

TURUN YLIOPISTON JULKAISUJA  
ANNALES UNIVERSITATIS TURKUENSIS

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SARJA – SER. B OSA – TOM. 379  
HUMANIORA

Defining the art of grammar:  
Ancient perceptions of γραμματική and *grammatica*

Minna Seppänen

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Department of Classics  
TURUN YLIOPISTO  
UNIVERSITY OF TURKU  
Turku 2014

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## Tiivistelmä

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Klassillisen filologiaan kuuluvan väitöstutkimukseni aiheena ovat grammatikan määritelmät kreikan- ja latinankielisissä lähteissä klassiselta kaudelta 100-luvulle j.a.a. Tutkimus on toteutettu keräämällä kaikki ajanjaksolle osuvat säilyneet määritelmät ja asettamalla ne tarkastelun kohteeksi. Tarkastelen määritelmiä pääasiassa kahdesta eri näkökulmasta: yhtäältä sitä, kuinka ne on muodostettu ja toisaalta sitä, mitä ne kertovat itse oppialasta.

Määritelmiä on säilynyt filosofeilta, grammatikoilta ja yleisoppineilta. Määritteleminen taito ymmärrettiin klassiselta kaudelta lähtien tärkeäksi. Grammatikan määritelmä näyttää vakiintuneen osaksi käsikirjojen (*tékhnē, ars*) alkukappaleita, joihin sijoitettiin huomioita oppialan perusteista, tärkeimpänä näistä juuri määritelmä. Tyypillisiä olivat myös listat "osista"; näitä laadittiin erilaisin perustein, hyödyntäen "jaottelua" (*diáresis, divisio*) tai "osittelua" (*merismós, partitio*). Yksittäiset grammatikot eivät välttämättä näitä teorioita kuitenkaan tunteneet. Parhaiten niitä pystyivät seuraamaan tasavallan ajan lopun oppineet Varro ja Cicero. Merkittäväksi kysymykseksi nousi se, perustuuko grammatikan ala kokemusperäiseen tietoon (*empeiria*) vai taustalla vallitsevaan järjestelmään (*lógos, ratio*). Tämä oli kysymys, jonka liittyminen grammatiikkaan juontaa juurensa Aleksandriassa vaikuttaneista lääketieteen teoreetikoista.

Grammatiikan kehityksessä erottuu määritelmässä kolme vaihetta: klassisella kaudella *grammatiké* koski konkreettisesti kirjaimia (*grámmata*); hellenistisellä kaudella Aleksandrian oppineiden työn myötä se tuli merkitsemään teksti- ja kirjallisuuskritiikkiä; hellenistisen kauden lopulta lähtien oikeakielisyysaspekti tulee mukaan vähitellen.

Asiasanat

filosofia – antiikki; kielitiede; klassiset kielet; määritelmät.

## Abstract

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The subject of this dissertation, which belongs to the field of Classical Philology, are the definitions of the art of grammar found in Greek and Latin sources from the Classical era to the second century CE. Definitions survive from grammarians, philosophers, and general scholars. I have examined these definitions from two main points of view: how they are formed, and how they reflect the development of the art itself.

Defining formed part of dialectic, in practice also of rhetoric, and was perceived as important from the Classical era onwards. Definitions of grammar seem to have become established as part of preliminary discussions, located at the beginning of grammatical manuals (*tékhnai, artes*). These discussions included certain principal notions of the art; in addition to the definition, a list of the parts of the art was also typically included. These lists were formed by two different methods: division (*diáiresis, divisio*) and partition (*merismós, partitio*). Many of the grammarians may actually have been unfamiliar with these methods, unlike the two most important scholars of the Late Republic, Varro and Cicero. Significant attention was devoted to the question whether the art of grammar is based on *lógos* or *empeiría*. This epistemological question had its roots in medical theories, which were prominent in Alexandria.

In the history of the concept of *grammatiké* or *grammatica*, three stages become evident. In the Classical era, the Greek term is used to refer to a very concrete art of letters (*grámmata*); from the Hellenistic era onwards it refers to the art developed by the Alexandrian scholars, a matter of textual and literary criticism. Towards the end of the Hellenistic era, the grammarian also becomes involved with the question of correct language, which gradually begins to appear in the definitions as well.

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The external examiners of the manuscript were Dr. Casper De Jonge and Professor Emeritus Toivo Viljamaa, whom I thank for providing me with numerous corrections and insightful suggestions. Dr. Martti Leiwo has agreed to serve as my examiner in the defence of the thesis, for which – as well as for patience he has shown in the drawn-out final stages of the work – I thank him.

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Minna Seppänen

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 The aim of the thesis

The subject of this thesis is the definition and scope of grammar in Antiquity. The term 'grammar' is used here as a translation of the ancient concept of γραμματική or *grammatica*. In classical sources, this concept is defined from different angles: in terms of its scientific nature, its functions, aims, methods, parts, or tasks. The function of definitions of grammar is to reveal the essential core of the art in comparison with the other arts: the existence of a definition of the art is a sign of its status as a separate intellectual entity. In this thesis, I ask the following questions: What are ancient definitions of the art of grammar like – what form do they take, and what do they mean? How do these definitions reflect the development of the art? In many cases the definitions reveal something of the methodological principles applied, and I examine the explicit methodological discussions of those authors who contributed to the art of grammar. When methodology becomes involved, the question of the role of philosophy, as well as other sciences and arts, is immediately relevant.

These definitions have not previously been comprehensively inventoried or analyzed, although various scholars have studied and compared individual definitions. Of these scholars, the most important for this study have been David L. Blank, Stephanos Matthaios and Elmar Siebenborn. The thesis is based on a diachronic study, making use of the broadest material possible for the given period. The period extends from the early Hippocratic concept, dating from about 400 BC, to the second century AD, the time of Apollonius Dyscolus. The latest Latin source is Aulus Gellius, from about the same time. I considered it necessary to start from the earliest possible date; on the other hand, after the second century CE we are dealing with the Late Latin grammarians, far too large and substantial a source group to be discussed within the scope of the present study, although one that I hope to be able to discuss in the future.

The present chapter forms an introduction, in which I give an overview of the sources and the ancient theory and practice of defining, first in general and then in relation to the art of grammar. Chapters 2 and 3 focus on the Greek tradition, from the Classical era to the end of the Hellenistic era. The Roman grammatical tradition is discussed in Chapter 4, including Greek authors active in Rome. The testimonia of the art of grammar in the first two centuries CE are discussed in Chapter 5. In Chapter 6 we reach Apollonius Dyscolus, whose work I briefly consider from a methodological viewpoint. The seventh and final chapter consists of some general conclusions. The material is organized chiefly in terms of chronology. I hope that this study will add to our understanding of

ancient definitions of the art of grammar, as part of the scholarly tradition of organising knowledge in general and of the grammatical tradition in particular.

## 1.2 Sources

In selecting the material relevant for my purpose, it quickly became obvious that it would be impossible to pick my sources based on genre, title, author, or any other external quality. I have explored sources that answer the question “what is γραμματική or *grammatica*”, and in many cases this question receives an answer that is a definition of grammar.<sup>1</sup> A definition can take different forms: broadly understood, “definition” is here interpreted as a metagrammatical discussion that has engaged scholars – mostly grammarians, but also philosophers and other writers with a general interest in scholarly work or education. In addition to formal definitions, I have taken into account definitory notions of all kinds: divisions, partitions, etymological explanations as well as general delineations and descriptions, all of which mostly answer the question “what does grammar do”. Such a task requires caution, manifested in careful contextualization. The source authors differ in their perspectives. A philosopher may briefly discuss the art of grammar, but these remarks are by-products of his main focus; a rhetorician values the art of grammar as a necessary preliminary study to his own art; a grammarian is a man who teaches the art of literature and language and therefore presumably has a clear picture of what is included in that art. Somewhere between these main scholarly types linger those who are simply interested in literary matters more widely. Some texts are polemical; others may be inspired by rivalry between scholars and schools. To work out the differences potentially arising out of the author’s orientation, I pay attention not only to the contexts of the definitions, but also to the source authors’ educational background and their general attitude towards knowledge – as far as this is possible, given the fragmentary state of the sources and the scanty information we have on often obscure ancient scholars. In what follows, I briefly introduce the most central sources for this study.

The usual starting points for any study concerning the history of Western linguistics are Plato, with the *Cratylus* and certain other dialogues, and Aristotle, with multiple works, most importantly the *Poetica*, *Categoriae* and *De interpretatione*. Although my concern is not ancient linguistics as such, these names are also prominent from the very beginning; an actual definition of γραμματική, however, survives only from Aristotle. Plato merely refers to γραμματική in some of his writings.

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<sup>1</sup> For these answers, I have made use of the electronic textual corpora PHI and TLG.

The word γραμματική was used already in the fifth century, but classical thought perceived the tradition of γραμματική as originating in the Hellenistic centres of literary studies. At the beginning of the third century BCE, the word γραμματική came to be associated with the textual and literary criticism that arose in Ptolemaic Alexandria. An early definition of grammar survives from Eratosthenes (c. 275–194 BCE), one of the most renowned scholars of Alexandria. Γραμματική as a study of language and literature was firmly established with the work of Aristophanes of Byzantium (c. 265/257–190/180 BCE), Aristarchus of Samothrace (c. 216–144 BCE) and the Pergamene scholar Crates of Malus (second century BCE). At some point, the word γραμματιστική was used of elementary grammar aiming at a basic knowledge of letters, reading and writing. At least Sextus Empiricus, Philo of Alexandria, and the Scholiasts to Dionysius Thrax explain the difference between γραμματική and γραμματιστική.<sup>2</sup>

Eratosthenes' definition of grammar never seems to have gained much scholarly attention,<sup>3</sup> but the definition by Dionysius Thrax (*fl.* second half of the second century BCE) certainly did. The grammatical manual preserved to us bearing his name became the most popular of the Greek grammars in Late Antiquity. The initial chapter of the work is considered authentic, while the rest of the nineteen chapters are a product of later times.<sup>4</sup> The definition and the list of parts of grammar describe γραμματική as philological activity that aims at producing a text in a readable and true-to-original form, with explanations, and with an assessment of its authenticity and literary value. Several other Hellenistic Greek definitions of grammar also survive, even though not a single complete grammatical manual does: we have definitions from the grammarians Ptolemaeus the Peripatetic, Asclepiades of Myrlea, Chaeris, Demetrius Chlorus, and Tyrannion. Many of these definitions are found in the polemical work *Adversus mathematicos* by the Sceptic Sextus Empiricus. Of the Hellenistic grammarians, we have only fragments; the first Greek grammatical texts to survive independently are the writings of Apollonius Dyscolus in the second century CE. For some reason, he does not give a definition of γραμματική (at least in those of his works that are known to us); however, these writings contain the most explicit methodological discussion that survives from ancient grammatical sources, and that are therefore relevant to this study. The gap between the late Hellenistic era and the second century CE leaves much room for speculation as to the development of grammar, from a topic forming part of philosophy and of textual and literary criticism into an art that has to do with (literary) language.

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<sup>2</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,44; Philo *congr.* 148,3; Schol. D.T. GG1.3 448,12–14. In the Scholia, these are also called γραμματική μικρά and γραμματική μεγάλη (114,23–34) as well as παλαιά and νεωτέρα (164,22–29).

<sup>3</sup> This was pointed out by Matthaios in an article on Eratosthenes in 2011.

<sup>4</sup> See section 3.4.1.

The problem of the vast lacunae in the sources concerns the early stage of Roman grammatical thought as well. Suetonius' *De grammaticis* (written in the early second century CE), a collection of short biographies of the grammarians, gives us a picture of the early Roman art of grammar, but the art itself is not defined in the treatise. Marcus Terentius Varro (116–27 BCE) wrote multiple works on subjects related to language and literature, but his work is reduced to six books out of the original twenty-five from the treatise *De lingua Latina*. We do, however, have a multitude of extant Varronian fragments, and among these is a definition of *grammatica*, as well as some other definitory considerations by Varro. Cicero's notions of the things that are included in grammar complement our picture of the perceived nature of the art. The first Latin grammar known by its author's name, the *ars grammatica* of Remmius Palaemon (first century CE) has survived only in fragments; the oldest Roman grammar available to us, the treatise by Sacerdos, dates from as late as the third century and thus falls outside the scope of the present study. Luckily, in the late first century CE, Quintilian included a coherent description of grammatical curriculum in his *Institutio oratoria*. There are gaps in our knowledge of the early stages of grammar, and it is possible that grammar underwent changes during the first centuries CE of which we know practically nothing. Our understanding of the status of grammar among the arts can be emended by studying the texts of Seneca and Pliny the Elder.

In this thesis, I frequently cite the Scholiasts to Dionysius Thrax. Their date is late, from the ninth to the fourteenth century; however, their contribution to our comprehension of the ancient grammatical tradition is significant in that they preserve a considerable number of fragments from the grammarians of Antiquity that would otherwise be lost. The proportion of Hellenistic grammatical theory in the Scholia, transmitted anonymously and undated, can perhaps never be accurately known.<sup>5</sup> Especially relevant to this study are the definitions of grammar preserved solely in the Scholia, and the discussions, sometimes broad, on the nature of τέχνη γραμματική that are based on the definition and the list of the parts of grammar by Dionysius Thrax; also significant are the discussions of epistemological terminology, methodology, and the essence of τέχνη in general.

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<sup>5</sup> See for example Janko 1995, 214.

### 1.3 The ancient theory of defining and definitions

#### 1.3.1 DEFINING AND THE ART OF DIALECTIC

In this section, I discuss the concept of defining in Antiquity. Section 1.3.2 provides an introduction to definitions of grammar and to the theoretical background of those who created them.

What are definitions, and why are they important? The words used for 'definition' in Greek are ὄρισμός and ὄρος, literally 'boundary', 'limit'. Accordingly, defining is the specifying of boundaries to the meaning of the definiendum.<sup>6</sup> The idea of the importance of defining was inherited from Plato, Aristotle and the Stoics, who were largely responsible for the development of sophisticated formal theories of argumentation in antiquity.<sup>7</sup> Definitions were in the service of organized thought, providing some protection against fallacies.<sup>8</sup> As Plato points out in *Phaedrus* (237c): unless any given deliberation starts with the definition (ὄρος) of the topic, the whole discussion will be based on mere assumptions, with the result that the participants in the discussion will agree neither with themselves nor with each other.

According to the testimony of Sextus Empiricus, the 'dogmatists' pride themselves on their technical treatment of definitions that falls under the logical part of philosophy. The main representatives of the dogmatists are specified as the Aristotelians, the Epicureans, and the Stoics.<sup>9</sup> Diogenes Laertius reports that in the Stoic philosophical system, defining is discussed under the heading of dialectic, which itself is a part of logic. He describes dialectic as the art of distinguishing truth and non-truth, and as the art that makes it possible to provide systematic argumentation in question-and-answer form.<sup>10</sup> The latter notion is very probably an older one, and it is clearly connected to the Sophistic and Socratic methods of argument.<sup>11</sup> Diogenes Laertius also tells us that according to some, defining is a sub-division (τὸ ὀρικὸν εἶδος) of logic, similarly to rhetoric and dialectic. The function of the part dealing with definitions is recognition of the truth.<sup>12</sup> Dialectic is a tool for the various academic professionals: essentially,

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<sup>6</sup> The words ὄρισμός and ὄρος are used synonymously at least by Aristotle (*top.* 101b38–102a4), but he also employs the word ὄρος for 'term' (*an. pr.* 24b16–18).

<sup>7</sup> Charles 2010, 1: "Socrates' most significant philosophical innovation, in Aristotle's view, was to focus on the search for definitions, raising and attempting to answer his famous 'What is it?' question (*Metaphysics* 1078b22ff.)."

<sup>8</sup> See for example Frede 1996, 17–18.

<sup>9</sup> For definitions (ὄροι) that belong to the logical part of philosophy, Sext. Emp. *Pyrrh.* 2,205. For the main dogmatists (δογματικοί), *Pyrrh.* 1,3.

<sup>10</sup> Diog. Laert. 7,47.

<sup>11</sup> Long 1996, 87–88.

<sup>12</sup> Diog. Laert. 7,41–42. As this is also the function of dialectic, the separation of these parts is not necessary, and not a common Stoic view.

it teaches one to guard knowledge by offering an ability to form valid arguments and to present assertive proofs.<sup>13</sup> As Aristotle says in his treatise on dialectic, the *Topica* (100a18–21), the purpose of the treatise is to find a method making it possible to reason (συλλογίζεσθαι) from generally accepted ideas about any given problem; the treatise also helps in avoiding self-contradiction.<sup>14</sup>

The Stoics held first place as innovators in logic in the Hellenistic era, with Chrysippus (c. 279 – c. 206 BCE) as their leading theorist.<sup>15</sup> The works of Aristotle were not widely known – even if not totally unavailable – until the revival of Peripatetic philosophy in the first century BCE.<sup>16</sup> From the end of that century onward, Aristotelian logic more or less supplanted that of the Stoics. Chrysippus’ works have not survived, whereas Aristotle’s logic is well known. Aristotle distinguishes three types of definition according to their content:

- (1) The explanation of the meaning of a name or an expression (τί σημαίνει τὸ ὄνομα ἢ λόγος ἕτερος ὀνοματώδης), the “nominal definition”<sup>17</sup>
- (2) The explanation of why the thing defined exists (ἄλλος δ’ ἐστὶν ὄρος λόγος ὁ δηλῶν διὰ τί ἔστιν)<sup>18</sup>
- (3) An indemonstrable assumption of the essence of the thing defined (ὁ δὲ τῶν ἀμέσων ὀρισμὸς θέσις ἐστὶ τοῦ τί ἐστὶν ἀναπόδεικτος), the “essential definition”.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Barnes 1999, 68. The Stoics regarded logic as a ‘part’ of philosophy, whereas the Peripatetics saw logic as its ‘instrument’. The Aristotelian works that had logic as their broad subject (*Categoriae*, *Topica*, *De sophisticis elenchis*, *De interpretatione*, *Analytica priora* and *Analytica posteriora*) were called the *Organon* by later philosophers, probably from the end of the first century BCE, after the renascence of Aristotelianism; Barnes 1999, 67 and n. 14.

<sup>14</sup> Ἡ μὲν πρόθεσις τῆς πραγματείας μέθοδον εὔρεϊν, ἀφ’ ἧς δυνασόμεθα συλλογίζεσθαι περὶ παντός τοῦ προτεθέντος προβλήματος ἐξ ἐνδόξων, καὶ αὐτοὶ λόγον ὑπέχοντες μὴθὲν ἐροῦμεν ὑπεναντίον. Aristotle’s ideas of defining were influenced by what Plato had first written in the *Theaetetus* (206c–208c). Plato distinguishes three ways of understanding what λόγος (‘account’) might be: (1) a vocally expressed thought; (2) a list of elements of the definiendum, or (3) distinguishing a mark by which the definiendum differs from other things (Deslauriers 2007, 15).

<sup>15</sup> For example Barnes 1999, 65.

<sup>16</sup> See Barnes (1997a) on Aristotelian transmission in the Hellenistic era; for an overview of Aristotle’s reception see Tuominen 2009, 4ff.

<sup>17</sup> Ar. *an. post.* 93b30–31.

<sup>18</sup> Ar. *an. post.* 93b38–39.

<sup>19</sup> Ar. *an. post.* 94a 9–10; Davies 1975–6 *passim*.

This account of definitions in the *Analytica posteriora* may not be very helpful for someone who wants to create definitions, and it did not attract much attention during the following centuries. A more hands-on discussion of the central concepts of defining is found in Aristotle's handbook of dialectical debate, the *Topica*. Aristotle's specified goal is to discover the essence of the definiendum: ἔστι δ' ὅρος μὲν λόγος ὃ τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι σημαίνων.<sup>20</sup> According to the view shared by Plato and Aristotle, definitions are reached by means of division: more general kinds are divided into more specific ones.<sup>21</sup> By this means, definitions of individual phenomena are always arrived at in relation to other, similar phenomena.<sup>22</sup>

According to the instruction in the *Topica* (101b37ff.), a definition is constructed by identifying the genus (γένος) and the differentia (διαφορά) or differentiae. The genus and the differentiae function as the means of expressing the essence (τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι) of the definiendum; this is called the species (εἶδος). An often used example is 'man is a rational animal', in which 'man', the definiendum, is the species, 'animal' is the genus and 'rational' the differentia, distinguishing man from other animals. The genus is shared with other particular things that are similar in kind, such as 'animal' as the genus of both man and ox. The differentia pertains to the essence of the definiendum, but there are also other ways to enhance the definition: a peculiar property (ἴδιον) is an attribute that does not pertain to the essence of the thing but reveals a unique characteristic, not shared with any other creature or phenomenon; for example, only 'man' is 'capable of laughter'. An accident (συμβεβηκός) is neither of these two kinds of properties (διαφορά, ἴδιον), but still belongs to the definiendum as an incidental attribute. It is a feature that may or may not be shared with some other particular thing. In addition to the proper construction of a definition, the *Topica* also deals with the possibilities of refuting or nullifying a definition (155a2–9). A definition may be refuted by showing weaknesses in its components. For example, the definition may fail to point to a peculiar characteristic of the definiendum; there might be a problem in the choice of genus; or the definition may contain something that does not belong to it.

Definitions held an important place in Stoic thought. A significant number of titles related to defining have survived: collections of definitions by Chrysippus and contributions to the theory of definition by Chrysippus, Antipater, Cleanthes and Sphaerus.<sup>23</sup> Diogenes Laertius briefly discusses Stoic methods of defining in his work *Vitae philosophorum*, giving two Stoic definitions of definition and a list of relevant concepts, some of which are poorly distinguished:

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<sup>20</sup> Ar. *top.* 101b39–40.

<sup>21</sup> Aristotle instructs on the use of division in the *Analytica posteriora* (96b15–97a6).

<sup>22</sup> Deslauriers 2007, 11; 18ff.

<sup>23</sup> For a list of these works, see Crivelli 2010, 360–361.



ύπογραφή (delineation), γένος (genus), έννóημα (notion), είδος (species), διαίρεσις (division), and μερισμός (partition).<sup>24</sup> The concepts of defining received a Latin form with the efforts of Cicero, from whose writings we are able to gather what elementary dialectic meant to the Romans of his time. Cicero saw dialectical training as indispensable for an orator, referring to Aristotle, who had said that rhetoric was a counterpart of dialectic (ή ρήτορική έστιν αντίστοιχος τή διαλεκτική).<sup>25</sup> Cicero outlines the practical uses of the art of arguing and systematising:

nec vero sine philosophorum disciplina genus et speciem cuiusque rei cernere neque eam definiendo explicare nec tribuere in partis possumus nec iudicare quae vera quae falsa sint neque cernere consequentia, repugnantia videre, ambigua distinguere.<sup>26</sup>

Without the discipline of the philosophers, we cannot distinguish the genus and species of anything, nor can we disentangle it by defining nor divide it into parts, nor judge truths from falsehoods, nor recognize consequents, see contradictions or analyze ambiguities.

These concepts are important for the development of the arts themselves: the elements of the arts – Cicero lists geometry, music, astrology, grammar, and rhetoric – were once dispersed and unconnected, but with the help of dialectic they were organized into a systematic scheme of knowledge.<sup>27</sup> The Stoics tended to be overly pedantic in their distinctions and devoted excessive attention to every possible ambiguity, which meant that their training was not of the most

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<sup>24</sup> Diog. Laert. 7,60–62. For example, the “delineation” or ύπογραφή is explained as an expression that generally introduces the issue at hand, or alternatively as a simpler form of definition, but from these notions (as Diogenes gives no examples), it is difficult to determine which expressions are “delineations”. Among the concepts listed by Diogenes, genus, species, division and partition seem to be truly relevant to the practice of defining.

<sup>25</sup> Ar. *rhet.* 1354a1; Cic. *or.* 114: *atque etiam ante hunc Aristoteles principio Artis rhetoricae dicit illam artem quasi ex altera parte responderi dialecticae, ut hoc videlicet differant inter sequod haec ratio dicendi latior sit, illa loquendi contractior.*

<sup>26</sup> Cic. *or.* 16. Cf. Cic. *Brut.* 153: *-- artem, quae doceret rem universam tribuere in partes, latentem explicare definiendo, obscuram explanare interpretando, ambigua primum videre, deinde distinguere, postremo habere regulam, qua vera et falsa iudicarentur et quae quibus propositis essent quaeque non essent consequentia.* In *Lucullus* (91), however, Cicero rejects the Stoic claim that dialectic discerns truth from falsehood: *dialecticam inventam esse dicitis veri et falsi quasi disceptatricem et iudicem.* Cicero’s relationship with dialectic has been discussed in detail by Spranzi (2011, 40ff.).

<sup>27</sup> Cic. *de or.* 1,187–188; see also Hadot 2005, 55; see section 4.4.

useful kind; this warning is found in the anonymous *Rhetorica ad Herennium*.<sup>28</sup> In *Orator* (114–115) from 55 BCE, Cicero recommends the study of either Aristotelian or Chrysippean dialectic – Cicero’s own early teacher of dialectic had been the Stoic Diodotus.<sup>29</sup> However, some ten years later, in *De finibus bonorum et malorum*, Cicero criticizes the Stoics’ contribution to the practical organization of arguments as inadequate, saying that the Peripatetics are superior in this.<sup>30</sup> In *Brutus* (309; 46 BCE), Cicero views dialectic through rhetoric, and makes it clear that dialectic has been an ancillary study in his becoming a master orator, although what dialectic has to offer is not sufficient; daily practice has made him what he is: *ab exercitationibus oratoris nullus dies vacuus esse*.

Cicero’s views on the central concepts and methods of defining, as well as examples of defining in practice, find crystallized form in his last rhetorical work, the *Topica*, from 44 BCE.<sup>31</sup> It appears that Cicero did not use Aristotle as a direct source, but used a late Hellenistic source containing Academic, Peripatetic, and Stoic material.<sup>32</sup> Cicero refers to the *veteres* (*top.* 29), the old authorities, as those from whom he adopted the practical rule for defining. The rule is that one has to find “a peculiar property” (*proprium*) of the definiendum, something

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<sup>28</sup> *rhet. Her.* 2,11,16.

<sup>29</sup> Cicero and the ideal of oratorical education are discussed in Bonner 1977, 76 ff.; for dialectic in particular, see pages 86–87.

<sup>30</sup> *Cic. fin.* 4,10: *Cumque duae sint artes, quibus perfecte ratio et oratio compleatur, una inveniendi, altera disserendi, hanc posteriorem et Stoici et Peripatetici, priorem autem illi egregie tradiderunt, hi omnino ne attigerunt quidem. nam e quibus locis quasi thesauris argumenta depromerentur, vestri ne suspicati quidem sunt, superiores autem artificio et via tradiderunt. quae quidem res efficit, ne necesse sit isdem de rebus semper quasi dictata decantare neque a commentariolis suis discedere. nam qui sciet ubi quidque positum sit quaque eo veniat, is, etiamsi quid obrutum erit, poterit eruere semperque esse in disputando suus. quod etsi ingeniis magnis praediti quidam dicendi copiam sine ratione consequuntur, ars tamen est dux certior quam natura. aliud est enim poetarum more verba fundere, aliud ea, quae dicas, ratione et arte distinguere* (Now there are two arts that between them completely cover the fields of reasoning and oratory: one is the art of discovery, the other that of argument. Both the Stoics and the Peripatetics dealt with the second of these, but, as for the first, the Peripatetics made an outstanding contribution while the Stoics barely touched upon it. You Stoics had no conception of the notion that one can store arguments in mental “locations” from which they can be taken down for use. Their predecessors, on the other hand, laid out methods and techniques for doing so. This art ensures that there is no need to recite the same arguments on the same topics as if reading a rule-book and never departing from one’s notes. One will know where each argument is located and how to lead up to it. However deeply buried, one will be able to dig it up and always be self-possessed in a debate. There may be some of great natural talent who acquire verbal fluency without systematic study. But in this field art is a safer guide than nature. To pour out words like a poet is one thing. To arrange what one says in a methodical and organized manner is another. – Translation by Woolf 2001).

<sup>31</sup> See Brittain (2005, 200ff.), who has analyzed Cicero’s formal theory of definition.

