present within the Medium participant, but in comparison to the role of Agent in the active voice, agency is reduced in order to convey the Medium as endpoint or realization of the verbal process. Agency is reduced even further in the passive when the Medium is not the source of the process, instead another participant is, and this participant belongs only to an indirect expression by a circumstance that may be interpreted as agentive to the process.

In the examples just reviewed above, passive uses with specified external causality (+*Specified agency*), conveys agency as diminished, belonging to an optional circumstantial element. If agency is interpreted in a circumstance as causal, however, agency is still present as a *stated* participant of the clause. By contrast, the portrayal of agency is diminished even further when an agentive circumstance is not stated in the clause at all, leaving causality of the process to implication. The other option of the passive available in the system is that of $-$ *Specified agency* in the clause, whereby causality is not stated through any participant of the clause, but rather is external to the entire clause. Nonetheless, throughout this continuing progression from explicit agency of the subject in the active voice to an increasing minimization of the portrayal of agency

³⁹² The theta/eta forms, by contrast, are treated below and these suggest a stronger transitive idea in middle-passive clauses.

in the middle-passive voice, passive meaning consistently conveys the actualization of the process in the Medium.

Rom 3:7: τί ἔτι κἀγὼ ὡς ἁμαρτωλὸς κρίνομαι: (Why am I still being condemned as a sinner?)

The usage of this verbal process in this transformative clause is that Paul protests how he hosts the process of judgment or condemnation, not as the one who causes it, but only as the one who manifests it, that is, being judged specifically ὡς ἁμαρτωλὸς. In this sense the clause is passive, but there is no stated circumstance that may be interpreted as agentive to the process. This leaves agency unspecified, thereby keeping focus on Paul as Medium having to carry around such erroneous depictions of him by others.

Matt 4:4: ὁ δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν· γέγραπται: (But he answered, “It is written...)

The focus here is in the second clause, that which is said, γέγραπται, a verbal clause type used frequently by Jesus. The Medium is built into the process and refers to the Scriptures that actualize the process as that which has been written. The perfect tense-form conveys the Scriptures in a written state but there is no text stating who wrote the Scriptures or how they came about. The Scriptures do not write themselves, but agency is intentionally diminished as to who caused the Scriptures to come about because it is assumed information or nonessential information to the discourse and therefore left out. The passive use keeps focus on the Medium + Process core to support that what Jesus says and teaches here, which is from the Scriptures, is backed by the Scriptures themselves as written documents.

Gal 2:19: Χριστῷ συνεσταύρωμαι: (I have been crucified with Christ.)

This is another example of diminished agency of the passive use in which the Medium, Paul, speaks as though he actualizes the process of crucifixion, describing his

state of being and his experience. Agency to the process is left unstated but it may be assumed that causality is external to the process whereby Paul probably does not intend to mean that he has crucified himself, but rather crucifixion has happened to him as it has to Christ. Who exactly crucified Paul or how it happened is beside the point here. The passive use brings forth primarily Paul as Medium embodying the process of crucifixion as part of the dying process that he discusses in the wider text.

As shown above in the previous section, sometimes when a circumstance augments a verbal process, the circumstance is not interpreted as causal and it does not specify external agency. The circumstance performs its regular circumstantial function. But at other times, rather than the process being in the middle use, external agency is still involved, albeit unspecified and implied, and therefore the clause is passive. (Note that in these following two examples, the prepositional phrases that are used are not among the ones mentioned above that are typically interpreted as causal to the process. Even so, passive use is used.)

Acts 4:9: εἰ ἡμεῖς σήμερον ἀνακρινόμεθα / ἐπὶ εὐεργεσίᾳ ἀνθρώπου ἀσθενοῦς ἐν τίνι οὗτος σέσωται./ (“If we are being examined today concerning a good deed done to a crippled man, by what means this man has been healed...”)

Two circumstances attend to this process, ἀνακρινόμεθα. An ἐπὶ + dative phrase expressing a circumstance of Cause (Reason) and an ἐν + dative phrase expressing a circumstance of Means, both specifying what the process involves. The ἐπὶ + dative phrase may be read as, “we are being examined [because of] a good deed for a crippled man,” answering “why?” in regard to the examination taking place. The agent to the process is unspecified, referring externally to the Jews who witnessed the situation and

therefore can engage in the process itself of judging and criticizing, playing an agentive role.

1 Cor 15:29: τί καὶ **βαπτίζονται** /ὕπὲρ αὐτῶν;/ (“Why are people baptized on their behalf?”)

A circumstance of Cause (Behalf) is expressed by ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν as an expansion on the middle-passive verb, βαπτίζονται, but the circumstance only answers, “for whom?” and is not agentive to the process. Agency is external and unspecified, and the clause is passive.

The Theta/Eta and External Agency

All verbal processes, when marked for middle-passive voice, signal that the subject participant is the affected participant that realizes the process. The subject is in the role of Medium and this role conveys that the subject participant is endpoint to the process. The aorist and future tense-forms have a distinctive form in the middle-passive voice identified as the -(θ)η- formative (theta form).³⁹³ The theta form exists in addition to the other forms used to express middle-passive voice in the aorist and future tense-forms, giving these tense-forms two forms for the middle-passive voice. This form is an inflectional infix and requires endings to be attached to it.³⁹⁴ The theta form can also be

³⁹³ The theta is put into parentheses here to indicate that depending on the verb, sometimes the theta does not occur and only the epsilon is present. Also the epsilon may or may not lengthen to an eta, again depending on the verb and the presence of certain criteria such as when the epsilon is followed by an ending that begins with a consonant (e.g. ἐλύθης) or no ending follows the epsilon (e.g. ἐλύθη). Note that no lengthening occurs in the optative mood and certain participial forms. Moreover, even though the theta consonant of this form is not always present in a verbal form, it is used here as the name of these forms because it is a consonant that is more distinguishable as a label term than simply using either an epsilon or eta vowel.

³⁹⁴ In the aorist tense-form, the theta form receives the *active* voice endings for each mood, including the active participle marker, -ντ/ντσ, and the active infinitival ending, -ναι. Also, there are some variations as to the kind of inflectional ending the theta form receives depending on verbal mood. Specifically in the indicative and optative moods, the theta form takes active secondary endings. Here the third person plural form also retains the distinctive aorist tense formative, -σ, and connecting vowel, -α, to

called, *aorist passive* and *future passive*, as names to distinguish these forms from the other middle-passive forms.³⁹⁵

In this next section, passive uses of the theta form are considered in both aorist and future tense-forms. Passive uses occur with both specified and unspecified agency in both tense-forms. Moreover, it was argued above that to determine if a use of the middle-passive voice is passive or middle, there is a degree of interpretation as to whether or not agency is meant to be portrayed by the Medium (middle use) or by a circumstantial element in the clause (passive use), specified or not. The theta form, however, is a passive use form that eliminates the need for interpreting a middle-passive form to be either middle or passive in use. The theta form signals a transitive idea for a passive clause in which the subject is Medium and there is an external cause to the process affecting the Medium, whether this cause is specified or not.³⁹⁶ The theta form is unique in this regard by encoding the subject as Medium, but also making causality more salient, at least conceptually, in order to convey a transitive idea for the verbal process.³⁹⁷

form, -θησαν. Also, the theta form in the second person singular imperative mood receives the special additional ending -τι/-θι.

In the future tense-form, this tense formative receives middle-passive primary and secondary endings as well as the tense formative, -σ, and occurs in the indicative and optative moods only. In the indicative mood, the theta form receives -μαι endings and in the optative mood it receives -μην endings. There are no infinitival forms using the theta form for the future tense-form and only one occurrence in the NT of a future participle with the theta form (e.g. see Heb 3:5).

³⁹⁵ Likewise in this study, the other middle-passive voice forms of the aorist and future tense-forms that use the other sets of endings are not called *aorist middle* or *future middle* forms since these forms do not demonstrate only middle uses, but can have passive uses as well. In this study these are referred to as *aorist -μην* forms (including both first and second aorist tense-forms) and *future -μαι* forms within the middle-passive voice.

