

Rosemarie Lühr (Jena)

The Structure of Events in Word Formation

1 The problems posed

If one wants to examine the structure of events in word formation then abstract verbal nouns offer a good point of departure, because they can support circumstantial arguments like the respective verbs. Of the ancient Indo-European languages the ancient Greek data developed in our project "Conception of the nominal lexicon in the Indo-European languages" proves to be particularly appropriate. Abstract verbal nouns play an important role in the development of the linguistic terminology of Greek. The gradual intrusion of nominal expressions at the cost of their verbal correspondents can be observed during the 5th century BC (Porzig 1942: 45). One author for whom this tendency is quite obvious is the historian Thucydides. That is why the following examples are taken from his "History of the Peloponnesian War" (Freundlich 1987: 7).¹ In that text a verb construction depicting some event is often taken up again in the form of an abstract verbal noun.² Now, events display a two part temporal dimension, the internal dimension, which applies to the duration of the event, and the external dimension, which establishes the *temporal relationships to other events* (Engelberg *ibid.*: 231). Beyond that they can be situated in space or be a modal relationship. Such relationships are not always quite as explicit in abstract verbal nouns as they are for the respective finite constructions; moreover they must be extracted from context. That leads to the first question to be answered: Are there contextual elements in Thucydides' use of abstract verbal nouns which indicate how an event is anchored to its internal or external temporal dimension, to its spatial dimension or to its modal use?

¹ The following citations are from his article: Zur Morphologie der Verbalabstrakta auf -ος und -η bei Herodot (cf. Arend 1936).

² Cf. the fundamental article in Porzig (1942); with respect to Ancient Indian cf. Liebert (1949); Niederreiter (2001: 7f.); concerning neutral abstract verbal nominalization with *-es/-os in Ancient Greek, Latin or Indo-Iranian (cf. Höfer 1984, Nowicki 1976).

Just as it is generally interesting in the case of nominalization, it is particularly intriguing, which complements of the basic verb are passed on to the abstract verbal noun (Schwyzer & Debrunner 1950: 356).

In Greek, however, there is a competitor for abstract verbal noun constructions amongst the non-finite verb phrases. It is the infinitive construction. On the one hand the infinitive can take complements. On the other hand both constructions take an article. Thus, the second question of this examination arises: whether these two constructions are really different and if so, under what contextual conditions Thucydides chose the abstract verbal noun construction rather than the infinitive phrase?

2 Abstract verbal nouns

2.1 Temporal, locational modification

2.1.1 Internal temporal relationships

In our treatment of the internal temporal dimension of abstract verbal nouns we adopt the assumptions of Engelberg (*ibid.*: 54) that such constructions refer to complex structured events composed themselves of other simpler partial events. Such simpler partial events are either events per se (e), or better processes, or they are states (z). These partial events can possibly be causally related, but they are always temporally related. They can thus take place simultaneously ($\langle \rangle$) or follow one another ($\langle \rangle$) and they must be characterized as either a durative or a punctual event. In contrast to which, the thematic complements corresponding to AGENT, PATIENT, THEME, EXPERIENCER, POSSESSUM, RELATUM need not necessarily be involved in all partial events.

If we consider a verb comprising as many as three partial events as *abbrechen* 'tear down' in example (1) we see that it refers, first of all, to a partial event e^1 filling a certain temporal duration in which an AGENT and a PATIENT are involved: Themistocles has a bridge torn down. At the same time a second event e^2 is taking place, which only involves the PATIENT, the tearing down of the bridge that also takes a certain amount of time (cf. Engelberg *ibid.*: 31f. in this respect). This event is followed by a third being the subsequent state of the PATIENT. The bridge is torn down.

- (1) a. e^1 Themistocles has a bridge torn down.
 e^2 The bridge gets torn down.
 e^3 The bridge is torn down.

Because the most important type of Greek verbal nouns – those with the suffix -σις - behave superficially very much the same as German abstract verbal nouns ending in *-ung* the treatment of sortal meanings and the realization of logical arguments by Ehrich & Rapp (2000) can serve as a basis for comparison. The abstract verbal noun associated with *abbrechen* 'tear down' would be classified as a "destruction nominalization" and would display the following lexical semantic structure [LSS], where the situation variable *s* stands for a state and the variable *e* stands for an event denoting a change of state predicate:

- b. $(\lambda y) \lambda e [DO((x, y) r \ \& \ BEC ((NOT (BE ((y) s))) e)]$

According to the rules that they postulate for the argument structure of *-ung* nominalizations, only the lowest ranking effected argument may occur here next to the situational argument. Specifically that would be $THEMA_{EFFECTED}$. And this is indeed the case in the Greek example (1c). However the time point adverb τότε, which occurs in the general context, only applies to the first partial event in which the AGENT still participates. In this case the AGENT is connected through the prepositional phrase with the preposition διά just like German 'durch' or English 'by' which can be interpreted as the implicit AGENT argument of the lexical semantic structure (Ehrich & Rapp *ibid.*: 278).