<sup>32</sup> Rubinelli 2009, 124; see also Huby 1989 for Cicero’s Peripatetic sources.

that cannot be applied to any other thing. The actual definition of definition Cicero gives in *Topica* is neither that of Aristotle nor one of those cited by Diogenes Laertius: “A definition is a phrase that explains what the thing defined is” (*Definitio est oratio, quae id quod definitur explicat quid sit*<sup>33</sup>). Cicero goes on to present two types of definition: “There are two primary genera of definitions: one of things that exist, the other of things that are mentally apprehended” (*Definitionum autem duo genera prima: unum earum rerum quae sunt, alterum earum quae intelleguntur --*). Whether the definiendum is a material entity or an abstract notion is not, in reality, a very significant factor in terms of the actual method of defining. The methods of defining are typically *divisio* and *partitio*, translated from the Greek originals διαίρεσις and μερισμός. Cicero explains the difference (left unclear in Diogenes Laertius): partition dismembers the defined into the parts of which it consists, whereas a definition by division contains all the species (of which Cicero uses the Latin term *formae*), or qualities, the defined holds;<sup>34</sup> in sum, it is a conceptual analysis of a genus. Division means the dividing of the genus into its species, partition a more concrete chopping up of a material thing or a concept into members. These members cannot be said to represent the genus in an essential way.<sup>35</sup> However, there may sometimes be problems in distinguishing between the two methods of defining, especially when the defined is something abstract. The later tradition seems to amalgamate (at least to some extent) the concepts of “division” and “partition”.<sup>36</sup> Cicero himself uses the terms indiscriminately at least once.<sup>37</sup> These are the most basic types of defining, but there are also others that Cicero does not consider it necessary to explain in this context.<sup>38</sup> Etymology, a type of definition also listed by Aristotle

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<sup>33</sup> Cic. *top.* 26.

<sup>34</sup> Cic. *top.* 28.

<sup>35</sup> For clarification: a ‘head’ is a part of a ‘man’, but it cannot be said to be ‘man’, whereas ‘Socrates’, the species, in fact is a ‘man’. Cicero’s examples are less clear: in *top.* 30 he says that the parts are like “members” (*membrae*) of the body – head, the shoulders, the hands, the sides and so on. The species (*formae*) are “those into which a genus can be divided without leaving out anything”: the concept of ‘law’ can be divided into legal statutes, custom and equity.

<sup>36</sup> For example, Sextus Empiricus discusses definitions in his *Pyrrhoniae hypotyposes* (2,213). He analyzes the concept of διαίρεσις and says that it occurs in four ways: either a word is divided into its significations, or a whole into parts, or a genus into species, or a species into particulars: γίνεσθαι τοῖνυν τὴν διαίρεσιν φασὶ τετραχῶς· ἢ γὰρ ὄνομα εἰς σημαινόμενα διαιεῖσθαι ἢ ὅλον εἰς μέρη ἢ γένος εἰς εἶδη ἢ εἶδος εἰς τὰ καθ’ ἕκαστον. Sextus does not recognize the concept of μερισμός as a separate category of defining. Rather, what seems to be ‘partition’ (the dividing a whole into parts, μέρη) is just another type of διαίρεσις.

<sup>37</sup> Cic. *nat. deor.* 3,6; Mansfeld 1992, 328.

<sup>38</sup> Cic. *top.* 28.

(the nominal definition; see page 8),<sup>39</sup> is translated by Cicero as *notatio*; it is an argument in defining that reveals the original meaning (*vis*) of a word.<sup>40</sup>

From Aristotle onwards, dialectical issues were discussed in treatises on rhetoric; those with a thorough education were familiar with certain basic principles of argument, defining and making divisions or partitions, and the limits of dialectic and rhetoric could not be drawn with much accuracy in this matter. Writing towards the end of the first century CE, Quintilian included a section on the basic concepts in *Institutio oratoria* (5,10,53ff). The subject of the discussion is the “places” (*loci*) from which to draw arguments (*argumenta*). Such places are definitions (*finitio* or *finis*). Definitions can be made by explaining the ‘power’ (*vis*) of the definiendum (in practice, the contents), or by etymology (*ἐτυμολογία*). In addition, the concepts of *genus*, *species*, *differens*, and *proprium* are explained. In his explanation of division and partition, Quintilian refers to Cicero’s treatment of the issue in the *Topica*. Quintilian is aware that these concepts are likely to cause confusion: he selects his examples carefully, wanting to provide more understandable ones than Cicero does.<sup>41</sup>

Despite the effort Cicero put into translating and clarifying the precepts of defining, they do not seem to have received much particular attention among the Roman scholars of the late Principate and early Empire, at least not in the form of manuals dedicated to the subject.<sup>42</sup> Varro’s *Disciplinarum libri IX* possibly included a book of dialectic,<sup>43</sup> but we know almost nothing about its contents. Some later authors, such as Cassiodorus and Martianus Capella, refer to Varro’s dialectical writings. Cassiodorus attributes the classic characterization of rhetoric and dialectic to Varro’s *Disciplinarum libri IX*, without specifying a book: dialectic is compared to a fist and rhetoric to an open palm. The first one contracts words, the other spreads them out.<sup>44</sup> Martianus Capella mentions Varro’s dialectical writings in *De nuptis Philologiae et Mercurii*. Varro’s name appears

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<sup>39</sup> Ar. *an. post.* 93b30–31.

<sup>40</sup> Cic. *top.* 10.

<sup>41</sup> Quint. *inst.* 5,10,63–64.

<sup>42</sup> There are a few authors we know of to have touched upon logic in the early Empire: on Stoicism, logic included, there was Sergius Plautus (perhaps first century BCE, at the latest first century CE). Aristotle’s *Categoriae* were commented on by Athenodorus of Tarsus, as well as by Lucius Annaeus Cornutus. A few other writers known to have written on logic are known by name; Barnes 1997b, 4–5.

<sup>43</sup> See Schanzer’s reconstruction table 4.3 (2005, 101–102).

<sup>44</sup> *Dialecticam vero et rhetoricam Varro in novem Disciplinarum libris tali similitudine definiuit: Dialectica et rhetorica est quod in manu hominis pugnus astrictus et palma distensa: illa brevi oratione argumenta concludens, ista facundiae campos copioso sermone discurrens; illa verba contrahens, ista distendens.* Cassiod. *inst.* 2,3,2 p. 109 Mynors; also Isidore of Seville cites the definition (*orig.* 2,23). The metaphor of the fist and the open palm was attributed to the Stoic Zeno; Quint. *inst.* 2,20,7.

twice in the introduction to the book on dialectic, and Martianus has his character *Dialectica* say that if it were not for “her Varro” she would not be able to speak in Latin at all.<sup>45</sup> Furthermore, according to Gellius (16,8,1–6), Varro translated some crucial Greek dialectical terminology in his *De lingua Latina*; this could be what Martianus Capella is referring to, not necessarily a book in the *Disciplinae*, although the latter does seem more plausible. In the same chapter, Gellius says that the lack of a proper Latin manual for dialectic made him turn to the Greek originals; L. Aelius Stilo, known as Varro’s teacher, had written a manual, but Gellius found it confusing. Gellius does not mention any dialectical manual by Varro, whose *Disciplinarum libri IX* he otherwise cites quite frequently in *Noctes Atticae*.<sup>46</sup> Gellius may have not referred to Varro’s manual in this context for a number of reasons. Perhaps Varro’s writings were confusing as well, like those by Stilo, but Gellius did not want to say so; perhaps he did not have the text at hand, or perhaps indeed there had never been anything to mention. The alleged lack of a good Latin manual did not mean the lack of a dialectical approach in technical texts: the fruits of dialectic are very clearly visible in rhetorical manuals, such as the early *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. It is constructed on hierarchical principles, consisting of multiple partitions, divisions, and subdivisions, using dialectical terminology. *Causae*, for example, are divided into three *genera* (*demonstrativum, deliberativum, iudiciale*); *constitutio* is divided into six *partes* (*scriptum et sententia, contrariae leges, ambiguum, definitio, translatio, ratiocinatio*).<sup>47</sup>

*Dialectica* held a somewhat vague position within the *artes*; despite this, it makes an appearance in classical literature from time to time. Philo of Alexandria (fl. early first century CE) mentions dialectic among the encyclical studies (*congr.* 18). However, there are as many as eight individual lists of encyclical studies found within Philo’s texts, and dialectic occurs in only one of them. Curiously, *dialectica* caught the attention of some of the imperial writers. In Seneca’s opinion, dialectic was pursued to an unhealthily excessive degree.<sup>48</sup> Seneca directs his criticism of the study of dialectic seemingly to his young correspondent Lucilius, but it apparently reflects a genuine situation among young members of the elite. For Seneca, philosophy with a therapeutic goal, namely ethics, was the only kind of philosophy worth investing one’s time in: life is too short for dialectic. The part of dialectic that Seneca especially resented seems to have been logical puzzles.<sup>49</sup> This was a common reproach addressed to Stoic dialectic,

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<sup>45</sup> Mart. Cap. *nupt.* 4,335; Schanzer 2005, 93. For dialectic in the lists of the liberal arts, see Luhtala 2007, 69–70.

<sup>46</sup> Hadot 2005, 163–164.

<sup>47</sup> *rhet. Her.* 1,2,5–6.

<sup>48</sup> Sen. *ep.* 49,5–6.

<sup>49</sup> Barnes 1997b, 10.

notorious for its tendency toward terminological quibbling.<sup>50</sup> Dialectic was still studied and practiced by the Stoic philosophers, although after Chrysippus and his immediate successors there seem to have been no great Stoic theorists of logic.<sup>51</sup> This may be why Philo of Alexandria, who was affiliated to the Stoic philosophical system, did not pay more attention on dialectic in his lists of the encyclical studies: there were perhaps no active proponents of dialectic in his philosophical circle, and in any case, many dialectical concepts were included in the study of rhetoric. It may be that in the imperial era dialectical training did not devote its attention to concepts of defining; this is suggested in another letter by Seneca, also addressed to Lucilius. Seneca discusses these concepts on quite an elementary level: “I shall explain you all this, but let me first point out that there is such a thing as genus and such a thing as species” (*Omnes tibi exponam, si ante indicavero esse aliquid genus, esse et speciem*<sup>52</sup>). In this case, the study of these concepts seems to have been neglected in the rhetorician’s class as well. Seneca did not like irrelevant, meaningless logical puzzles, but ultimately he could not reject all of dialectic; as the art of argument, dialectic includes a number of subjects that are indispensable for any philosopher, even if he prefers to concentrate on ethics.

The study of *dialectica* to which Seneca disapprovingly refers maintained its fashionable status, which is reflected in the second century CE by Aulus Gellius, Epictetus and Fronto. Gellius refers to the study of dialectic as charming like the Sirens,<sup>53</sup> an idea he probably derived from Epictetus.<sup>54</sup> The latter was trained in logic by Musonius Rufus in Rome, and he indeed shows considerable familiarity with logic throughout his *Dissertationes* by his use of logical terminology.<sup>55</sup> Epictetus wants to draw attention to the triviality of dialectic if it is studied unrelated to the whole Stoic philosophical system, of which it forms an inseparable part.<sup>56</sup> Fronto testifies that orators have suffered a decline while *dialectici* are esteemed; he also claims that the arguments of the dialecticians are obscure and twisted.<sup>57</sup> It seems obvious that Fronto’s *dialectici* are more about syllogisms and logical puzzles – despised by Seneca as well – than about defining and dividing. Definitions and divisions should have nothing obscure about them. Dialectic that aims at the very practical goals of argumentation and analysis is not at issue here. The dialectical approach manifests itself within rhetorical

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<sup>50</sup> For example, Gal. *inst. log.* 3,5; Castagnoli 2010, 153.

<sup>51</sup> See section 2.4.

<sup>52</sup> Sen. *ep.* 58,8ff.

<sup>53</sup> Gell. 16,8,15–17.

<sup>54</sup> Epict. *diss.* 2,23,41; Barnes 1997b, 36–38.

<sup>55</sup> Barnes 1997b, 27–28 (with a list of loci in Epictetus).

<sup>56</sup> Long 1978, 119–120.

<sup>57</sup> Fronto *el.* 4,11.

theory, as Quintilian's example shows; but the study of dialectic as a separate art, with precepts applicable to the needs of other arts, such as grammar, seems to have been largely neglected after Varro and Cicero, who had tried to make the concepts available, until the rise of a new interest in these matters in Late Antiquity.

### 1.3.2 DEFINING AND THE ART OF GRAMMAR

A definition of the discipline typically takes a stand on two issues: 1) the epistemological status of grammar, as revealed by the choice of the generic category of grammar (ἐμπειρία, θεωρία, τέχνη, ἔξις, γνῶσις, *scientia*, τριβή, or εἶδησις) and 2) the basic goal of grammar. In many cases, this is expressed by stating the object of the study, which is typically literature. The concept of 'epistemological status' perhaps requires some clarification: I use this term to refer to systematic representation of the possibilities and limits of knowledge.<sup>58</sup> Methodology is included in the epistemological discussion, as methods are the instruments whereby we arrive at the knowledge that is vital to achieving the goals that have been set. It is not the objective of a definition to exhaust the contents of grammar. A definition of the discipline, at its simplest, is a means to differentiate.

Systematic knowing was a hierarchical construction in Antiquity. There are many ways and levels of knowing, especially in the Aristotelian system of thought.<sup>59</sup> The highest level was traditionally reserved for ἐπιστήμη, which I translate as 'scientific knowledge'. Τέχνη, 'art' or 'expertise' is located below ἐπιστήμη, and it is important to note that the Aristotelian system also integrates the thought that the hierarchy of knowledge entails a hierarchy of people possessing such knowledge.<sup>60</sup> Ἐπιστήμη and τέχνη are the two most central concepts in the epistemological field; ἐμπειρία can be seen as parallel to these, referring to 'knowledge based on experience'. Knowledge, in general, emerges essentially in two ways: by reason (λόγος, *ratio*) or by experience (ἐμπειρία, with no clear Latin equivalent). Systematic knowledge of something is in many cases a combination of the two ways, i.e. methods, of knowing. Sometimes the question of method gives rise to a more serious academic problem, forcing one to choose between two opposing camps: one is either a "Rationalist" or an "Empiricist". This juxtaposition primarily concerns expert, technical knowledge (τέχνη or *ars*). In relation to the study of language and literature the contradiction seems rather artificial, and leads to aggravated claims as to the coherence of the whole art of grammar, as we shall see further on.

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<sup>58</sup> See Brunschwig 1999, 230.

<sup>59</sup> In the *Ethica Nicomachea* (1139b15–17), Aristotle lists five cognitive states: τέχνη, ἐπιστήμη, φρόνησις, σοφία, and νοῦς; see C.C.W. Taylor 1990, 117ff.

<sup>60</sup> Ar. *metaph.* 981a13–982a3.

A fifth century author, Bishop Sidonius Apollinaris, lists the arts and their special functions: *Illic enim et grammatica dividit et oratoria declamat et arithmetica numerat et geometrica metitur et musica ponderat et dialectica disputat et astrologia praenoscit et architectonica struit et metrica modulatur*.<sup>61</sup> In a single verb, grammar *divides*. Sidonius Apollinaris is in all probability referring to the parts of speech, which were brought into focus at the latest by Donatus and his popular *Ars minor*, a concise book on the eight *partes orationis*.<sup>62</sup> Determining the special task of each discipline in this manner, Sidonius Apollinaris could not have chosen better: dividing – that is, using the method of division – phenomena of language and literature into categories is the special function of the art of grammar.<sup>63</sup> The grammarians took this question seriously. This is reflected in the Scholia to Dionysius Thrax:

Τί ἐστι γραμματικὴ τέχνη; Ἐξίς θεωρητικὴ καὶ πρακτικὴ, τὸ εὖ λέγειν καὶ τὸ εὖ γράφειν διδάσκουσα ἡμᾶς· οὐ γὰρ πᾶς ὁ γράφων ἢ ὁ ἀναγινώσκων λέγεται γραμματικός, ἀλλ' ὁ τὸν κανόνα καὶ τὸν ὄρον ἀποδιδούς.<sup>64</sup>

What is the art of grammar? A theoretical and practical skill that teaches us to speak and write well; yet not everyone who can write or read is called a grammarian, but he who transmits rules and definition.

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<sup>61</sup> Sidon. *epist.* 5,2. Schanzer (2005, 88 n. 75) points out that *musica ponderat*, “music weighs”, sounds highly improbable and is almost certainly corrupt. *Metrica* as a separate art is evidently a memory lapse. It is properly a part of *grammatica* and *musica*, and the original ninth discipline should most probably be *medicina* (Schanzer 2005, 89–90 and n. 81).

<sup>62</sup> Significant variation in defining the parts of speech took place during the early decades of Latin grammar (Luhtala 2002): The methods used in defining them were etymological, formal, or semantic, but an overall lack of systematicity seems to be a dominant feature until the third century, from when on there are signs of development towards standardization in definitions of the parts of speech. The earlier grammarians combined different types of definitions quite freely within a single grammatical manual (for the example of Remmius Palaemon, see section 5.4.1). It is not until Donatus, in the mid-fourth century CE, that we are faced with a new kind of orderliness in defining all eight parts of speech (Hovdhaugen 1995, 117; Luhtala 2002, 278).

<sup>63</sup> In his commentary on Donatus’ *ars minor*, Servius argues that the eight parts of speech are peculiar to the art of grammar, and that Donatus therefore rightly began his *ars* by introducing these, rather than beginning for example from *de voce* or *de definitione* (GL4 405,3–11): *plerique artem scribentes a litterarum tractatu inchoauerunt, plerique a uoce, plerique a definitione artis grammaticae. sed omnes uidentur errasse. non enim propriam rem officii sui tractauerunt, sed communem et cum oratoribus et cum philosophis. nam de litteris tractare et orator potest; de uoce nemo magis quam philosophi tractant; definitio etiam Aristotelicorum est. unde proprie Donatus et doctius, qui ab octo partibus inchoauit, quae specialiter ad grammaticos pertinent.*

<sup>64</sup> GG1.3 300,4–9.



Besides the classification of words, there is another prominent place in grammar in which the grammarians practice their dialectical skills. Quintilian gives an explicit testimony of this:

Tropos est uerbi uel sermonis a propria significatione in aliam cum uirtute mutatio. Circa quem inexplicabilis et grammaticis inter ipsos et philosophis pugna est quae sint genera, quae species, qui numerus, quis cuique subiciatur.<sup>65</sup>

A Trope is a shift of a word or phrase from its proper meaning to another, in a way that has positive value. An endless battle has raged around this, both by the grammatici among themselves and by the philosophers, as to the genera, species, number, and classification of Tropes.<sup>66</sup>

The technical execution of the division of tropes – poetic devices, expressions ‘converted’ from their proper signification – was a subject of heated debate among grammarians, with philosophers as well participating in the discussion. Quintilian may mean that the philosophers did so among themselves, as did the grammarians, without crossover between the two groups.<sup>67</sup> In any case, Quintilian suggests that the grammarians – even if they were not equipped to debate with the philosophers – were using the methods and the terminology of dialectic. The theory of tropes has its origin in the *Poetica* (1457b8–33), in which Aristotle uses the terminology of defining (genus and species) in categorizing metaphors. The number of tropes, and accordingly the way they were defined, was seen as important, as Quintilian testifies. Different philosophers, rhetoricians, and grammarians arrived at different numbers.<sup>68</sup> A treatise on tropes has been preserved under the name of Tryphon, the first century BCE grammarian. The author distinguishes fourteen tropes.<sup>69</sup> We know that Tryphon also wrote on the parts of speech, thus showing an interest in dividing and defining; it would seem plausible that this Tryphon was one of the grammarians who took part in the ‘battle’ referred to by Quintilian. It may indeed be that Quintilian is referring to grammarians and philosophers from the first century BCE – scholars influenced by the Peripatetic revival and the general intellectual rise of standards in

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<sup>65</sup> Quint. *inst.* 8,6,1.

<sup>66</sup> Translation by Russell 2001.

<sup>67</sup> Thus Russell (2001, 425), who (apparently) refers to Calcante’s *Quintiliano. La formazione dell’oratore* (2001).

<sup>68</sup> See Calboli 2007, 129 n. 20.

<sup>69</sup> RG3 191,14–18.

Rome. From Quintilian's own era, no definitions of grammar survive except for his own treatment of the question.

## 2. THE ART OF GRAMMAR IN THE MAKING

### 2.1 A starting point: what makes an expertise?

From the fourth century BCE onwards, we regularly come across attributes of the word τέχνη— formed with the adjectival ending -ικη. Some central concepts were already in use during the previous century: μαντική, ναυτική, ιατρική, μουσική.<sup>70</sup> The philosophers laid down the prerequisites of a τέχνη as follows:<sup>71</sup>

(1) A τέχνη aims at something useful. An expertise has an explicit goal, and already the Sophists refer to usefulness as a criterion. They introduced a theory of the τέχναι, according to which these were divided into two groups: the useful arts, and those promoting pleasure.<sup>72</sup> The criterion of usefulness was particularly stressed by the Epicureans, who were mostly set against the liberal arts.<sup>73</sup> Usefulness was also mentioned in the standard Stoic definition, attributed to Zeno of Citium: “Art is a system of perceptions organized for some goal advantageous in life” (Ζήνων δέ φησιν ὅτι “τέχνη ἐστὶ σύστημα ἐκ καταλήψεων συγγεγυμνασμένων πρὸς τι τέλος εὐχρηστον τῶν ἐν τῷ βίῳ<sup>74</sup>). Aristotle notes that “every art and every method, and similarly every action and undertaking, is thought to aim at some good” (Πᾶσα τέχνη καὶ πᾶσα μέθοδος, ὁμοίως δὲ πρᾶξις τε καὶ προαίρεσις, ἀγαθοῦ τινὸς ἐφίεσθαι δοκεῖ<sup>75</sup>).

(2) There is a requirement of specialization: every art has its peculiar task (ἔργον), distinct from the tasks of the other arts.<sup>76</sup>

(3) The factor that separates τέχνη from ἐμπειρία is the prerequisite of transferability. A person who has τέχνη knows the true λόγος – cause and reason – of the thing at hand and is thus able to teach it to another person.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Blank 1998, xvii–xviii and xviii n. 24. In Greek mythology, the arts, whether of a physical or intellectual sort, were originally gifts from the Olympian gods. Later they were seen as human signature features, as a sign of man’s prominence in the universe. Aeschylus (*Pr.* 477–506) presents the τέχναι as gifts from Prometheus; Blank 1998, xvi.

<sup>71</sup> For the list of prerequisites, see Heinemann (1961, 105–106) and Woodruff (1990, 70–72). Plato sometimes uses another concept instead of τέχνη. For example, in *Philebus* 57e, Plato refers to ἡ τοῦ διαλέγεσθαι δύναμις, “the capacity of dialectic”, clearly actually meaning τέχνη; also in *Gorgias* 456a5 Plato uses the concept ἡ δύναμις τῆς ῥητορικῆς, ‘the capacity of rhetoric’. In Plato’s texts the word δύναμις carries multiple and varied meanings and it is therefore understandable that the word τέχνη was found more useful later by those who were familiar with Plato’s texts.

<sup>72</sup> For example Isocrates *Panegyricus* 40; Tatarkiewicz 1963, 232.

<sup>73</sup> For example, Sext. *Emp. math.* 1,1 and 1,49.

<sup>74</sup> Olympiod. *in Pl. Gorg. comm.* 12,1,17–19 = SVF I frg. 73.

<sup>75</sup> *eth. Nic.* 1094a1–2.

<sup>76</sup> *Pl. Euth.* 291e–292a; *Xen. mem.* 3,1,3ff; 3,3,9; 3,7,4.

<sup>77</sup> *Pl. Prot.* 319e ff., *Meno* 99b. *Ar. metaph.* 981b10: ὅλως τε σημεῖον τοῦ εἰδότος καὶ μὴ εἰδότος τὸ δύνασθαι διδάσκειν ἐστίν, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο τὴν τέχνην τῆς ἐμπειρίας ἡγουμένα μᾶλλον

(4) Aristotle refers to productivity as a vital characteristic of τέχνη, defined as a “productive ability that works according to the truth under the guidance of reason” (ἔξις μετὰ λόγου ἀληθοῦς ποιητική).<sup>78</sup>

(5) A τέχνη covers exhaustively the entire range of its subject; for example, there is no such thing as expert knowledge on Homer alone. If this knowledge were truly of an expert nature, its possessor would be equally expert in all poetry.<sup>79</sup>

(6) Art is systematic and makes use of certain methods. This aspect is visible in the Stoic account of art preserved by Cicero: *constant (sc. artes) ex cognitionibus et contineant quidam in se ratione constitutum et via*.<sup>80</sup> The concepts of μέθοδος / *via*, τέχνη / *ars* and λόγος / *ratio* are deeply interwoven.

These are the requirements that constitute the hard core of the concept of τέχνη; they are not easily compromised. Some authors additionally compare τέχνη to scientific knowledge, ἐπιστήμη. In the hierarchy of knowledge, there is an important feature that separates τέχνη and ἐπιστήμη: the latter is certain and cannot be shaken by reason (Ἐπιστήμη ἐστὶ κατάληψις ἀσφαλῆς καὶ ἀμετάπτωτος ὑπὸ λόγου).<sup>81</sup>

## 2.2 Ancient historiography of the early art of grammar

In this section, I discuss some views of the early history of grammar as understood by the ancient writers. The early phases of γραμματική are concisely laid out in the Scholia to Dionysius Thrax, albeit this account bears little resemblance to the historiography we are used to:

Διττὴ δὲ ἐστὶν ἡ γραμματικὴ· ἢ μὲν γὰρ περὶ τοὺς χαρακτῆρας καὶ τὰς τῶν στοιχείων ἐκφωνήσεις καταγίνεται, ἥτις καὶ γραμματικὴ λέγεται παλαιά, οὕσα καὶ πρὸ τῶν Τρωικῶν, σχεδὸν δὲ καὶ ἅμα τῇ φύσει προελθοῦσα· ἢ δὲ περὶ τὸν ἑλληνισμόν, ἥτις καὶ νεωτέρα ἐστίν, ἀρξαμένη μὲν ἀπὸ Θεαγένους, τελεσθεῖσα <δὲ> παρὰ τῶν Περι-

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ἐπιστήμην εἶναι δύνανται γὰρ, οἱ δὲ οὐ δύνανται διδάσκειν. Transferability is common to ἐπιστήμη, scientific knowledge, and τέχνη.

<sup>78</sup> *eth. Nic.* 1140a10.

<sup>79</sup> This example comes from Plato's *Ion* (532c).

<sup>80</sup> *Cic. fin.* 3,18 = *SVF I* frg. 73. Cf. *GG1.3* 118,14–16 = *SVF I* frg. 72: δηλοῖ καὶ ὁ Ζήνων, λέγων “τέχνη ἐστὶν ἔξις ὁδοποιητική”, τουτέστι δι' ὁδοῦ καὶ μεθόδου ποιούσά τι; see sections 3.1, 3.6.3 and 5.4.3.

<sup>81</sup> *Ps.-Gal. defin. med.* 19,350,3–6. Edelstein (1952, 583) also suggests that the nature of scientific knowledge, as exemplified by the astronomer Ptolemy, encompassed importance on its own right, rather than the requirement of usefulness in some respect.

πατητικῶν Πραξιφάνους τε καὶ Ἀριστοτέλους· καὶ τῆς μὲν γραμματικῆς τέλος τὸ εὖ ἀναγινώσκειν, τῆς δὲ γραμματικῆς τὸ εὖ γράφειν.<sup>82</sup>

Grammar is twofold: on the one hand, that which is also called the old grammar deals with the letters and the pronouncing of the elements. It existed before the time of the Trojans, and it was born almost together with nature. On the other hand, the newer grammar deals with Hellenism; it was introduced by Theagenes, and reached its final form with the Peripatetics Praxiphanes and Aristotle. The aim of the first kind of grammar is to read well, and of the last mentioned, to write well.

The Scholiast understands the old type of grammar – age-old, almost eternal – as if so deeply intertwined in the human intellectual capacity that it has no individual originator, whereas the new type focuses on questions of correct language. Theagenes (*fl. c.* 525 BCE) was, according to the testimony of the Scholiast, the first to deal with questions pertaining to ἑλληνισμός or correct language. We mainly know him as a very early Homerist.<sup>83</sup> Aristotle contributed to grammar by developing poetic theory and the theory of language description, and contributed to the birth of the theory of correct language. Praxiphanes was purportedly a disciple of Theophrastus, Aristotle’s follower as the leader of the Lyceum, and his contribution is less obvious. The second century CE writer Clement of Alexandria also mentions Praxiphanes as a significant figure in the history of γραμματική. In a few lines, Clement provides a brief history of the “first ones” in the Greek tradition of the study of literature and language:

Ἀπολλόδωρος δὲ ὁ Κυμαῖος πρῶτος <τοῦ γραμματικοῦ ἀντι> τοῦ κριτικοῦ εἰσηγήσατο τοῦνομα καὶ γραμματικὸς προσηγορεύθη, ἔνιοι δὲ Ἐρατοσθένη τὸν Κυρηναῖον φασιν, ἐπειδὴ ἐξέδωκεν οὗτος βιβλία δύο «γραμματικά» ἐπιγράψας. ὠνομάσθη δὲ γραμματικός, ὡς νῦν ὀνομάζομεν, πρῶτος Πραξιφάνης Διονυσοφάνους Μιτυληναῖος.<sup>84</sup>

Apollodorus of Cyme was the first to assume the name <of a grammarian instead> of critic, and he was called a grammarian. However, some say it was Eratosthenes of Cyrene who was first so called, since he published two books that he entitled *Grammatica*. The first who was called a grammarian according to the present usage was Praxiphanes, the son of Dionysophanes of Mitylene.

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<sup>82</sup> GG1.3 164,23–30. See also GG1.3 448,12–16, in which there is a nearly identical passage.