³⁹⁶ Dixon stresses that passive constructions are essentially intransitive, although he makes clear that passives are derived from a transitive clausal idea (see Dixon, *Ergativity*, 146–48). The theta form in Greek seems to encode this kind of transitive/intransitive “blend” that Dixon describes. The Medium + Process core is intransitive in regard to the experience of the subject, but at the same time, a circumstance with indirect agency augmenting this core also construes the clause as transitive.

³⁹⁷ The occurrence of unspecified external agency, in which agency is implied as coming from outside the clause, opens up another option for how passive meaning is construed. As a kind of clause complexing, agency may be unspecified within an individual clause, but still specified by means of a clause that enters into a relationship with another individual clause, thus creating a kind of external agency that

Specified Agency in the Aorist Tense-Form

Passive configurations with the theta form can explicitly state a circumstance that augments the Medium + Process core within a clause. This circumstance is externally causal to this core, expressing specified agency.

1 Cor 2:12: ἵνα εἰδῶμεν τὰ /ὕπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ/ χαρισθέντα ἡμῖν. (So that we might understand the things freely given us by God.)

The participle, τὰ χαρισθέντα, is a substantival use of an aorist theta participle acting as participant. Specifically, it is Goal to the process, εἰδῶμεν, a mental process. The theta form signals middle-passive voice in which the participle is Medium to its own process (“freely given things”), actualizing it, and affecting also the Recipient, ἡμῖν. This clause may be defined further as a passive clause in which the prepositional phrase, ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ, expresses a circumstance of Means that is causal to the participial process. Use of the theta form signals a transitive idea of Medium + Process + Agency, eliminating the need to interpret the circumstance as to whether or not it is causal to the process.³⁹⁸

Heb 11:23: Πίστει Μωϋσῆς γεννηθεὶς ἐκρύβη τρίμηνον /ὕπὸ τῶν πατέρων αὐτοῦ./ (By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents.)

Moses is the Medium that actualizes the process of being hidden for three months. This experiential core is augmented by a circumstance of Means whose participant, Moses’s parents, is the indirect agent that causes the process, clarifying that Moses did not hide himself.

Eph 2:13: ὕμεῖς οἱ ποτε ὄντες μακρὰν ἐγγενήθητε ἐγγὺς /ἐν τῷ αἵματι τοῦ Χριστοῦ./ (You who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.)

involves both specified and unspecified agency—unspecified at the clause level but specified beyond the clause. To further explore the fuller scope of external agency of the passive involves stepping outside of single clausal boundaries and into the wider textual discourse to locate agency.

³⁹⁸ See also Luke 7:30: μὴ βαπτισθέντες /ὕπ’ αὐτοῦ./ (Not having been baptized by him.)

Here an ἐν + dative prepositional phrase is agentive, giving ἐν τῷ αἵματι τοῦ Χριστοῦ as a circumstance of Location an instrumental causal relationship to the process. The participant, “blood of Christ” causes the verbal process “become near,” or “draw near,” in which the Medium, ὑμεῖς, actualizes and embodies as the participant through whom this occurs. The Medium is acted upon and caused to come near. This is made possible by being located “in” the blood of Christ and thereby the blood of Christ becomes the means by which the process occurs.

Matt 1:20: Ἰωσήφ υἱὸς Δαβὶδ **μὴ φοβηθῆς** /**παραλαβεῖν** Μαρίαν τὴν γυναῖκά σου / (Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife.)

Specified agency can sometimes occur in a clause through an infinitival construction. Here the infinitive, παραλαβεῖν, which creates a circumstance of Cause, is read as agentive to the theta process, φοβηθῆς, which acts as the affected process. The theta form brings out the relationship between the two processes read as “Do not be caused to fear, [because of] taking Mary as your wife.”

Matt 28:4: /ἀπὸ δὲ τοῦ φόβου αὐτοῦ/ **ἐσειέθησαν οἱ τηροῦντες** καὶ **ἐγενήθησαν** ὡς νεκροί. (And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men.)

The soldiers as Medium manifest a physical shaking and become like dead men. Use of the theta form means the ἀπὸ + genitive circumstance of Cause specifically causes the soldiers to act this way due to fear.

Matt 8:13: ὕπαγε, /ὡς ἐπίστευσας/ **γενηθήτω** σοι. (“Go; let it be done for you as you have believed.”)

Use of the theta form in γενηθήτω signals that a participial phrase, ὡς ἐπίστευσας, is agentive to the theta process, γενηθήτω, stating a circumstance of Cause to this process, read as, “Go, [because of] believing, let it be done for you.” A clause such as this one and especially the use of ὡς here presents a linguistic portrayal of the subject’s

involvement in the causality of the process, even though it may be assumed that an external divine power is also involved in bringing about the healing.

Specified Agency in the Future Tense-Form

Luke 21:16: **παραδοθήσεσθε** δὲ καὶ /ὑπὸ γονέων καὶ ἀδελφῶν καὶ συγγενῶν καὶ φίλων./ (You will be delivered up even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends.)

The future process, παραδοθήσεσθε, has its Medium, “you,” manifest the process as a participant that will be acted upon by the process and its agent. This is made explicit by a ὑπὸ phrase augmenting the clause as a specified circumstance of Means that is causal to the process. This passive clause using the theta form conveys a transitive idea in which the circumstance, realized by the prepositional phrase, is agentive to the process.³⁹⁹

2 Pet 2:12: /ἐν τῇ φθορᾷ αὐτῶν/ καὶ **φθαρήσονται**. ([They] will also be destroyed by their corruption.)

The Medium + Process core contained in φθαρήσονται is augmented by a specified circumstance of Location expressed by the phrase, ἐν τῇ φθορᾷ αὐτῶν. This circumstance is causal to the process whereby being located “in” their own corruption has an agentive effect on them, causing them to die. The participant, τῇ φθορᾷ αὐτῶν acts as indirect agent to the process realized by the Medium.

Luke 1:14: **πολλοὶ** /ἐπὶ τῇ γενέσει αὐτοῦ/ **χαρήσονται**. (Many will rejoice at his birth.)

In addition to reading the prepositional phrase here as a circumstance of Time as noted above, there is also a locative sense that enhances this process with an ἐπὶ phrase that can have a sense of “upon [the event of] his birth.” Here this clause can be passive because the ἐπὶ phrase as a circumstance of Location describes specifically why rejoicing

³⁹⁹ See also John 14:21: ὁ δὲ ἀγαπῶν με **ἀγαπηθήσεται** /ὑπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς μου./ (He who loves me will be loved by my Father.)

takes place, that is, putting focus on that which gives cause and reason for the process of rejoicing by essentially “locating” the cause, read as, “Many will rejoice at [the event of] his birth [which causes their rejoicing.]” (Note that a circumstance of Time also works here in which rejoicing is caused *when* the birth takes place.) In any case, use of the theta form portrays an externally causal idea to the process.

Unspecified Agency in the Aorist Tense-Form

Passive uses can be expressed with unspecified agency with the theta form in which no circumstance is stated that augments a clause, but an agentive circumstance is assumed, without the need to interpret an implied circumstance as agentive. Thus, the clause still maintains a transitive idea. Moreover, frequently configurations unaugmented by a circumstance can be passive without explicitly stated agency because an agent has already been established in the text and does not need to be repeated.

Matt 3:16: **βαπτισθεῖς** δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς. (And when Jesus was baptized...)

The passive theta participle, βαπτισθεῖς, augments the clause as a circumstance of Time. External agency to the process has been stated earlier in the passage in which John the Baptist is the one performing baptisms.

1 Cor 6:11: ἀλλ’ ἀπελούσασθε, ἀλλ’ **ἡγιάσθητε**. (But you were washed, you were sanctified.)

As a passive use, God is the assumed external agent for this process.

Acts 25:23: καὶ κελεύσαντος τοῦ Φήστου **ἤχθη** ὁ Παῦλος. (Then, at the command of Festus, Paul was brought in.)

In this context, Paul would not bring himself in or walk in by himself.