- c. I 137,4 (γράφας τήν τε ἐκ Σαλαμῖνος προάγγελσιν τῆς ἀναχωρήσεως καὶ τὴν τῶν γεφυρῶν, ἣν ψευδῶς προσεποιήσατο, τότε δι' αὐτὸν οὐ διᾶλυσιν)
(with which he mentioned his announcement, sent from Salamis, to retreat and not to tear down the bridges, which previously he had mistakenly attributed to his own influence – Freundlich *ibid.*: 140).
- d. ... τήν ... προάγγελσιν τῆς
the-ACC.SG.F announcement-ACC.SG.F of the-GEN.SG.F
ἀναχωρήσεως καὶ τὴν τῶν
retreat- GEN.SG.F and the-ACC.SG.F of the-GEN.PL.F
γεφυρῶν, ἣν ψευδῶς
bridges-GEN.PL.F which-ACC.SG.F mistakenly
προσεποιήσατο τότε
he attributed to himself3.SG.IND.AOR.MED previously
δι' αὐτὸν οὐ διᾶλυσιν
because of himself-ACC.SG.M not tear down-ACC.SG.F
Literally: the announcement of retreat (given from Salamis) and not tearing down the bridges at that time by him, with respect to which he mistakenly considered his own accomplishment.

The complication that the negation of an abstract verbal noun does not in fact denote an activity need not be explained here. It is however important that the negation οὐ occurs here.

There are only two partial events involved in *attack*. There is once again the partial event e^1 encompassing a certain temporal duration in which both an AGENT and a PATIENT participate. Then there is the temporally parallel event e^2 which only involves a PATIENT, more specifically *being attacked*, which lasts for a certain stretch of time (cf. in this respect Engelberg (ibid.: 31f.)).

- (2) a. e^1 The Athenians attack the Spartans.
 e^2 The Spartans are attacked.

The previous text:

- b. Π 84,1 προείρητο δ' αὐτοῖς ὑπὸ Φορμίωνος μὴ ἐπιχειρεῖν πρὶν ἂν αὐτὸς σημήνη
 However [the Attic commander] Phormio had forbidden them [the Athenians] to attack [the Spartans], before he himself gave the signal ...
- c. Π 84,2 καὶ τὴν ἐπιχείρησιν ἐφ' ἐαυτῷ τε ἐνόμιζεν εἶναι, ὅπότεν βούληται, τῶν νεῶν ἄμεινον πλεουσῶν, καὶ τότε καλλίστην γίνεσθαι.
 and he believed that the attack were in his hand, when(ever) he wants with his more maneuverable ships and that he will then be most favored.
- d. καὶ τὴν ἐπιχείρησιν ἐφ' ἐαυτῷ τε
 and the-ACC.SG.F attack-ACC.SG.F at him-DAT.SG.M and
 ἐνόμιζεν εἶναι, ὅπότεν
 he believed-3.SG.IND.IPF.ACT to be-INF.PRS.ACT at which time
 βούληται τῶν
 he would want-3.SG.SBJV.PRS.MED of the-GEN.PL.F
 νεῶν ἄμεινον πλεουσῶν ... τότε
 ships-GEN.PL.F better sailing-PTC.PRS.ACT.GEN.PL.F then
 καλλίστην γίνεσθαι
 the most favorable-SUPERL.ACC.SG.F will be-INF.PRS.MED
 Literally: and that the attack lay in his hands was what he believed, at whatever time he could want, because the ships sail better and (he believed) that he would be the more favored.

In this case the temporal modification, the temporal clause ὅπότεν βούληται, τῶν νεῶν ἄμεινον πλεουσῶν, whenever he wants with his better sailing ships' and its corollary τότε 'then' both refer to the first partial event, the beginning of the attack by Phormio. This is also indicated in context by the prepositional phrase ἐφ' ἐαυτῷ characterizing the agent. Thus when considering the two possible arguments of the

atelic 'battle verb' with the situation variable *r* for a process: AGENT or THEMA_{AFFECTED} (Ehrich & Rapp *ibid.*: 279), only an AGENT can be found in the immediate context of the abstract verbal noun.