<sup>83</sup> Porphyry testifies to this in *Quaestionum Homericarum ad Iliadem pertinentium reliquiae* 20,67–75 (McPhail p. 240); there is also a mention of Theagenes being a Homerist in *Suda* θ 81.

<sup>84</sup> Clem. *str.* 1,16,79,3.

The above-mentioned Apollodorus of Cyme is otherwise unknown, but another Cymaeans features in the Scholia to Dionysius Thrax in a similar context: Antidorus of Cyme.<sup>85</sup> The two Cymaeans seem to be one and the same individual, dating somewhere to the beginning of the third century BCE.<sup>86</sup> The Scholiast to Dionysius Thrax adds some information:

Γινώσκειν δὲ χρὴ ὅτι τὸ παλαιὸν ἡ γραμματικὴ κριτικὴ ἐκαλεῖτο παρὰ τὸ κρίνειν τὰ ποιήματα· Ἀντίδωρος δὲ τις γραμματικὸς αὐτὴν ὠνόμασε παρὰ τὴν γνώσιν τῶν γραμματῶν.<sup>87</sup>

It must be made known that in the old days grammar was called ‘criticism’ from ‘criticizing poetry’; a grammarian called Antidorus named it ‘grammar’, as the knowledge of literature.

According to the information passed by Clement of Alexandria and the Scholiast, Antidorus gave the name γραμματικὴ to the study of language and literature formerly known as κριτικὴ, and changed the title to γραμματικὸς as well. We do not know whether this formulation originates in a text by Antidorus or whether this was something advanced by the Scholiast himself, using the available information on Antidorus as a milestone in the formation of the discipline. What seems to be implied here is that Antidorus defined grammar as γνώσις τῶν γραμματῶν, knowledge of literature. This simple definition rests on the obvious etymology; the genus (γνώσις) is neutral, and the definition produces an answer to the question “what is the meaning of the word γραμματικὴ”, as an Aristotelian nominal definition.<sup>88</sup>

Clement of Alexandria deals with Eratosthenes of Cyrene a little dismissively, although he confirms that Eratosthenes authored a treatise on grammar; Eratosthenes was too much of a polymath to be called a grammarian.<sup>89</sup> For Clement, it was the Peripatetic Praxiphanes of Mitylene who was truly a grammarian in the ‘modern’ sense: a scholar and a teacher of language and literature. Antidorus was the first grammarian only by name. The time referred to by Clement as νῦν is probably not his own time but the time of his source. It has been suggested that his source was the grammarian Asclepiades of Myrlea (second–first century BCE), who is known to have written an extensive treatise on

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<sup>85</sup> Ἀντίδωρος Κυμαῖος is mentioned in GG1.3 3,23–26 and the same Antidorus in GG1.3 7,23–29; see below.

<sup>86</sup> Pfeiffer 1968, 157–158.

<sup>87</sup> GG1.3 7,23–29.

<sup>88</sup> Matthaios (2011, 67) first pointed out this testimony to the origins of the name γραμματικὴ. On the Aristotelian nominal definition, see section 2.1.

<sup>89</sup> Eratosthenes is discussed in section 3.1 that is dedicated to him.

grammarians. Asclepiades may also be the source for the information passed on by the Scholiasts on the history of critics and grammarians.<sup>90</sup> The first Scholiast quoted (page 21–22) suggests that Praxiphanes' main grammatical goal was "to write well" (τὸ εὖ γράφειν), but what we know of Praxiphanes' work on literature does not quite fit this picture. Praxiphanes' known works include a dialogue between Plato and Isocrates on poets.<sup>91</sup> Some Peripatetics are known to have practiced literary criticism and authentication work – Aristotle's lost works include the titles *Homeric problems* (Ἀπορήματα Ὀμηρικά or τὰ Ὀμηροῦ προβλήματα) and *On poets* (Περὶ ποιητῶν) – but it remains unclear what exactly are the merits for which Praxiphanes is mentioned in this context. In the first century CE, Dio Chrysostom noted that the arts of criticism and grammar began with Aristotle, (καὶ δὴ καὶ αὐτὸς Ἀριστοτέλης, ἀφ' οὗ φασι τὴν κριτικὴν τε καὶ γραμματικὴν ἀρχὴν λαβεῖν, --).<sup>92</sup> This passage is found in Dio's 53rd oration, whose subject is Homeric poetry; Dio is here probably referring primarily to the *Poetica* and to Aristotle's work on Homer.

In a sense, the names referred to by the first Scholiast cited – Theagenes, Praxiphanes and Aristotle – are tenable as landmarks in the early history of γραμματική. In the next section, I examine the earliest evidence of the concept and its meanings.

### 2.3 Plato and Aristotle

The formation of an expertise is connected with the formation of an educational system, and the first steps in the art of grammar within the system are poorly known. Most of our evidence of schools derives from a remarkably late date, and a large part of it concentrates on the Roman Imperial time. Schools offering basic literacy skills were probably an established part of society in the Greek world by the fifth century BCE, and an elementary teacher (παιδαγωγός or γραμματοδιδάσκαλος) taught reading and writing as well as arithmetical skills. Poetry was studied and memorized, whereby the pupils gained knowledge on religion, history, and ethics. The Sophists offered higher education from the fifth century onwards. The Sophists' viewpoint was that of rhetoric: they taught the influential 'good' Greek, including such topics as prose rhythm and vocabulary.<sup>93</sup> By the time of Isocrates and Aristotle, the idea of literacy as the foundation of education was confirmed: the art of letters became the sine qua non art

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<sup>90</sup> Pfeiffer 1968, 158. See section 3.5.

<sup>91</sup> Diog. Laert. 3,8.

<sup>92</sup> Dio Chrys. or. 53,1.

<sup>93</sup> Householder 1995a, 91.

for the practice of other cultural arts.<sup>94</sup> A very early notion of γραμματική is found in the Hippocratic treatise *De diaeta*, dated around 400 BCE. In this passage, the things that belong to γραμματική are listed:

Γραμματικὴ τοιόνδε· σχημάτων σύνθεσις, σημήϊα φωνῆς ἀνθρωπίνης, δύναμις τὰ παροιχόμενα μνημονεῦσαι, τὰ ποιητέα δηλῶσαι· δι' ἑπτὰ σχημάτων ἢ γνῶσις· --.<sup>95</sup>

This is what grammar is like: the composition of figures, the signs of human voice, the ability to remember things past and to indicate the things that must be done; knowledge comes through the seven figures.

Γραμματικὴ is here described as a practical means of communicating both diachronically and synchronically. The 'figures' (σχήματα) simply mean the arranging of letters, and the 'seven figures' are the seven vowels.<sup>96</sup> The vowels are specified apparently because there is some significance to the number seven, mentioned again in the text a few lines further down. The art of grammar is attached to its basic and primitive function: promoting literacy. Another example of how the word γραμματικὴ was understood is preserved through Athenaeus (276a). Athenaeus refers to a comedy by Callias entitled γραμματικὴ τραγωδία, based on the letters of the Greek alphabet (represented by a chorus of women); more specifically, the Ionian alphabet, apparently newly introduced and established in 403/402 BCE.

It is hardly surprising that in the bulk of the writings that have come down to us from Plato and Aristotle the term τέχνη γραμματικὴ, or more simply γραμματικὴ, occurs repeatedly. In what follows I examine what seems to be understood by the concept in the fourth century BCE.

Plato uses the term τέχνη γραμματικὴ in the *Cratylus*, as well as in *Sophista* and *Philebus*. The art of grammar appears first in Plato's *Sophista* in a discussion of conjoining sounds: he refers to the expertise used in the proper arrangement of sounds as τέχνη γραμματικὴ. A similar domain for grammar is assigned in the *Philebus*.<sup>97</sup> In the *Theaetetus*, Plato likewise assumes that the classification of sounds is a matter of common knowledge (that is, among the educated).<sup>98</sup> By τέχνη γραμματικὴ Plato is not referring to an expertise in language and literature, but literally to an expertise in letters. In the *Cratylus*, τέχνη

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<sup>94</sup> Morgan 1998, 10; 21.

<sup>95</sup> Hippocr. *diaet.* 1,23.

<sup>96</sup> Blank 1998, 114.

<sup>97</sup> *soph.* 253a; *Phil.* 18c3–d2.

<sup>98</sup> *Theaet.* 203b.



γραμματική means an expertise in spelling.<sup>99</sup> Diogenes Laertius recorded that Plato was the first to observe the “capacity of grammar”: πρῶτος ἐθεώρησε τῆς γραμματικῆς τὴν δύναμιν.<sup>100</sup> What exactly Diogenes means by this is not clear; the contents of the *Cratylus* have been suggested,<sup>101</sup> but there is little there that is actually “grammatical” in the sense in which Diogenes, writing in the third century CE, would have understood the word γραμματική. It seems more probable that Diogenes is in fact referring to the meaning of the word γραμματική that becomes clear in Plato’s texts: Plato was the first to observe the things included in this art, by which he means spelling, a very concrete art of letters.

Aristotle refers to the art of grammar on a few occasions, using the concept of γραμματική as a convenient example of the practice of defining. This means that γραμματική is clearly a separate intellectual entity. Aristotle says for example that it is the property of ‘man’ to be capable of learning γραμματική (ἴδιον ἀνθρώπου τὸ γραμματικῆς εἶναι δεκτικόν).<sup>102</sup> In the *Metaphysica*, he gives γραμματική as an example of an individual ἐπιστήμη: “for each one genus (γένος) of things, as there is one perception (αἴσθησις), so there is one science (ἐπιστήμη). Thus for instance grammar, being one science, examines all articulate sounds (φωναί) --.”<sup>103</sup> An exemplary definition of γραμματική is found in the *Topica*: “-- for example, if he has defined ‘grammar’ as ‘the science of writing from dictation’: he should add that it is also the science of reading” (-- οἷον εἰ τὴν γραμματικὴν ἐπιστήμην τοῦ γράψαι τὸ ὑπαγορευθέν· προσδεῖται γὰρ ὅτι καὶ τοῦ ἀναγνῶναι<sup>104</sup>). This definition is an example of how to define perfectly, and the art of grammar is described here with regard to the needs of everyday life. We have little cause to believe that Aristotle was exaggerating or understating the functions of grammar of his time. However, it should be noted that this definition is not given as the only correct one, but as an example of a definition which, together with Aristotle’s corrective note, is acceptable. In *De mundo* – traditionally attributed to Aristotle, but regarded for some time now as pseudepigraphic – γραμματική is understood as the art that combines vowels and consonants and thus forms a complete art (γραμματικὴ δὲ ἐκ φωνηέντων καὶ ἀφώνων γραμμάτων κρᾶσιν ποιησαμένη τὴν ὅλην τέχνην ἀπ’ αὐτῶν συνεστήσατο).<sup>105</sup> The author makes the certainly Aristotelian claim that art imitates nature, and that nature seems to have a liking for opposites – of which the

<sup>99</sup> *Crat.* 431e–432a.

<sup>100</sup> *Diog. Laert.* 3,25.

<sup>101</sup> Sandys 1903 (1967), 7.

<sup>102</sup> *Ar. top.* 102a20.

<sup>103</sup> *Ar. metaph.* 1003b20. See also *cat.* (e.g.) 1b2–3.

<sup>104</sup> *Ar. top.* 142b31–33.

<sup>105</sup> *Ps.-Ar. mundo* 396b17–19.

components of γραμματική, vowels and consonants, stand as examples. The other τέχναι mentioned are ζωγραφία and μουσική, painting and music.<sup>106</sup> The *De mundo* probably is not much later than Aristotle: a probable *terminus ante quem* is at about 250 BCE.<sup>107</sup> The above Hippocratic treatise, Plato and Aristotle do not seem to differ in their conception of γραμματική: the essential contents of grammar are letters and sounds. Thus a survey of the earliest references to γραμματική in our sources confirms what the Scholiast said about ‘old grammar’: it deals with the letters and with their pronunciation.

The use of the word γραμματική was limited in the Classical period and apparently until the early Hellenistic era. Nevertheless, there are signs that knowledge we recognize as ‘philological’ was valued and transmitted. This appears from a passage in Plato’s *Protagoras*:

Ἦγοῦμαι, ἔφη, ὦ Σώκρατες, ἐγὼ ἀνδρὶ παιδείας μέγιστον μέρος εἶναι περὶ ἐπῶν δεινὸν εἶναι· ἔστιν δὲ τοῦτο τὰ ὑπὸ τῶν ποιητῶν λεγόμενα οἷόν τ’ εἶναι συνιέναι ἅ τε ὀρθῶς πεποιήται καὶ ἅ μὴ, καὶ ἐπίστασθαι διελεῖν τε καὶ ἐρωτώμενον λόγον δοῦναι.<sup>108</sup>

He said: “I think, Socrates, that the greatest part of education is to be well-versed in poetry, and this I conceive as understanding which compositions of the poets are correct and which are not, and the ability to detail them, and when asked, being able to reason one’s opinions.”

Poetry is obviously a pertinent element of education in many senses: it is present in music and it is vital for cultural and historical understanding. What Protagoras is describing here is knowledge that later came to be thought of as peculiar to γραμματική, that is, the authentication and proficient interpretation of texts. The text suggests that Protagoras’ idea of a knowledge of poetry actually is something that is based on reason (λόγος), suggesting in turn that the teaching of these things involves an expertise. It is unlikely that Protagoras is referring to γραμματική, the elementary art of letters; the kind of work described above – authentication and exegesis – was not yet claimed as part of the art, but belonged to the higher education offered by sophists and philosophers. We also know that Aristotle, the all-round philosopher, was considered qualified for these philological tasks: he was the educator of Alexander the prince of

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<sup>106</sup> Ps.-Ar. *mundo* 396b9–19.

<sup>107</sup> The scholarly views are summarized for example in Bos (1991, 312).

<sup>108</sup> Pl. *Prot.* 338e6–339a3.

Macedonia, and according to Plutarch he was the one who taught Homer to Alexander, preparing a revised version for his everyday use.<sup>109</sup>

Aristotle explains the concept of genus using γραμματική and ἐπιστήμη as examples.<sup>110</sup> Aristotle indeed generally refers to grammar as ἐπιστήμη, i.e. scientific knowledge – or ‘science’, as it is more conveniently translated here. Plato (see above) referred to τέχνη γραμματική; for Aristotle, the genus of γραμματική appears to be higher in the hierarchy of knowledge. The issue, however, is not that simple. Plato uses the word ἐπιστήμη and the verb εἰδέναι in the general sense of knowing, even synonymously with τέχνη.<sup>111</sup> According to Xenophon’s philosophical work *Oeconomicus*, Socrates did not distinguish between ἐπιστήμη and τέχνη; rather, he seems to have used both terms freely, calling all sorts of fields of knowledge – οἰκονομία, ἰατρική, χαλκευτική and τεκτονική – first ἐπιστήμαι and then again τέχνηαι.<sup>112</sup> Aristotle presents his idea of the ἐπιστήμη type of knowledge in the *Analytica posteriora*. The conditions placed on ἐπιστήμη are – in principle – severe: it is theoretical knowledge that presupposes a systematic understanding. We speak of knowing (ἐπίστασθαι) when we know (γινώσκειν) without further qualification the true cause (αἰτία) of the fact, and we know that the fact cannot be otherwise.<sup>113</sup> Furthermore, ἐπιστήμη is not based on sense perception (αἴσθησις), because there can be no perception of what is universal.<sup>114</sup> But the Aristotelian web of knowledge is tangled: in the *Metaphysica* (1027a20) he insists that ἐπιστήμη always concerns that which is “for the most part”, ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ. It means that ἐπιστήμη is not absolute knowledge, because it can only grasp the regular in nature. Aristotle, like Socrates, uses the words τέχνη and ἐπιστήμη indifferently from time to time.<sup>115</sup> Thus it is unclear how much can be read into ἐπιστήμη as the genus of γραμματική. The important point is that the art of letters and sounds is an exemplary field of knowledge: it can be clearly defined, and since it can be used as an example its domain is to a certain extent undisputed.

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<sup>109</sup> Plut. *Alex.* 7,1–4; 8,2–3. Pfeiffer (1968, 71–71) rejects this: according to him, it is improbable that Aristotle made such an edition.

<sup>110</sup> See for example *Ar. top.* 124b17–20, 126a3–5 and 146b6–7.

<sup>111</sup> Cf. *Charm.* 165c; *Euth.* 281a; *Prot.* 356d–e. Plato gives a special meaning to ἐπιστήμη in *Theaetetus*, a dialogue that deals explicitly with the question “what is knowledge” (without a specific outcome). In *Respublica* (477b ff.), Plato discusses ruling of the city. Here ἐπιστήμη of virtue is needed in order to rule well, ἐπιστήμη is the ability to know the real (the forms) as it is.

<sup>112</sup> For example, *oec.* 1,1–2.

<sup>113</sup> *Ar. an. post.* 71b9–12.

<sup>114</sup> *Ar. an. post.* 87b28–31.

<sup>115</sup> At least in *eth. Nic.* 1097a10–15 and 1106b5–15.

In their logical works Plato and Aristotle laid the foundations for a theory of the parts of speech, which eventually became the core of technical grammar. In the *Sophista*, Plato recognized a nominal component (ὄνομα) and a verbal component (ῥῆμα) as the basic parts of the sentence (λόγος). These components have the functions of subject and predicate, and they are essential in discussing the ‘truth’ and ‘falsehood’ of propositions.<sup>116</sup> Like Plato, Aristotle too had a syntactical starting point. The discussion is found in *De interpretatione*, his work that discusses the logical form of declarative sentences, in which Aristotle defines ὄνομα, ῥῆμα and λόγος.<sup>117</sup> In the *Poetica*, Aristotle’s idea of language (λέξις) is laid out as a list of elements. The first of these is ‘indivisible sound’; the last is a composite semantic unit, divisible into eight parts: στοιχειῶν, συλλαβῆ, σύνδεσμος, ὄνομα, ῥῆμα, ἄρθρον, πῶσις and λόγος.<sup>118</sup> According to Aristotle, the theory of the parts of speech does not belong to the domain of γραμματική; where he discusses words and sentences, he does not refer to γραμματική. The proper domain for the parts of speech is rather “the study of rhetoric or of poetics” (ῥητορικῆς γὰρ ἢ ποιητικῆς οικειότερα ἢ σκέψις).<sup>119</sup>

<sup>116</sup> Pl. *Crat.* 431b5–c1: εἰ δὲ ῥήματα καὶ ὀνόματα ἔστιν οὕτω τιθέναι, ἀνάγκη καὶ λόγους λόγοι γάρ που, ὡς ἐγῶμαι, ἢ τούτων σύνθεσις ἔστιν --.

<sup>117</sup> The definition of the noun (Ar. *int.* 16a20–22): Ὀνομα μὲν οὖν ἐστὶ φωνὴ σημαντικὴ κατὰ συνθήκην ἄνευ χρόνου, ἧς μὴδὲν μέρος ἐστὶ σημαντικὸν κεχωρισμένον (“A noun is a significant sound established by convention, with no time-reference, and no part of it is significant considered apart from the whole”). The definition of the verb does not take the same form (“x is a significant sound”), although there too is a semantic element in the definition, προσσημαίνον (Ar. *int.* 16b6–8): Ῥῆμα δὲ ἐστὶ τὸ προσσημαίνον χρόνον, οὐ μέρος οὐδὲν σημαίνει χωρὶς· ἔστι δὲ τῶν καθ’ ἑτέρου λεγομένων σημείων (“A verb is that which carries a time-reference; no part of it has an independent meaning. It indicates that something is said of something”). The “x is a significant sound” formula appears again in the definition of sentence (*int.* 16b27–29: Λόγος δὲ ἐστὶ φωνὴ σημαντικὴ --) as well as in the definitions of conjunction and joint that are available in the *Poetica* (1456b38–1457a6).

<sup>118</sup> Ar. *poet.* 1456b20. Four of these parts (conjunction, noun, verb, and article) later found their way into the parts of speech system.

<sup>119</sup> Ar. *int.* 17a5–6. The art of poetics had been recognized as an expertise with its own technical rules since Aristotle’s powerful treatise on the subject. In Latin, the subject was discussed in Horace’s influential *Epistula ad Pisones* that Quintilian (*inst.* 8,3,60) refers to as *ars poetica*. It is noteworthy that already Aristotle says (*poet.* 1460b,13–15) that different rules apply to poetics than to the other arts, and mentions politics and medicine as examples of “normal” arts. Richard Janko (2010) has identified an Aristotelian definition of poetics, found in Aristotle’s fragmentarily preserved work *On Poets* via Philodemus’ work *De poematis*, book 5 (frg. 46 Janko = *PHerc.* 1581 frg. 1,5–8): ἔστιν ἢ ποιη[τι]κῆ χρήσιμον πρὸς [ἀρε]τήν, καθαίρουσα ὡ[ς] ἔφαμεν, τὸ (ἄλογον) μόριον (τῆς ψυχῆς). The (art of) poetry is something useful with a view to virtue, purifying, as we said, the (irrational) part (of the soul). – Translation by Janko 2010, 447. However different poetics may be compared to the other arts, its usefulness is established in the definition.

## 2.4 The Stoics

Stoicism was the most influential philosophical school of post-Classical Greece. Zeno of Citium (d. 261 BCE) founded the school some twenty years after the death of Aristotle. In the Stoic system, philosophy was divided into three categories that formed an organic unity: logic, ethics, and physics.<sup>120</sup> Stoic logic (λογική) was a broad concept, covering the functions of λόγος, reason. As already mentioned, especially Chrysippus, a significant developer and systematizer of Stoic philosophy, concentrated on logic.<sup>121</sup> The field of logic was divided into rhetoric and dialectic, and dialectic was further divided into two subdivisions: meaning and form. Meaning generally is σημαίνόμενον or the ‘signified’; or, specifically in dialectic, λεκτόν, the ‘sayable’ – the underlying meanings of what we say and think. The linguistic expressions we utter are called φωναί, ‘voices’ or σημαίνοντα, ‘signifiers’. None of these Stoic subdivisions related to the study of language actually corresponds to ‘grammar’; accordingly, it is not possible to speak of a distinctly marked discipline called ‘Stoic grammar’.<sup>122</sup> There is thus no reason to think that the Stoic philosophers defined γραμματική from their own viewpoint; similarly, the notions of γραμματική held by earlier philosophers were what we might call accidental, and no such ‘accidents’ are known for the Stoic philosophers. Accordingly, the Stoics will be discussed here quite briefly. In considering the influence of Stoic linguistic thought on the formation of grammar, it is important to keep in mind that only few Stoics embraced aspects of language study in their philosophical system. Moreover, it seems that not all the mystery that now veils it can be explained by the lack of primary sources, since already ancient authors complained about the obscurity of Stoic logic.<sup>123</sup> The true scope of Stoic influence on the formation of grammar remains unclear.<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> For example, Diog. Laert. 7,40. Cicero expresses his admiration towards the Stoic philosophical system in *fin.* 3,74: *Verum admirabilis compositio disciplinae incredibilisque me rerum traxit ordo, quem per deos immortales nonne miraris?*

<sup>121</sup> Testimonia of Chrysippus’ role as the leading logician of Antiquity are found in numerous authors: Diog. Laert. 7,180; Dion. Hal. *comp.* 4; Cic. *or.* 115 and Cic. *fin.* 4,4,9. In a recent article, Schmidhauser (2010, 499) gives a significant role to Chrysippus in the formation of grammar: “Grammar as one understands it today gives an account of the system of rules governing the construction of syllables, words, and sentences in a certain language. -- Greek grammar is the creation of Chrysippus of Soli.”

<sup>122</sup> Frede 1987, 303; Luhtala 2000, 11–12; Blank and Atherton 2003, 314.

<sup>123</sup> For example Cic. *fin.* 3,4,15. See Luhtala 2000, 64.

<sup>124</sup> E.g. Blank and Atherton 2003, 318.

No first-hand sources for the Stoic study of language survive, and many of the sources are of rather an inconsistent or polemical nature.<sup>125</sup> Our knowledge of Stoic language theory is based mainly on Sextus Empiricus and Diogenes Laertius. Diogenes' doxography includes both an account of Stoic dialectic and a bibliography of Chrysippus' works in which he discusses linguistic topics: for example *Περὶ τῶν ἐνικῶν καὶ πληθυντικῶν ἐκφορῶν* (On singular and plural expressions), *Περὶ σολοικισμῶν* (On solecisms), and *Περὶ τῶν στοιχείων τοῦ λόγου καὶ τῶν λεγομένων* (On the elements of speech and the spoken words).<sup>126</sup> The study of logic seems to have waned after Chrysippus' contemporaries and immediate successors. We do not know of any treatises on logic by for example Panaetius and Posidonius, the most eminent representatives of the Middle Stoa. Complete treatises survive from the later Stoic writers, such as Seneca and Epictetus, who focused largely on ethics.

The Stoic 'expertise concerning the voice' is laid out in Diogenes Laertius' *Vitae philosophorum* (7,55–59) as a summary of the *Τέχνη περὶ φωνῆς* by Diogenes of Babylon (c. 240–150 BCE). Diogenes was a successor of Chrysippus and the first scholar to introduce formally the Stoic philosophy in Rome, in 156/5 BCE.<sup>127</sup> The summary in Diogenes Laertius gives us a picture of how a Stoic handbook concerning language was structured: the *Τέχνη περὶ φωνῆς* included the concepts of voice (φωνή),<sup>128</sup> proposition (λόγος), dialect (διάλεκτος), letters (γράμματα), articulate sound (λέξις), the five parts of speech (τοῦ λόγου μέρη πέντε), and the five virtues of diction (ἀρεταὶ λόγου πέντε). The vices of diction (κακίαι) are briefly mentioned as well.<sup>129</sup>

The most important of the five virtues of diction was Hellenism, ἑλληνισμός. The idea of correct Greek was introduced in Aristotle's *Rhetorica*, although what Aristotle mainly speaks about is appropriate and cogent language.<sup>130</sup> Aristotle's immediate successor as the leader of the Lyceum, Theophrastus, developed the idea. He distinguished four virtues of diction: Hellenism or purity, clarity (σαφήνεια), appropriateness (πρέπον), and elegance (κατασκευή). The Stoics took the discussion further and added one virtue, con-

<sup>125</sup> See e.g. Blank and Atherton 2003, 310.

<sup>126</sup> Diog. Laert. 7,192.

<sup>127</sup> *New Pauly s.v.* Diogenes of Babylon.

<sup>128</sup> The φωνή tradition (*vox* in Latin grammars) has been clarified in the study of Ax (1986); also a summary of the study with a discussion is found in Schenkeveld 1990b, 299–306.

<sup>129</sup> Diogenes Laertius' discussion on the subject of *τέχνη περὶ φωνῆς* from 7,59 onward (including the concepts of ποιήμα, ποιήσις, ὄρος, and μερισμός) is apparently not based on the handbook of Diogenes of Babylon. Diogenes Laertius refers to Posidonius, Antipater and Chrysippus. For Diogenes Laertius' testimony, Schenkeveld 1990a passim. A reconstruction of the Stoic handbook *περὶ φωνῆς* has been made by Barwick (1922); similarly to the rest of his study, this reconstruction has not gone unchallenged.

<sup>130</sup> Ar. *rhet.* 1404b–1407a25.

ciseness (συντομία).<sup>131</sup> While it may be surprising that the Stoics adapted the virtues of diction from the Peripatetic thinkers, it definitely was in the Stoics' interest to define and strive for pure language. The question of good language was ultimately a question of happiness, which was endangered by unclear, ambiguous, and bad language that may pervert the truth of things.<sup>132</sup> In the Stoic thought, goodness and badness were represented by virtue and vice,<sup>133</sup> and a theory of vices and virtues of speech was incorporated in their dialectic.<sup>134</sup> The subject of Hellenism became a major interest of the grammarians towards the end of Hellenistic era. A Stoic definition of Hellenism (ἑλληνισμός), attributed to Diogenes of Babylon, survives in Diogenes Laertius (7,59): "Hellenism is a way of speaking that is faultless in respect of technical [usage] and not some arbitrary usage" (Ἑλληνισμός μὲν οὖν ἐστὶ φράσις ἀδιάπτωτος ἐν τῇ τεχνικῇ καὶ μὴ εἰκαίᾳ συνηθείᾳ).<sup>135</sup> Diogenes Laertius merely cites the definition; there is no discussion. This is a small but noteworthy piece of Stoic epistemological and methodological thought concerning correct language, a basic element of later γραμματική, involving the important concept τεχνική. What is the 'arbitrary usage' mentioned in Diogenes' definition of Hellenism? If usage is arbitrary, it is not constrained by rules. Faults are correctly observed with respect to usage that is constrained by a definite set of rules: such usage is called 'technical' (τεχνικὴ συνηθείᾳ). A set of rules for acceptable language may include criteria such as etymology, analogy, usage, antiquity, authority, and nature;<sup>136</sup> the rules of technical usage are not specified in Diogenes Laertius, nor do we have a Stoic set of criteria for acceptable language from other sources. The use of the word τεχνική here might well be motivated by the lively epistemological

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<sup>131</sup> Cic. or. 79: *sermo purus erit et Latinus, dilucide planeque dicitur, quid deceat circumspicietur. unum aberit quod quartum numerat Theophrastus in orationis laudibus: ornatum illud suave et affluens.* Diog. Laert. 7,59: Ἀρεταὶ δὲ λόγου εἰσὶ πέντε, Ἑλληνισμός, σαφήνεια, συντομία, πρέπον, κατασκευή.

