BMCR
Bryn Mawr Classical Review

BMCR 2019.02.39

Ancient Greek Linguistics: New Approaches, Insights, Perspectives

Felicia Logozzo, Paolo Poccetti, *Ancient Greek Linguistics: New Approaches, Insights, Perspectives*. Berlin; Boston: de Gruyter, 2017. ix, 863. ISBN 9783110548068 €149,95.

Review by
Audrey Mathys, Humboldt-Stiftung, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität.
mathys@phare.normalesup.org

Preview

[Authors and titles are listed at the end of the review.]

The book under review is a collection of 51 papers, resulting from the publication of the first International Colloquium on Ancient Greek Linguistics, which was held in Rome in March 2015. Contributions cover topics from all fields of Ancient Greek Linguistics, i.e. phonology and its written reflexes, morphology and use of particles, tense, aspect, modality and evidentiality, speech acts and pragmatics, syntax, semantics and morphosyntax, lexicon and onomastics, and relations between Ancient Greek and other languages. Thus, this volume offers a comprehensive picture of ongoing research in all subfields of Ancient Greek linguistics. Even though most of the papers deal with Archaic and Classical texts, some studies are devoted to epigraphic Greek (e.g. Muscianisi on Theran *h* ικεσιος and Middei on Sabellic personal names in Greek inscriptions, etc.), or to more recent texts (see e.g. García Soler on Libanios, Tronci on the Septuagint, Redondo Moyano on Greek novels). The papers are written in English, Italian, French, and Spanish, with abstracts in English and a general index of subjects at the end of the volume, and their authors come from extremely different backgrounds.

Unfortunately, this collection is particularly poorly edited and proofread: aside from typos, which can be found on almost every page, some articles by non-native speakers might have benefited from some rewriting. The publisher seemingly has troubles with Greek fonts (see e.g. Ὼ p. 270, Ἢ p. 360, υἱέ”ι p. 353, Εἶεν p. 483, etc.), which is rather surprising, since it is certainly not the first time de Gruyter has published works on Ancient Greek. Some papers are almost impossible to understand due to typos on crucial words and lack of proofreading; see for instance Logozzo's paper on abbreviations, where some abbreviations are missing in the text (p. 63 l. 1, for instance), Muscianisi's paper on *h* ικετήσιος, where strange Indo-European roots are reconstructed, such as * $g^{(u)h}$ *es-* $_1$ “eat (up), feed” (p. 781) and * *sek* $^{u̯c}$ – “follow, affiliate” (p. 782). In Létoublon's article on ὑπισχνέομαι and ὑφίσταμαι « to promise », some Greek passages seem to have been directly pasted from the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* without any modification (see e.g. p. 728). Other languages are also poorly proofread, e.g. the Old Norse example p. 407, which should read *Þei-r* $_i$ *kóm-u ok vestan með þrem tig-um manna Hrafn ok Sturla* $_i$, instead of *Þeir-i* and *θrem*, or the Hittite examples on p. 64, where ḫUR.SAG

ḫI.A should appear as ḪUR.SAG ḪI.A, and where *me-mi-ica-Jan-ni* should read *me-mi-i̯a-Jan-ni*.

Despite these shortcomings, this book will prove essential reading for anyone interested in Ancient Greek linguistics. Specialists will be glad to find several long papers presenting a comprehensive review of a research topic. Among them, Luraghi and Sausa's (p. 745-774) presentation of verbs of mental activity in Homeric Greek is particularly noteworthy, and will be a useful complement to Lyon's classic study of Platonic vocabulary.[1] Orlandini and Poccetti (p. 345-381) provide a useful description of all types of manifestations of the speaker, and so does Crespo (p. 133-154) with focus adverbs in Classical Greek. But some of the shorter contributions are also extremely valuable. The length of the collection makes it impossible to discuss them all here. Instead, I will mostly focus on some recurring questions, which are representative of the evolution of Ancient Greek linguistics in recent research.

