

# Voice mismatches in non-finite contexts: the morphosyntax of deponent participles

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## 1 Introduction

- **Deponents:** morphologically non-active verbs in syntactically active contexts
- = a lexical idiosyncrasy (verbs that are apparently inherently specified for non-active morphology)
- In languages with a **syncretic** active/non-active voice system (“**voice mismatch**”)

(1) Latin alternating (A) vs. deponent (D) verbs

	a. Pres.act.	b. Pres.pass.
A	am- $\bar{o}$ ‘I love’	am- <b>or</b> ‘I am loved’
D		hort- <b>or</b> ‘I encourage’ *‘I am encouraged’

**The puzzle:** Is deponency linked to *finiteness*?

- Papangeli and Lavidas 2009, Pesetsky 2009: Deponency surfaces when T = finite
- Deponency = suspended in non-finite contexts? Ex.: Latin present participles of deponents and non-deponents use the same morphology (“active”):

(2) Latin A vs. D verbs: pres.ptcp.

a. Pres.act.	b. Pres.pass.	c. Pres.ptcp.
am- $\bar{o}$ ‘I love’	am-or ‘I am loved’	ama- <b>nt-</b> ‘loving’
	hort-or ‘I encourage’	horta- <b>nt-</b> ‘encouraging’

**Proposal:** Deponency does not depend on finiteness, but on the presence vs. absence of Voice (the head introducing the external argument)

- Comparative evidence from Vedic Sanskrit (VS), Ancient Greek (AG), Latin (Lat.), Hittite (Hitt.), Modern Greek (MG).
- Additional assumption: Latin has syncretic participial morphology (underspecified for Voice)

## 2 Background

(3) Spell-Out of non-act. morphology (after Embick 2004: 150):

**Voice** ↔ **Voice-NAct** / **[-ext.arg]**

“Non-active morphology is assigned when Voice does not introduce an external argument”

- (Non-)active morphology = portmanteau with T/Agr, sensitive to Voice
- active morphology = “elsewhere” (also emerges when Voice is missing, e.g., in unaccusatives & statives, Kallulli 2013).

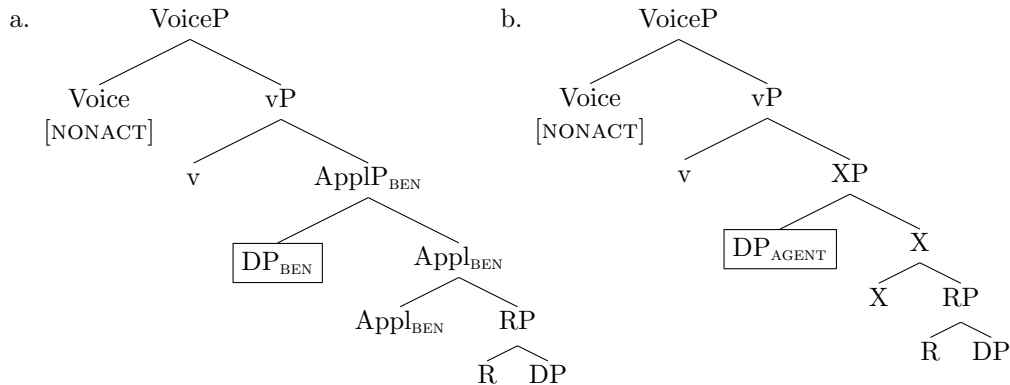
Grestenberger 2014: **Deponents** merge a **non-canonical agent** below Voice due to a diachronic reanalysis of a benefactive or experiencer argument (Pykkänen 2008: low applicatives; cp. also Bosse et al. 2012) as agent → (4)

### Prediction:

- Deverbal nouns and adjectives (participles, gerunds and verbal adjectives) that include VoiceP below the nominalizing node will preserve deponent behavior
- Participles, etc., that do not include VoiceP never preserve voice mismatches