Unspecified Agency in the Future Tense-Form

2 Cor 12:15: ἐγὼ δὲ ἥδιστα δαπανήσω καὶ ἐκδαπανηθήσομαι / ὑπὲρ τῶν ψυχῶν ὑμῶν./ (I will most gladly spend and be spent for your souls.)

The passive verbal process is augmented by a circumstance of Cause (Behalf), ὑπὲρ τῶν ψυχῶν ὑμῶν, but this phrase is not portrayed as agentive to the process. Some other unspecified external agency will cause Paul to be “spent out,” minimized to an implication in order to focus on the Paul’s experience and outcome. Most likely Paul is referring here to the arduous work of his ministry that causes him to feel “spent out.”

Matt 5:25: ὁ κριτὴς τῷ ὑπηρέτῃ καὶ εἰς φυλακὴν βληθήσῃ. (The judge [hands you over] to the guard and you will be put in prison.)

An agent has already been specified in the first clause in the passage and does not need to be repeated here. It can be assumed that the guard will put the person in prison.

Matt 12:25: πᾶσα πόλις ἢ οἰκία μερισθεῖσα καθ’ ἑαυτῆς οὐ σταθήσεται. (Any city or house divided against itself will not stand.)

In contrast to the future –μαι form of this verb that is used in the NT,⁴⁰⁰ the use of σταθήσεται here suggests that something external to a city or house itself always causes it to stand. No city or house simply stands by itself, but rather external factors related to those who dwell in a city, speaking figuratively as unity among its people, cause it to stand. In this regard, if there is division among the people, then this external cause is weakened, and if allowed to perpetuate itself, eventually a city or house “will not [be caused to] stand.”

⁴⁰⁰ See Rev 18:15.

Medium + Process + Range (Passive Use)

Luke 7:29: Καὶ πᾶς ὁ λαὸς ἀκούσας καὶ οἱ τελῶναι ... **βαπτισθέντες τὸ βάπτισμα Ἰωάννου** (All the people hearing, and the tax collectors ... being baptized [in] the baptism of John.)

Passive uses in the middle-passive voice can take a Range participant that further specifies the verbal process. The process, βαπτισθέντες, realized as an aorist theta participle, actualizes in the Medium participants, πᾶς ὁ λαὸς and οἱ τελῶναι, and the theta form signals passive use with external agency, here unspecified. The process is specified further by the Range participant, τὸ βάπτισμα Ἰωάννου, which is a good example of how Range participants overlap with circumstances. This is reflected in the way this clause might be translated using a prepositional phrase as in “in the baptism of John,” or more commonly, “with (respect to) the baptism of John.” In any case, the Range participant adds further description to the process, and therefore fulfils a role that is not affected by the process since the subjects for this process are in the role of Medium.⁴⁰¹

Middle and Passive Uses

In the NT, the theta form becomes exclusively passive in its use when a verb has two middle-passive forms that are in use: a theta form in addition to a –μην or –μαι form to express middle-passive voice. When this occurs, the –μην forms express middle use and the theta forms express passive use, having either specified or unspecified agency.

⁴⁰¹ This passive use with a Range participant occurs in the other tense-forms as well and not just with the theta marker. See Phil 1:11, 1 Tim 6:5.

Aorist Tense-Form

ἀποδίδωμι

Acts 7:9: Καὶ οἱ πατριάρχαι ζηλώσαντες τὸν Ἰωσήφ ἀπέδοντο εἰς Αἴγυπτον. (And the patriarchs, jealous of Joseph, sold him into Egypt.)

The aorist –μην form shows middle use that focuses on the experience of the subject participant. The process is further specified by a Range participant, τὸν Ἰωσήφ.

Matt 27:58: τότε ὁ Πιλαῦτος ἐκέλευσεν ἀποδοθῆναι. (Then Pilate ordered that [the body] to be given up.)

The process, ἐκέλευσεν, is a verbal process type that projects what was said (verbiage) construed as a participant. An infinitive is used to nominalize the process, ἀποδοθῆναι, which qualifies the implied Medium participant, “body,” by saying more about the body, that it is given up. There is also an implied external agent that hands over the body, making this passive, assuming of course that a dead body cannot hand itself over.

εὐρίσκω

Heb 9:12: εἰσῆλθεν ἐφάπαξ εἰς τὰ ἅγια αἰωνίαν λύτρωσιν εὐράμενος. (He entered once for all into the holy places . . . thus securing an eternal redemption.)

This is a middle participle referring to Jesus as Medium having an agentive feature to the process. This participle is used as a circumstance of Result. “[resulting in] securing an eternal redemption.” The process is further defined by a Range participant, αἰωνίαν λύτρωσιν, specifying what has been secured by the Medium.

2 Cor 12:20: φοβοῦμαι γὰρ μή πως ἐλθὼν οὐχ οἷους θέλω εἶρω ὑμᾶς καὶ γὰρ εὐρεθῶ /ὕμῖν/ οἷον οὐ θέλετε. (For I fear that perhaps when I come I may find you not as I wish, and that I might be found by you not as you wish.)

The theta form shows passive use with specified external agency expressed by the dative case, ὑμῖν, as a circumstance of Means/Instrument.

θεάομαι

John 4:35: **θεάσασθε τὰς χώρας** ὅτι λευκαί εἰσιν πρὸς θερισμόν. (“See that the fields are white for harvest.”)

In the imperatival mood, this is middle use in which the subject is Medium with agency toward the process. In this mental clause, the Medium realizes the subject’s experience of “seeing.” This process is specified further by a Range participant that tells of what is seen.

Mark 16:11: κάκεῖνοι ἀκούσαντες ὅτι ζῆ καὶ **ἐθεάθη** /ὕπ’ αὐτῆς/ ἠπίστησαν. (But when they heard that he was alive and had been seen by her, they would not believe it.)

The theta form shows the subject being acted upon by another participant through a circumstance of Means, ὕπ’ αὐτῆς, that is agentive to the process.

ἀγαλλιάω

In the previous chapter on the middle use, the verb, ἀγαλλιάω, was discussed regarding its use in the middle-passive voice in comparison to the active voice. There a middle usage of this verb in Luke 10:21 was shown using the –μην form in the aorist tense-form. This verb also appears in a theta form as an infinitive, ἀγαλλιαθῆναι in John 5:35. This verse reads, ἐκεῖνος ἦν ὁ λύχνος ὁ καιόμενος καὶ φαίνων, **ὕμεῖς** δὲ ἠθελήσατε **ἀγαλλιαθῆναι** πρὸς ὄραν /έν τῷ φωτὶ αὐτοῦ./ (He was a burning and shining lamp, and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light.) In contrast to the aorist –μην form used in Luke 10:21, this passage from John’s Gospel portrays the act of rejoicing not as self-caused, but rather caused by John the Baptist, specifically his light.

The meaning of this verb carries an intransitive idea in that this verbal process is always performed by the subject itself. The use of the middle-passive voice here portrays the subject in the role of Medium in which the subject of the infinitive is ὕμεῖς, referring

to persons who embody the act of rejoicing and who realize this act. Causality is minimized in the use of ἀγαλλιαθῆναι in order to bring forth the subject actualizing the verbal process in an endpoint role to the action. The ἐν + dative construction here, ἐν τῷ φωτὶ αὐτοῦ, as the one in Luke 10:21 above, is a circumstance of Location. It follows another circumstance, πρὸς ὥραν, that of time, and together they augment the experiential center by further specifying the duration of the verbal process as well as the location where rejoicing takes place.

However, the use of a theta form in this clause indicates a transitive idea and causality is realized in the ἐν + dative prepositional phrase. The theta form signals that ἐν τῷ φωτὶ αὐτοῦ is construed as causal to the process, ἀγαλλιαθῆναι, in which what is described about John, referred also to the previous clause, produces the outcome of rejoicing in the Medium, ὑμεῖς.

The clause complex brings out the use of the theta form, indicating two separate participants involved in the process in which one affects the other, specifically as external agent affecting the Medium. The question of agency, “by whom?” is deliberately opened up here in this text rather than trying to focus agency strictly onto the subject as internal. In addition to an ergative portrayal of the middle-passive voice in which the subject manifests the process of rejoicing, the theta form has the capability to make explicit the startpoint of the process occurring external to the subject in another participant belonging to an adjacent clause.