General linguistics plays an ever-increasing part in Ancient Greek linguistics, and several papers of the collection are devoted to the study of traditional problems of Greek semantics and syntax in the framework of linguistic typology and cognitive linguistics. Thus, the works of Talmy on the expression of movement[2] are used in two papers (Bartolotta on deictic motion verbs in Homeric Greek and de Pasquale on Classical Greek). Several authors attempt to use the generative framework in order to analyze Greek data; see e.g. Melazzo on the alleged Pindaric scheme, Rodegheiro on the augment, Vai on information structure in Homeric Greek. In this regard, it should be kept in mind that this is perhaps not the best theoretical framework for specific topics of syntax of Ancient Greek, both because of the lack of a reference syntax exploring all aspects of Ancient Greek from a generative perspective and due to difficulties ensuing from the structure of the language, such as uncertainties regarding the position of the verb, the frequency of hyperbaton, and intricacies surrounding the syntax of participles (Rodegheiro, p. 636). The use of Dik's functional grammar[3] and its expanded version, Hengeveld and Mackenzie's functional discourse grammar,[4] yields more promising results, as exemplified, among others, by the contributions of Allan (p. 103-118) on the grammaticalisation of discourse particles, and Bertrand (p. 399-410) on discontinuous topic expressions. Compared to Latin, Ancient Greek pragmatics and information structure have long suffered from a lack of interest from researchers; but the situation has radically changed over the last two or three decades, as shown by the contributions on these topics in the collection under review, which are too numerous to be listed here.

As our knowledge of language typology improves, categories which are particularly salient in some non-Indo-European languages are now being investigated in Greek. The most striking example is evidentiality, which is mentioned in several contributions in this volume, e.g. Conti's study of the particle ἤδη as an evidential marker (p. 126-130), Lillo's (p. 313-324) analysis of the oblique optative in Herodotus, and Orlandini and Poccetti's (p. 362-372) observations on the link between evidentiality and some aspects of the manifestations of the speaker. The contributions of this volume should provide a good starting point for a monograph on the development and the use of evidential markers in Ancient Greek, which is still lacking. Paradoxically, although evidentiality seems to be a very pervasive category in Classical Greek, there is no unified means of expressing it, as shown by the diversity of linguistic devices involved therein. In this connection, Bary's paper on the reportative use of the unembedded accusative and infinitive (*Accusativus cum infinitivo* or AcI) (p. 293-302), that is to say, AcI's which are not governed by a main verb, is also of interest. Although she does not make any explicit mention of evidentiality, the fact that she shows that non-embedded AcI's are used to indicate that "what is expressed as a report of an utterance (someone else" clearly ranks them among the constructions which are to be investigated ш

one is to gain a comprehensive vision of evidential devices in Ancient Greek.

This collection also shows, in many aspects, how Greek linguistics can contribute to a better understanding of Ancient Greek literature and culture in general. In this respect, the wealth of research that is being carried out on Greek particles is particularly interesting: students and translators of Greek are often left perplexed by their diversity and their use. It is a well-known fact that a purely lexical approach generally leads to misunderstandings and mistranslations, as recalled for instance by Lambert's (p. 193-210) convincing paper on the impossibility of mechanically translating καί by "and". An investigation of the pragmatic function of each particle seems much more promising. This is confirmed, among others, by Thijs's paper (p. 259-274) on single μήν in Plato, where he convincingly argues that this particle is a marker of a discrepancy between the assumptions and expectations of the speaker, on the one hand, and of the addressee, on the other hand. Muchnová's analysis (p. 211-226) of οὖν in subordinate clauses in Homeric Greek is equally valuable. She shows that this particle is used with a double orientation, pointing both backward and forward (e.g. the combination ὡς οὖν with a perception verb refers to a person or to activities of a person mentioned a few lines earlier, and at the same time introduces a new piece of information about this person or his actions), and that the translations provided in reference works do not reflect this double orientation. In a completely different field, historians and anthropologists should be aware of Létoublon's (p. 711-734) analysis of verbs meaning "to promise", as her findings shed some light on the gestures and rituals which originally surrounded the act of promising.

Though more restricted in scope, Tronci's (p. 383-395) description of the morphology of the future in the Septuagint, where she distinguishes between forms resulting from Classical Greek influence and forms which were probably used in the spoken language of the time when the translation was made, provides a better understanding of the structure of the verbal system and of diathetic oppositions in the Hellenistic period. Dardano's (p. 791-802) insightful study of the formulaic devices used to introduce soliloquies in Homer and in Hittite texts has far-reaching implications for the understanding of cultural contacts in Anatolia at the beginning of the first millennium B.C.