## 2.1 Background

(4) Deponent reanalysis: (self-)benefactive → agent



(Verbal endings below: **VS** 3sg.act. *-ti* : 3sg.non-act. *-te*; **AG** 1sg.act. *-ō/-mi* : 1sg.non-act. *-mai*; **Lat.** 1sg.act. *-ō* : 1sg.non-act. *-or*; **Hitt.** 3sg.act. *-zi* : 3sg.non-act. *-(t)ari*; **MG** 1sg.act. *-o* : 1sg.non-act. *-me*)

### 3 Mismatch suspended: deponents look like non-deponents

(5) Agent nouns

	alternating		deponent	
	pres.act.	agent noun	pres.non-act.	agent noun
VS	<i>náy-a-ti</i> ‘leads’	<i>ne-tár-</i> ‘leader’	<i>trá-ya-te</i> ‘protects’	<i>trā-tár-</i> ‘protector’
AG	<i>dídō-mi</i> ‘give’	<i>do-tér</i> ‘giver’	<i>rháo-mai</i> ‘protect’	<i>rhū-tér</i> ‘protector’
Lat.	<i>am-ō</i> ‘love’	<i>amā-tor</i> ‘lover’	<i>hort-or</i> ‘incite’	<i>hortā-tor</i> ‘inciter’
MG	<i>horev-o</i> ‘dance’	<i>horef-tis</i> ‘dancer’	<i>hirizo-me</i> ‘use’	<i>hiris-tis</i> ‘user’

(6) Verbal adjectives

	Non-deponent	verbal adjective	deponent	verbal adjective
VS	<i>náy-a-ti</i> ‘leads’	<i>nī-tá-</i> ‘conquered’	<i>trá-ya-te</i> ‘protects’	<i>trā-tá-</i> ‘protected’
AG	<i>títhē-mi</i> ‘place’	<i>the-tós</i> ‘placed’	<i>ex-áinu-mai</i> ‘pick’	<i>éx-ai-tos</i> ‘picked; choice’
Hitt.	<i>ēp-zi</i> ‘seizes’	<i>app-ant-</i> ‘seized’	<i>tuḫš-ari</i> ‘cuts off’	<i>tuḫš-ant-</i> ‘cut off’
MG	<i>anig-o</i> ‘open’	<i>anih-tos</i> ‘opened’	<i>metahirizo-mai</i> ‘use’	<i>a-metahiris-tos</i> ‘unused’

### 4 Mismatch continued: deponents do not look like non-deponents

In VS and AG, deponents always select morphologically non-active participial morphology and preserve the “voice mismatch”:

(7) VS and AG participles: alternating (non-deponent)

	Pres.act.	ptcp.	Pres.non-act.	ptcp.
VS	<i>náy-a-ti</i> ‘moves’ (tr.)	<i>náy-a-nt-</i>	<i>náy-a-te</i> ‘moves’ (itr.)	<i>náy-a-māna-</i>
AG	<i>phér-ō</i> ‘carry’	<i>pher-o-nt-</i>	<i>phér-o-mai</i> ‘carry for me, win’	<i>pher-ó-menos</i>

(8) VS and AG participles: deponents

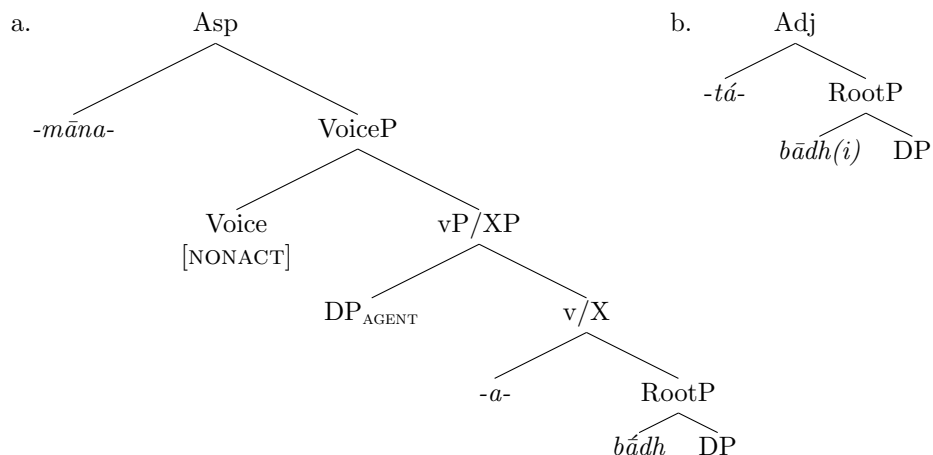
	Pres.non-act.	ptcp.
VS	<i>bádh-a-te</i> ‘attacks’	<i>bádh-a-māna-</i> ‘attacking’
AG	<i>dízē-mai</i> ‘seek’	<i>dizé-menos</i> ‘seeking’