γίνομαι

Occurring very frequently throughout the NT, γίνομαι appears in both aorist –μην and aorist theta forms. Whereas the aorist –μην forms convey middle uses, the theta forms

show an ergative passive use in which the Medium + Process core is affected by an external agent, either specified or unspecified.

Luke 18:23: /ὁ δὲ ἀκούσας ταῦτα/ περίλυπος ἐγενήθη· ἦν γὰρ πλούσιος σφόδρα. (But when he heard these things, he became very sad, for he was extremely rich.)

In the previous clause, verse 22, not stated here, Jesus tells the rich man to sell his possessions and distribute to the poor. In verse 23, the aorist theta form ἐγενήθη signals that the subject is Medium whereby the clause, περίλυπος ἐγενήθη, is portrayed as the outcome of what was stated in verse 22. The rich man as Medium embodies the process of becoming sad and downcast. What Jesus says prior to this is construed as that which causes the man to become sad, functioning as external agency to the Medium + Process core of περίλυπος ἐγενήθη, thereby forming a passive configuration. This is enhanced by a circumstance of Time in the participial phrase, ὁ δὲ ἀκούσας ταῦτα (when/after hearing these things), adding more specification to the passive clause.

Acts 4:4: πολλοὶ δὲ τῶν ἀκουσάντων τὸν λόγον ἐπίστευσαν καὶ ἐγενήθη [ὁ] ἀριθμὸς τῶν ἀνδρῶν [ὡς] χιλιάδες πέντε. (But many of those who had heard the word believed, and the number of the men came to about five thousand.)

Two independent clauses are joined by a καὶ conjunction. In the second clause, the Medium is [ὁ] ἀριθμὸς τῶν ἀνδρῶν and the theta form process, ἐγενήθη, is the process that has an external agent. The juxtaposition of these two clauses suggests that the first clause causes the second one to occur. The first clause acts as external agent to the passive process, ἐγενήθη, in the second clause. The number of people rose to five thousand as the result of these people believing the word. The verse may be read as, “But many of those who heard the word believed, and [as a result] the number of people [was made into =became] about five thousand.”

In contrast, the numerous aorist –μην uses of γίνομαι construes the clause as the Medium that actualizes the process as well as initiates it as in James 2:4: καὶ ἐγένεσθε κριταὶ διαλογισμῶν πονηρῶν; (And have you [not] become judges with evil thoughts?) Causality is portrayed here as self-causing, arising from within these people, and not externally caused. What is described in the preceding verses leading up to this verse is personal behaviour that is the outworking of having such a judgmental disposition stated here in verse 4. It may be supposed that external pressures and influences help to cause this process, but these are not the focus here.

ἀποκρίνομαι

One verb in particular, ἀποκρίνομαι, which occurs very frequently in the NT, has been commonly viewed as deponent, according to more traditional treatments of voice, when it occurs in the aorist theta form. This is partly due to the existence of –μην forms that convey middle usage also being operational in the NT for this verb. As a result, the theta form of this verb has been treated not as passive in function, but as functioning with an agentive subject and therefore active in function. However, an ergative passive use should be considered in which a transitive idea is encoded by the theta form using external agency, in addition to maintaining the Medium + Process core that is characteristic of the middle-passive voice. Use of this verb in the middle-passive voice coincides with the lexical semantics of this verb whereby the process itself remains in the subject (answering/replying cannot be transferred onto another participant). But it also consistently requires another participant to whom the process is directed (the act of answering is always in response to something else) and this participant is also the external cause to the process. Frequently, the surrounding co-text of a theta clause

containing this verb indicates places where external agency may originate in contrast to the middle uses of this verb.

Whereas a self-causal idea for this verb is signalled by the aorist $\text{-}\mu\eta\nu$ form (there are no future $\text{-}\mu\alpha\iota$ forms for $\text{\acute{\alpha}\pi\omicron\kappa\rho\iota\nu\omicron\mu\alpha\iota}$), the theta form signals a transitive idea, in which the Medium is directly affected as the endpoint to the process by an indirect agent. The high frequency of use of this verb in the aorist theta form suggests that passive use coincides with the lexical meaning of the verb. The act of answering or replying is always in response to something said or done first by someone else. In this regard, what is said or done first causes an answer to be given. This verb is also accompanied frequently by another participant involved that is indirectly affected by the process, acting in the role of Recipient. This participant typically refers back to the person that initiated the response. This participant can be specified or unspecified, but either way, the clause is conceived syntactically as transitive and realizes a passive clause.

In chapter four of John's Gospel, a conversation takes place between Jesus and a Samaritan woman. Although the woman is in conversation with Jesus, the use of verbs that display the back and forth dialogue in this passage shows a difference between telling the other person something versus responding directly to what the other person just said, hence being caused to answer. During this exchange, when the woman speaks to Jesus the text begins in John 4:9 as, $\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\epsilon\iota\ \omicron\upsilon\tilde{\nu}\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\tilde{\omega}\ \eta\ \gamma\upsilon\nu\eta\ \eta\ \Sigma\alpha\mu\alpha\rho\tilde{\iota}\tau\iota\varsigma\ \dots$, then in John 4:11 as, $\Lambda\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\epsilon\iota\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\tilde{\omega}\ [\eta\ \gamma\upsilon\nu\eta]\ \dots$, and then again in John 4:15 as, $\Lambda\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\epsilon\iota\ \pi\rho\delta\varsigma\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\tilde{\omicron}\nu\ \eta\ \gamma\upsilon\nu\eta\ \dots$. In each of these interactions, the active voice is used, in which the woman initiates what she says to Jesus. In the first example, 4:9, Jesus tells the woman to give him a drink. The woman in response does not do this at all, but instead is more concerned

with the fact that Jesus is talking to her, a Samaritan woman. What she says to him is not a direct reply specifically to what Jesus just said to her. In the second example, 4:11, Jesus tells her that if she knew who was speaking to her, she would ask him for water. But again the woman does not reply directly to what Jesus is indicating. Instead she is concerned that he has no bucket to draw water and she wonders how he would get any water in the first place. Then in the third example, 4:15, Jesus describes what his water is all about as “living water.” By just describing the water itself, Jesus does not put anything directly to the woman that she must reply to. She asks Jesus for this special water but this is initiated by her in the use of the active voice.

In the very next exchange, the woman’s response is introduced in 4:17 by a shift in verbs, here as ἀπεκρίθη ἡ γυνὴ καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ.... In addition to the process, εἶπεν, which is the verbal process used consistently in the course of the dialogue, the process, ἀπεκρίθη now occurs. Jesus has just told the woman to go call her husband. This statement by Jesus now requires a specific response from the woman. It calls for an answer of some kind from the woman. The addition of ἀπεκρίθη here in the text shows that the woman now answers directly to what has just been put to her by Jesus and she says, οὐκ ἔχω ἄνδρα, thus resolving the command that Jesus gave her. The passive use, represented by the theta form of this verb, is portrayed by the woman as Medium, actualizing the act of answering Jesus, but the cause of the answer is through an indirect agent, Jesus, that is external to this clause. This can be read as, “The woman was caused [by Jesus’ command] to answer and she said to him....” In contrast, the active voice uses of λέγει in the previous clauses show that the woman initiates her own responses to Jesus and she is not directly answering something specific that Jesus just said to her even

though the two are in conversation. Finally, the participant αὐτῷ, expressed by the dative case, is Recipient to the process. This participant is an indirect Goal to the verbal process which sometimes occurs in the middle-passive voice, but frequently with this particular verb. This participant can sometimes be omitted or, as in this case, it is omitted in the first clause but picked up again in the second as αὐτῷ.⁴⁰²

The several occurrences of the aorist –μην form of this verb in the NT do not convey an external cause, which puts something directly to the Medium participant who in return is caused to answer. Rather, the subject as Medium is portrayed as both initiating the process and actualizing it. Mark 14:61 has, ὁ δὲ ἐσιώπα καὶ οὐκ ἀπεκρίνατο οὐδέν. (But he remained silent and made no answer.) The middle use suggests that Jesus' silence is self-caused and realized by him. Other examples include Matt 27:12, Luke 23:9, and Acts 3:12, in which ἀπεκρίνατο is used to show that agency is in the subject as Medium suggested by the volition of the subject itself. Further, the instances in Luke 3:16, John 5:17, and 5:19 are not part of a dialogue taking place which states what Jesus or John the Baptist responds to. Nothing specific is put directly to these subject participants to respond to, but rather what they say is self-caused, even though it might appear to be a response.