<sup>132</sup> Sluiter 2000a, 376.

<sup>133</sup> Diog. Laert. 7,102.

<sup>134</sup> The two vices of speech that gained much attention were barbarism and solecism, the counterparts of Hellenism (Diog. Laert. 7,59): ὁ δὲ βαρβαρισμός ἐκ τῶν κακιῶν λέξις ἐστὶ παρὰ τὸ ἔθος τῶν εὐδοκιομένων Ἑλλήνων, σολοικισμός δὲ ἐστὶ λόγος ἀκαταλλήλος συντεταγμένος. See for example Frede 1987, 309–310. According to Blank and Atherton (2003, 314–316) the theory of vices and virtues of speech, it may have been a "third home of 'grammatical' theorising within Stoic philosophy", the first two being the analysis of the properties of λόγος and the second one metaphysics, in which sounds and words are understood as material objects.

<sup>135</sup> Diog. Laert. 7,59.

<sup>136</sup> See discussion in sections 4.3.3, 5.3 and 5.4.2.

debate between the empiricists and the rationalists – a discussion the Stoics could not have disregarded.<sup>137</sup>

Language was a big issue for the Stoic philosopher, but as to the Stoic interest in literary criticism and philology, there are uncertainties. There was at least interest in literary criticism from an ethical perspective, and allegorical interpretation is also considered to have been practiced.<sup>138</sup> Some of the Stoic thinkers, such as Zeno, dealt with Homeric questions.<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> Frede 1987, 310–311; see especially section 5.5.

<sup>138</sup> Blank and Atherton 2003, 317. A.A. Long (for example, 1996 and 2005) contests the theory of Stoic allegoresis as unfounded, and suggests that in fact the procedure in question is etymologizing (Long 2005, 38): “The task of the Stoic etymologist is to try to recover the true beliefs encoded in the god’s names and epithets – beliefs that have been overlaid by subsequent superstition.” In the spirit of Long, Porter (1992, 86 and 86 n. 52), also maintains that there is no proof that the Stoics had any interest in literary criticism for its own sake, and that their interest in allegory was not directed towards it as a form of literary interpretation; the Stoics’ contributions to the development of literary criticism were thus accidental.

<sup>139</sup> Titles Προβλημάτων Όμηρικῶν πέντε and Περί ποιητικῆς ἀκροάσεως are ascribed to Zeno; Diog. Laert. 7,4; Blank and Atherton 2003, 317.



### 3. HELLENISTIC ΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΙΚΗ

#### 3.1 Eratosthenes

The starting point of scholarship can be marked in the early third century BCE, when Ptolemy I founded the Museion and the library of Alexandria. The early Ptolemies acted as patrons of the arts. In particular they showed an interest in philological work and encouraged it, thus promoting the significant social and cultural status of studies in literature and language.<sup>140</sup> Vast collections of writings from all over the Greek world were gathered up in the library, where scholars laboured at cataloguing, editing, and interpreting them in order to determine a correct and authentic textual form.<sup>141</sup> Methods of linguistic analysis were developed to serve this purpose. The Alexandrian scholars raised textual and literary criticism to a new level, preparing the ground for a discipline called γραμματική by creating the necessary metalanguage and developing linguistic analysis, in both morphology and phonology.<sup>142</sup> The first scholar to whom a corrected version of Homer was attributed was Zenodotus of Ephesus (c. 325–260 BCE), the early librarian of Alexandria. He is mentioned in the *Suda* (ζ 74) as the “first corrector of Homer”, *πρῶτος διορθωτῆς τοῦ Ὀμήρου*.

As we have seen in the previous chapters, the term γραμματική was already used in the classical era, but the field of study did not yet extend beyond letters and sounds. An early Alexandrian view of the scientific nature of γραμματική is preserved in a fragment from the Alexandrian scholar Eratosthenes of Cyrene (c. 275–194 BCE). Eratosthenes was the third head librarian of the Alexandrian library, after Zenodotus of Ephesus and Apollonius of Rhodes. According to Suetonius, Eratosthenes was also the first to assume the name of φιλόλογος,<sup>143</sup> in reference to his versatile scholarly nature: Eratosthenes was active in the fields of geography, history, chronography, mathematics, astronomy, philosophy, and poetry.<sup>144</sup> He seems to have been quite well known for his philological works. We know of such titles as *Περὶ τῆς ἀρχαίας κωμωδίας* and *Εἰς τὸν ἐν τῇ Ἰλιάδι*; from the point of view of the present study, however, the most remarkable (we know of) is the two-book treatise called *Γραμματικά*, mentioned by Clement of Alexandria.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> Sluiter 1995, 194; Vallance 2000, 96.

<sup>141</sup> Kennedy 1989, 201.

<sup>142</sup> Taylor 1995a, 86.

<sup>143</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 10,4.

<sup>144</sup> For example Geus 2002, 48ff.

<sup>145</sup> Clem. *str.* 1,16,79,3; see section 2.2.

Eratosthenes was both a ‘grammarian’ and a ‘philologist’ in the ancient sense of the words:<sup>146</sup> he was considered a grammarian because he wrote on issues pertaining to the art of grammar, and a philologist (φιλόλογος, the name he gave himself) because of his varied and wide learning. A traditional view of the Alexandrian librarians is that, beginning with Callimachus and ending in Aristophanes, there is a line of succession from poets to scholars: Callimachus represents the pure (although learned) poet type; with Eratosthenes an era of scholarly approach begins, reaching its climax with Aristophanes of Byzantium, who is no longer a poet in any sense.<sup>147</sup> The term φιλόλογος commonly means ‘lover of discourse’<sup>148</sup> or ‘scholar’ in general, one whose learnedness is based on and centres around literature.<sup>149</sup> The Greek word φιλόλογος never appears as a professional title, only as an epithet or a name.<sup>150</sup> The development in the terminology related to scholars is illustrated in Table 1:

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<sup>146</sup> See Matthaios 2011, 64.

<sup>147</sup> See Pfeiffer 1968, 149; 152–153; 179. There is no direct evidence that Callimachus ever became the librarian, but it is clear that he was active in the library.

<sup>148</sup> See for example Pl. *Theaet.* 146a6; 161a7; *Phaedr.* 236e5; *Lach.* 188c6; 188e1; *resp.* 582e8.

<sup>149</sup> See e.g. various examples from Plutarch’s *Quaestiones convivales*: 628c1, 635f6, 645c6, 673a9, 686c10, 690c3, 694d7, 709b1, 715b3, 723a9, 736d5, 737d2 and 748d7.

<sup>150</sup> Kaster 1988, 453, who refers to the studies of Nuchelmans (1950), Kuch (1965) and Robert (1940–1965).

TABLE 1. “GRAMMARIAN” AND “PHILOLOGIST”

word	age	use	meaning
γραμματιστής	5th cent. BCE–	titular	specializing in letters <sup>151</sup> / elementary teacher <sup>152</sup>
φιλόλογος	5th–4th cent. BCE–	adjective	fond of speaking; fond of learning, cf. <i>studiosus</i> <sup>153</sup>
γραμματικός	4th cent. BCE–	epithet/adjective	literate; skilled in letters <sup>154</sup>
φιλόλογος	3rd cent. BCE–	epithet/name	skilled in letters, manifold learning <sup>155</sup>
γραμματικός	2nd cent. BCE–	titular	expert on literature and language <sup>156</sup>
<i>grammaticus</i>	2nd cent. BCE–	titular	expert on literature and language
<i>litterator</i>	1st cent. BCE–	titular	elementary teacher <sup>157</sup> / ‘ <i>grammaticus</i> ’ <sup>158</sup>

<sup>151</sup> We find this word in Herodotus in the sense of ‘scribe’, or someone who knows something more of the art of letters than the average man (*hist.* 128,8–11), and in the sense of ‘writer, recorder’ (*hist.* 2,283–6).

<sup>152</sup> Plato uses the word γραμματιστής in the sense of ‘teacher of literacy’ in *Charm.* 161d.

<sup>153</sup> *LSJ s.v.* φιλόλογος. Plato’s use of the word φιλόλογος is indeed not related to a profession; for example, *Lach.* 188c and *Phaedr.* 236e. Aristotle’s use of the word is similar (*rhet.* 1398b15). For φιλόλογος and φιλολογία, see Kuch (1965).

<sup>154</sup> This original force of the word γραμματικός also persisted throughout antiquity; Kaster 1988, 453.

<sup>155</sup> Kaster (1988, 453) observes a lexical shift: the classical meaning of γραμματικός has shifted to φιλόλογος. The result is that the words can be used of the same individuals.

<sup>156</sup> According to Kaster 1988, 453: “-- one can be nearly certain that from the second century onward anyone who is called γραμματικός or *grammaticus* is believed to possess a readily definable expertise that he holds in common with anyone else bearing the same title.”

<sup>157</sup> The use of the word *litterator* is not stable. According to Apuleius (*flor.* 20,5–7), *litterator* refers to the first-stage teacher of language and literature: *prima creterra litteratoris rudimento excitat, secunda grammatici doctrina instr[au]it, tertia rhetoris eloquentia armat*. Suetonius places the terms *litteratus* – *litterator* and *grammaticus* – *grammatista* in parallel, as the Latin and Greek usages for “completely” and “incompletely” educated teachers (*gramm.* 4,4): *sunt qui litteratum a litteratore distinguant, ut Graeci grammaticum a grammatista, et illum quidem absolute, hunc mediocriter doctum existiment*. This distinction is not absolute, as suggested by the *sunt qui* structure. Bower (1961) argues convincingly that *litteratus* was rarely used as a title. Later on, it is claimed by Diomedes that *litterator* is Latin for *grammaticus* (*GL* 1 421,11–13): *nam et grammaticus Latine litterator est appellatus et grammatica litteratura, quae formam loquendi ad certam rationem dirigit*. The terminology has been discussed in length in Bower (1961) and Booth (1981).

<sup>158</sup> According to Bower (1961, 477), it is more common to use *litterator* synonymously with *grammaticus* than in the sense of ‘elementary teacher’. Kaster (1995, 94) has observed a pejorative use of *litterator* until (at least) Aulus Gellius (16,6,1; 18,9,2).

Eratosthenes' definition of γραμματική is preserved in the Scholia to Dionysius Thrax, and it most probably pertains to the work Γραμματικά;<sup>159</sup> this idea is based on the title, as virtually nothing else of the treatise is known. According to the Scholiast, this is how Eratosthenes defined grammar: γραμματική ἐστὶν ἕξις παντελής ἐν γράμμασι.<sup>160</sup> The Scholiast adds an explanation of the word γράμματα: 'letters' refers to literature (γράμματα καλῶν τὰ συγγράμματα). The word ἕξις, deriving from the verb ἔχω,<sup>161</sup> seems a natural choice of word in this context: the expertise of γραμματική that Eratosthenes is defining is mostly about mastering, or in a sense taking possession of, the collection of the library. The Alexandrian culture is characterized as 'bookish': collecting literary works and taking care of them, both as physical objects and in terms of the knowledge codified in them, was a defining cultural feature of Hellenistic Alexandria.<sup>162</sup> Accordingly, the translation I suggest for the definition γραμματική ἐστὶν ἕξις παντελής ἐν γράμμασι is "grammar is the complete mastering of literature", referring to the fact that the librarian has to be aware of what his library contains and how it is organized. "Mastering" (ἕξις) had to be "complete" (παντελής), including the subject matter of literature ("enzyklopädisches Realienwissen"<sup>163</sup>) as well as editorial skills. As a definition of philological work carried out for the good of the library, Eratosthenes' definition seems appropriate. An example of a 'complete mastering' of the collections of the Alexandrian library is provided by Vitruvius (7,4–7), who reports a poetry competition held in Alexandria. One of the judges was Aristophanes of Byzantium, who determined a winner on the grounds that all but one of the contestants were plagiarists. This he knew instantly, because he was familiar with all the Greek literature collected in the library.

As already mentioned, the adjectival ending -ική had been used in connection with various arts already since the fourth century,<sup>164</sup> while ἕξις is a word much used in definitions,<sup>165</sup> connected to τέχνη in particular. The close connection of τέχνη and ἕξις was already observed in the *Cratylus* (414b), where Socrates gives the etymology ἕξις νοῦ > \*ἐχονόη > τέχνη, making τέχνη liter-

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<sup>159</sup> Matthaios 2011, 57.

<sup>160</sup> GG1.3 160,10–11.

<sup>161</sup> In Plato's texts, τέχνη are 'acquired' (λαμβάνειν) and then 'possessed' (ἔχειν) (Lyons 1963, 149).

<sup>162</sup> Matthaios 2011, 80.

<sup>163</sup> Geus 2002, 304.

<sup>164</sup> See section 2.1.

<sup>165</sup> For example in the pseudo-Platonic *Definitiones* (a short treatise containing various definitions, probably post-Platonic), many things are defined as ἕξις, including ὄψις (vision), δικαιοσύνη (justice), φιλανθρωπία (benevolence), φιλοσοφία (philosophy), and κολακεία (flattery).

ally ‘the possession of sense’.<sup>166</sup> Aristotle defines τέχνη as μετὰ λόγου ποιητικὴ ἕξις, “productive ability under the guidance of rational thought”.<sup>167</sup> Zeno uses the word ἕξις in his definition of τέχνη: τέχνη ἐστὶν ἕξις ὁδοποιητικὴ.<sup>168</sup> Thus the term ἕξις cannot be traced back to any particular philosophical direction. The use of the term in philosophical texts is frequent,<sup>169</sup> and as a thoroughly educated man of letters Eratosthenes was certainly aware of this. The use of the word ἕξις thus gives hardly any indication of his philosophical orientation, only of his learnedness in general. His philosophical writings are not revealing in this regard either.<sup>170</sup> The philological fragments of Eratosthenes similarly lack any clear indication of ideology or aesthetic preference, but they do attest to his eruditeness.

We cannot really know how methodical Eratosthenes’ ἕξις παντελής ἐν γράμμασι was, but – given his education in philosophy – he seems a clear turning point in the development of Alexandrian γραμματική, now defined as a philological discipline.<sup>171</sup> However, it should be kept in mind that we do not know with certainty that Eratosthenes was the first to define grammar as a philological discipline. As we have already seen, some form of definition of γραμματική was attributed to Antidorus of Cyme (active probably a few decades prior to Eratosthenes) in the Scholia to Dionysius Thrax, and Eratosthenes’ role as a professional of the art of grammar was downplayed by Clement of Alexandria.<sup>172</sup> Antidorus’ definition of grammar (Ἀντίδωρος δὲ τις γραμματικὸς αὐτὴν ὠνόμασε παρὰ τὴν γνῶσιν τῶν γραμματῶν<sup>173</sup>) also crucially appeals to the meaning of the word, explaining its etymology, and could have served as a model for Eratosthenes.<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> Plato also uses ἕξις to refer to a ‘trained skill’ in *Phaedr.* 268e; *LSJ* s.v. ἕξις.

<sup>167</sup> *Ar. eth. Nic.* 1140a.

<sup>168</sup> *SVF* I frg. 72; see sections 2.2, 3.6.3 and 5.4.3. The concept of ἕξις is thoroughly discussed by Matthaios (2011, 68–76).

<sup>169</sup> Matthaios 2011, 72–75.

<sup>170</sup> Matthaios 2011, 73; Geus 2002, 96–97 and 338–339.

<sup>171</sup> So Matthaios 2011, 85.

<sup>172</sup> See section 2.2.

<sup>173</sup> *GG*1.3 7,23–29.

<sup>174</sup> Matthaios 2011, 67.

### 3.2 Aristophanes and Aristarchus

The names of the most eminent grammatical scholars in Hellenistic Alexandria have already been mentioned here: Aristophanes of Byzantium and Aristarchus of Samothrace.<sup>175</sup> Aristophanes became head librarian at Alexandria in about 200 BCE, and Aristarchus followed him in the position.

Both Aristophanes and Aristarchus produced a wide range of scholarly treatises, which now survive only in fragments; but as far as we know neither one wrote a systematic grammatical manual. We do not have a definition of grammar, or any other description of the nature of the expertise, from either of the scholars, which means that this section is bound to be quite short. Aristophanes' editions include epic, lyric and drama. He paid special attention to the systematization of marginal signs and developed for example the asterisk; he also initiated the tradition of using accentuation marks to preserve the original pronunciation of poetry. There is some discussion as to whether Aristophanes produced any commentaries,<sup>176</sup> but it is clear that he contributed to the literary field by writing monographs, collecting proverbs, and practicing lexicography. A large number of fragments survive from a thematically arranged glossary entitled *Λέξεις*. Aristophanes was chiefly concerned with the oldest authors, but he also admired Menander, whom he considered the greatest poet after Homer. Along with Aristarchus of Samothrace, who served as head librarian from approximately 153 BCE, Aristophanes is largely responsible for the Greek literary canon we recognize today; Aristarchus' exegetical work includes critical editions of Homer, Hesiod, Pindar, Archilochus, Alcaeus and Anacreon, along with commentaries on these poets and on Aeschylus, Sophocles, Aristophanes and Herodotus, as well as monographs on Homeric problems.

The contents of Aristophanes' fragments on language study have been analyzed by Callanan (*Die Sprachbeschreibung bei Aristophanes von Byzanz*, 1987). According to Callanan, grammatical categories were used by Aristophanes as an auxiliary means in his editorial work, that is, strictly for philological needs. A passage in Charisius shows that Aristophanes recognized formal grammatical features as criteria for the use of the analogical method:<sup>177</sup> gender, case, ending, number of syllables, and accents. A sixth principle, that we should not accept compound words as simple, was added by Aristarchus.<sup>178</sup> Aristophanes shows

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<sup>175</sup> See section 1.2.

<sup>176</sup> See Slater 1986, 206–207 and Dickey 2007, 92.

<sup>177</sup> On Aristophanes and analogy, see Callanan 1987, 107ff.

<sup>178</sup> Char. 149,26–150,2 (Barwick): *huic [sc. analogiae] Aristophanes: quinque rationes dedit vel, ut alii putant, sex; primo ut eiusdem sint generis de quibus quaeritur, dein casus, tum exitus, quarto numeri syllabarum, item soni. sextum Aristarchus, discipulus eius, illud addidit, {n}e umquam simplicia compositis aptemus. Sonus can mean various things, but Charisius is here referring to accents; Callanan 1987, 26; Schenkeveld 1994, 284.*

no signs of normativity: he does not identify ‘incorrect’ language but rather observes differences in usage. From the evidence we have, he does not use analogy in the service of correct language (in the sense of defining how to produce faultless speech) but in textual criticism.<sup>179</sup> The methodological foundation for Aristophanes’ language study seems to have been empirical observation, rather than theory or presumed laws.<sup>180</sup>

In our sources, Aristarchus also mentions ἑλληνισμός: he maintains that Homer was the author by whom correct Greek was perfected (παρ’ ᾧ τὰ τοῦ ἑλληνισμοῦ ἠκρίβωται).<sup>181</sup> Aristarchus’ pupil Ptolemaeus Pindarion, and the latter’s followers, went so far as to state that Homeric usage, which they examined and found to be acceptable (δεδοκιμασμένη) and most ancient (ἀρχαιοτάτη), should be adopted as the criterion for ἑλληνισμός.<sup>182</sup> These sound like impractical views – yet they are understandable: Homeric language was at the same time something immensely valuable and perfect Greek, and utterly inapplicable in non-Homeric contexts.<sup>183</sup> These notions of ἑλληνισμός and Homer may be seen rather as moderating the use of analogy; the writers were not actually suggesting that Homeric Greek should be revived as a spoken language, which does sound quite unrealistic.<sup>184</sup>

By Aristarchus’ time, the parts of speech had become a point of interest for the grammarian. The development of parts-of-speech theory is interesting because of the central position it gains in Late Antiquity. The parts of speech were also something of a bone of contention between the philosophers, who were behind the original notions on the issue, and the grammarians, who had a different kind of interest in them. According to Quintilian, Aristarchus recognized eight *partes orationis*, parts of speech.<sup>185</sup> An overall analysis of the grammatical contents of Aristarchus’ work has been carried out by Stephanos Matthaios (*Untersuchungen zur Grammatik Aristarchs: Texte und Interpretation zur Wortartenlehre*, 1999). Matthaios concludes that the information passed on by Quintilian and Charisius concerning Aristarchus’ grammatical achievements is entirely credible. The term μερῆ τοῦ λόγου (*partes orationis* in Quintilian’s testimony), used by the Stoics in their definitions,<sup>186</sup> is not attested in the

<sup>179</sup> Callanan 1987 e.g. 69, 98, 106 (Schenkeveld 1990b, 291).

<sup>180</sup> Pagani 2011, 51.

<sup>181</sup> Ap. Dysc. pron. GG2.1 71,22–25 = frg. 125A Matthaios.

<sup>182</sup> Sext. Emp. math. 1,202–205; Blank 1998, 228.

<sup>183</sup> See also Janko 1995, 232.

<sup>184</sup> Pontani 2011, 92–93.

<sup>185</sup> Quint. inst. 1,4,20: *alii tamen ex idoneis dumtaxat auctoribus octo partes secuti sunt, ut Aristarchus et aetate nostra Palaemon, qui vocabulum sive appellationem nomini subiecerunt tamquam speciem eius, at ii, qui aliud nomen, aliud vocabulum faciunt, novem.* See section 5.4.1.

<sup>186</sup> For example the definition of the proper noun (Diog. Laert. 7,58): ὄνομα δέ ἐστι μέρος λόγου δηλοῦν ἰδίαν ποιότητα, οἷον Διογένης, Σωκράτης.

fragmentary material remaining from Aristarchus. Instead, Aristarchus used the word λέξις to refer to a word class, as well as (in fact primarily) to a ‘word’ or a ‘unit of language bearing significance’.<sup>187</sup> There is no indication that Aristarchus was interested in words as parts of λόγος, as the Stoics were, but rather as classifiable units that could be viewed separately. He retained certain Stoic notions, such as the distinction between common noun and proper noun, but he did not apply the actual Stoic definitions.<sup>188</sup>

The number of the parts of speech was not codified by Aristarchus, and this is by no means suggested by Quintilian, who notes that there are different opinions as to their number.<sup>189</sup> All the evidence we have, most importantly the grammatical papyri, suggests that eight became the canonized number of parts of speech as late as the second century CE.<sup>190</sup> De Jonge (2008, 93) remarks that despite Apollonius’ influential position, it was only Donatus, in the middle of the fourth century, by whom the number of eight parts of speech was finally signed and sealed. Many different versions of the theory of parts of speech were in circulation in the centuries between Aristarchus and Apollonius. The divisions introduced by the philosophers were in the service of syntactical analysis, and there was thus no need for more than four or five categories.<sup>191</sup> Philologically oriented grammarians, whose work relied heavily on the creation of taxonomies, made sharper divisions, into eight classes or more.<sup>192</sup> There was clearly an interest in classification, and this concerned language as well as literature: the interest in systematic description extends to the treatment of the art of grammar in general, resulting in definitions and divisions of γραμματική.

While Alexandria became the centre of scholarly activities, philosophy was dominated by the city of Athens, with its four important philosophical institutions (the Academy, the Lyceum, the Stoa and the Epicurean Garden). Athens maintained this position until the sack of the city in 86 BCE. This is not to say that there was no interest in philosophy in Alexandria: the early Ptolemies invited philosophers to Alexandria to enjoy royal patronage,<sup>193</sup> and the Alexandrian library held copies of Aristotle’s logical writings (some of which were for-

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<sup>187</sup> Matthaios 1999, 191–200.

<sup>188</sup> Callanan 1987 passim; 34; Luhtala 2005, 27. A notion of the pronoun by Aristarchus is preserved in Apollonius Dyscolus’ *De pronomine* (GG2.1 3,12–13): Ἀρίσταρχος λέξεις κατὰ πρόσωπα συζύγους ἐκάλεσε τὰς ἀνωνομίας (“Aristarchus referred to words that are connected with person as ‘pronouns’”). Apollonius treats this notion as a definition, and finds it unsatisfactory because it does not really distinguish between verbs and pronouns.

<sup>189</sup> Quint. *inst.* 1,4,17–21.

<sup>190</sup> Matthaios 1999, 195 and 2002, 168.

<sup>191</sup> On the philosophical tradition, see Luhtala 2005, 12ff.

<sup>192</sup> In relation to the extremity of the taxonomy of Alexandrian grammar, Taylor (1996, 17) points out an example from Varro *ling.* 10,10.

<sup>193</sup> See Hatzimichali 2011, 25–26.



geries).<sup>194</sup> Aristophanes is known to have produced an epitome of Aristotle's work *περὶ ζῴων*, on animals. It is evident that Aristophanes' interest in Aristotle's work on animals was that of an information specialist: he rearranged Aristotle's material so that it was easier to find what one was looking for.<sup>195</sup> We also know that Aristophanes organized Plato's works in trilogies, and that to some extent he was familiar with Epicurus' work as well.<sup>196</sup> In the light of evidence from papyri, it seems that the Alexandrians also edited and commented on Plato, following the same methods as in the editing and commentary process relating to Homer. These philological works, in which Plato's style and language were studied, were not in wide circulation, unlike the philosophical editions produced by the Academy at Athens.<sup>197</sup> There certainly seems to have been, if not a lively philosophical interest, a philological interest in philosophical texts among the Alexandrian scholars. These scholars may have not been attracted by the theoretical ideas of the philosophers, but the bibliographical and biographical tradition reveals a certain interest in philosophers as authors and eminent figures of the past.<sup>198</sup>

### 3.3 Crates of Mallus

A contemporary of the Alexandrian Aristarchus and a scholarly rival, Crates of Mallus, is the next scholar to be considered whose literary remains tell us something of the conceptualization of *γραμματική*. Crates was the librarian of Pergamum in the second century BCE. According to Suetonius' description in the treatise *De grammaticis*, Crates of Mallus is responsible for the beginning of grammatical activity in Rome. This was due to an unfortunate incident in the early 160s BCE: Crates fell into a sewer, broke his leg, and was forced to stay in the city longer than he had intended. The discipline he introduced to the Romans was *studium grammaticae*.<sup>199</sup> The story is definitely not without legendary features, such as his lecturing on a sickbed<sup>200</sup> and his being a *πρῶτος εὐρετής*, but it is possible that Suetonius does not greatly exaggerate Crates' impact. The preconditions for the rise of a Latin art of grammar seem to have been favourable: the bilingual poets Livius Andronicus and Ennius had already presented interpretations of Greek poetry and published original poetry as well, and Crates was by no means the first Greek scholar with whom the Romans had had

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<sup>194</sup> Barnes 1997a, 15–16.

<sup>195</sup> *Aristophanis Historiae animalium epitome* p. 36,3–5 (ed. Lambros); Hellmann 2006, 336.

<sup>196</sup> Diog. Laert. 3,61; 10,13.

<sup>197</sup> Schironi 2005.

<sup>198</sup> Hatzimichali 2011, 34–35.

<sup>199</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 2.

<sup>200</sup> Cf. Gell. 19,10.

contact. Thus Suetonius's modest crime in this case may merely be one of oversimplification.

Crates' name is echoed in some well-known linguistic and literary contexts: not only is he the person who introduces τέχνη γραμματική to the bellicose Romans, but Varro too discusses some of his views regarding anomaly and analogy in *De lingua Latina*. Otherwise, relatively little is known of Crates, and a substantial amount of our knowledge comes from the *Suda*, a source that is less than solid. According to the *Suda*, Crates was a Stoic,<sup>201</sup> but we do not know that he ever wrote on philosophy. According to Varro in *De lingua Latina*, Crates relied on the Stoic Chrysippus in the matter of anomaly, but in Varro's opinion Crates does not seem to have understood it very well.<sup>202</sup> No technical grammar is ascribed to Crates, but he dealt with a range of topics in language study, including στοιχεῖα or elements, defined as the smallest part of voice (φωνή), and possibly dialectology.<sup>203</sup> The professional title he claimed was κριτικός, a critic. This title had formerly been adopted by Philitas of Cos (*fl.* c. 300 BCE), a poet and renowned Homerist, whose works include a glossographical treatise on miscellaneous words with obscure meanings (ἄτακτοι γλῶσσαί).<sup>204</sup>

The critic Crates' theory of poetics is summarized in approximately five columns in the fragmentary work *De poematis* by Philodemus of Gadara (c. 110–35 BCE).<sup>205</sup> *De poematis* is a typical work among Philodemus' writings. He was an Epicurean whose argumentation technique consisted in systematically refuting his opponents, who were mainly Stoics and Peripatetics.<sup>206</sup> In *De poematis*, Philodemus wanted to point to certain theorists who shared views on euphony. These 'critics' were scholars who practiced the art of literature and language, with varying emphasis, conveniently labelled by Philodemus with the common name κριτικοί. The same term, however, is also used by Philodemus in refer-

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<sup>201</sup> *Suda* κ 2342. Κράτης, Τιμοκράτους, Μαλλώτης, φιλόσοφος Στωϊκός· ὃς ἐπεκλήθη Ὀμηρικὸς καὶ Κριτικός, διὰ τὴν καὶ περὶ τοὺς γραμματικὸς καὶ ποιητικὸς λόγους αὐτοῦ ἐπίστασιν· σύγχρονος Ἀριστάρχου τοῦ γραμματικοῦ, ἐπὶ Πτολεμαίου τοῦ Φιλομήτορος. συνέταξε διόρθωσιν Ἰλιάδος καὶ Ὀδυσσεΐας βιβλίοις θ' καὶ ἄλλα.