- e. λy λx λr [DO_{Bekämpf} 'fight' ((x, y) r)]

2.1.2 External temporal relationships

With respect to the external dimension between events Greek as well as German provide a possibility to use abstract verbal nouns in conjunction with prepositions delineating clear temporal relationships. For instance using an abstract verbal noun with the preposition ἐν 'during' indicates simultaneity. If, as in (3), the verb at the basis of the abstract verbal noun, *march back*, consists of two partial events then only the durative component *e*¹ of the monovalent *activity* predicate can be connected with an expression of simultaneity. The resulting state *e*² cannot:

- (3) a. *e*¹ The allied forces are marching back.
*e*² The allied forces are back at the place from which they left.
 (resultant state of the AGENT)
- b. III 103,1 Οἱ ... Ἀθηναῖοι ... ἀπῆσαν ...
 The Athenians ... returned
- c. III 103,2 ἐν δὲ τῇ ἀναχωρήσει ὑστέροις Ἀθηναίων τοῖς ξυμμαχοῖς
 ἀναχωροῦσιν ἐπιτίθενται οἱ ἐκ τοῦ τειχίσματος Συρακόσιοι
 On the march back the allies, which followed the Athenians, were attacked by the Syracusans from the fortification.
- d. ἐν δὲ τῇ ἀναχωρήσει ὑστέροις
 on however the-DAT.SG.F march back-DAT.SG.F later-DAT.PL.M
 Ἀθηναίων τοῖς ξυμμαχοῖς
 as the Athenians-GEN.PL.M the-DAT.PL.M allies-DAT.PL.M
 ἀναχωροῦσιν
 falling back-PTC.PRS.ACT.DAT.PL.M
 Literally: on the march back, however, [the Syracusans attacked] the allies retreating later than the Athenians

There is no AGENT in the immediate context of the nominalization and just as is the case for German the rule takes effect that for an abstract verbal noun a thematic argument need not be realized (Ehrich & Rapp *ibid.*: 276). But the AGENT of the abstract verbal noun is simultaneously the PATIENT of the sentence, ξύμμαχοι 'the allies'. In contrast to German the modifying nominalization of the atelic or durative verb *verzögern* 'delay' reacts differently – it combines two partial events when

as in the case of (4c) simultaneity is denoted by the causal *διὰ* 'because of' doesn't get this:

- (4) a. e¹ The Athenians delay the use of violence.
e² Use of violence is delayed.
- b. λγ λx λr [DO ((x, y) r)]
(Ehrich & Rapp *ibid.*: 287)
- c. III 12,2 ἄστε εἶ τῳ δοκοῦμεν ἄδικεῖν προαποστάντες διὰ τὴν
ἐκείνων μέλλησιν τῶν ἐς ἡμᾶς δεινῶν ... οὐκ ὀρθῶς σκοπεῖ
Whoever believes we were wrong to back off so early, because Athens
also delayed using violence, does not see things properly.
- d. διὰ τὴν ἐκείνων μέλλησιν
because of the-ACC.SG.F of those-GEN.PL.M delay-ACC.SG.F
τῶν ἐς ἡμᾶς δεινῶν
of the-GEN.PL.N against us-ACC.PL horrors-GEN.PL.N
Literally: because of their delay of their violence against us ...

The point of reference here is the first partial event. Whereas in German the argument reading as *THEMA* is more prominent (Ehrich & Rapp *ibid.*: 285f.), Greek supports both a preceding genitive *AGENT-NP* and a following genitive *THEMA-NP* 'of their violence against us' in the immediate context of the abstract verbal noun. In modern German the agent must be connected to such an abstract verbal noun by means of a prepositional phrase introduced by *durch* 'through' just like the Greek example (1). The possible expression of external temporal dimensions with two prefixes for the abstract verbal noun in order to indicate anteriority also is different from German as seen in (5).

Examination of the basic verb for the abstract verbal noun shows that durative **ἐνοικέω* 'habitate' consists of two events:

- (5) a. e¹ The Phaeacians live in Corcyra.
e² Corcyra is inhabited.

According to Engelberg (*ibid.*: 60) in such verbs a specific resultant state of the participant *y* will be maintained while at the same time a further participant takes action with regard to *y*:

- b. E-STR ... $\diamond (\rightarrow_1 z: x^{\text{PATIENS}})$

By adding the prefix *προ-* we now have **προενοικέω* 'previously inhabiting' as the derivational basis for the abstract verbal noun, *προενοίκησις* 'the previous habitation':

- c. I 25,4 (οἱ Κερκυραῖοι) ... ναυτικῶ δὲ καὶ πολὺ πρῶχειν ἔστιν ὃ τε
 ἔπαιρόμενοι καὶ κατὰ τῆν τῶν Φαιάκων προενοίκησιν τῆς
 Κερκύρας κλέος ἐχόντων
 Yes, they (the inhabitants of Corcyra) also occasionally boasted to be
 much better than the Corinthians at sea, and referred to the nautically
 notorious Phaeacians, who once inhabited Corcyra (Freundlich *ibid.*:
 151, comment 9).
- d. καὶ κατὰ τῆν τῶν
 and according to that-ACC.SG.F of the-GEN.PL.M
 Φαιάκων προενοίκησιν
 Phaeacians-GEN.PL.M previous habitation-ACC.SG.F
 τῆς Κερκύρας κλέος
 of the- GEN.SG.F Corcyra-GEN.SG.F fame-ACC.SG.N
 ἐχόντων
 having-PTC.PRS.ACT.GEN.PL.M
 Literally: ... and according to the previous habitation of Corcyra
 (=genitivus obiectivus) by the Phaeacians (=genitivus subiectivus)
 having fame