Other examples of verbs that have both theta and middle aorist forms in the NT include:

βαπτίζω: Mark 7:4 (middle), Mark 1:9 (passive); ἀσφαλίζω: Matt 27:65 (middle; no active form), Matt 27:64 (passive); κατεργάζομαι: Rom 15:18 (middle), 2 Cor 12:12 (passive); λογίζομαι: 2 Cor 3:5 (middle), 2 Tim 4:16 (passive); λυτρόω: Titus 2:14

⁴⁰² Another example is Rev 7:13: Καὶ ἀπεκρίθη εἰς ἓκ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων λέγων μοι· οὗτοι οἱ περιβεβλημένοι τὰς στολὰς τὰς λευκὰς τίνες εἰσὶν καὶ πόθεν ἦλθον; (Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?") In this instance, what has been put forth that causes the theta process is not something that is said by someone, rather the external cause of the theta process is found in vv. 9-12 referring to the multitude standing before God's throne. One the elder observes causes him to respond and ask this question as to who this multitude is and where they have come from.

(middle), 1 Pet 1:18 (passive); μεταπέμπω: Acts 10:5 (middle), Acts 10:29 (passive); μωμάομαι: 2 Cor 8:20 (middle), 2 Cor 6:3 (passive); ῥύομαι: Col 1:13 (middle), 2 Thess 3:2 (passive).

Future Tense-Form

γινώσκω

1 Cor 4:19: γνώσομαι οὐ τὸν λόγον τῶν πεφυσιωμένων ἀλλὰ τὴν δύναμιν· (I will find out not the talk of these arrogant people, but their power.)

A middle use of a future mental process is caused and experienced by the Medium and expanded by a long Range participant that includes an embedded participial clause (substantival use). This Range participant fills out the process realized in the subject.

1 Cor 14:9: πῶς γνωσθήσεται τὸ λαλούμενον; (How will anyone know what is said?)

A substantival passive participle, τὸ λαλούμενον, as “the things that are said [by people],” actualizes as Medium the future theta process in the passive, γνωσθήσεται. This clause can be read as, “How will the things that are said [by people] be known [by people]?” An external agent to the process γνωσθήσεται is assumed.

ὁράω

Matt 5:8: μακάριοι οἱ καθαροὶ τῆ καρδία, ὅτι αὐτοὶ τὸν θεὸν ὄψονται. (Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.)

As a middle use, the sensory experience of the subject is caused and actualized in the Medium, augmented by a Range that specifies what they will see.

Heb 9:28: ὄφθήσεται τοῖς ἀπεκδεχομένοις εἰς σωτηρίαν. (He will be seen by those eagerly awaiting him for salvation.)

The passive use is a future mental process that has specified external agency expressed by a dative substantival middle participle, τοῖς ἀπεκδεχομένοις. This dative participle functions like an agentive circumstance of Means. The participle itself is an

embedded clause and is further modified by a Client participant, αὐτὸν, as the one for whom the participial process occurs. This may be read as, “He will be seen by the ones eagerly waiting [for] him for salvation,” maintaining a transitive idea in the clause.

φαίνω

1 Pet 4:18: καὶ εἰ ὁ δίκαιος μόλις σφύζεται, ὁ ἀσεβῆς καὶ ἁματωλὸς ποῦ φανεῖται; (And if the righteous is scarcely saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?)

The middle is used here in context to being saved in which the process originates in, and comes about through the Medium. This may be read as, “how will the ungodly and sinner appear [to God],” that is, “how will they fare?”

Matt 24:30: καὶ τότε φανήσεται τὸ σημεῖον τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου /ἐν οὐρανῷ./ (Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man.)

This clause is augmented by an ἐν phrase realizing a circumstance that suggests a portrayal here of something external to the sign itself, τὸ σημεῖον, causing it to appear. The sign is acted upon by another external agent. The circumstance of Location, ἐν οὐρανῷ, may be interpreted as agentive here as the place of origin for the sign and this place is also the cause of the sign’s appearing, read as “the sign will be made to manifest in [=by] heaven.”

The Ambiguity of Agency in the Middle-Passive Voice

The aorist and future tense-forms, each utilizing the theta form in addition to the other middle use forms, enables a clearer distinction between middle and passive uses. For the other tense-forms, however, there is only one form for both middle and passive uses and it can be very difficult to determine agency in order to differentiate between middle and passive uses. Knowing how a writer of the NT wanted to convey agency to a process in

using the middle-passive voice may not be clear and the issue persists in this voice whether the speaker/writer intends to show agency in the Medium or whether another participant acts upon the Medium in order to bring about the verbal process. This creates ambiguity in language use, and “a piece of language is ambiguous if it has more than one discrete interpretation,” and “if an item realizes or is capable of realizing more than one set of meaning choices, i.e. more than one selection expression from a network.”⁴⁰³

Moreover, English translation complicates the issue since the way certain verbs need to be rendered for grammaticality or simply to sound better in English may alter to some degree the portrayal of the sense intended in Greek. However, the ambiguity of the middle-passive voice in determining the cause or source of a verbal process is not anomalous, but is a distinctive of this voice, characterizing it, because of its emphasis on realizing a process while also minimizing causality. This aspect has positioned this study to argue that it is best to keep these two voices close together in their grammatical portrayal of voice.

Despite the ambiguity it creates, minimization of causality can be a useful tool for how human experience is represented linguistically using voice. A writer may intentionally want to convey an action with unspecified or implied external agency in order to provide a bigger picture of an experience without becoming too redundant by stating the agent to the process every time. The book of Revelation is full of these sorts of examples where it seems an implied divine agency causes different processes to happen perhaps for the purpose of maintaining the motif that God is in control of the acts and is sovereign throughout. At other times, however, a writer uses the middle-passive voice to

⁴⁰³ Porter, *Verbal Aspect*, 442.

zoom in on an action coming about, defocusing causality, and underscoring the Medium's experience of a process without making any reference, implicitly or explicitly, to who or what is causing an action.

According to an ergative approach to the middle-passive voice, minimization of causality means that the subject as Medium is always the consistent feature of this voice, signalled by its morphological forms in which Medium is in an endpoint role to a process. The minimization of causality to a verbal process is one of the main reasons a user chooses to employ the middle-passive voice, since this voice focuses on the realization of a process in the subject participant. The passive use specifically, exercises a reduction of causality in a given portrayal of a verbal process by either reducing agency to an optional *circumstance of a clause* (specified agency), an implied *circumstance* (unspecified agency), or reducing agency to something stated outside a clause. Since minimization of causality occurs in both middle and passive uses, it is a defining feature for both voices in addition to the role of Medium, enabling both voices to still to be close enough in function to comprise one voice despite their differences in how each voice portrays agency. As the following two examples illustrate, the value of structuring the voices as two parts comprising one voice is that, either way, the subject is consistently in the role of Medium, embodying, realizing, and manifesting the verbal process, leaving room for variations in agency that, due to minimization occurring in this voice, at times make it difficult to point to a specific use.

Gal 5:12: Ὅφελον καὶ ἀποκόψονται οἱ ἀναστατοῦντες ὑμᾶς. (“I wish those who unsettle you would emasculate themselves!”)