<sup>202</sup> Varro *ling.* 9,1.

<sup>203</sup> For elements, Schol. D.T. GG1.3 316,24–25; for dialectology, see Broggiato 2000.

<sup>204</sup> *Suda* φ 332; Strabo 14,2,19; Pfeiffer 1968, 157–159, 238. For the occupational names of the scholars see Prencipe 2002, 52–55.

<sup>205</sup> Philod. *poem.* 5,24,23–29,24 (in Mangoni's edition and frg. 101b in Broggiato's edition of the fragments of Crates). The text in the Philodemian papyri is not unproblematic, and Philodemus' work is the only source that links Crates of Mallus with euphonic criticism; Porter 1995, 83–84. This is not the only one of Crates' scholarly activities concerning which the testimonia are curiously disconnected: his Homeric allegoresis, widely attested in other sources, are not mentioned in the Philodemian papyri; see Porter 2003.

<sup>206</sup> De Lacy – Allen De Lacy 1978, 153–154.

ence to ‘literary critics’ in general.<sup>207</sup> Sextus Empiricus cites Crates’ view of the domains of a critic and a grammarian:

ἔοικε δὲ καὶ Κρατήτειόν τινα κινεῖν λόγον. καὶ γὰρ ἐκεῖνος ἔλεγε διαφέρειν τὸν κριτικὸν τοῦ γραμματικοῦ, καὶ τὸν μὲν κριτικὸν πάσης, φησί, δεῖ λογικῆς ἐπιστήμης ἔμπειρον εἶναι, τὸν δὲ γραμματικὸν ἀπλῶς γλωσσῶν ἐξηγητικὸν καὶ προσωδίας ἀποδοτικὸν καὶ τῶν τούτοις παραπλησίων εἰδήμονα· παρὸ καὶ εὐοικεῖναι ἐκεῖνον μὲν ἀρχιτέκτονι τὸν δὲ γραμματικὸν ὑπηρέτη.<sup>208</sup>

But he (i.e. Chaeris) also seems to be bringing an argument from Crates. Crates said that the ‘critic’ differs from the grammarian and that the critic is experienced in all of logical science, whereas the grammarian is merely an interpreter of words, establisher of accents, and knower of things like these; therefore the critic is like an architect and the grammarian like his servant.

In addition to his work with language and literature, Crates’ scholarly interests also covered geography and cosmology. This work seems to have been subordinate to his work as a critic.<sup>209</sup> He saw the grammarian as the practical executor of various tasks related to the text; a servant of the critic. In the *Metaphysica* (981b27–982a3), Aristotle portrays the hierarchy of possessors of knowledge somewhat similarly to Crates’ idea: The man of experience (ὁ ἔμπειρος) is wiser (σοφώτερος) than the man who merely possesses ‘sense perceptions’ (αἰσθήσεις); the man with expert knowledge (ὁ τεχνίτης) is wiser than the man of experience; the architect (ὁ ἀρχιτέκτων) is wiser than the craftsman (ὁ χειροτέχνης). Crates’ ‘architect’ knows his λόγος and is thus above the servant, or ‘craftsman’ – what better way, from a Pergamene viewpoint, to underline the hierarchical relationship of the rival schools of Pergamum and Alexandria?

Crates defined the critic as one who is experienced in all of logical science, πᾶσα λογικὴ ἐπιστήμη. According to Crates, poetry was to be judged through the senses; the objects of judgement were the rational precepts that are there by nature (τὰ λογικὰ θεωρήματα φύσει ὑπάρχοντα δι’ αἰσθήσεως κρίνειν).<sup>210</sup> This reflects the Stoic idea of immanent λόγος, with which everything in the world accords.<sup>211</sup> The thoughts expressed in a poem are not the actual object of Crates’ criticism. The criterion of judgement is whether a poem is

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<sup>207</sup> Janko 2000, 126; Porter (1995) also discusses the matter.

<sup>208</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,79 = frg. 94 Broggiato.

<sup>209</sup> As suggested by Asmis 1992, 142.

<sup>210</sup> Philod. *poem.* 5,28,24–26 (in frg. 101b Broggiato).

<sup>211</sup> See Long 1996, 50 and n. 42 for loci.

“actualized in accordance with the rational rules of the art” (ικ|ατ[ἄ τὸν τῆς τ[έ]χνης [λόγ]ον ἐνεργηθῆι), with the result of pleasing the hearing.<sup>212</sup> Crates’ position regarding the gaining of knowledge was clearly rationalist. Accordingly, it is conceivable that *πᾶσα λογικὴ ἐπιστήμη* is the concept underlying the judgement of the rational precepts in the poem.

It has been seen as possible that Crates’ *πᾶσα λογικὴ ἐπιστήμη* refers to the logical part of Stoic philosophy, covering dialectic and rhetoric.<sup>213</sup> However, we do not know of Crates ever having written on philosophy, just as we do not know if he ever wrote a technical grammar; furthermore, what his philosophical viewpoint might have been in practice remains unclear. Rather than referring directly to Stoic logic, Crates may have meant the requirement of omniscience, well known in the rhetorical tradition from Isocrates onwards. A good speaker must possess wide knowledge of the arts and sciences. In the same spirit, Cicero also insisted on knowledge of “all great matters and arts”.<sup>214</sup> Crates apparently wanted to elevate the critic to a level of mastery by claiming a very broad domain; this was to ensure that the critic was fully equipped for the study of literature and language. No matter what the critic encountered in his material, he was not at a loss because of his mastery of all of logical science, everything that is a result of rational human thought.<sup>215</sup>

Despite Crates’ search for rational precepts, euphony is a matter of sense perception and therefore empirical. According to Crates, “everything is judged by being viewed empirically” (*πάντα δ’ ἐμπείρως [θε]ωρούμεν|α κρίνεται*). No regulations can pertain to hearing: it tells us naturally whether the poem is good or not. The whole process presupposes rational rules, but Crates admits that the actual judgement cannot be based on anything but *ἐμπειρία*.<sup>216</sup> The euphonist

<sup>212</sup> Philod. *poem.* 5,28,2-4 (in frg. 101b Broggiato); see Armstrong 1995, 265 and Blank 1982, 3–4.

<sup>213</sup> Mette 1952, 56; Prencipe 2002, 54: “intera dialettica (λογικὴ ἐπιστήμη)” but later “con λογικὴ ἐπιστήμη si riferisce probabilmente a quella parte dello stoicismo che comprende retorica e dialettica --.” Blank (1998, 140) interprets it “all of philosophy and logical achievement”; Blank and Atherton (2003, 318) take a careful position: “-- possible indirect clues [of the Stoic Τέχνη περὶ φωνῆς] are also found in the earliest structural divisions of grammar which are reported to us, the ‘critical expertise’ of Crates of Mallus and the ‘expert part’ of Asclepiades of Myrlea.”

<sup>214</sup> Cic. *de or.* 1,20: *Ac mea quidem sententia nemo poterit esse omni laude cumulatus orator, nisi erit omnium rerum magnarum atque artium scientiam consecutus; etenim ex rerum cognitione efflorescat et redundet oportet oratio.*

<sup>215</sup> Crates’ ‘logical science’ also included the parts of speech. Crates’ teacher, Diogenes of Babylon, was according to Diogenes Laertius (7,58) the very Stoic philosopher who defined the parts of speech (see section 2.4). There may, however, be differences in the theories of Crates and Diogenes; see Janko 1995, 228–229. Besides Diogenes of Babylon, also another well-known Stoic, Panaetius, is mentioned (Strabo 14,5,16) to have known Crates.

<sup>216</sup> Philod. *poem.* 5,1,7–17 = frg. 101a Broggiato.

theory apparently did not appeal to a pupil of Crates, Tauriscus (second century BCE), who does not refer to it in his division of κριτική preserved by Sextus Empiricus:

Ταυρίσκος γοῦν ὁ Κράτητος ἀκουστής, ὡσπερ οἱ ἄλλοι κριτικοὶ ὑποτάσσων τῇ κριτικῇ τὴν γραμματικὴν, φησὶ τῆς κριτικῆς εἶναι τὸ μὲν τι λογικὸν τὸ δὲ τριβικὸν τὸ δ' ἱστορικόν,<sup>217</sup> λογικὸν μὲν τὸ στρεφόμενον περὶ τὴν λέξιν καὶ τοὺς γραμματικούς τρόπους, τριβικὸν δὲ τὸ περὶ τὰς διαλέκτους καὶ τὰς διαφορὰς τῶν πλασμάτων καὶ χαρακτήρων, ἱστορικὸν δὲ τὸ περὶ τὴν προχειρότητα τῆς ἀμεθόδου ὕλης.<sup>218</sup>

Tauriscus the pupil of Crates, who like the other critics subordinated grammar to criticism, says that the parts of criticism are rational, practice-based and historical. The rational part is concerned with diction and the grammatical tropes. The practice-based part is about dialects and differences in formations and styles, and the historical part deals with the subject matter of the nonmethodical material.

Crates' own definition or division of κριτική are not known to us, although his delineation of the domains of the critic and the grammarian comes close to one and emphasizes the subordinate position of the grammarian, which Tauriscus reminds us about as well. According to Tauriscus, the art of criticism is divided in terms of the relevant methods into three species: λογικόν, τριβικόν, ἱστορικόν. The first of these, λογικόν, consists in turn of 'diction' (λέξις) and 'grammatical tropes' (γραμματικοὶ τρόποι). Mette (1952, 57) interprets these categories by way of ps.-Plutarch's *vit. Hom.* 14, in which the λέξεις are named as ξένα, ἀρχαία, κοινὰ καὶ συνήθεις – foreign, old, common and usual.<sup>219</sup> The latter concept, γραμματικοὶ τρόποι, probably refers to converted significations of a single word, for example metaphor and synecdoche. The word γραμματικοί is needed in order to distinguish the kind of tropes in question here; the rhetoricians had their own type of tropes. Diction and grammatical tropes are placed in the same category probably because they are clearly classifiable, small-scale entities in a literary text. This division of κριτική uses λόγος,

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<sup>217</sup> Viz. μέρος: the preceding sentence reads Ὅτι μὲν ἀξιοῦται τοῦτο ὀλοσχερῶς εἶναι μέρος γραμματικῆς, συμφανές.

<sup>218</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,248–9.

<sup>219</sup> Quintilian also discusses the study of individual words (*inst.* 1,5,3), and divides words (*uerba* or *uoces*, *locutiones*, *dictiones*) into "our own or foreign (*aut nostra aut peregrina*), "simple or compound" (*aut simplicia aut composita*), "literal or metaphorical" (*aut propria aut tralata*), and "in current use or made up" (*aut usitata aut ficta*).

which means that it depends on given rules and theorems that are applied in each case.

The second species in Tauriscus' division is called τριβικόν: the command of this part is founded on knowledge based on practice (τριβή), as opposed to 'theory'.<sup>220</sup> This part in Tauriscus' division of criticism embodies the study of dialects and stylistic devices used by different authors, subjects with which the critic must familiarize himself first-hand. It is difficult to say what the relationship between πλάσματα and χαρακτήρες is in Tauriscus' division. There may not be much difference; in Ps.-Plutarch's *vit. Hom.* 72, the concepts are synonymous, and exemplified by Thucydides (an example of 'grand style'), Lysias ('plain style') and Demosthenes ('middle style').

The third, historical part concerns the 'raw material' of the texts, the stories, and is based on literary tradition, both poetry and prose. The word ἀμέθοδος appears as a means of distinguishing the nature of the parts: the 'methodical' material, which is to say the scientifically predictable material, will be found in the rational and the empirical part.

The domains of the critic and the grammarian are exemplified in the earlier Sextus passage, in which Crates explicitly assigns matters of προσωδία to the pursuit of grammar on a lower level. The euphonist theorist would indeed leave prosodic markings to the grammarian and himself focus on rhythm and μέλος, sounds and the effects they cause, and ultimately on the aesthetic evaluation of a literary product – something the grammarian was not equipped to do. Crates' and his pupil Tauriscus' descriptions of κριτική suggest that there was a shared perception of what γραμματική is, and, if we take Crates' word for it, apparently the study of individual words – perhaps referring to Aristarchus' view on analogy – and matters of prosody were distinctive to it. But in Tauriscus' threefold division of κριτική there is nothing that is not included in Dionysius Thrax' definition and division of γραμματική.<sup>221</sup> Whatever there was that was significant in the division of κριτική by Tauriscus compared to γραμματική, it no longer stands out. Both Crates and Tauriscus apparently allow grammarians a more limited domain than the grammarians actually occupied; this is clearly due to the rival position of the Alexandrian and Pergamene scholars. These represent early phases in the history of grammar, and the division by Tauriscus is may be earlier than that of Dionysius Thrax. Tauriscus' division may be the first attempt to divide the art of literature and language into different levels, or in this case into species. If neither the grammarians nor the critics had any kind of standard definition and division of their arts, the critics would

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<sup>220</sup> The concepts of ἐμπειρία and τριβή are closely related. In Plato's *Phaedrus* (260e), τριβή is ἄτεχνος, not τέχνη, and the concepts of τριβή and ἐμπειρία are directly contrasted with τέχνη (*ibid.* 270b).

<sup>221</sup> See sections 3.4.2 and 3.4.3.

indeed be tempted to draw up a programme in which γραμματική was subordinated and merged into κριτική.

The difference between grammarians and critics was artificial to begin with, based on geography and a sense of rivalry more than anything else, the ‘critics’ being Pergamene and the ‘grammarians’ Alexandrian. Later on, the rivalry went largely unnoticed; for example, Dionysius of Halicarnassus refers to the “grammarians of Pergamum” (τούς ἐκ Περγάμου γραμματικούς).<sup>222</sup> The two prominent scholars of the rival schools of the Hellenistic era, Crates and Aristarchus, are commonly presented as fellow-Homerists, for example by Dio Chrysostom:

-- οἱ δὲ αὐτὸ τοῦτο τὴν διάνοιαν ἐξηγούμενοι, οὐ μόνον Ἀρίσταρχος καὶ Κράτης καὶ ἕτεροι πλείους τῶν ὕστερον γραμματικῶν κληθέντων, πρότερον δὲ κριτικῶν.<sup>223</sup>

-- others have busied themselves with interpreting the (Homeric) thought itself, not only Aristarchus and Crates and several others who were later called grammarians, formerly critics.

The question of professional designations finds an answer here: Dio Chrysostom indicates no difference in the tasks of the critics and the grammarians. Only the names have been changed over the time. This seems to be the shared opinion of later generations. The same notion occurs in the Scholia to Dionysius Thrax: the art of grammar was earlier called κριτική and those who practiced it were called κριτικοί, and the first to be called γραμματικός was Antidorus of Cyme.<sup>224</sup>

Sextus Empiricus claims that Crates, Aristophanes and Aristarchus and their followers are the ones that worked out a *complete grammar*.<sup>225</sup> Sextus does not mention criticism. The hierarchical array asserted by Crates is lost. Crates and Aristarchus were rivals in their work on literary criticism, and there is evidence that they often disagreed in their interpretations of Homer. With respect to their philological work, on the other hand, they do not seem to have differed radically.<sup>226</sup>

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<sup>222</sup> Dion. Hal. *Din.* 1,16.

<sup>223</sup> Dio Chrys. *or.* 53,1.

<sup>224</sup> *GG*1.3 3,23–26; 7,23–29; see section 2.2.

<sup>225</sup> *math.* 1,44: Γραμματική τοίνυν λέγεται..., ιδιαίτερον δὲ ἡ ἐντελής καὶ τοῖς περὶ Κράτηρα τὸν Μαλλώτην Ἀριστοφάνην τε καὶ Ἀρίσταρχον ἐκπονηθεῖσα.

<sup>226</sup> See Blank 2005, 222.

Crates left a legendary heritage to the Romans, who, it seems, failed to adopt his terminology regarding professional titles. Varro calls Crates *nobilis grammaticus*, not *criticus*.<sup>227</sup> *Critici* are mentioned every now and then in the Latin sources. Cicero's 'ancient critic' deals with questions of authenticity (*fam.* 9,10,1): *ego tamquam criticus antiquus iudicaturus sum utrum sint τοῦ ποιητοῦ ἢ παρεμβεβλημένοι*. From Horace we have a passage in which Ennius is said to have been called a 'second Homer' by *critici* (*ep.* 2,1,50): *Ennius, et sapiens et fortis et alter Homerus / ut critici dicunt, leviter curare videtur / quo promissa cadant et somnia Pythagorea*. Horace may be referring to Varro as one of the *critici*; he is known to have paralleled Ennius and Homer in one of his Menippean satires.<sup>228</sup> The meaning of *critici* is not perhaps different from *grammatici*, since in this case *criticus* is selected at least in part because of the demand of the metrical arrangement. Servius, who mentions *critici* frequently in the commentary on Vergil, always does so in a context of blame and judgement: *critici notant, notatur a criticis, critici culpant*.<sup>229</sup> The kinds of things the 'critics' point out are most often diagnoses of spuria, and it seems that *critici* are in fact *grammatici* performing textual criticism.<sup>230</sup> It thus appears that the word *criticus* was connected to what was perceived as the original function of the art as it was practiced in Hellenistic Alexandria. The Romans did not adopt the Cratetean designation in the sense of 'critic of aesthetic values in poetry', but rather used it of the type of work generally associated with the Alexandrian professionals of textual criticism.

There has been much discussion over the last few decades of the ancient dispute over analogy and anomaly provoked by Varro's testimony at the beginning of the ninth book of *De lingua Latina*. In this hypothetical dispute, the Alexandrian school and Aristarchus represent the 'analogist side', Crates, with his Pergamene view, the 'anomalist side'. More recently, more or less exclusively moderate tones have been heard concerning the existence and scale of this debate.<sup>231</sup> According to Varro's testimony, Aristarchus thought that analogical word forms should be used to the extent permitted by common usage (-- *Aristarchus, de aequabilitate cum scribit ei<us>de<m>, verborum similitudinem quandam <in> declinatione sequi iubet, quoad patitur consuetudo*<sup>232</sup>). In the past, the idea has been widely accepted that Crates was the proponent of anomaly in Book 8 of *De lingua Latina*, which is traditionally seen as a battlefield of the anomalists and the analogists. However, there are no indications that those who criticized

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<sup>227</sup> *ling.* 9,1; see section 4.3.3.

<sup>228</sup> *sat. Men.* 398 = GRF frg. 96.

<sup>229</sup> Serv. *in Verg. buc.* 2,65; *in Verg. Aen.* 1,71; 2,668; 8,291; 8,731; 9,81; 10,157; 10,861; 11,24; 11,188; 12,83.

<sup>230</sup> Winterbottom 1982, 34.

<sup>231</sup> See for example Blank 2005.

<sup>232</sup> Varro *ling.* 9,1.



the analogical rules, or claimed that they were non-existent, were grammarians – a field Crates essentially represented, even if he wanted to claim another name for it. Rather, the attackers were the Epicureans and the Pyrrhonian sceptics to whom Sextus Empiricus refers in his *Adversus mathematicos*.<sup>233</sup> As to Crates and Aristarchus, it is probable that their disagreement only concerned the application of the rules of analogy.<sup>234</sup> Varro mentions Crates' name only once in the ninth book, and this seems to have been in a cautionary spirit: the subject of anomaly and analogy is a difficult one, and Crates – whom Varro respects – had not understood it correctly. According to Varro, it is an argument against the very existence of analogy that those who have written about it do not agree with one another.<sup>235</sup>

### 3.4 The art of grammar according to Dionysius Thrax

#### 3.4.1 THE MAN AND HIS WORK

Crates of Mallus may have been at the peak of his career when he brought *studium grammaticae* to the Romans sometime during the 160s BCE. His Alexandrian contemporary Aristarchus inspired followers, who saw the possibilities of Aristarchus' groundwork and with Stoic influence further developed the language description of which today only fragments stand as testimony.<sup>236</sup> One of these followers – a pupil of Aristarchus – was Dionysius Thrax (roughly 170–90 BCE),<sup>237</sup> who (despite the epithet 'Thracian') was of Alexandrian origin. He wrote a grammatical manual known by the title of Τέχνη γραμματική. It does not seem that either Aristophanes or Aristarchus ever wrote a systematic grammatical manual, but Dionysius apparently did have at least one Alexandrian scholarly predecessor in this type of work: Eratosthenes and his Γραμματικά. Other grammatical manuals were in circulation towards the end of the second century BCE as well, none of which survives to present day. An example of these lost manuals is the work Περὶ γραμματικῆς by Asclepiades of Myrlea, described by Sextus Empiricus in his critical account of the art of grammar, the first book of his *Adversus mathematicos*. The so-called technical part of grammar, containing the array of letters, parts of speech, orthography and the theory of correct language, gained increasing interest in the first century BCE.

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<sup>233</sup> Sextus' critique of analogy is found in *math.* 1,176ff; see section 3.7.

<sup>234</sup> Blank 2005, 211–212.

<sup>235</sup> Varro *ling.* 9,111.

<sup>236</sup> One of the key figures in this work was Tryphon, Apollonius' much cited – and refuted – predecessor in grammar; Matthaios 1999, 625. Tryphon incorporated at least some syntactical theorizing in works; see Matthaios 2003. On Tryphon, see section 4.2.

<sup>237</sup> The dates can be approximated by the dates of Aristarchus and Tyrannion, Dionysius' teacher and pupil; Linke 1977, 9.

Di Benedetto (1958, 202ff.) has listed the factors that caused the emergence of technical grammar.<sup>238</sup> First of all, there was the wish to protect classical Greek from becoming corrupted by contemporary usage; secondly, the cultural interaction between the Greeks and Romans, which made dialectology a focal point in studies of language and literature;<sup>239</sup> and finally, the simple fact that conditions were geographically propitious. After Ptolemy VIII Euergetes violently attacked scholars and expelled them from Alexandria in 145 BCE, the meeting point of intellectuals representing different fields of study shifted to Rhodes. The banished professionals included grammarians, philosophers, geometricians, musicians, painters and physicians. In the course of time, those who studied and worked at Rhodes came to include famous philosophers, rhetoricians and grammarians as well as future statesmen. Dionysius Thrax lived there, as did for instance Tyrannion, Aelius Stilo, Cicero and Caesar.<sup>240</sup>

For the purposes of the present study, there is a great deal more to discuss in the literary remains of Dionysius Thrax than in those of his Alexandrian predecessors. The Τέχνη γραμματική preserved to us under his name begins with a definition of grammar. The definition is immediately followed by a list of the six parts of grammar. This initial section is followed by the so-called technical section, which nowadays is widely regarded as inauthentic.<sup>241</sup> It does not seem to correspond to the list of the six parts of grammar in the first chapter: parts 2–4 (literary tropes, obscure words and historical references, etymologies) and part 6 (critical assessment of poems) are not mentioned again in the existing text. Parts 1 (reading) and 5 (analogy) seem to receive a treatment in the text, but it is highly dubious whether the chapters consisting of semantic taxonomy (for example the adverb section, in which 26 subtypes are listed)<sup>242</sup> are something that Dionysius would have called ‘analogy’, the fifth part of grammar.<sup>243</sup> Reading (ἀνάγνωσις) in the list of parts and its treatment in the actual grammar do not seem to amount to the same thing either.<sup>244</sup> Although it is very likely that the list of the parts of grammar was not intended as a table of contents, it would also seem more plausible that the treatise was originally more coherent in its entirety (later suffering from some form of disintegration) than that it had been incoherently fabricated in the first place and then preserved in its original form.

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<sup>238</sup> See also Kemp 1996, 303.

<sup>239</sup> For example, Philoxenus of Alexandria, Tyrannion the Younger, Lucius Aelius Stilo, and Varro were among the scholars who contributed to dialectology; see *GRF*.

<sup>240</sup> *Ath. deipn.* 4,184b–c.

<sup>241</sup> In the modern research tradition, the inauthenticity claim was first made by Di Benedetto (1958–1959).

<sup>242</sup> *GG*1.1 73–86.

<sup>243</sup> See for instance Taylor 1995a, 86.

<sup>244</sup> For reading (ἀνάγνωσις), see Di Benedetto 2000, 397.

This, however, is by no means the most convincing argument on behalf of the inauthenticity claim. I next go over some of the strong points against the authenticity of Τέχνη.<sup>245</sup>

Apollonius Dyscolus mentions Dionysius by name and cites him, but he does not cite the Τέχνη, or at least not the one we know today. The fragments of the teachings of Dionysius Thrax seem to reflect Stoic ideas. After the death of Panaetius in 110 BCE, the centre of Stoicism seems to have moved from Athens to Rhodes, where Dionysius resided after the famous *secessio doctorum* in 145 BCE. The most prominent of the Stoics at Rhodes was Posidonius of Apamea (c. 135–51 BCE), a former disciple of Panaetius. These two Stoics do not seem to have been interested in a logic that incorporated the study of language, but there is another link between Dionysius and the Stoic study of language: the grammarian Apollodorus of Athens. He was a pupil of Diogenes of Babylon, whom we know to have practiced language study; Apollodorus also worked with Aristarchus, Dionysius' teacher, in Alexandria.<sup>246</sup> It seems very probable that Apollodorus, who was trained in Stoic logic, influenced the grammatical ideas of the Alexandrians.<sup>247</sup> A survival from word-class analysis by Dionysius Thrax exemplifies the Stoic influence: ὁ δὲ Διονύσιος ὁ Θραξ, ὡς φησιν Ἀπολλώνιος ἐν τῷ Ῥηματικῷ, οὕτως ὀρίζεται τὸ ῥῆμα: “ῥῆμά ἐστι λέξις κατηγορημα σημαίνουσα”.<sup>248</sup> Dionysius here defines the verb as a predicate, much as in the Stoic definition attributed to Diogenes of Babylon: ῥῆμα δὲ ἐστὶ μέρος λόγου σημαῖνον ἀσύνθετον κατηγορημα.<sup>249</sup> By specifying λέξις as the genus of the verb, Dionysius seems to follow Aristarchus' practice, whereas the Stoics used the term μέρος λόγου, part of speech. The definition of the verb from the present Τέχνη looks quite different: the verb is defined as a word which is not declined but is marked for tense, person and number, and expresses activity or passivity (Ῥῆμά ἐστι λέξις ἄπτωτος, ἐπιδεκτικὴ χρόνων τε καὶ προσώπων καὶ ἀριθμῶν, ἐνέργειαν ἢ πάθος παριστάσα).<sup>250</sup> Likewise notions of the pronoun (which Dionysius called ἄρθρον δεικτικόν) and of common and proper nouns as separate categories are preserved.<sup>251</sup>

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<sup>245</sup> For the discrepancies concerning the text of the Τέχνη as we now have it, see Pagani 2011, 33–34.

<sup>246</sup> Diogenes “the Stoic” and Aristarchus are associated with Apollodorus in ps.-Scymnus' Hellenistic era geographical work *ad Nicomedem regem* 20–21: ἀκουστής Διογένους τοῦ Στωικοῦ, συνεσχολακῶς δὲ πολὺν Ἀριστάρχῳ χρόνον. The *Suda* (α 3407) also refers to Apollodorus of Athens as having been a student of Panaetius.

<sup>247</sup> Frede 1987, 358–359; see also Janko 1995, 215 and De Jonge 2008, 100–101.

<sup>248</sup> Schol. D.T. GG1.3 161,6–8.

<sup>249</sup> Diog. Laert. 7,58.

<sup>250</sup> GG1.1 46,4–5.