In contrast to German again the AGENT appears in the immediate context of the abstract verbal noun as a pre-nominal genitive and the PATIENT as a post-nominal genitive. The following strategy for expressing external temporal dimensions also is different from German: Greek permits constructions with abstract verbal nouns to represent preceding durative events when an aorist participle occurs in their immediate context. In (6) the form γενόμενος 'become' makes it clear that the stay at Isthmus took place before the subsequent march. 'stay' only comprises one event:

- (6) a. e 'He stays at Isthmus.'
- b. II 18,3 ἐπειδὴ τε ξυνελέγετο ὁ στρατός, ἢ τε ἐν τῷ Ἴσθμῳ ἐπιμονὴ
 γενομένη καὶ κατὰ τὴν ἄλλην πορείαν ἢ σχολαιότης διέβαλεν
 αὐτόν, μάλιστα δὲ ἢ ἐν τῇ Οἰνότη ἐπίσχεσις.
 And when the army was gathered, it became suspicious by staying at
 Isthmus and by the slow speed of the further march, but most of all by
 the stop over in Oenoe (Freundlich *ibid.*: 146, comment. 4).
- c. ἢ τε ἐν τῷ Ἴσθμῳ
 the-NOM.SG.F as well as at the-DAT.SG.M Isthmus-DAT.SG.M
 ἐπιμονὴ γενομένη καὶ κατὰ
 stop over-NOM.SG.F become-PTC.AOR.MED. NOM.SG.F and by
 τὴν ἄλλην πορείαν ἢ
 the-ACC.SG.F other-ACC.SG.F march-ACC.SG.F the-NOM.SG.F
 σχολαιότης διέβαλεν
 slow speed-NOM.SG.F it caused suspicion-3.SG.IND.AOR.ACT
 αὐτόν, μάλιστα δὲ ἢ ἐν τῇ
 him-ACC.SG.M the most however the-NOM.SG.F in the-DAT.SG.F

Οἰνόη ἐπίσχεσις.
 Oenoe-DAT.SG.F stop over-NOM.SG.F

Literally: ... not only the stop over in Isthmus³ having taken place as well as the slow speed in marching on, but most of all (what) caused him to be suspicious (was) the stop over in Oenoe.

2.1.3 External and internal temporal relationship

Considering the fact that both internal and external temporal dimensions can be realized with abstract verbal nouns in Greek, it is not surprising that both should occur with such an abstract noun at the same time. This is exemplified in the case of the preposition *μετά* 'after' used together with the nominalization of the telic verb 'surround'. It is a verb of change with the following lexical semantic structure with *s* representing the resulting state and three partial events in (7):

- (7) a. DO ((x, y) r) & BEC ((BE ((y) s)) e)
 (Ehrich & Rapp *ibid.*: 259)
 b. e¹ Phormio surrounds Potidaea.
 e² Potidaea is being surrounded.
 e³ Potidaea has been surrounded.

The preposition *μετά* 'after' refers to the third partial event of the abstract verbal noun, namely the resultant state.

- c. I 64,1 Τὸ δ' ἐκ τοῦ ἰσθμοῦ [τειχοῦ] εὐθὺς οἱ Ἀθηναῖοι
 ἀποτειχίσαντες ἐφρούρουν ...
 The Athenians immediately closed off the wall built against the Isthmus
 [in the vicinity of Potidaea] and guarded it.
 d. I 65,3 μετὰ δὲ τῆς Ποτειδαίας τὴν ἀποτείχισιν Φορμίων ... τὴν
 Χαλκιδικὴν καὶ Βοττικὴν ἐδήου
 [The Attic commander] Phormio devastated the Chalkidice and Bottice
 lands after the enclosure of Potidaea
 e. μετὰ δὲ τῆς Ποτειδαίας τὴν
 after however of the-GEN.SG.F Potidaea-GEN.SG.F the-ACC.SG.F
 ἀποτείχισιν
 enclosure-ACC.SG.F

The pre-posed genitive in (7e) only realizes the RELATUM (Ehrich & Rapp *ibid.*: 293). The reason that the AGENT Ἀθηναίων is not mentioned follows from the further context. The previous text concerns the description of the battle between the Athenians and the Peloponnesians,

³ The prose version is *dativus localis* with a preposition.