In the translation given here, an agentive sense of the subject is conveyed and a reflexive pronoun is added to emphasize the act taking place upon oneself even though a reflexive pronoun is not stated in the Greek. By Hellenistic times, however, reflexive pronouns were more commonly used with active verbs and not middle-passive verbs and the configuration of this verse may be evidence that upholds this rule.⁴⁰⁴ This verb, ἀποκόπτω, means “to cut” or “hew off” and is used six times in the NT. Other than the middle-passive form found in Gal 5:12, all other occurrences of this verb are in the active voice,⁴⁰⁵ and only in its usage here in Gal is it used in reference specifically to castration. Moreover, the connotation made by Paul in this passage clearly is not suggesting that these men take the noble step toward becoming eunuchs for political service, but rather engaging in the physical act of castration as a self-inflicted punishment for leading the people of Paul’s church astray.

Certainly a middle reading is possible for this clause in which a feature of agency is in the Medium to convey these men doing actual castration themselves. Also, given that this verb is in the future tense-form, using, traditionally speaking, the primary middle endings, it may be expected that this clause is read like an active voice clause, according to traditional grammar approaches, since a future theta form would give it a passive sense.⁴⁰⁶ But a passive reading is also possible here—and probably more accurate as far

⁴⁰⁴ It may also be that reflexive pronouns were added only to verbs whose action is normally not performed on oneself, thereby specifying a different kind of use for this verb. And verbs in the middle-passive would not take reflexive pronouns normally because the subject’s affectedness is already understood through voice. See Allan’s discussion for his category “Direct Reflexive Middle” in Allan, *The Middle Voice*, 88–95.

⁴⁰⁵ See Mark 9:43, 45; John 18:10, 26; Acts 27:32.

⁴⁰⁶ The verb form used here, ἀποκόψονται, is, traditionally speaking, future middle deponent.

as what is involved in the meaning of the act of castration—in which the focus is on the subject as Medium receiving the act of castration that is typically performed by someone else, though this agent is not stated in this text.⁴⁰⁷ An English translation would be, “I wish those who unsettle you will be castrated [by someone]!” If this reading is upheld, when the future middle-passive voice signals subject-affectedness using the primary middle endings (–μαι paradigm), it also can carry a future passive sense as well and not just future middle in regard to agency in a clause.

In any case, Paul’s use of the middle-passive voice here is to emphasize that these men receive in their bodies the act of castration which the role of Medium brings forth. Unspecified agency conveys the minimization of causality that concurrently takes place in the middle-passive voice in order to bring out the verbal process actualizing in the Medium. Whether Paul meant that these men literally castrate their own selves by each one doing it to oneself (middle use), or that each man is castrated by someone else (passive use), the point Paul makes is that these men end up with mutilation occurring in their own bodies, and this is helped in its expression using the middle-passive voice.

Luke 7:47: οὗ χάριν λέγω σοι, ἀφέωνται αἱ ἁμαρτίαι αὐτῆς αἱ πολλαί ὅτι ἠγάπησεν πολὺ· ὁ δὲ ὀλίγον ἀφίεται, ὀλίγον ἀγαπᾷ. (“Therefore I tell you, her many sins are forgiven so that she loves much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little.”)

The same verbal process, ἀφίημι, occurs twice in this verse, both times in the middle-passive voice. In the first clause αἱ ἁμαρτίαι αὐτῆς αἱ πολλαί is Medium to the first verb ἀφέωνται and in the second clause, ὀλίγον is Medium to the verb ἀφίεται. These clauses justifiably may be read in the passive whereby each Medium is acted upon

⁴⁰⁷ In ancient times the physical act of castration was usually not performed by the person being castrated, but rather by others, often against the will of those to become eunuch slaves to serve a specific social function.

by an external agent and the process is read as “forgive.” In the first clause, this reading would imply a divine agent causing the forgiveness to materialize, affecting the woman’s many sins and changing her status before God. Likewise, in the second instance, “a little” or “a few (sins)” are forgiven, again by an implied divine agent that causes the process. For both clauses, a passive interpretation seems logical here because sins, whether many or few, cannot forgive themselves. English translations convey this to help show God as the required external agent.

However, the meaning of ἀφίημι can be understood more broadly than simply “forgive.” This meaning opens up questions of agency as to forgiven by whom? How? But the meaning of ἀφίημι also allows for a middle sense that does not open up external agency in its portrayal. Sin as the affected participant of ἀφίημι also can “dissolve,” “let go its hold,” “release itself,” “loosen its grip,” “slacken,” or “discharge from.” Each of these is a legitimate meaning of this verb in this context. These images help to convey a more ergative sense of the subject manifesting these verbal processes that can have a self-causing, internal sense of agency to the process. As a result, the clause can be construed slightly differently than the Medium being acted upon by the process and an agent, that is, the process being “done to” the Medium by an external agent which is what a passive reading of the verse conveys. The writer could have chosen to represent this experience by intentionally not stating an explicit agent in text. By choosing to use the middle-passive voice, agency is minimized, and focus is put on αἱ ἁμαρτίαι and their actualization of the process.

The way these clauses are configured, having no external agency made explicit, suggests that the experience can be represented as a self-engendering middle use, rather

than a passive sense with implied external agency. This may be gained by considering the portrayal of internal agency, in which the clause portrays sin as having the potential ability to “release its hold” on a person and sin has just realized this potential on this woman. In this verse, even though something else must cause sin to do this, the focus of the clause may be on the realization, that is, on the result of what sin does through the Medium, and not on what an agent does. As to the grammatical voice function used here to represent the process, the middle would portray the process as self-causing.⁴⁰⁸ The meaning of this verse can have more to do with the woman’s new-found ability to love much because her sin has been “loosened” from her, and “released”; it has let go its debilitating hold on her. Jesus’s point here is that how much sin is “let go” from a person results in how much love a person shows. This maintains a contrastive pairing between ‘sin—person’ and ‘love—person.’ Thus, this clause, on the one hand, may be described as having *situational passive use* because the overall experiential picture being described here involving the wider discourse of this story implies that Jesus is the external cause of the woman’s sins being ‘let go’ from her (forgiven) even though this is not stated explicitly in the form of text. It can be assumed that for causality, the reader/listener is invited to deduce from the story and draw upon previous knowledge that Jesus’s mercy previously shown to the woman at some earlier point is why she is performing such a kind act to him. The woman’s many sins have been forgiven by Jesus and this is the reason for the woman showing much love as Jesus describes it.

⁴⁰⁸ To use another image, glass has the ability to break because it is fragile. When it breaks or shatters, it has just realized its own potential to break. If no external agent is made explicit that caused the break, and the experience is represented simply as “the glass broke,” then according to the way this clause is configured, the broken glass is portrayed grammatically as having been self-caused, hence a middle use rendering. Even though it may be understood that in “real life” other external causes are involved, these are left out from the linguistic portrayal.

At the same time, the clause ἀφέωνται αἱ ἁμαρτίαι αὐτῆς αἱ πολλαί also may be described, comparatively, as being *linguistically middle* because what is actually put forth in text focuses specifically on the experience of the woman's many sins 'letting go,' 'loosening,' and 'releasing' from her. The writer purposely does not make explicit who or what caused this process to occur, even though it may be assumed that Jesus is the cause. Who or what caused the sins to release, or how the woman's sins were released, is not brought into the reader's/listener's purview through text by the writer. Instead, the process ἀφέωνται is *represented* as a self-engendering process that minimizes agency internally in order to bring forth the outcome of the woman's sins releasing their hold on her, which results further in her showing love. To minimize agency in this way as being self-contained in the Medium is middle use. This means also that questions of external agency, "who or what did this? By whom or by what?" are not being offered an answer by such a construal. Though this verse can certainly be read as passive, a middle use reading is also very possible, even preferable here, in order to keep the listener/reader's attention on the final effect of the process coming about in the subject participant.

Agency can be ambiguous in the middle-passive voice, especially when the nuances of a verb's lexical semantics are considered. The minimization of causality allows for the possibility that the line between middle and passive use can be indeterminate due to the difficulty of knowing what the writer intends to convey to its listener/reader regarding causality and how the listener/reader interprets what is stated. At the same time this broadens out the scope of what agency entails, including what seems to be its capability to move beyond the clause and incorporate the wider discourse. In any

case, subject as Medium, signalled by the verbal form, is the consistent feature in middle-passive clauses, despite variations of agency.