<sup>251</sup> For the verb, frg. 55 Linke (GG1.3 161,6–8); pronoun Ap. Dysc. *pron.* GG2.1 5,18–19; common noun and proper noun frg. 54 Linke (GG1.3 160,26–28). As far as it is possible to tell

There appears to have been some ambivalence about the dating and origin of the text of the *Τέχνη γραμματική* since antiquity. The Scholiast who preserves Dionysius' definition of the verb (cited above) also notes that it does not correspond to the definition found in the *Τέχνη* he knows (GG1.3 160,24–161,8), which leads to suspicion as to the authenticity of the text. Another Scholiast also raises the question:

Θέλουσιν οὖν τινες μὴ εἶναι γνήσιον τοῦ Θρακῶς τὸ παρὸν σύγγραμμα, ἐπιχειροῦντες οὕτως, ὅτι οἱ τεχνικοὶ μέμνηνται Διονυσίου τοῦ Θρακῶς, καὶ λέγουσιν ὅτι διεχώριζε τὴν προσηγορίαν ἀπὸ τοῦ ὀνόματος καὶ συνῆπτε τὸ ἄρθρον καὶ τὴν ἀντωνυμίαν· ἄρα οὖν οὐκ ἔστι Διονυσίου τοῦ Θρακῶς τὸ παρὸν σύγγραμμα. Ἔστιν οὖν εἰπεῖν, ὅτι ἄλλος ἦν ἐκεῖνος <ὁ> Διονύσιος ὁ Θραῶξ, καὶ ἄλλος ὁ ποιήσας τὸ παρὸν σύγγραμμα, ἐκεῖνος μὲν μαθητὴς Ἀριστάρχου, οὗτος δὲ ὁ τοῦ Πηροῦ.<sup>252</sup>

Some argue that the present treatise is not an authentic work of the Thracian. They insist that the technicians mention Dionysius Thrax and say that he separated the proper noun from the common noun and combined the article and the pronoun; therefore this is not a treatise by Dionysius Thrax. It is thus possible to say that this Dionysius Thrax was one and the author of this treatise another. The former was a student of Aristarchus and the latter [the son] of Perus.<sup>253</sup>

The authenticity of the *Τέχνη* is not doubted in any text (that we know of) pre-dating the Byzantine Scholia, although the Scholiast here – as on many other occasions – seems to be relying on an earlier tradition of questioning.<sup>254</sup> We do not know of the other Dionysius, son of Perus, to whom the Scholiast refers; nor do we know where the Scholiast got his information. It is however obvious that the doubts the Byzantine grammarians had about the authenticity of the *Τέχνη* had no impact on the popularity of the text in grammar schools.<sup>255</sup>

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from the fragmentary evidence, Dionysius was also the first to apply the Stoic theory of proper nouns and common nouns to the Alexandrian study of word classes; Matthaios 2002, 192.

<sup>252</sup> GG1.3 124,7–14.

<sup>253</sup> Probably “the son of Perus” rather than “the disciple of Perus”; as the other Scholiast puts it, οὗτος δὲ ἐστὶν ὁ λεγόμενος ὁ τοῦ Πηροῦ.

<sup>254</sup> Lallot 1989, 20.

<sup>255</sup> Law 1990, 89.

The question of authenticity is discussed in detail for example by Lallot (1989), Kemp (1991<sup>256</sup>), Collinge (1995, 56–68), and Robins (1995). Most present-day scholars regard chapters 2–20 of the Τέχνη as inauthentic. It has been suggested that the Τέχνη we have is a compilation from the third or fourth century.<sup>257</sup> One way to look at the issue is to regard the present version as a final, canonized edition of the original work by Dionysius Thrax,<sup>258</sup> a view I am inclined to agree with: as Stephanos Matthaios shows in his study of Aristarchus (1999, 17–23; 623), much of the material contained in the Τέχνη could in fact date to Dionysius’ day. Dionysius Thrax probably wrote the text from which the initial section survives towards the end of the second century BCE. In considering the momentousness of the authenticity question, we need to be aware that it was not until the fourth or fifth century that Dionysius’ grammar became more than one grammar among many others. This is reflected for instance in the taxonomic diversity in the field of language study: different authors posited different numbers of parts of speech.<sup>259</sup> There is no single Greek grammar we can point to as being universally accepted during the first centuries BCE and CE.<sup>260</sup>

The text of Τέχνη γραμματική attributed to Dionysius Thrax is quite short, just under 3000 words in fifteen modern pages. The technical section of the grammar consists of nineteen short chapters. These include different aspects of language: reading, accent, punctuation, rhapsody,<sup>261</sup> elements (letters and sounds), the syllable (long, short and common) and the word. The last ten chapters introduce the eight parts of speech: noun, verb, participle, article, pronoun, preposition, adverb and conjunction.<sup>262</sup> There is virtually no discussion of linguistic issues: the terms are simply listed, with numerous examples, thus making the grammar a compact manual and thus suitable for a teacher’s aid.<sup>263</sup> Syntax is not dealt with in the Τέχνη, nor is the question of correct language.

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<sup>256</sup> Kemp’s article ‘The emergence of autonomous Greek grammar’ in *Geschichte der Sprachtheorie 2* was originally published in 1991. I have used the second, improved edition from 1996.

<sup>257</sup> Kemp 1986, 343–344.

<sup>258</sup> Robins 1993, 44.

<sup>259</sup> Schenkeveld 1994, 267.

<sup>260</sup> Taylor 1986, 184.

<sup>261</sup> The section on rhapsody is a particularly puzzling one, possibly an interpolation, or its relevance may be obscured by the loss of some of the passages surrounding it (Kemp 1986, 343).

<sup>262</sup> Dion. Thrax GG1.1 23,1–2: Τοῦ δὲ λόγου μέρη ἐστὶν ὀκτώ· ὄνομα, ῥῆμα, μετοχή, ἄρθρον, ἀντωνυμία, πρόθεσις, ἐπίρρημα, σύνδεσμος.

<sup>263</sup> In comparison with *De constructione* (Περὶ συντάξεως, on syntax) by Apollonius Dyscolus, the Τέχνη can be described as an example of ‘labelling type grammar’, concentrating on the basic grammatical terminology, and giving definitions as well as examples. Apollonius

### 3.4.2 DIONYSIUS' DEFINITION OF GRAMMAR AND THE EMPIRICIST MOVEMENT

Two versions of the famous definition of grammar by Dionysius Thrax survive. The Τέχνη γραμματική (GG1.1) begins with a definition and a list of the parts of grammar, while the second century CE sceptic writer Sextus Empiricus cites the definition in his discussion of what grammar is (*math.* 1,57,7–9). Sextus refers to Dionysius' work, from which the definition and list of parts originate as παραγγέλματα. This term may or may not be meant as the title of the work: it could simply refer to Dionysius' precepts. We know, however, of a title παραγγέλματα ῥητορικῆς from Theophrastus that could offer a parallel.<sup>264</sup> In the mediaeval manuscripts, the definition is followed by a list of grammar's six parts. Sextus also preserves the list, but not directly after the definition. There are slight differences in the definitions as well as in the lists of parts.<sup>265</sup> Sextus Empiricus cites Dionysius as saying "grammar is experience for the most part of what is said in the writings of poets and prose-writers" (γραμματική ἐστὶν ἐμπειρία ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πλεῖστον τῶν παρὰ ποιηταῖς τε καὶ συγγραφεῦσι λεγομένων).<sup>266</sup> According to the Τέχνη γραμματική, Dionysius defined grammar as "experience of the things that are often said in the writings of poets and prose-writers" (γραμματική ἐστὶν ἐμπειρία τῶν παρὰ ποιηταῖς τε καὶ συγγραφεῦσιν ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ λεγομένων).<sup>267</sup> The expressions ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ / ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πλεῖστον hold a different place in the two versions of the definitions.

The meaning of the definition has aroused a fair amount of discussion.<sup>268</sup> We cannot know with certainty which of the two slightly different definitions is

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focuses on examining the scientific premises of grammar and thus represents an 'argumentative' type; Swiggers and Wouters 1996, 153.

<sup>264</sup> Di Benedetto (1958, 182), Schenkeveld (1995, 42) and again Di Benedetto (2000, 395) consider παραγγέλματα as the title of Dionysius' work. Theophrastus was renowned in Alexandria: we know that Ptolemy I Soter (368/367–283/282 BC) wanted him to come to Alexandria, apparently to tutor his son, but failed to persuade him. Another philosopher of the Peripatetic school, Strato of Lampsacus, agreed to the request (Diog. Laert. 5,37; 5,58; Hatzimichali 2011, 25).

<sup>265</sup> A recent discussion on the interpretations of the Dionysian definition is found in Pagani (2010).

<sup>266</sup> *math.* 1,57,7–9.

<sup>267</sup> GG1.1 5,2–3.

<sup>268</sup> Blank (1998, 14) has translated the passage from Sextus as "Grammar is an experience for the most part of what is said in poets and writers" (italics mine). Di Benedetto (2000, 395) translates the same version as "Grammar is the *maximally extensive* experience of what is said by poets and prose writers" (italics mine). Di Benedetto uses his interpretation as an argument not only against the authenticity of the Τέχνη, but also as an argument for the development of grammatical thought. According to him, the wording in the definition Sextus cites relates to the critical-philological tradition and is thus the original one. The definition in the Τέχνη γραμματική (γραμματική ἐστὶν ἐμπειρία τῶν παρὰ ποιηταῖς τε καὶ συγγραφεῦσιν ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ λεγομένων) on the other hand relates to the "everyday language, which

the original form, or truer to the original. It seems, however, more plausible to take Sextus' version – probably mediated by Asclepiades of Myrlea – as the older one.<sup>269</sup> The difference between the two versions of the definitions has been explained by misquoting: according to Uhlig (1883, 5), it is likely that Sextus Empiricus' memory failed when he cited Dionysius (πλεῖστον *pro* πολὺ). This could be the case, given the fact that Sextus also specifically states on several occasions that Dionysius wrote κατὰ τὸ πλεῖστον instead of ἐπὶ τὸ πλεῖστον, which is the version Sextus records first.<sup>270</sup> Sextus' also places ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πλεῖστον before τῶν παρὰ, and not immediately before λεγομένων. Uhlig does not see this as a *memoriae lapsus*, but instead takes it as the original word order, transmitted to Sextus by Asclepiades of Myrlea.

A passage from Sextus Empiricus explains how he understands the meaning of the definition he cites: the object of grammar's experience is the most part of things said in literature.

ὅταν οὖν λέγωσιν αὐτὴν ἐμπειρίαν κατὰ τὸ πλεῖστον τῶν παρὰ ποιηταῖς καὶ συγγραφεῦσι λεγομένων, φασὶ πάντων ἢ τινῶν. καὶ εἰ πάντων, [πρῶτον μὲν] οὐκέτι κατὰ τὸ πλεῖστον ἀλλὰ πάντων, καὶ εἰ πάντων, καὶ τῶν ἀπείρων· ἀπειρα γὰρ ἐστὶ ταῦτα. τῶν δὲ ἀπείρων οὐκ ἔστιν ἐμπειρία· διόπερ οὐδὲ γραμματικὴ τις γενήσεται. εἰ δὲ τινῶν, ἐπεὶ καὶ οἱ ἰδιωταὶ τινὰ τῶν παρὰ ποιηταῖς καὶ συγγραφεῦσι λεγομένων εἰδότες οὐκ ἔχουσι γραμματικὴν ἐμπειρίαν, οὐδὲ ταύτη εἶναι λεκτέον γραμματικὴν.<sup>271</sup>

Now when they say that grammar is an experience for the most part of the things said in poets and writers, they mean of all such things or some of them. And if they mean of all, then to begin with, it is no longer 'for the most part', but of all, and furthermore if it is of all, then it is of unlimited matters, for these things are unlimited. But there is no experience of the unlimited, and hence there will be no such thing as grammar. And if it is of some, since lay people, although they know some of

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was the basis for the technical-grammatical part of the Τέχνη", (Di Benedetto 2000, 398), the section that is generally thought to be a product of much later time. In Di Benedetto's view, the definition Sextus cites (γραμματικὴ ἐστὶν ἐμπειρία ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πλεῖστον τῶν παρὰ ποιηταῖς τε καὶ συγγραφεῦσι λεγομένων) is the original version as Dionysius Thrax wrote it, reflecting the philological tradition.

<sup>269</sup> See section 3.7 on Asclepiades.

<sup>270</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,66; 1,67; 1,72.

<sup>271</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,66.

the things said in poets and writers, do not possess grammatical experience, grammar cannot be said to exist in this way either.<sup>272</sup>

The definition preserved in the Τέχνη γραμματική has been translated as “Grammar is experience of the normal usages of poets and prose writers” by Kemp (1986, 346), and by Lallot (1989, 41) as “La grammaire est la connaissance empirique de ce qui se dit couramment chez les poètes et les prosateurs.” Both of these interpretations set the focus of the art in what is mostly found in literary texts. This interpretation is found in the form of a paraphrase already in the Scholia:

-- “γνώσις τῶν παρὰ τοῖς τὰ ἔμμετρα καὶ ἄμμετρα γράψασιν ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πλεῖστον εὐρισκομένων.” -- Ἐπειδὴ τινες λέξεις ἀπαξ που ἢ δις εἰρημέναι εἰσὶν, ἅς οὐ πᾶσα ἀνάγκη εἰδέναι τὸν γραμματικόν, οἷον οἱ γρίφοι.<sup>273</sup>

-- “Knowledge of the things that are found for the most part in [the works of] those who have written in metre or without metre.” Because some words occur only once or twice, it is not entirely necessary for the grammarian to know these, such as riddles.

A grammarian may not know the rarest words, but this is understandable and forgivable – even though γραμματική also involves the explication of words (γλωσσῶν...πρόχειρος ἀπόδοσις<sup>274</sup>), and a grammarian in fact possesses the tools for clarifying what is not considered ‘normal’ language: etymology and analogy. – In this Scholiast’s explanation, it is notable that in his paraphrase of the definition he renders ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ as ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πλεῖστον, seeing no difference between them – at least when they are located in the same place in the definition.

Blank (1998, 128–129) sees no systematic difference between the two versions of the definition, and Ineke Sluiter (2011, 310) has recently said that she is inclined to favour the view that the versions of the definition are synonymous. In a way, this seems to be so: if a grammarian is conversant with a large body of literature, he also, by necessity, knows what is to be considered typical usage. Both definitions recognize the fact that as the grammarian cannot have previous knowledge of everything, there is a point in which he must decide that he has enough experience to make a rule or an editorial decision.

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<sup>272</sup> Translation by Blank 1998.

<sup>273</sup> GG1.3 11,11–14. Cf. also 301,20–22.

<sup>274</sup> GG1.1 6,1.



The point in Dionysius' definition that received most attention during the following centuries – and in fact millennia – is the use of the word ἐμπειρία. To explain this, we shall have to look into the history of philosophy of science. In the Museion of Alexandria, scholars and scientists representing varied disciplines worked and lived as a community, exchanging ideas and keeping up with the current discoveries of their learned colleagues. A crucial question within the arts and sciences is this: how does one acquire knowledge? This is what the epistemological concepts of ἐμπειρία or 'experience', and its counterpart λόγος or 'reason', are about: does knowledge emerge through experience or through rationally organized principles?

The origins of empiricist ideas in grammar can be traced back to the methodological discussion within the art of medicine. Medicine came to hold a leading position in the philosophy of science in the third century BCE, but empiricist ideas had already begun to gain intellectual respectability in the fifth century BCE, and it was also during this century that the schools of medicine saw daylight.<sup>275</sup> As the philosophers had been working with epistemological questions at least from the fifth century onwards, coming up with systematic views on organized knowledge by the fourth century, the physicians also took up the nature of medicine as a philosophical question. To some physicians, however, what the philosophers had to offer did not seem satisfactory. Medicine is a practical art, in which the consequences of an unfounded treatment could be severe – a fact that is in sharp contrast to the theoretical activity of the philosopher. Moreover, the focus of philosophical epistemological theories was not on the process of discovering new things, but rather on how to arrive at a systematic understanding of matters that in a sense we already know.<sup>276</sup> Towards the end of the fourth century, with the contributions by Epicurus and Stoic Zeno, philosophical interest seems to have shifted even further away from the question "What is knowledge", to the question "Is there any knowledge".<sup>277</sup> These questions were understandably not of much use to physicians in developing their expertise. From quite early on, therefore, questions of the nature, origin and scope of medical knowledge, and knowledge in general, began to develop independently of philosophers, among the medical schools. Consequently, the philosophers were now compelled to take into account the epistemological views of the physicians.<sup>278</sup>

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<sup>275</sup> Frede 1987, 225, 233; Siebenborn 2000, 428. For the whole discussion on empiricist medicine and grammar, I owe much to Siebenborn (1976, chapter 4.7).

<sup>276</sup> Frede 1987, 288.

<sup>277</sup> Striker 1990, 143.

<sup>278</sup> Frede 1987, 234; 237–238; 245.

The two medical schools that were the most influential were labelled as the rationalists and the empiricists. The question distinguishing the rationalist and empiricist medical schools is quite simply how knowledge of the proper treatment emerges in any given case. The empiricist answer would be by *πειρα* (experiment) and *αἴσθησις* (perception), that is, by induction. The rationalists would answer that knowledge emerges by *ἔνδειξις* (indication), which means that knowledge is produced deductively.<sup>279</sup> In Deichgräber's (1965, 291–292) concise biblical terms: for the empiricists, “im Anfang steht die αἴσθησις”, for the rationalists, “im Anfang ist die λόγος”. No particular ‘rationalist school’ as such ever existed: it was the empiricists’ label for various thinkers who emphasized the role of reason in the formation of knowledge. The rationalists were the various non-empiricists, consisting of logical and dogmatic scholars, who were collectively attacked by the empiricists.<sup>280</sup> The empiricists themselves represented scholars from different schools: for instance the Epicureans, who emphasized the aspect of usefulness, and the Pyrrhonian sceptics, such as Sextus, whose aim was to demolish the rationalist basis of various arts. Probably the Academics too were represented among empiricists.<sup>281</sup>

The medical scene was exceptionally vigorous in Alexandria, and empiricism in medicine was a particularly Alexandrian phenomenon.<sup>282</sup> The debate over the nature of knowledge involved philosophers and physicians, and grammarians followed their lead.<sup>283</sup> The epistemology and methodology that

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<sup>279</sup> Gal. *sect.* 65,7–12.

<sup>280</sup> Frede 1985, xxii and 1987, 236. A third school (the methodists) that rose in the first century CE (Frede 1987, 262) will be discussed in section 5.4.1.

<sup>281</sup> Sext. *Emp. math.* 1,1; Blank 2005, 212. According to Frede (1987, 248–249), the early empiricists were not Pyrrhonian sceptics – which as a philosophical scheme is a product of later time – but relied on some other sceptical scheme. Different types of empiricism can be distinguished from the Hippocratic corpus: (1) Sceptical empiricism, according to which the scientist cannot know anything beyond perceptions. No theoretical principles can be formulated, and science consists of mere experience and practice. (2) Methodological empiricism allows, as long as method is followed strictly, the formulation of generalizations and inferences, although maintaining that these are only highly probable, not necessarily true. (3) According to dogmatic empiricism, universal and necessary truths may be derived from perception. De Lacy and Allen De Lacy 1978, 168–169.

<sup>282</sup> See for example Flemming 2012.

<sup>283</sup> The Tiberian-era author Celsus links medicine and the rise of the art of letters – by which he refers to philosophy – in a concrete way (1*pr.*,5–7): -- *nulli clari uiri medicinam exercuerunt, donec maiore studio litterarum disciplina agitari coepit; quae ut animo praecipue omnium necessaria, sic corpori inimica est. Primoque medendi scientia sapientiae pars habebatur, ut et morborum curatio et rerum naturae contemplatio sub isdem auctoribus nata sit: scilicet is hanc maxime requirentibus, qui corporum suorum robora quieta cogitatione nocturnaue uigilia minuerant. Ideoque multos ex sapientiae professoribus peritos eius fuisse accipimus, clarissimos uero ex is Pythagoran et Enpedoclen et Democritum* (-- no distinguished men practised the art of medicine until literary studies

developed in the medical schools was seen as suitable for the needs of all areas of expert knowledge, and the empiricist tradition influenced almost all of the arts and sciences at some level.<sup>284</sup> The close relationship between grammar and medicine was particularly emphasized: the grammatical process of διόρθωσις, correcting text, was seen as analogous to the medical process of healing a patient. Varro demonstrates this by comparing a physician curing an ill man, whose illness is due to a long-continued bad habit, to someone who cures speech that has been ineffective due to bad usage (*mala consuetudo*).<sup>285</sup> In the Scholia to Dionysius Thrax, medicine and grammar are on occasion referred to as ‘siblings’ because of their similar nature as τέχναι: both are ‘mixed’ (μικταί) arts, with three different aspects: the ‘theoretical’ (θεωρητικόν), the ‘practical’ (πρακτικόν) and the ‘productive’ (ποιητικόν).<sup>286</sup> However, this methodical similarity – although it may seem a bit forced – is not the only thing that connects the roots of empiricist medicine and philological practice, roots that are intertwined in a way that in retrospect seems extraordinary. In the third century BCE, the Hippocratic writings became an object of medical, antiquarian and even philological interest among physicians and theoreticians of medicine; this interest in literary exegesis was central to the early development of the empiricist medical sect.<sup>287</sup> Physicians contributed to the development of philology at a very practical level, in the form of the Hippocratic commentary tradition.<sup>288</sup> The most famous of the Hippocratic critics, however, is Galen (129–199/217 CE), from a much later period. He took on the task of going through the entire Hippocratic corpus, partly in order to evaluate what was authentic and what was not. The well-known Hippocratic aphorism (better known in Latin: *ars longa, vita brevis*) plays with familiar terminology: “Life is short; art is long, opportunity fleeting, experiment perilous, judgement difficult” (Ὁ βίος βραχύς, ἡ δὲ τέχνη

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began to be pursued more vigorously; more than anything these are necessary for the spirit, but at the same time these are bad for the body. At first the medical science was considered a part of philosophy, so that treatment of disease and contemplation of the nature of things began with the same authors. This was clearly because healing was needed especially by those whose bodily strength had been weakened by restless thinking and nightly working. Thus we find that many of those who professed philosophy became experts in medicine. The most celebrated of them were Pythagoras, Empedocles and Democritus.). This view tends to diminish the achievements of earlier medicine (of which Celsus surely was aware) as something of non-theoretical nature.

<sup>284</sup> For example, Galen testifies that the empiricist physicians claimed that perception and memory suffice for the constitution of all arts (*subf. emp.* Deichgräber p. 87); see also De Lacy – Allen De Lacy 1978, 176.

<sup>285</sup> Varro *ling.* 9,11.

<sup>286</sup> GG1.3 2,4–14 and 158,3–10; see also 110,26–31.

<sup>287</sup> Vallance 2000, 100–101; 105.

<sup>288</sup> Frede 1987, 249.

μακροῦ, ὁ δὲ καιρὸς ὀξύς, ἢ δὲ πεῖρα σφαλερῆ, ἢ δὲ κρίσις χαλεπή<sup>289</sup>). It all boils down to κρίσις, as in Dionysius' list of the parts of γραμματικὴ – the crown of the whole art.

Methodically, the empiricist medical sect relied on a so-called 'empiricist tripod' that excluded reason (λόγος) as a foundation of knowledge. The first of the empiricist methods was autopsy or personal observation (αὐτοψία or *visio*, also known as τήρησις, μνήμη, ἐμπειρία); the second was the study of the tradition (ἱστορία or *historia*), i.e. what physicians in the past had learned and recorded in books; the third, the 'transition to the similar' (μετάβασις καθ' ὁμοιότητα or *similium transitus*).<sup>290</sup> The last-mentioned refers to a heuristic analogical method: when one discovers similarities between certain medical situations, a remedy can be applied that has already been found proper in some cases by experience. The first two methods in the empiricist tripod are original; they occur already in the writings of Serapion (third century BCE), who was the first to write on empiricism. The 'transition to the similar', on the other hand, seems to be a later addition.<sup>291</sup> In third-second century BCE Alexandria, the high status of philological study in general, encouraged by the Ptolemies, gave particular support to increasing use of the second method, ἱστορία or the study of past writings.<sup>292</sup> The most notable empiricist physician – or at least the one most often cited – was the Alexandrian Heracleides of Tarentum (fl. c. 75 BCE).<sup>293</sup> However, it was already before the mid-first century BCE that empiricism seems to have come to the end of its most vigorous phase, and our sources fall more or less silent.<sup>294</sup>

Accordingly, the most interesting and significant feature of Dionysius' definition is that he defines grammar as ἐμπειρία. Four treatises preserved under Galen's name discuss the debate between the empiricists and rationalists. One of these works, *De optima secta*, is considered spurious. The others are *De experientia medica* (fragmentarily preserved but extant in Arabic translation), *De sectis ad eos qui introducuntur*, and *De subfiguratio empirica* (some Greek fragments survive; the work is extant in Latin translation). What Galen says of the empiricist physician is that he calls his art by the name of ἐμπειρία: ὠνόμασε γὰρ ἑαυτὸν ὁ τηρητικὸς ἰατρὸς ἐμπειρικὸν καὶ ὅλην τὴν τέχνην ἐμπειρίαν.<sup>295</sup> It

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<sup>289</sup> Hippocr. *aph.* sect. 1, no. 1.

<sup>290</sup> For example ps.-Gal. *de optima secta* 1,131,17 Kühn. The Latin calques are found in Ps.-Soranus *anecd.* 2,253,32 Rose; Siebenborn 1976, 126.

<sup>291</sup> Frede 1987, 251.

<sup>292</sup> Vallance 2000, 108.

<sup>293</sup> Flemming 2012, 59.

<sup>294</sup> Deichgräber (1965, 203–205) places the empiricists Diodorus and Lycus around 60 BC; Flemming 2012, 63.

<sup>295</sup> Gal. *subf. emp.* Deichgräber p. 54 lines 10–12.

must be emphasized that to presume an antithesis here between ἐμπειρία and τέχνη would be misleading. The empiricist physicians called their field τέχνη and always maintained that their ἐμπειρία was technical, because it had a distinct method to it. In claiming that his art was ἐμπειρία (uniquely, as far as we know, among the definitions of grammar) Dionysius was taking a clear methodological stand: grammatical knowledge emerges by experience. According to empiricist principles, this experience ought to be collected randomly and fortuitously, as phenomena are encountered in the course of life, rather than in the form of systematic research, which always presupposes a theory of some kind.<sup>296</sup> The empiricist and more generally epistemological debate is also reflected in the historiography of the second century BCE. Polybius uses its terminology in his account of the strategic art, στρατηγική τέχνη: τῶν δὲ προειρημένων τὰ μὲν ἔκ τριβῆς τὰ δ' ἐξ ἱστορίας, τὰ δὲ κατ' ἐμπειρίαν μεθοδικὴν θεωρεῖται.<sup>297</sup> Some of the things that belong to this art are viewed through practice and tradition, while others are viewed through “methodical experience”. In this tripartite model, ‘methodical experience’ appears to occupy the place of μετάβασις καθ' ὁμοιότητα, the analogical method.

A parallel to Dionysius’ notion of the art of grammar is found in the empiricist physicians’ outline of their art, recorded by Galen:

οὐ γὰρ τὴν ἰατρικὴν τέχνην ἐνδείξει μετὰ πείρας συστήναι βούλονται, ὡς φασιν ἅπαντες οἱ δογματικοὶ ἰατροί, ἀλλὰ μόνη τῇ τῶν ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ καὶ ὁμοίως ἐωραμένων πείρα.<sup>298</sup>

For they want to say that the art of medicine is constituted, not by indicative inference in conjunction with experience, as all dogmatic doctors claim, but rather solely by the experience of those things which have been found to happen for the most part and in a similar way.<sup>299</sup>

To the empiricists, enough experience allows the inductive formation of knowledge. We must keep in mind the way the boundary is drawn between the two camps referred to above by Galen: the empiricists were more absolute in their methodology than the rationalists (Galen’s “dogmatic doctors”), whose basic argument was simply that knowledge could *not* be based *solely* on experi-

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<sup>296</sup> Vallance 2000, 108.

<sup>297</sup> Polyb. 9,14. The connection in the terminology was observed by Mette (1952, 57).

<sup>298</sup> Gal. *subf. emp.* Deichgräber p. 43 lines 15–20. Cf. ps.-Soranus, *anecd.* 2,249,21 Rose: *secundum empiricorum sectam medicina dicitur observatio earum rerum, quae saepe et similiter eveniunt*. Ps.-Gal. *defin. med.* 19,353,9: Ἔστιν ἡ ἐμπειρικὴ αἴρεσις τῶν πλειστάκις καὶ κατὰ τὸ αὐτὸ καὶ ὡσαύτως πῶς ἐωραμένων.