Without any doubt, the most interesting contributions are those whose authors combine a deep understanding of Greek philology and a mastery of the latest results of general linguistics. A good example is Zanchi's paper on double preverbs in Homeric Greek, where she uses the colometric structure of the verse as well as recent linguistic research on clitics and on word boundaries to show that in most cases where the transmitted verbal form has two preverbs, at least one of them is not univerbated with the verb. Moreover, she argues that in some cases the position of the caesura shows that none of the alleged preverbs was univerbated with the verb, as in ἀμφιπεριστρώφα (*Il.* 8.348). Another example is Bertrand's (p. 399-410) contribution on discontinuous topic constructions (e.g. ἥ $_i$ δ' ἐν τοῖσι παρίστατο δῖα θεάων $_i$) in Homeric Greek, where he provides a convincing account in terms of the information structure of cases where a pronoun followed by δέ is coreferent with a noun phrase appearing later in the clause: the pronoun is to be analysed as a non-ratified topic expression, which is used in order to "(re)install the referent as a topic of the utterance", and the following noun phrase is a ratified topic expression specifying the identity of the referent; and both expressions are located in the position corresponding to their pragmatic function. Bertrand also raises the question of the existence of an expletive pronoun in Homeric Greek, although more evidence is needed to confirm his interpretation. Other thought-provoki contributions are Inglese's insightful article on ἀτάρ and αὐτάρ in Homer, and Magni's

analysis of the intensive perfect in Homeric Greek as a means of encoding different kinds of event plurality, the findings of which ought to be compared with what we know from the inherited morphology of the perfect stem. De la Villa's analysis of different types of verbal alternation in Classical Greek should also provide a reliable basis for further investigation.

As the reader will have gathered from the preceding remarks, this volume is an important contribution to our knowledge of Ancient Greek linguistics. Publications of such magnitude do not appear very frequently in this field; and this is good reason to look forward to the publication of the Second International Colloquium on Ancient Greek Linguistics, which took place in Helsinki at the end of August 2018.

Authors and Titles

Part I: Phonology and its reflexes
Felicia Logozzo and Paolo Poccetti, "Introduction" (XI-XII)
Roberto Batisti, "The outcome of liquid and sibilant clusters in Ancient Greek" (3-18)
Violeta Gomis García and Araceli Striano Corrochano, "Los grupos de consonantes oclusivas labiales y velares seguidas de silbante en los dialectos griegos" (19-34)
Ville Leppänen, "Gothic evidence for Greek historical phonology" (35-56)
Felicia Logozzo, "Scritture Brevi in alfabeto greco: qualche considerazione linguistica" (57-76)
Chiara Zanchi, "Metro e confini di parola: il caso dei preverbi multipli in Omero" (77-100)

Part II: Particles and their functional uses
Rutger J. Allan, "The grammaticalization of Greek particles" (103-118)
Luz Conti, "On the non–prototypical uses of adverbs in Homer: analysis of ἤδη " (119-132)
Emilio Crespo, "Focus adverbs in Classical Greek" (133-154)
Guglielmo Inglese, "Connettivi e marcatori discorsivi in greco antico: il caso di ἀτάρ e αὐτάρ in Omero" (155-170)
José Miguel Jiménez Delgado, "Ancient Greek καί: marginal adverbial uses" (171-180)
María José García Soler, "Usos de καί y ἔτι como adverbios de foco aditivos en las declamaciones etopoéticas de Libanio" (181-192)
Frédéric Lambert, "Les emplois de καί initial en grec ancien" (193-210)
Dagmar Muchnová, "Homeric use of the particle οὖν in subordinate clauses" (211-226)
Anna Novokhatko, "Discourse markers in a comic fragmentary dialogue" (227-242)
Elena Redondo Moyano, "Defective approximative adverbs in Late Greek" (243-258)
Kees Thijs, "'single' μήν in Platonic dialogue" (259-274)

Part III: Tense, aspect, modality and evidentiality
Annamaria Bartolotta, "On deictic motion verbs in Homeric Greek" (277-292)
Corien Bary, "Reportative markers in Ancient Greek" (293-302)
Ronald Blankenborg, "Would–be factuality. Future in the Greek verb system" (303-312)
Antonio Lillo, "On the oblique optative in Herodotus' completive sentences, an evidentiality mark in Ancient Greek" (313-324)
Elisabetta Magni, "Pluractionality and perfect in Homeric Greek" (325-344)
Anna Orlandini and Paolo Poccetti, "Manifestazioni del 'locutore'in greco" (345-382)
Liana Tronci "Forme sintetiche del futuro nel greco ellenistico. Brevi note sulla Settanta" (383-396)