Conclusion

Whereas the middle use conveys agency internal to the Medium, the passive use conveys agency external to the Medium. External agency can be unspecified in a clause, being assumed or implied, or specified, usually through a stated circumstance that augments a clause. In passive uses, rather than the subject interpreted strictly as an object-like participant to the verbal process, derived from an object role in an active voice clause, ergative passivity, realized by the passive forms, means the process actualizes in the semantic role of Medium, while agency occurs from outside the Medium. Moreover, since both middle and passive uses convey a process materializing in the Medium as endpoint to the process, in this way both uses are defined primarily as one voice. The shared role of Medium unites both uses, even though variation in agency nuances the ways the role of Medium is construed. In fact, agency can be highly ambiguous in voice usage, making it difficult to distinguish between middle and passive uses. But what is underscored here is that despite varying uses of the middle-passive voice, both uses operate consistently on the basis of the subject as Medium, the role of the affected participant of a given clause through which the verbal process is realized.

In the aorist and future tense-forms, two forms exist due to the theta form that signals variations in passive use. In comparison to the $-\mu\eta\nu$ and $-\mu\alpha\iota$ forms, the theta form holds in common with these forms configurations that represent experience in language by construing the subject as the affected participant. The theta form functions

with external causality, whether specified in the same clause, specified by another clause, or whether left unspecified. But regardless of fluctuations in agency, the theta form signals consistently subject as Medium that actualizes the verbal process as a defining part to the middle-passive voice.

For verbs that have the theta form and the $-\mu\eta\nu/-\mu\alpha\iota$ forms operational for the middle-passive voice, a clear division of labor is evident between middle and passive uses signaled by these distinct forms. Configurations with external agency in the NT, hence passive uses, occur more frequently using the theta form rather than the $-\mu\eta\nu$ and $-\mu\alpha\iota$ forms, which tend to express middle use in the aorist and future although this is not always the case. As use of the theta form appears to be on the rise at this stage of the language, so far as the texts of the NT indicate, the $-\mu\eta\nu$ and $-\mu\alpha\iota$ forms of the aorist and future seem to be on the decline. A high frequency verb such as ἀποκρίνομαι suggests that the theta form is expanding its range of function at this stage of the language, gradually taking over the $-\mu\eta\nu/-\mu\alpha\iota$ paradigm as passive meaning, realized by its various clausal configurations, continues to develop. The theta form may be gradually “absorbing” into itself middle form and function, being capable of expressing both middle and passive uses when need be, but in doing so, rendering the use of an independent middle form for the aorist and future to be on the decline. Higher usage of the theta form suggests that there may be functions of the theta form taking place in uses of the language that are moving beyond uses of the $-\mu\eta\nu$ and $-\mu\alpha\iota$ forms. It is pertinent whether the theta form is meant to express something the $-\mu\eta\nu$ and $-\mu\alpha\iota$ forms are no longer meant to express for these tense-forms as this difference in function becomes integrated in the language.

CONCLUDING REMARKS ON ANCIENT GREEK VERBAL VOICE

This study began by considering different syntactic alignment systems as a feature of transitivity that occurs in languages around the world, both ancient and modern.

Transitivity has been defined in this study as the logical sequencing and ordering among participants of a clause in relation to the verbal process in order to produce meaningful uses of language. What appears to be the oldest and most basic form of such transitive operations, going back to Proto-Indo-European, is an active-inactive opposition, retained in so-called active languages of the world that, even to the present day, still exhibit elements of such alignments patternings. Both a verbal process and a nominal that together form a subject and verb core are paired together according to their active or inactive lexical meanings, producing two opposing clause types. This form of transitivity carries with it the earliest indications of verbal voice, seen through the semantic relationship that exists between a noun in a subject role to the verb.

An active-inactive opposition based entirely on lexical meaning gives rise to ergativity as an alignment system that advances from an active-inactive arrangement towards one in which syntactic roles are further developed. Stemming from an active-inactive basis, an ergative system produces two opposing semanto-syntactic conceptualizations of the subject participant, realized formally, further advancing the transitivity of a clause. An ergative system manifests the arrangement of nominal

participants of a clause in relation to its verbal process, and does so by signalling where the 'work' of a verbal process occurs and where the process culminates.

In the course of further developments of transitivity, a third alignment patterning develops, known as a nominative-accusative (nom-acc) patterning. This system does not differentiate the subject formally according to the transitivity of a clause, thereby conflating the role of the subject into a general role that performs the action of the verbal process, regardless of the transitive nature of the verbal process. This system does not necessarily replace an ergative one (if a language exhibits ergativity), rather the two systems can complement each other in numerous ways depending on the mechanisms of a language itself. All three systems—active, ergative, and nom-acc—work together by shifting or splitting from one into another based on certain occurrences in the grammar that take place in a language. A language may not exercise all three systems, but if it uses at least two, there is a wide range of ways in which a language can move back and forth between alignment systems, allowing each language to do this in ways that are uniquely characteristic to an individual language.

All three systems set up nominals of a clause as various restrictors upon the transitive activity of a verbal process, specifying the range of operation for a verbal process in a given linguistic expression. In these systems the verbal process is limited by the nominal participants, which mark the transitive boundaries of a verbal process and in doing so define the general roles participants play in relation to a verbal process. However, this kind of activity at work in a clause can also be reversed: nominal participants are limited by the verbal process itself, that is, the roles of these participants are defined further by the syntactic and semantic features of a verbal process.

Ancient Greek utilizes a nom-acc patterning as the basis for transitive relations of a clause, marking nominals accordingly using inflectional cases. A nom-acc system is realized in Greek by a formally undifferentiated grammatical subject (nominative and vocative cases), regardless of whether or not a verb is transitive or intransitive. This is followed by what a process may extend directly toward (accusative case) if the process is transitive, and possibly extending further by augmenting the process somehow (dative case), and finally, a nominal itself potentially can be restricted or specified (genitive case). Transitivity is an occurrence in language in which a verbal process and its meaning constantly interacts with participants and their semantic roles. Given this, it is not uncommon among languages, both ancient and modern, to utilize more than one alignment system in order to more efficiently organize syntactic and semantic relations. Ancient Greek, as this study has argued, is no exception to this.

Voice in ancient Greek is a feature of the verb in the grammar of the language that further defines the role of the subject participant, and thereby governs the roles that other nominals play in a clause as well. In this regard voice also operates on the principle of restriction by specifying a nominal's function in relation to the verbal process. Whereas syntactic roles are differentiated according to a nom-acc system in ancient Greek, realized formally by their inflectional markings, a shift takes place into an ergative system for further defining these syntactic roles. This study has identified an ergative patterning at work in the language, according to which the Greek verb operates, and this system shift helps to reinterpret significant elements of voice function. In order to signal an affected—unaffected opposition pertaining to the subject participant, an ergative alignment system is utilized, producing an effective organizational basis for clausal

constituents, also enabling the principle of causality and affectedness to operate and to better specify respective semantic roles. This system is realized formally by the verb forms that encode a clear and consistent opposition of the roles the subject plays in relation to the verbal process. The two distinct roles of the subject participant that realize an ergative system have been labelled in this study as Agent (active voice) and Medium (middle-passive voice). This voice distinction is not made formally in the nom-acc system, which uses only one case (nominative/vocative) for the subject participant. (Even though at times an oblique case is used to signal the subject idea in a clause, this is not a consistent contrastive selection for voice according to its own system network.) In the active voice, the subject is the Agent to a process, which can have an impact on another participant (Goal) or extend only as far as the subject itself due to the lexical semantics of the verb. In the middle-passive voice, the process remains entirely within the domain of the subject, actualizing through the subject participant itself, the Medium. Moreover, it follows from this that a verbal process enters into different relationships with other nominal participants based on the driving principle of affectedness and unaffectedness and the semantics of a verbal process, producing various other participant roles (e.g. Client, Recipient, Range). In the middle-passive voice, a further distinction in function is made, producing two different types of uses of this voice, a middle use and a passive use. These uses differ according to causality and where it is located in relation to the subject and verbal process core. Middle uses interpret causality, specified grammatically as agency, as occurring in the Medium. Passive uses, on the other hand, locate agency outside of the subject and verb core, even at times outside the entire clause.