<sup>299</sup> Translation by Frede 1985, 23.

ence. Few of the rationalists would say that experience is absolutely unnecessary, whereas the empiricists in fact claim that reason (λόγος) is indeed unnecessary and even impossible. The Scholiasts to Dionysius Thrax appeal to empiricist physicians in their definitions of ἐμπειρία, for example: Ἐμπειρία δὲ ἡ τῶν ὡσαύτως ἐχόντων πραγμάτων τήρησις τε καὶ μνήμη ὡς ἐπὶ τῶν ἐμπειρικῶν ἰατρῶν.<sup>300</sup> This also seems to suggest that they – or perhaps more properly the source they depended on – understood Dionysius’ choice of genus as influenced by the empiricist school of medicine.<sup>301</sup> Considering the nature and actual practice of Alexandrian philological grammar, ἐμπειρία was by no means an inapt term to apply. Aristophanes and Aristarchus did not, to our knowledge, directly disclose a connection to the empiricist school of medicine or its methods. However, their grammatical practice was firmly tied to literary and textual criticism, without independent speculative meaning; an overall systematic grammatical theory that presumes λόγος behind it all cannot plausibly be attributed to them.<sup>302</sup>

The definition of γραμματική by Eratosthenes, dating back several decades prior to that of Dionysius, claims a complete command of literature: γραμματική ἐστὶν ἕξις παντελής ἐν γράμμασι.<sup>303</sup> It is another matter how reasonable a claim this is; nevertheless, I understand this as a necessary tool for the librarian and textual critic. In the case of Dionysius Thrax, the influence of the empiricists explains the expression ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ, which seems like drawing boundaries to a grammarian’s knowledge. In reality, it is not meant as a limitation on the requirements laid on the grammarian, but as a simple fact about the empiricist method: experience is always “for the most part”. The literary material that the art of grammar deals with is explicitly mentioned in both definitions. According to Eratosthenes it is simply ‘letters’, meaning ‘literature’, but for Dionysius it is more elaborately τὰ λεγόμενα παρὰ ποιηταῖς καὶ συγγραφεῦσιν. This is a small point as such; but the question whether the definitions of γραμματική by Dionysius and Eratosthenes are relevant to each other has more bearing on this point than on the point as to grammar being a complete (παντελής) mastering of literature, or only of what is typically found in literature (ἐπὶ τὸ πλεῖστον or ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ). This difference in the definitions can be explained by the empiricist influence, whereas another kind of explanation is to be sought in the case of Eratosthenes’ γράμματα and Dionysius’ τὰ λεγόμενα παρὰ ποιηταῖς καὶ συγγραφεῦσιν. This is a difference that derives from the

<sup>300</sup> GG1.3 113,2. See also GG1.3 10,24ff; 162,27; 166,52 (= Deichgräber frg. 52–55).

<sup>301</sup> Deichgräber first pointed out the connection between Dionysius Thrax and the empiricist school of medicine in his collection of Empiricist fragments, originally published in 1930. I have used the second augmented edition from 1965, in which the notion is found on page 325.

<sup>302</sup> Pagani 2011, 63; so also Janko 1995, 214.

<sup>303</sup> Schol. D.T. GG1.3 160,10–11.

different technical execution of the two definitions. Eratosthenes, in effect, is explaining the name of grammar: γραμματική derives from γράμματα. Dionysius is taking a clear stand on the actual material grammar deals with; he defines it as “what is said by poets and prose-writers”. In practice, of course, these amount to the same thing – literature, in as broad a sense as possible.

At the end of the initial section of Τέχνη γραμματική (GG1.1 6,3), the author refers to grammar as a τέχνη: ἕκτον κρίσις ποιημάτων, ὁ δὲ κάλλιστόν ἐστι πάντων τῶν ἐν τῇ τέχνῃ. Sextus Empiricus, who simply lists the parts of grammar according to Dionysius, does not include the amplifying sentence ὁ δὲ κάλλιστόν... τέχνη. The issue of ἐμπειρία and τέχνη is discussed by Sextus (*math.* 1,60–66), and we shall return to it later (section 3.6.1); in any case, Sextus does not refer to Dionysius’ calling γραμματική both ἐμπειρία and τέχνη. Clearly, as far as Dionysius Thrax was concerned, he was practicing an expertise fully entitled to the name τέχνη, simply following the empiricist precepts. However, as the philosophers’ influence – particularly that of the Peripatetics and the Stoics – grew stronger, the concepts of ἐμπειρία and τέχνη came to be regarded as unequal and contradictory.<sup>304</sup> This took place in the first century BCE, and at the same time, the influence of the Alexandrian empiricist physicians was growing thinner. A discussion of the epistemological terminology in Plato’s dialogue *Gorgias* serves to clarify the foundation of philosophical views regarding ἐμπειρία and τέχνη. At the beginning of the discussion, which is just turning to the art of rhetoric, the antithesis of τέχνη and τύχη is given as a commonplace,<sup>305</sup> uttered by Polus: “Experience makes our life proceed according to art, inexperience according to chance” (ἐμπειρία μὲν γὰρ ποιεῖ τὸν αἰῶνα ἡμῶν πορεύεσθαι κατὰ τέχνην, ἀπειρία δὲ κατὰ τύχην<sup>306</sup>). An experienced man can rely on his τέχνη, but the inexperienced man is at the mercy of τύχη. This seems like a positive outlook on ἐμπειρία, but a redefinition of the relationship between ἐμπειρία and τέχνη is ahead. The defining moment comes a little later in the text: rhetoric is denied the status of a τέχνη. Instead, Socrates defines it as ἐμπειρία, thus making it clear that τέχνη is a category under which every craft or art-like action is not welcome.<sup>307</sup> Ultimately, Socrates refuses to call rhetoric a τέχνη because it is irrational (ἄλογος): it does not have λόγος, which means that it cannot give the underlying cause (αἰτία) of each thing.<sup>308</sup> The category of ἐμπειρία or experience, something that is achieved by practice

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<sup>304</sup> Siebenborn 1976, 135.

<sup>305</sup> There are actually three ways something can occur: by nature (φύσει), by chance (τύχη) and by expertise (τέχνη); Pl. *Prot.* 323c3ff.; Pl. *resp.* 381b; cf. Ar. *eth. Nic.* 1140a14–15 and *rhet. Her.* 4,61 (*artificio, casu, natura*).

<sup>306</sup> Pl. *Gorg.* 448c.

<sup>307</sup> Pl. *Gorg.* 462b–c.

<sup>308</sup> Pl. *Gorg.* 465a.

and observation, includes such irrational abilities as rhetoric, cosmetics, cookery, and sophistry. These aim only at pleasure, whereas τέχνηαι such as medicine and legislating aim at the good. Thus, ἐμπειρία does not seem to have much prestige in Plato's thought: in comparison with art, experience can only guess. Art, in contrast, makes use of λόγος, which is aware of causes and the true nature of things. The Platonic precept could not be clearer: do not use the word τέχνη of a thing that does not include λόγος – a point that is crucial to the relationship between the empiricists and the rationalists.

Aristotle's notion of ἐμπειρία in the *Metaphysica* (981a1–5) is more positive than that of Plato: experience leads to possession of art. The two have different objects of knowledge, and they are not altogether comparable. To Aristotle, experience seems very similar to scientific knowledge and art, but actually scientific knowledge and art are acquired through experience. The interdependence of the three basic epistemological concepts (ἐπιστήμη, τέχνη, ἐμπειρία) is indeed presented in a more positive light from the viewpoint of ἐμπειρία: there are practical cases, where mere experience is sufficient and no theory is needed. The fundamental difference between experience and art is expressed in the form of a maxim: experience is knowledge of particulars, but art is knowledge of universals (ἡ μὲν ἐμπειρία τῶν καθ' ἕκαστόν ἐστι γνῶσις ἡ δὲ τέχνη τῶν καθόλου). The ongoing debate in Antiquity over Dionysius' definition becomes understandable in the light of these notions.<sup>309</sup>

For those who later commented on the definition by Dionysius Thrax, the seemingly dual nature of grammar – defined as ἐμπειρία, yet undoubtedly a τέχνη – was a serious problem that needed resolving. A Scholiast explains that some defend Dionysius' use of the word ἐμπειρία by arguing that grammar cannot always rely on λόγος, that is, resolve unclarities in language by systematic rules. Therefore, it sometimes becomes necessary to rely on experience. As examples, the Scholiast gives the words Σκείρων, εἰμί, μέγας and ὀλίγος.<sup>310</sup> Accordingly, the Scholiast continues, those defending Dionysius' definition and the occurring ἐμπειρία have reformulated the definition: “grammar is for a large part experience of words, but mostly expertise” (γραμματική ἐστὶν ὡς ἐπὶ πολὺ τῶν λέξεων ἐμπειρία, κατὰ δὲ τὸ πλεῖστον τέχνη<sup>311</sup>), in other words mainly based on independently formed rules. This benevolent attempt at under-

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<sup>309</sup> In the Stoic sources available to us, the relationship between ἐμπειρία and the concept of τέχνη is not discussed, but we know that for the Stoics ἐμπειρία consisted of large number of memories born from a series of similar apprehensions of an object (Ps.-Plut. *plac.* 900b4–5): ἐμπειρία γὰρ ἐστὶ τὸ τῶν ὁμοειδῶν φαντασιῶν πλήθος.

<sup>310</sup> The Scholiast mentions these apparently because the word Σκείρων is commonly misspelled with ε, the conjugation of εἰμί is irregular, and the comparative of μέγας and ὀλίγος is anomalous.

<sup>311</sup> GG1.3 165,16–24; similar reasoning can also be found elsewhere, GG1.3 448, 22–25.



standing Dionysius' meaning is constructed on a misapprehension: that even to Dionysius, who was defining his own field, the word ἐμπειρία connoted something inferior to τέχνη. But there is no inherent contradiction in calling grammar both ἐμπειρία and τέχνη. The general confusion in the terminology indeed leads to argumentation that hardly appeals to the opponent, such as the accusation cast upon ἐμπειρία that it is ἄλογος.<sup>312</sup> The empiricist practitioners of various τέχναι very probably did not take this as an insult, in that it was the very foundation of their epistemology that λόγος had nothing to do with any τέχνη.

The debate over the epistemological status of the arts never seems to fall out of date. The empiricist terminology was fluently used in the first century BCE by Philodemus, who claims in the first book of *De rhetorica* that political rhetoric is nothing but ἐμπειρία that is based on τρίβη and ἱστορία, practice and study of the tradition.<sup>313</sup> Later on, the topic remains a hot one, even though Galen, an authority on both medicine and philosophy, emphasizes that strictly empiricist medicine is fully entitled to the name of an expertise.<sup>314</sup> Empiricist tendencies are also visible in literary criticism, where the notion of an irrational faculty such as experience is sometimes encountered. The literary critics considered that rules and precepts could only be followed up to a certain point; after this, the critic relied on his highly developed linguistic and stylistic instinct to guide the process of critical assessment. We have encountered this in the case of Crates of Mallus' euphonist criticism.<sup>315</sup> Dionysius of Halicarnassus thought that the pleasantness of a literary work is judged by the irrational criterion of aesthetic evaluation (τὸ ἄλογον τῆς διανοίας κριτήριον). Individual technical excellence is judged by a rational criterion (τὸ λογικόν, ἐφ' οὗ διαγιγνώσκεται τὸ ἐν ἐκάστη τέχνῃ καλόν).<sup>316</sup> (Ps.)-Longinus, writing probably in the first century CE, uses the word πείρα, referring to the critical assessment of words as the final product of much experience: ἡ γὰρ τῶν λόγων κρίσις πολλῆς ἐστὶ πείρας τελευταῖον ἐπιγέννημα.<sup>317</sup> This notion clearly resembles Dionysius Thrax's sixth part of grammar, κρίσις ποιημάτων – even if the functions of κρίσις in literary criticism and in philologically oriented grammar are different. In the *Τέχνη γραμματική*, critical assessment is hailed as the crown of the whole art (κάλλιστόν ἐστι πάντων τῶν ἐν τῇ τέχνῃ),<sup>318</sup> which itself – understood in the empiricist sense – consists of methodical, systematic experience.

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<sup>312</sup> For example in the Scholia to Dionysius, GG1.3 166,25–30.

<sup>313</sup> Philod. *rhet.* 2,21–22.

<sup>314</sup> Gal. *subf. emp.* Deichgräber p. 88 line 18ff.; Frede 1987, 290.

<sup>315</sup> See section 3.3.

<sup>316</sup> Dion. Hal. *Thuc.* 27; Russell 1981, 8–9.

<sup>317</sup> Ps.-Long. 6,1.

<sup>318</sup> GG1.1 6,3.

As already noted, the word ἐμπειρία or its Latin equivalent (whatever that would have been) is not given as grammar's genus in any of the other definitions of grammar that we know of. Nevertheless, there is the undeniable empiricist aspect to the nature of γραμματική, a nature which itself is dual: literary material and language are to be viewed in essence from two aspects, that requiring experience and that requiring the use of rational principles. However gratuitously, the ambiguity concerning the nature of grammar was frequently questioned, giving rise to the harsh criticism attested both in Sextus Empiricus' treatise *Adversus mathematicos* and in the Scholia to Dionysius Thrax. Perhaps much of this polemic could have been avoided by presenting the whole of the art of grammar as solely committed to the three empiricist principles, the 'empiricist tripod': observation of usage, reliance on earlier research, and the 'transition to the similar'. But it appears that this was never done: an expertise of grammar that is based strictly on the three principles is nowhere attested.<sup>319</sup>

### 3.4.3 THE PARTS OF GRAMMAR

In this section, I discuss the parts of γραμματική, an important supplement to the definition proper, as listed by Dionysius Thrax according to Sextus Empiricus.<sup>320</sup> Sextus cites Dionysius' definition of γραμματική in the discussion of what grammar is (τί ἐστι γραμματική, *math.* 1,57); the list of the parts follows later (*math.* 1,250):

Διονύσιος ὁ Θράξ ἕξ μέρη γραμματικῆς εἶναι λέγων, ἅπερ ἡμεῖς ἀνώτερον ὀλοσχερῶς τρία προσηγορεύσαμεν, ἐν τούτοις καὶ τὸ ἱστορικὸν ἀποδίδωσιν· εἶναι γάρ φησι γραμματικῆς μέρη ἀνάγνωσιν ἐντριβῆ κατὰ προσφῶδιαν, ἐξηγήσιν κατὰ τοὺς ἐνυπάρχοντας ποιητικούς τρόπους, λέξεων τε καὶ ἱστοριῶν ἀπόδοσιν, ἐτυμολογίας εὔρεσιν, ἀναλογίας ἐκλογισμὸν, κρίσιν ποιημάτων --.

When Dionysius Thrax says that there are six parts of grammar, which we have spoken of above as three in general, he assigns the historical part among them. For he says the parts of grammar are skilful reading

<sup>319</sup> Blank 2005, 216–217.

<sup>320</sup> There are only slight differences in the texts of the Τέχνη γραμματικῆ (GG1.1 5,4–6,3) and Sextus; as it seems that Sextus' text is closer to the original, I shall here discuss the parts as they are found in *Adversus mathematicos*. The initial chapter in the Τέχνη γραμματικῆ reads as follows: Μέρη δὲ αὐτῆς ἐστὶν ἕξ· πρῶτον ἀνάγνωσις ἐντριβῆς κατὰ προσφῶδιαν, δεύτερον ἐξηγήσις κατὰ τοὺς ἐνυπάρχοντας ποιητικούς τρόπους, τρίτον γλωσσῶν τε καὶ ἱστοριῶν πρόχειρος ἀπόδοσις, τέταρτον ἐτυμολογίας εὔρεσις, πέμπτον ἀναλογίας ἐκλογισμὸς, ἕκτον κρίσις ποιημάτων, ὃ δὴ κάλλιστόν ἐστι πάντων τῶν ἐν τῇ τέχνῃ.

aloud with due attention to prosody, interpretation according to the poetic tropes present, explication of words and historical references, discovery of etymologies, setting out of analogies, and critical assessment of poems.

Dionysius' method here appears to be μερισμός, as he divides grammar into members that can be, and in fact are, enumerated in the Τέχνη γραμματική. The parts are probably listed in the order in which the action they name was generally carried out in philological work.

(1) Ἀνάγνωσις ἐντροβῆς κατὰ προσῳδίαν. The first part of grammar, ἀνάγνωσις, literally means 'recognition': recognizing letters and other textual characters and vocally producing them. This is quite an understandable choice of term for the process, in that reading with almost no support from orthographic or other visual features – such as spaces between words, capital letters or punctuation – was a challenge for the reader, requiring that he recognize words as units.<sup>321</sup> Considering the material that was typically read, Homeric poetry, reading with due regard for prosody was a task that no doubt became increasingly difficult for a non-expert with the linguistic changes that took place in Greek, such as loss of differences in vowel quantity, monophthongization, and the change in the quality of the accent.<sup>322</sup> As part of grammar as Dionysius understood it, ἀνάγνωσις was not primarily about reading aloud with an 'artistic' sense but the determination of prosodic features as accurately as possible.<sup>323</sup> The term προσῳδία in its broadest sense covers accents, aspiration, vowel and syllable length, and phonetic features relating to word boundaries.<sup>324</sup> The word ἐντροβῆς, quite literally 'practiced' or 'experienced', relates to the word τροβή and may be a token of the empiricist roots in medicine: 'practiced recognition' would be something that a physician would apply in encountering an illness.

(2) Ἐξήγησις κατὰ τοὺς ἐνυπάρχοντας ποιητικούς τρόπους. The second part, the interpretation of the text according to poetic tropes, should be understood in a broad sense as comprising all kinds of expressions typical of literature ('poetic usage'),<sup>325</sup> such as metaphor, allegory, and synecdoche,<sup>326</sup> Tauriscus referred to these as γραμματικοὶ τρόποι.<sup>327</sup>

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<sup>321</sup> Lallot 1989, 75.

<sup>322</sup> Swain 1996, 30.

<sup>323</sup> Di Benedetto 2000, 396.

<sup>324</sup> Kemp 1986, 360 n. 1.

<sup>325</sup> Schenkeveld 1991, 153–156; 1995, 46.

<sup>326</sup> See for instance the list of tropes in Schol. D.T. GG1.3 457,1ff.

<sup>327</sup> See section 3.3.

(3) Λέξεων τε καὶ ἱστοριῶν ἀπόδοσις. In the Τέχνη γραμματική, the second part of grammar reads γλωσσῶν τε καὶ ἱστοριῶν πρόχειρος ἀπόδοσις. It is probable that the original text included the word πρόχειρος, and that Sextus – aiming at economy of words and avoidance of repetition, since he has just used the word in *math.* 1,249 – may have excluded it from the quotation.<sup>328</sup> Tauriscus’ ἡ προχειρότης τῆς ἀμεθόδου ὕλης (said of the historical part of κριτική) seems to be referring to the immediately obvious object of study in the text: its subject-matter.

Whether Dionysius’ list of the parts of grammar originally included the word λέξεις or γλῶσσα remains unclear; in any case, Sextus appears to be using the words synonymously.<sup>329</sup> In Tauriscus’ division of κριτική, the rational part of the art concerns λέξις (‘diction’). In this case, the study of λέξεις probably means their categorization into foreign, old, and common or usual.<sup>330</sup> It seems plausible that γλωσσῶν ἀπόδοσις refers to such a study of words, inasmuch as the word γλῶσσα often means an unusual word: foreign or obsolete. The examination of literary dialects is included in the study of γλῶσσα: the basic notion of obscure words (γλῶτται) is from Aristotle (*poet.* 1457b4), where he states that a noun can be ‘ordinary’ (κύριον) or ‘rare’ (γλῶττα), but not in relation to the same people.<sup>331</sup> ‘Historical references’ (ἱστορία) simply mean events, subjects, and places. Studying these goes well with λέξεων / γλωσσῶν ἀπόδοσις, which would have meant the categorization of at least conspicuous words, and giving the translation of an uncommon, often Homeric word. A term already familiar from the empiricist methodological tripod, ἱστορία, there referring to the recorded experience of others, here does not necessarily refer directly to the method, even though the recorded findings of other scholars would be something for the grammarian to consult at this stage of his work. Rather, empiricist methods are an overall frame within which the parts of grammar are practiced. The description of the parts of grammar is concentrated on the content.

(4) Ἐτυμολογίας εὔρεσις.<sup>332</sup> The fourth part of grammar is the discovery of etymologies. It was a widespread idea in antiquity that words had originally corresponded quite accurately to their signifieds, and that it was in the process of linguistic corruption that their signification became obscure.<sup>333</sup> A Scholiast to Dionysius Thrax (*GG1.3* 14,23–24) explains etymology as ἡ ἀνάπτυξις τῶν

<sup>328</sup> Blank 1998, 263.

<sup>329</sup> See Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,253; Blank. 1998, 263.

<sup>330</sup> ξέναι, ἀρχαῖαι, κοιναὶ καὶ συνήθεις; see section 3.3.

<sup>331</sup> Aristotle’s example is the Cypriot word σίγυνον, which obviously is κύριον in Cyprus, but γλῶττα in Athens.

<sup>332</sup> For ancient etymology in general, see Herbermann 1996.

<sup>333</sup> Sluiter 1990, 37.

λέξεων, δι' ἧς τὸ ἀληθὲς σαφηνίζεται. The purpose of ancient etymologizing was not to explain the structure of a word or to reconstruct its historical development, but to help to determine its meaning, its 'truth'. The Alexandrian approach to etymology was a practical one: Aristophanes seems to have used etymology as a means of clarifying and justifying the meanings and orthographies of obscure words. However, he probably did not form general rules for etymologizing.<sup>334</sup>

For the Stoics, etymology was primarily a means of semantic description,<sup>335</sup> to some extent, they also used etymology as a tool for solving textual problems, such as obscure words and correct readings or spellings.<sup>336</sup> The actual process of this grammatical etymologizing was essentially similar in Alexandria and Pergamum.<sup>337</sup> Varro gives the following testimony of the level of etymology he has "studied under the lamp of Aristophanes" (*ad Aristophanis lucernam -- lucubravi, ling. 5,9*): "the second [level] is that which the old grammar has reached. It shows how the poet has made each word which he has formed, compounded and derived" (*secundus quo grammatica descendit antiqua, quae ostendit, quemadmodum quodque poeta finxerit verbum, quod<que> confinxerit, quod<que> declinarit*<sup>338</sup>). *Fingere verbum* is exemplified by *sibilus* (onomatopoeic word), *confingere* by *incurvicervicus*, a famously inelegant word by Pacuvius, and *declinare* by the verb *clupeo*, a neologism and derivative.<sup>339</sup>

(5) Ἀναλογίας ἐκλογισμός. Analogy was in the service of other arts before its application in any grammatical context.<sup>340</sup> Like the fourth part of grammar, the fifth has its focus on a single word. The successive parts complement each other: etymology studies the word as a whole, while analogy aims at finding the word's place in the grammatical class system. Analogy, or reference to similar forms or accentual patterns,<sup>341</sup> was one of the methods used in Alexandria to emend damaged manuscripts. From Aristarchus' work, it is evident that

<sup>334</sup> Callanan 1987, 99–102, and for the non-existence of the rules, 97–98.

<sup>335</sup> Pinborg 1975, 95; see also Vaahtera 1998, 94–96. The word ἐτυμολογία is possibly of Stoic origin: the first one (that we know of) to use the word was Chrysippus in the third century BC. Blank argues (2008, 52–53) that it is probable that Chrysippus did not include etymology in the logical part of Stoic philosophical system: evidence for the use of etymology by the Stoics is found in ethics and physics. The Stoic concept of language was that language was of natural origin (the φύσις theory). According to this, it was important to find the original or primary words (πρῶται φωναί), in order to reveal the real nature of things (Amsler 1989, 21–22).

<sup>336</sup> See Broggiato 2003.

<sup>337</sup> Pfeiffer 1968, 241; Vaahtera 1998, 96; Broggiato 2003, 65.

<sup>338</sup> Varro *ling. 5,7*.

<sup>339</sup> Vaahtera 1998, 35–35.

<sup>340</sup> See Siebenborn 1976, 56ff.

<sup>341</sup> As defined by Kemp 1986, 344.

one important aim was also to differentiate between Homeric and post-Homeric usages. Aristarchus made use of analogy in dealing with certain phonological similarities as well as semantic fields.<sup>342</sup> One of the key phases of textual criticism, διόρθωσις or ‘restoration’, is not explicitly present in Dionysius’ division of γραμματική. Accordingly, ἀναλογίας ἐκλογισμός in Dionysius’ list of parts does not mean the actual process of inflection, which requires a theory and knowledge of certain principles of analogy, but rather the use of analogy in the service of διόρθωσις.<sup>343</sup> The comparison of phenomena in language that share similar features is the empiricist method of μετάβασις καθ’ ὁμοιότητα, the ‘transition to the similar’; essentially, it is an analogist heuristic procedure.<sup>344</sup>

(6) κρίσις ποιημάτων. The sixth and final part of Dionysius’ division of grammar is the critical assessment of poems. Κρίσις is an element that was intimately associated with literature at the latest from the classical period onward, as poetry was being presented in competitions that were judged by κριταί.<sup>345</sup> In the fuller version of the sixth part of γραμματική (GG1.1 6,3), it is called the ‘finest’ or ‘most important’: ὁ δὴ κάλλιστόν ἐστι πάντων τῶν ἐν τῇ τέχνῃ. In the Alexandrian practice, its purpose was to assess (ἐγκρίνειν) literary texts and select the best ones to create a literary canon. The authors approved for inclusion in the canon (ἐγκριθέντες) were listed in πίνακες, and these texts were further treated and commented on by grammarians.<sup>346</sup> It is obvious that an important part of critical assessment consisted of separating inauthentic texts from authentic ones – a genuine problem for the Alexandrian librarians, who were trying to compile the complete corpus of Greek literature.<sup>347</sup>

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<sup>342</sup> Schironi 2003, 71 and 77.

<sup>343</sup> Siebenborn 1976, 70.

<sup>344</sup> Sluiter 1990, 57. Siebenborn (1976, 63–67) lists three types of use for grammatical analogy: (1) the simple comparison of two words in cases where there are unclearities in orthography, prosody, sound, or inflection; (2) the inflectional and derivational analogy, which in practice is the comparison of at least two basic lexical forms and two inflectional or derivational forms (κτῆσις – κτᾶσθαι and χρῆσις – χρᾶσθαι); this is the extended version of the first type of analogy. (3) The consulting of the κανόνες (rules) that are built up based on the above-mentioned four-member analogy, in cases where grammatical accident is not clear (orthography, prosody, or inflection).

<sup>345</sup> Aristophanes refers to the judges in the Athenian poetic contests in his comedies (*Ach.* 1224, *nub.* 1115, *av.* 445).

<sup>346</sup> Pfeiffer 1968, 206–208.

<sup>347</sup> Ps.-Aristeas’ letter to Philocrates (9–10) reports the project of collecting all the books in the known world. The project was assigned by the king to Demetrius of Phaleron. See the discussion in Pfeiffer 1968, 98ff.

There is some discussion as to whether the Alexandrian practice of κρίσις ποιημάτων involved aesthetic evaluation of literature,<sup>348</sup> but it is clear that refraining from evaluating whether a work of literature is beautifully composed or otherwise felicitously arranged is not possible in the course of a process of canon formation.<sup>349</sup> Aristarchus certainly made notes on Homer in the spirit of Aristotle's poetics, judging features such as plausibility, inconsistencies and characters.<sup>350</sup> Dionysius followed Aristarchus' example, including becoming a Homerist himself.<sup>351</sup> Evidence of the nature of κρίσις ποιημάτων comes from Dionysius Thrax himself, who uses the expression in a fragment of Homeric study: "These [verses] are marked for the critical assessment of poems, to show that Homer occasionally makes metrically poor verses" (τὰ γὰρ τοιαῦτα ἐσημειοῦντο πρὸς κρίσιν ποιημάτων, ὅτι σπανίως Ὀμηρος κακομέτρους ποιεῖ<sup>352</sup>). Critical assessment is also very much a poetic analysis, that concerns for example metrical anomalies. For Dionysius, criticism is the crown of the art, the ultimate goal. There he is to some extent in agreement with Crates of Mallus, according to whom criticism (κριτική) is superior to grammar, even if Crates regarded criticism only as aesthetic evaluation.<sup>353</sup>

The definition of grammar and the list of its parts by Dionysius Thrax reveal the function of grammar, as the art of letters: it is to make literature understandable at every possible level – pronunciation, scansion, the meaning of each expression, orthography – and, finally, to assess the value of the text as a literary product.<sup>354</sup> Accordingly, it would be justified to call Dionysius' list of the parts of grammar the six stages of philological analysis. The Byzantine Τέχνη manuscript, the Scholia and Sextus Empiricus are the only sources that contain Dionysius' list of parts. In these texts, however, there is a tendency to introduce a shorter list: Sextus' preference was for three parts, and the Scholiasts generally maintain that there are four: διορθωτικόν, ἀναγνωστικόν, ἐξηγητικόν and κριτικόν.<sup>355</sup> This is noteworthy, because it is generally in the interest of the Scholiasts to conform to the views of the commented author. Quintilian and Sextus Empiricus, who discuss the number of the parts of γραμματική, report

<sup>348</sup> Schol. D.T. GG1.3 303,27–304,5; see also GG1.3 471,26–472,18 and 169,30–170,5: the grammarian's task is the authentication of texts, not their aesthetic evaluation.

<sup>349</sup> On the aesthetic evaluation performed by grammarians, see Peirano 2012.

<sup>350</sup> For Aristotelian theory and Aristarchean practice in literary criticism, see Schironi 2009.

<sup>351</sup> According to Varro's testimony, the lyric poets were Dionysius' specialty as well (GRF frg. 282 = Dionysius Thrax test. 2 Linke): *Dionysius autem, Aristarchi discipulus, cognomento T(h)rax, domo Alexandrius, qui Rhodi docuit, lyricorum poetarum longe studiosissimus* --. Pfeiffer 1968, 252; Lallot 1989, 19. Several fragments tell us about Dionysius the Homerist; see Linke 1977.

<sup>352</sup> Frg. 13 Linke 1977.

<sup>353</sup> See section 3.3.

<sup>354</sup> Kemp 1986, 343.