Part IV: Speech acts and pragmatics
Nicolas Bertrand, "Discontinuous and expletive topic expressions in Homeric Greek" (399-410)

Marie-Ange Julia, “Le grec classique possède-t-il un présentatif?” (411-428)
Donna Shalev, “Attenuated, modified, assent–seeking declaratives, interrogation and *urbanitas* in the Greek of Platonic dialogue” (429-446)
Marina Solís de Ovando, “Focus in performance: some focusing expressions in anagnorisis scenes from Attic tragedy” (447-456)
Massimo Vai,“Struttura informativa della frase in greco omerico: periferia alta, periferia bassa; collocazione delle relative nella periferia sinistra” (457-474)
Rodrigo Verano, “Linguistic paraphrase in Platonic dialogue: a first approach” (475-488)

Part V: Syntax, thematic roles and their morpho-lexical interface
Marina Benedetti, “Quale *avere* ? Sulla sintassi di ἔχειν”, (491-506)
Maria Carmela Benvenuto and Flavia Pompeo, “Abstract possession and experiential expression. Some preliminary remarks” (507-522)
Carla Bruno, “Dietro la maschera. Apparizioni della prima persona nell’Antigone di Sofocle” (523-534)
Jesús de la Villa, “Verbal alternations in Ancient Greek as an interface between lexicon and syntax” (535-550)
Richard Faure, “Argument participial clauses viewed as abstract objects in Classical Greek” (551-564)
José Marcos Macedo, “Noun apposition in Greek religious language: a linguistic account” (565-580)
Rafael Martínez and Emilia Ruiz Yamuza, “Word order, adverb’s scope and focus” (581-596)
Lucio Melazzo, “Did Pindar’s scheme really exist?” (597-608)
Antonio R. Revuelta Puigdollers, “Result clauses in Ancient Greek: correlatives, negation, mood and sentence level” (609-624)
Sira Rodeghiero, “L’aumento in Omero tra narrazione e sintassi” (625-640)

Part VI: Lexicon and onomastics
Václav Blažek, “Apollo the Archer” (643-662)
Gunnar De Boel, “Locative alternation as lexical derivation: the examples of νάττω and βάλλω” (663-678)
Noemi De Pasquale, “The ‘Classical’way to encode motion” (679-694)
Mercedes Díaz de Cerio Díez, “Voice and Sociative alternations in spatial συμφέρω” (695-710)
François Létoublon, “Le lexique de la promesse en grec à l’époque archaïque” (711-734)
Ilaria Liberati, “Zoomorfismo ed antropomorfismo nella formazione del lessico botanico greco” (735-744)
Silvia Luraghi and Eleonora Sausa, “Pensare, sapere, ricordare: i verbi di attività mentale in greco omerico” (745-774)
Domenico Giuseppe Muscianisi, “Theran *h* ικεσιος (6th c. BC) and Homeric ἱκετήσιος: evidence for Zeus ‘of the Foreigners’ in Archaic Greece” (775-788)

Part VII: Greek and other languages
Paola Dardano, “ Homeric and Hittite phraseology compared: introducing the soliloquy in the Homeric and Near Eastern epic” (791-810)
Chiara Frigione, “Ipotesi su gr. Μαρσύας e gr. μάρσι/ύπ(π)ος” (811-824)
Theodor Georgescu, “Le grec en latin: des mots grecs attestés seulement en latin” (825-834)
Edoardo Middei, “Antroponimia sabellica nelle iscrizioni greche” (835-852)

Notes

1. See Lyons, J., 1963, *Structural semantics: An analysis of the vocabulary of Plato*, Oxford.

2. See among others L. Talmy, 1975, “Semantics and syntax of motion”, in J.P. Kimball (ed.), *Syntax and Semantics 4*, New York, p. 181-238.

3. See S.C. Dik, 1977, *The Theory of Functional Grammar*, Berlin and New York (two volumes).

4. See K. Hengeveld and J.L. Mackenzie, 2008, *Functional Discourse Grammar : A Typologically-based Theory of Language Structure*, Oxford.