Further, a verb's lexical semantics factor into how a verb might then be restricted by the arrangement of nominals. A verb's meaning can bear upon whether or not a process can extend beyond the subject participant. In other words, it determines how a verbal process is capable of operating in relation to systemic choices available in a nom-acc system. In an ergative patterning as well, the lexical meaning of a verb may factor in by contributing to how a nominal might travel through the system network according to certain voice patternings. The lexicogrammar of voice accommodates the interface between lexis and grammatical system, and to this extent, lexis can certainly shape the meaning potential of voice usage. The lexical semantics of a verb can determine how a user might utilize a certain voice, limiting voice portrayal in a clause. As such, lexical meaning may determine that a particular verb is used in only one voice (e.g. Medium-only verbs). However, the forms of such verbs (inflectional endings) rather are utilized across all process types, and in this regard, they encode grammatically, or to be more precise, they encode a systemic function that applies regardless of verbal process meaning types. This study has tried to demonstrate that a voice form of a verb will always signal its corresponding semantic role of the subject, which belongs to systemic grammatical function, established as consistent semantic choices in the system, regardless of verb meaning. The semantics of a verb, including semantic verb classes, are not repeatedly fashioning voice occurrences on their own by constantly rewriting the rules of engagement in a highly generalized system each time a new verb is used. Such a formulation of voice will always be changing from verb to verb, producing unending exceptions to any rules governing a voice system, and requiring constant redefining especially of what subject-affectedness actually entails.

By contrast, when the systemic operations of voice are clarified, having its semantic roles specified, lexical semantics and their place in the system are also better accounted for. Grounded in a broader working definition of transitivity, an ergative system aligns form with function in such a way that there can be greater clarity as to how a verb might 'behave' inside a system network of voice. It has not been so clear throughout the research on ancient Greek voice what such a grammatical system is, or what it looks like, even though voice has traditionally been called a voice "system." Going well back into the ancient period, discrepancies persist in regard to what function a form signals among the different voices and this is symptomatic of interpreting voice too strictly according to a nom-acc system. To cope with this difficulty, the meaning of the individual verb in a given occurrence has been underscored to help determine voice usage. But research on ancient Greek voice has not been able to overcome sufficiently the limitations accompanying a system interpreted solely according to individual lexical semantics within a nom-acc patterning.

In a systemic functional approach, however, lexis and grammar are always distinct but are never divorced from each other. They belong to the same continuum, always interacting with each other, and language use means cooperatively sliding back and forth along different axes towards either the grammar side or lexical side for the production of meaning. The grammar of ancient Greek voice, established under the tenets and models of SFL, can operate effectively without lexis determining how the grammar system operates. The grammar of voice in the system of transitivity is an entirely self-sufficient one on its own that carries its own meaning potential. This system engages with lexis and a user travels through routes in this grammar system, that is, routes established

by the lexicogrammar and not by lexis alone, nor by grammar alone. Sometimes the meaning of a verb factors into which route is taken in the system, but the grammar continually interacts with lexis, rather than the grammar being created by lexis.

Over its long history, studies on ancient Greek have not, for the most part, considered the possibility that there is more than one alignment system at work in the language, consisting of both a nom-acc and ergative patterning that work together as transitive alignment systems. Although there is currently a vast amount of research on alignment systems in the field of contemporary linguistics today, only small inroads have been made into ancient Greek studies. Because of this, more than one alignment system at work in the language has not been adequately considered, confining grammatical study of Greek to only a nom-acc system, and thereby forcing voice into a transitive system not fully compatible for this particular operation of the verb. An ergative system is better designed to accommodate voice function and its characterization of syntactic relations. As a result, the category of deponency in particular is unnecessary in formulations of ancient Greek's system of transitivity. The present study has shown no reliance upon such a category, having demonstrated a better alternative to such classifications of the verb. This is possible because of how an ergative alignment patterning supports better specification of the roles of participants for the production of meaning, which more than sufficiently replaces what deponency tries to accomplish. Most studies on ancient Greek voice, including studies that continue to come out, assume deponent verbs are an integral part of interpreting voice without questioning the basic validity of such a category. In light of what this present study has tried to show, assumptions such as these need serious

reconsideration, especially when revisiting work that has been done on voice, as well as engaging with any other forthcoming study on voice.

Areas for Further Study

Ergativity in Ancient Greek

The phenomenon known as *ergativity* in languages around the world has gained a lot of attention in recent years in the field of linguistics. It is becoming increasingly evident among linguists that ergativity is not a unitary phenomenon, but a multi-faceted term, capable of taking on many different characteristics and showing great diversity in its uses. Linguists continue to regard ergativity as something to be studied beyond its identification as a type of alignment system. There are other areas of inquiry that expand the scope of ergativity such as, for example, drawing better distinctions between morphological versus syntactic ergativity. Other areas of grammar such as word order, discourse, and information structure, to name a few, all can have features of ergativity involved. Discourse pragmatics, especially, have been viewed by linguists as contributing to ergative phenomena in languages, whether a language shows ergativity extensively or not. This study has demonstrated the flexibility of ergativity, contending that through voice, ergativity is operational in ancient Greek even though its case system realizes a nominative-accusative system. This opens up the potential for further studies on ergativity in ancient Greek, as well as the need to continue to pay attention to the importance of alignment patternings in the language. This can lead to identifying other areas of the language that may exhibit characteristics of ergativity.

Beyond the NT Texts

This study has been confined to the texts of the New Testament in the application of an ergative approach to voice in ancient Greek. Further study that takes up the model and method for voice put forth in this study can branch out in many directions by examining other texts that are contemporary with the NT, also working back toward earlier stages in the history of the language, including texts that move into periods following the NT. Closer examination specifically of the theta form can very possibly yield some fresh insights. The theta form as a passive marker that possibly signals stativity in the subject is an area worth pursuing further. Diachronic assessments of the theta form also can yield some interesting results, by locating the impetus for any trends, for example, that signal the decline of the sigma stems and the rise of the theta form according to the perspective on voice that has been presented in this study.

Voice Beyond the Clause

The present study focused attention on the clause and operations therein. There is ample room for further studies on voice that go beyond the clause. This is pertinent to voice because of the variability of causality, and especially how it can originate from a source that is external to the clause. When multiple clauses are treated together, SFL calls this "clause complexing." This occurs among a sequence of clauses to convey various relationships that take place between clauses. Complexing in texts steps into the wider arena of discourse analysis or text linguistics, which analyze how meaning is produced beyond a single clause. It should not be assumed that the principle of causality and affectedness, signaled in voice, is limited to the clause level only. In discourse, clauses

coordinate with one another according to various criteria and voice plays a role in this (e.g. topic continuity as a reason for selecting passive use). However, does discourse create ergative patternings, or do ergative patternings create discourse? It would be welcome to see more studies in discourse analysis being taken up that include applications of voice in light of this study and how voice contributes its part to the formation of meaning at the discourse level.

SFL and the Greek Verb

Finally, ancient Greek continues to be studied so intently because of what has been said by this ancient language, making it so relevant and significant for today. The methodology applied to voice in this study is grounded in Systemic Functional Linguistics, and, as this study has tried to show, this linguistic theory offers a viable means to gaining a better informed understanding of an ancient language. In studies that continue to come out, the verbal system, especially, continues to be discussed and debated, resulting in a myriad of differing formulations and interpretations of how the Greek verb works. One can sift through all this more intelligently by paying attention to the specific method (if there is one at all) utilized in a study that forms the basis for its analysis and conclusions. Voice is just one component to the Greek verb that has been studied voluminously, but without the aid of strong linguistic theory supporting such study, backed by the field of contemporary linguistics, credibility for any undertaking, whether regarding voice or any other linguistic feature, is diminished. SFL may not be the only credible theory to advance the study of ancient Greek, especially the verbal

system, but it continues to hold much potential for unlocking the complexities of a language so far removed from today.

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