(9) **Spell-Out of VS participles, (10):**

- a.  $-(m)\bar{a}na- \leftrightarrow \text{Asp}/_ \text{Voice}[-\text{ext.arg}]$
- b.  $-ant- \leftrightarrow \text{Asp}/\text{elsewhere}$

## 5 Structure of deponent participles: high vs. low attachment

- (10) VS deponent participles: *bādh-a-māna-* ‘attacking’ vs. *bādh(i)-tá-* ‘attacked’ (cp. Anagnostopoulou 2003, Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou 2008):



## 6 What about Latin?

- The present ptcp. of deponents appears to suspend the mismatch (see ex. 2), but the perfect ptcp. preserves it:

- (11) Latin non-finite forms: perfect

	a. Perf.act.	b. Perf.pass.
A	<i>am-āv-ī</i> ‘I have loved’	<i>amā-tus sum</i> ‘I was loved’
D		<i>hortā-tus sum</i> ‘I have incited’ *‘I have been incited’

The pres. and perf.ptcp. of deponents are syntactically active, cp. *sequ-or* ‘follow’:

- (12) Livy, *Ab urbe condita* 4.20.5:

**omnes ante mē auctōres secū-tus** ...  
all.ACC before me authors.ACC follow-PERF.PTCP.NOM

“Having followed all authors before me ...” (\*“having been followed”)

- (13) Livy, *Ab urbe condita* 1.10.6:

mē auctōrem **seque-nt-es**  
me.ACC author.ACC follow-PRES.PTCP-NOM.PL

“Following my example”

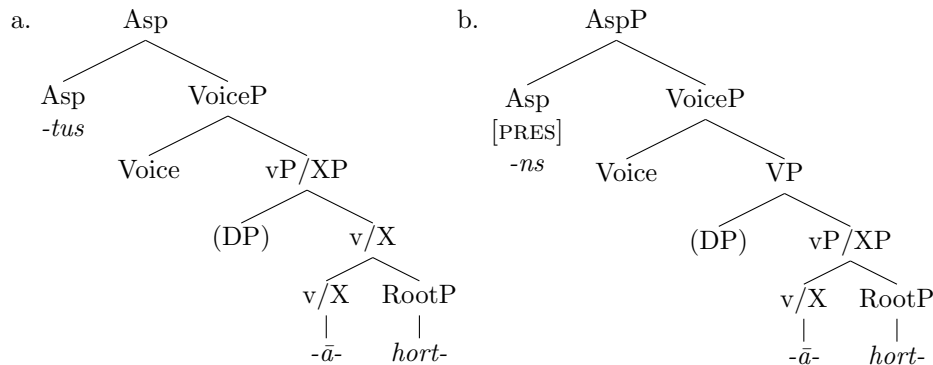
Embick (2000): **Syncretism**

- *-nt-* and *-tus* are allomorphs of Asp
- *-tus* = underspecified for Voice and Asp
- → Mismatch appears to be suspended

(14) **Spell-Out of Latin participles**

- a.  $-nt-$   $\leftrightarrow$  Asp[PRES]
- b.  $-t[us]-$  ( $/-s-$ )  $\leftrightarrow$  elsewhere

(15) Lat. deponent perfect ptcp. *hortātus* ‘having incited’ vs. deponent present ptcp. *horta-nt-* ‘inciting’:



## 7 Conclusion

- Deponency is contingent on the presence of VoiceP, not finiteness
- Derivational suffixes (here: participles) that attach below VoiceP appear to suspend the “voice mismatch”
- Microvariation in participial morphology can blur this picture  $\rightarrow$  Latin
- Future research: testing this in non-IE languages with similar voice systems

## References

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