Adverbial Participles

I. Participles can be either adjectival or adverbial.

Adjectival ptc: “The grinning cat ate.” [modifies a noun, “cat.”]
Adverbial ptc: “While grinning, the cat ate.” [modifies a verb, “ate.”]

Chapters 27–28 deal only with adverbial ptc.

II. Strategies for translating the adverbial Present Ptc.

1. If the adverbial participle is active voice, use the “–ing” form of the verb.
   If its passive voice, use “being –ed/en.”

   Act: λύων ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἀπέθανεν. Destroying, the man died.
   Pass: λυόμενος ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἀπέθανεν. Being destroyed, the man died.

2. If the adverbial idea is Temporal: use “while –ing” (or, “while being –ed/en.”).

   Act: λύων ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἀπέθανεν. While destroying, the man died.
   Pass: λυόμενος ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἀπέθανεν. While being destroyed, the man died.

3. If the adverbial idea is Causal: use “because ___ is/was –ing” (or, “because ____ is/was
   being –ed/en.”).

   Act: λύων ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἀπέθανεν. Because he was destroying, the man died.
   Pass: λυόμενος ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἀπέθανεν. Because he was being destroyed, the man died.

III. Note: Participles, even though they are adverbial, must still agree with the noun (or the
      implied noun) in case, gender, and number.

      Specified noun: λύων ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἀπέθανεν.

IV. Relative Time of Participles

Participles do not indicate absolute time; only indicative verbs do that. So the Present Indicative indicates an action that is Present to the speaker; the Aorist Indicative indicates and action that is Past to the speaker. For ex.:

PAI3s: Ιησούς ἀποθνήσκει. Jesus is dying. [present time]
2AoI3s: Ιησούς ἀπέθανεν. Jesus died. [past time]

Adverbial participles, on the other hand, IF they are temporal, simply indicate relative time. That is to say, the timing of the participle is relative to the timing of the main verb that it’s modifying.

A. A Present (Continuous) Participle will reflect the same time-frame of the main verb that it’s modifying.

λύων (Pres ptc) ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἀποθνήσκει (Pres Indic).= While he is destroying, the man is dying. [The ptc is translated with the present because the main verb is present time.]

λύων (Pres ptc) ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἀπέθανεν (2 Aor Indic). While he was destroying, the man died. [The ptc is translated with the past because the main verb is past time.]

B. An Aorist (Undefined) Participle will normally (not always) indicate a time-frame prior to the main verb that it’s modifying.

λύσας (Aor ptc) ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἀποθνήσκει (Pres Indic).= After he destroys/detroyed, the man dies. [The ptc is translated with the adverb “after” to indicate its action is prior to the main verb, which is present time.]

λύσας (Aor ptc) ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἀπέθανεν (2 Aor Indic). After he destroyed/had detroyed, the man died. [The ptc is translated with the adverb “after” and a past form of “destroy” to indicate its action is prior to the main verb, which is past time.]