<sup>355</sup> Schol. D.T. GG1.3 12,3–5.

that there is some dispute as to how many parts there are;<sup>356</sup> except for Dionysius, however, there seems to be no-one to suggest that grammar has as many as six main parts. The explanation for this may be that his list of four species of grammar is a more concise and memorable ensemble than Dionysius' more prolix list of six parts, and the names given to the different species are entirely transparent.

Technical grammar – the treatment of letters, syllables, and parts of speech – is absent from Dionysius' definition and list of parts. Di Benedetto (2000, 396) argues that it is a topic too important to be left out of the list of parts unless it actually was excluded from the original treatise, which he calls *Παράγγελατα* or *Precepts* according to the term used by Sextus Empiricus. We do not know how important technical grammar was to Dionysius, who was a philologist describing the process of his most basic task, the evaluation and editing of texts. The list of the parts of grammar cannot be read as a table of contents of the original treatise. It is also worth pointing out that there is not a single division or partition of grammar in which the role of the parts of speech is dominant, not even when the theory of the parts of speech came to occupy a large part of grammatical works. The Dionysian work from which the definition of *γραμματική* originates may have included a technical segment, but Dionysius still felt no need to elevate it as part of *γραμματική*, the expertise whose ultimate goal was the critical evaluation of literary products.

As Blank (2000, 407) suggests, it is possible that the surviving opening lines of Dionysius' grammar was originally longer and more discursive; Dionysius' definition may have undergone at least some changes, and the quotations by Sextus Empiricus are clearly not identical to the version of the definition and division of grammar found in the *Τέχνη γραμματική* (GG1.1). In any case, the modifications in the initial chapter seem to have been mild. As already mentioned, it is conceivable that over the centuries the *Τέχνη* underwent a gradual process of change, reaching its present form in the third–fourth century CE. There probably never was a need for a radical change in the list of parts, even though the role of technical grammar, including correct language, became significant and could have earned a specific mention in the list. The reason for this conservatism may be that Dionysius' list of the parts of grammar can also be seen as reflecting the ordinary course of a grammar lesson. The process starts with reading aloud (although this is not the original Dionysian meaning of *ἀνάγνωσις*), and continues with the explication of the text from both a literary and a grammatical point of view. The analogy part corresponds to the procedure of *μερισμός*, or assigning words to their proper categories. The definition of grammar is a different matter: it would have been quite justified to alter it,

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<sup>356</sup> See sections 5.4.1 and 3.7.



since it does not seem to be a very good definition. It involves problems, even quite serious ones – whether the genus of grammar is correctly defined and what the actual meaning of ‘for the most part’ is – but for some reason the tradition is very strong on this point. Dionysius’ formal definition of grammar achieved canonical status: even if it did not exactly reflect current circumstances, it was charitably interpreted as reflecting the truth.

### 3.5 Sextus Empiricus and the tradition of attacks against the arts

Dionysius Thrax was among the grammarians whose views were cited by Sextus Empiricus, who lived in the late second century CE. What Sextus reveals about the art of grammar in general derives largely from the first century BCE: his ultimate source for his rejection of grammar is a treatise called *Περί γραμματικῆς* by the early first century BCE grammarian Asclepiades of Myrlea.<sup>357</sup> The few other grammarians Sextus cites are not substantially later – in the case of Crates of Mallus, quite the opposite. Sextus’ notions concerning Crates of Mallus, and the definition and parts of *γρᾶμματική* by Dionysius Thrax, have already been discussed above. In the following section, I discuss the rest of the definitions of *γρᾶμματική* cited by Sextus Empiricus.

Sextus was a Greek empiricist physician and a Pyrrhonian sceptic – two aspects that perhaps do not always coexist happily.<sup>358</sup> Very little else is known about the man or his life.<sup>359</sup> Sextus does not reveal much of himself in his books; he does not discuss or even mention current issues, and his criticism is levelled against theorists from all periods. He is believed to have worked as a teacher in Rome and possibly also in Alexandria.<sup>360</sup> The treatise in which he discusses grammar is known as *Adversus mathematicos*. In Books 1 to 6 Sextus sets himself against the professors of the liberal arts (*πρὸς μαθηματικούς*). Books 7 to 11 criticize dogmatic philosophers (*πρὸς δογματικούς*). The former set of books includes detailed refutations of the arts of grammar, rhetoric, geometry, arithmetic, astrology, and music; these are all branches of expert knowledge commonly recognized as *τέχναι*. In the first and by far the longest book of *Adversus mathematicos* Sextus attacks the grammarians (*πρὸς γραμματικούς*). His goal is to prove that the very idea of expert grammar is impossible; thanks to his exhaustive argumentation, we now know something about Greek grammatical thought after Dionysius Thrax and before Apollonius Dyscolus.

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<sup>357</sup> Asclepiades of Myrlea as the ultimate source for Sextus Empiricus was already suggested by Kaibel in 1895 (25–28) and is supported by Blank (1998).

<sup>358</sup> See Bailey 2002, especially 86ff.

<sup>359</sup> For example House 1980, 238.

<sup>360</sup> Blank 1998, xiv–xv.

What is Sextus' motive for attacking grammar and the other arts? The answer is simple: he was a sceptic and it was his way of life.<sup>361</sup> He had to show that the foundations of grammar, or for that matter of any other τέχνη, were false. Any dogmatic traits he detected had to be traced back and demolished.<sup>362</sup> Accordingly, Sextus examines the salient teachings of the liberal arts thoroughly. There was a tradition of attacks against the rationality of the arts, arising from the heated discussion between the medical sects, as described in section 3.4.2. Sextus' method – common to the sceptics – was not to present his own theories, but to cite those of his so-called enemies and turn their ideas against them.<sup>363</sup> The four main points on which a study (μαθήμα, which he uses interchangeably with τέχνη) depends are shown by Sextus to be non-existent: the thing which is taught (τὸ διδασκόμενον προᾶγμα), the teacher (ὁ διδάσκων), the learner (ὁ μανθάνων), and the way of learning (ὁ τρόπος τῆς μαθήσεως).<sup>364</sup>

Galen, a contemporary of Sextus, takes notice of the classic refutation models in his work *De sectis ad eos qui introducuntur* (76,9–17): the empiricists seek to discredit all the claims of the dogmatists – that they know (ἐπίστασθαι) the nature of the body (τοῦ τε σώματος ἢ φύσις), the origins of all diseases (τῶν νοσημάτων ἀπάντων αἱ γενέσεις), and the potencies of medicines (τῶν ἰαμάτων αἱ δυνάμεις). The empiricists' argument is that the dogmatists perhaps reach a level of likelihood but fail to achieve any certain knowledge (βεβαία γνώσις); or, if the empiricists admit that such knowledge is possible, they try to show that the dogmatists' knowledge is in fact useless; or, if they admit that it is useful, it is argued to be superfluous. Already Hippocrates (c. 460–c. 370 BCE) had noted in his *De arte* (1) that the refutations of the arts were on a professional level: there were those who had made an expertise out of rebutting the arts. The treatise *De arte* was written in response to an attack against arts and medicine in particular; the question in this attack was whether art could exist.<sup>365</sup>

At the very beginning of *Adversus mathematicos*, Sextus presents himself as a compiler: he selects and sets out the most effective arguments against the μαθήματα.<sup>366</sup> The relationship between Sextus and Asclepiades of Myrlea is not

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<sup>361</sup> According to Sextus (*Pyrrh.* 1,8), Scepticism (ἡ σκεπτικὴ) is “an ability (δύναμις) to set up an opposition of appearances and thoughts, in any way at all, an ability from which we come, through the equal force of the opposing statements and states of affairs, first into suspension, and after that into freedom from disturbance” (translation by Nussbaum 1994, 285, with a good discussion on the definition of Scepticism).

<sup>362</sup> Sluiter 2000b, 93.

<sup>363</sup> See Woodruff 1990, 75.

<sup>364</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,9.

<sup>365</sup> Mann 2012, 1.

<sup>366</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,7; Barnes 1988, 57.

direct: it appears that Sextus based his systematic philosophical criticism of γραμματική on an Epicurean text criticizing grammar, and that the object of this criticism was the grammar of Asclepiades of Myrlea; I discuss this grammar further in a separate section (3.7). A number of Epicurean attacks against the τέχνη are attested. For example Epicurus (341–270 BCE) himself wrote critically on rhetoric and music, and Zeno of Sidon (c. 150–75 BCE) is known to have written on grammar, history, proverbs and expression, on the use of poems, on rhetoric and on geometry.<sup>367</sup> Zeno and his disciple Philodemus of Gadara have been suggested as possible sources for Sextus: some of their works on poems, music and rhetoric, which have been preserved in the Herculaneum papyri, follow similar patterns of argumentation as *Adversus mathematicos*.<sup>368</sup> There are differences between the two main lines of critical approaches: the Epicurean critique is mostly concerned with usefulness, whereas the Sceptic critique aims at refuting the very basic principles of the expertise, trying to prove them non-existent.<sup>369</sup>

The facts about Asclepiades of Myrlea are few. He may have worked as a teacher in Rome in the early first century BCE,<sup>370</sup> and it is possible that he studied with Dionysius Thrax. Strabo tells us that he also practiced grammar in Turdetania, in southern Spain.<sup>371</sup> Asclepiades authored a history of philology, a treatise on grammarians (περὶ γραμματικῶν), in at least 11 books.<sup>372</sup> If Zeno or Philodemus were Sextus' main source, Asclepiades' Περὶ γραμματικῆς would have become the object of Epicurean criticism while still quite fresh, probably during the first half of the first century BCE. The latest possible date for Philodemus' works is 35 BCE (his works on poetry and rhetoric date back to about 50 BCE) while Zeno would have been dead no later than 72 BCE; a large number of Philodemian works are known, but we do not know of a specific refutation of the art of grammar by him.

The structure of Sextus' book against the grammarians seems to follow the structure of a grammatical manual. First we have the definition of grammar, followed by its division into parts, then a systematic discussion of each of the parts. According to Blank (1998, 109), it was Sextus' intention to create a kind of

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<sup>367</sup> Blank 1998, xxx. On the polemical Epicurean tradition, see also De Lacy and Allen De Lacy 1978, 153–154.

<sup>368</sup> Asmis 1995, 29 and Blank 1998, xlvi. On Philodemus, see also section 3.3.

<sup>369</sup> Blank 1998, xlix.

<sup>370</sup> *Suda* α 4173. This is not entirely reliable information, as the *Suda* has confused the lives and deeds of several men; Rawson 1985, 69 n. 11.

<sup>371</sup> Strabo 3,4,3. *RE s.v.* Asklepiades [28]; Siebenborn 1976, 107.

<sup>372</sup> This treatise is believed (for example Pfeiffer 1968, 158) to have been used by another second century CE author, Clement of Alexandria, for his information on grammarians and critics (see section 2.2), as well as by the Scholiasts to Dionysius Thrax.

‘anti-τέχνη’ by systematically examining every aspect of grammar. As Sextus begins to build his case against grammarians, he states that there are two types of γραμματική, or rather, the word is used in two senses: a general sense (κοινῶς) and a particular sense (ιδίως). The former means the knowledge of letters (γράμματα), i.e. basic literacy, also known as γραμματιστική. The latter refers to the art developed by Crates of Mallus, Aristophanes and Aristarchus.<sup>373</sup> It is necessary to distinguish between the two types of γραμματική because Sextus does not perceive a need to argue against grammar in the general sense: its usefulness is beyond dispute, even by Epicurus’ standards.<sup>374</sup> The traditional Epicurean view was that the liberal arts were not at all useful for the attainment of wisdom.<sup>375</sup> In his treatise on rhetoric (written about 50 BCE), Philodemus several times mentions grammar as an example of an expertise.<sup>376</sup> It appears, however, that Philodemus is not referring to the complete grammar, the expertise of language and literature, but to the same level of grammar that Sextus too approves of: the elementary grammar, comprising instruction in reading and writing. For an Epicurean, γραμματική fulfils the standards of an art only to the extent that it provides rules for writing and reading.<sup>377</sup>

To begin his systematic demolition of the art, Sextus establishes that the structure of grammar is tripartite (*math.* 1,91–93). We do not know the structure presented by Sextus from any existing grammar, and none of the Hellenistic grammars survives to offer points of comparison. Sextus’ prototypical grammar consists of the following:

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<sup>373</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,44.

<sup>374</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,49–56.

<sup>375</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,1: Ath. *deipn.* 13,588a. Yet Sextus observes that Epicurus is known to have used poetry in formulating his precepts; likewise Pyrrho, a vigorous opponent of γραμματική, is reported by Sextus to have read poetry constantly, which to Sextus suggests that he also recognized its usefulness and therefore the necessity of γραμματική; Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,272–273. Arguments against usefulness are less convincing than the line of arguments Sextus has chosen.

<sup>376</sup> For example in Philod. *rhet.* 1,2–4: ἐ]στηκότα θεω[ρήματα προσφερομένην ὡς τὴν γραμματικὴν -- . See Blank 1995, 181 n. 9.

<sup>377</sup> The Philodemian definition of τέχνη is a manifold one and lays out a great many requirements, yet it leaves unmentioned the central Epicurean concern of the utility of a τέχνη; Blank 1995, 179. The definition is translated by Blank (1995, 179; Philod. *rhet.* 2,38): “a faculty (ἔξις) or disposition (διάθεσις) arising from observation of certain common and fundamental things which extend through most particular instances, a faculty which grasps and produces an effect such as only a few who have not learned the art can accomplish, and doing this firmly and surely (ἐστηκότως καὶ βεβαίως), rather than conjecturally (στοχαστικῶς).”

- (1) the expert part (τεχνικόν): the elements, parts of speech, orthography, Hellenism
- (2) the historical part (ἱστορικόν): the subject matter of the text
- (3) special (ἰδιαίτερον): that which concerns poets and prose-writers – unclarities of diction, authenticity (genuine vs. spurious)

According to Sextus, the grammarians do not agree on the number and contents of the parts. Nor are there strict boundaries between the domains of each part; rather, they form a system of intermingling components.<sup>378</sup>

Sextus himself does not define grammar, but he provides his readers with a kind of a head-note on grammar's functions before commencing his actual critique:

ἡ δὲ γραμματικὴ, σὺν τῶν τὰ ἐκ τῶν μύθων τε καὶ ἱστοριῶν λόγῳ διορίζειν καὶ τὸ περὶ τὰς διαλέκτους καὶ τεχνολογίας καὶ ἀναγνώσεις πραγματικὸν ἀυχοῦσα, πολὺν ἑαυτῆς ἐργάζεται τοῖς ἀκούουσι πόθον.<sup>379</sup>

Boasting of its **pragmatic work** dealing with dialects, technical exposition and reading, along with its ability to elucidate **by reason** the details of myths and histories, grammar creates a great longing for itself in those who hear its claims.

For Sextus, the primary functions of grammar – or the functions on which grammarians mostly pride themselves – are the following:

- (1) elucidation of myths and histories
- (2) dealing with (literary) dialects
- (3) technical exposition (quite literally, τεχνολογία means 'treatment under the rules of the art')
- (4) reading (as in Dionysius Thrax's list of parts, ἀνάγνωσις does not simply refer to literacy but to correct reading, including prosody and artistic impression).

What does Sextus mean by πραγματικόν? Dialectology, technical grammar and reading are 'pragmatic', and it is apparently by this quality that they are distinguished from the elucidation of myths and histories. Sextus uses the word πραγματικόν in referring to the physical objects of grammar: letters, syllables,

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<sup>378</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,91–95.

<sup>379</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,43.

prosody, word forms etc. Myths and histories, the contents of literature, are immaterial. This clearly refers to the historical part of grammar, and the suggested method for it is λόγῳ διορίζειν. However, when Sextus later on sets out to demolish the historical part of γραμματική, his starting point is that this part is ‘non-expert’ (ἄτεχνον) and arises from ‘unsystematic matter’ (ἐκ τῆς ἀμεθόδου ὕλης); he says explicitly that this is also the opinion of most, probably referring to grammarians.<sup>380</sup> The actual function of the above passage seems to be to provoke the reader: grammar ‘boasts’ and ‘creates longing’, and claims to be using λόγος even in its most vaguely constructed part. Thus grammar is made to seem overly dogmatic and false right from the beginning. Sextus compares grammar’s allure to the call of the Sirens,<sup>381</sup> and resents the fact that grammatical instruction usually starts at an early age, when one is defenceless.<sup>382</sup> Literature and stories themselves may fascinate the young mind, but Sextus may be referring to more unlikely lures: the aspect of correct language, included in τεχνολογία as part of technical grammar, was a subject that had practical uses in a society where a man’s success owed much to his eloquence – which presupposes faultless speech. The classic example of scholarly interest in the Latin language, even in exceptional circumstances, is of course Julius Caesar with his *De analogia*, written during the Gallic campaign.<sup>383</sup>

These are the preliminary notes provided by Sextus: a dissection of the parts of grammar and a description of grammatical work. All the actual definitions of grammar in his work are derived from other authors, whom in many cases he cites by name. In the following, I discuss these definitions.

### 3.6 The definitions of grammar in *Adversus mathematicos*

#### 3.6.1 PTOLEMAEUS THE PERIPATETIC

Under the heading Τί ἐστὶ γραμματικὴ (*math.* 1,57), Sextus Empiricus reports several definitions of grammar and builds his case for the non-existence of grammar on each one of them. The first definition he discusses is that of Dionysius Thrax. It is not demolished at once, but used as a starting point, as Sextus proceeds by quoting other scholars who have something to say about it. He first discusses the view of Ptolemaeus the Peripatetic. Ptolemaeus is practically unknown, but it is likely that he too belongs to the Hellenistic era soon after Dio-

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<sup>380</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,254.

<sup>381</sup> *Od.* 12,184–191. Love of learning and the Sirens are something of a commonplace; see Cic. *fin.* 5,49; Gell. 16,8,15–17 and Epict. *diss.* 2,23,41; for the last two, see section 1.3.1.

<sup>382</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,41–42.

<sup>383</sup> Suet. *Iul.* 56,5.

nysius Thrax, late second century BCE.<sup>384</sup> His name also suggests an Alexandrian provenance. Ptolemaeus criticizes Dionysius for calling grammar “experience”:

αὐτὴ μὲν γὰρ ἡ ἐμπειρία τριβὴ τίς ἐστι καὶ ἐργάτις ἄτεχνός τε καὶ ἄλογος, ἐν ψιλῇ παρατηρήσει καὶ συγγυμνασίᾳ κειμένη, ἡ δὲ γραμματικὴ τέχνη καθέστηκεν.<sup>385</sup>

-- experience itself is a kind of practice and a non-technical, irrational worker, consisting in mere observation and exercise, while grammar is an expertise.

The methods of experience are observation (παρατηρήσις, corresponding to αὐτοψία) and exercise (συγγυμνασία). This is irrational (ἄλογος), and thus cannot be seen as constructing an expertise (τέχνη) that is based on λόγος. The choice of terminology suggests that Ptolemaeus knows what he is talking about, and his position becomes clear: he is a rationalist, which is precisely why he is cited here. Sextus shrugs off the inconsistency detected by Ptolemaeus in the Dionysian definition by pointing out that the words ἐμπείρος and τεχνίτης are in reality used of the same people; keeping that in mind, even philosophy can be called ‘experience’ rather than ‘art’.<sup>386</sup> The use of the word ἐμπειρία is not problematic for Sextus at all.

Sextus practically ignores the ἐμπειρία question, but our picture of the discussion by Ptolemaeus the Peripatetic on this issue can be augmented by a passage found in the Scholia to Dionysius Thrax. Here too Ptolemaeus the Peripatetic is cited criticizing Dionysius’ definition, and an alternative definition of grammar is provided. The Scholiast may have used Sextus as a source, or he may have used the same source as Sextus, an Epicurean critique of Asclepiades.<sup>387</sup>

Ἐνταῦθα γενόμενος Πτολεμαῖος ὁ Περιπατητικὸς καὶ ἄλλοι τινὲς ἐγκαλοῦσι Διονυσίῳ ἐμπειρία<v> εἰρηκότι τὴν λογικωτάτην γραμματικὴν, ἥτις – ἐμπειρία φημί – τῶν ὡσαύτως ἐχόντων πραγμάτων ἐστι τήρησις τε καὶ μνήμη ἄλογος.<sup>388</sup>

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<sup>384</sup> Siebenborn 1976, 105 n. 105; Blank 1998, 381.

<sup>385</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,60–61.

<sup>386</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,61.

<sup>387</sup> Blank 1998, 131–133.

<sup>388</sup> GG1.3 165,16–19.

Concerning this matter, Ptolemaeus the Peripatetic and some others have accused Dionysius of calling grammar, which is most rational, “experience”. Experience is the irrational observation and memorization of things that are always the same.

The Scholiast continues with the accusations made against the nature of grammar by quoting another definition, whose provenance is left unspecified.

Καὶ οἱ μὲν οὕτως ἐπιλύονται τὴν κατηγορίαν· ἐπειδὴ γὰρ οὐ λόγῳ πάντοτε κατορθοῦται ἡ γραμματικὴ, ἀλλὰ πολλάκις καὶ ψιλῆ παραδόσει, ὡς ἐπὶ τοῦ Σκεῖρων καὶ εἰμί καὶ μεγάλως καὶ ὀλίγος, καὶ πολλάκις εὐρίσκομεν τὴν γραμματικὴν ἄλογον, φασὶν οὕτως ἔχειν τὸν ὄρον· “γραμματικὴ ἐστὶν ὡς ἐπὶ πολὺ τῶν λέξεων ἐμπειρία, κατὰ δὲ τὸ πλεῖστον τέχνη”.<sup>389</sup>

Some cast the following accusation: since grammar cannot always succeed by relying on reason but often by relying on mere literary tradition, as in the cases of *Skeirōn*, *eimi*, *megalōs* and *oligos*, and we often find that grammar is irrational. They say that its definition is as follows: “Grammar is for a large part experience of words, and for the most part it is an expertise.”

The Scholiast criticizes this definition because it is poorly made,<sup>390</sup> and indeed, the definition stretches the rules of defining by giving a double genus. The result is awkward and even unacceptable. Aristotle would not have approved of a definition thus constructed, because the genus is not partly imparted (*top.* 126a18–25): οὐ δοκεῖ γὰρ κατὰ τι μετέχεσθαι τὸ γένος. In fact, Aristotle uses *γραμματικὴ* as an example: the science of grammar is not merely partly knowledge (-- οὐδ’ ἡ γραμματικὴ κατὰ τι ἐπιστήμη).<sup>391</sup> As it is, the above definition represents a perfect compromise between *ἐμπειρία* and *τέχνη*, the irrational and the rational, a compromise that could have been reached more elegantly by dividing grammar in two according to the method used: ‘empirical’ and ‘technical’. The Scholiasts report several opinions of Dionysius’ use of the word *ἐμπειρία*: it is generally felt that it is not an entirely proper word to use.<sup>392</sup> One of the Scholiasts says so explicitly (GG1.3 11,2–3): “Is grammar irrational or not? It is not; he used the word [‘experience’] here improperly instead of

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<sup>389</sup> GG1.3 165,19–24; see section 3.2.3.

<sup>390</sup> GG1.3 165,25–27.

<sup>391</sup> See section 3.8.

<sup>392</sup> GG1.3 165,27–166,12.



‘knowledge’” (ἡ γραμματικὴ ἀλογός ἐστιν ἢ οὐ; Οὐ, ἀλλ’ ἐνταῦθα καταχρηστικῶς εἶπεν ἀντὶ τοῦ γνῶσις). Sextus argues that there is not necessarily any difference between the use of the words ἐμπειρία and τέχνη. In principle, this argument can be understood as serving two different views. It can be seen as disregarding the methodological dimensions of the word ἐμπειρία, namely that an expertise can consist of the systematic use of empiricist methods. Thus it would simply claim that in casual use the words ἐμπειρία and τέχνη are synonymous. This would make the word ἐμπειρία more acceptable to those who do not see experience as a valid method without the use of λόγος. On the other hand, Sextus may be arguing that ἐμπειρία and τέχνη truly coincide epistemologically, which would mean that Dionysius was right in defining grammar as ἐμπειρία. The examples Sextus cites here (the Epicurean Metrodorus and Euripides)<sup>393</sup> to support the claim that ἐμπειρία and τέχνη are synonymous do not reveal empiricist influence. But Sextus also says that he has shown in his own ‘empirical commentaries’ (ἐν τοῖς ἐμπειρικοῖς ὑπομνήμασιν) that the words are used synonymously. He must have been aware of the empiricist claim that medicine, as they practiced it, was an expertise, and therefore he must have understood Dionysius’ position.<sup>394</sup> However, it is clear that Sextus was not willing to redefine τέχνη, since his arguments against grammar were based on the general rationalist claims of systematicity and transferability. Accordingly, Sextus chose to downplay the specialized meaning of ἐμπειρία by saying that Dionysius meant it in the sense of ‘having much learning’.<sup>395</sup>

### 3.6.2 ASCLEPIADES OF MYRLEA

Having established that there is no actual problem with the use of the word ἐμπειρία in the definition of grammar, Sextus moves on to his primary target: whether an art of grammar can exist or not. The imprecise expression ‘for the most part’ in the Dionysian definition leaves room for speculation. ‘The most part’ is an unbounded amount of things; and since there can be no experience of the unlimited (τῶν δὲ ἀπείρων οὐκ ἔστιν ἐμπειρία), there can be no such thing as ‘expert grammar’, τέχνη γραμματικὴ. If the expression ἐπί το πλεῖστον were to be interpreted to mean ‘some part’, it would equally follow that the existence of γραμματικὴ is not possible: even lay people can easily possess some grammatical knowledge. It is a requirement of a τέχνη to be based on expert

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<sup>393</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,61–62.

<sup>394</sup> See Blank 1998, 130.

<sup>395</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,63: ἐφ’ ὅπερ ἴσως ὁ Θραξ φερόμενος σημαίνοντα, ἐπεὶ πολυειδήμονά τινα καὶ πολυμαθὴ βούλεται εἶναι τὸν γραμματικόν, ἔφη ἐμπειρίαν ὑπάρχειν τὴν γραμματικὴν τῶν παρὰ ποιηταῖς τε καὶ συγγραφεῦσι λεγομένων.

acquaintance; therefore γραμματική can no longer be called an expertise.<sup>396</sup> Of course, Sextus does not offer a solution to the problem of the proper definition of grammar's object of study, since his purpose is to prove the expertise itself unviable. Sextus cites Asclepiades' criticism of Dionysius' insufficient accuracy in defining boundaries:

“εἰ μὴ τι δέδοικε” φησί “τὴν ὀλιγότητα τοῦ βίου ὡς οὐκ οὔσαν ἱκανὴν πρὸς τὸ πάντα περιλαβεῖν, ὅπερ ἐστὶν ἄτοπον, γραμματικοῦ ἀλλ’ οὐ γραμματικῆς ποιήσεται τὸν ὄρον, ἐπεὶ οὗτος μὲν τυχὸν ἴσως ἐπιστήμων ἐστὶ τῶν <πλείστων> παρὰ ποιηταῖς τε καὶ συγγραφεῦσι λεγομένων, ὀλιγόβιον καθεστῶς ζῶον, ἢ δὲ γραμματικὴ πάντων εἴδησις.”<sup>397</sup>

‘Unless he was afraid of the brevity of life – that it is not long enough for the comprehension of everything – which is absurd, he will produce the definition not of grammar but of a grammarian, since in fact he is the one who may happen to be knowledgeable of most of the things said in poets and writers, being a short-lived creature, while grammar is the knowledge of all such things’.<sup>398</sup>

In Asclepiades' opinion, Dionysius' choice of words is ill advised. Asclepiades seems to entertain the idea of an abstract expertise that exists as a possibility, but cannot be actualized in every sense because of the deficiency of human capacity. This idea bears a resemblance to Plato's idea of the completeness and integrity of a τέχνη: claiming an expertise is claiming competence over the whole range of the subject.<sup>399</sup> But for Sextus, there can be no knowledge without a knower. Thus the revised version of Dionysius' definition as formulated by Asclepiades is not acceptable either: γραμματικὴ ἐστὶ τέχνη τῶν παρὰ ποιηταῖς καὶ συγγραφεῦσι λεγομένων, “grammar is an expertise in what is said by poets and prose-writers”.<sup>400</sup> This definition is formally similar to that of Dionysius, but lacks the problematic empiricist parts: the word ἐμπειρία and the expression ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πλεῖστον (/ ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ). In support of his rejection of this definition, Sextus quotes a well-known Stoic definition of τέχνη as a ‘system of perceptions’, ἢ δὲ τέχνη σύστημα ἐκ καταλήψεων [τῶν περὶ τὸν

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<sup>396</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,66–72.

<sup>397</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,73.

<sup>398</sup> Translation by Blank 1998.

<sup>399</sup> See Pl. *Lach.* 198d1–199a8 and *Ion* 532c; Woodruff 1990, 72.

<sup>400</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,74.

γραμματικόν]: there simply cannot be a grammarian capable of mastering everything in Greek literature on a systematic level of knowledge.<sup>401</sup>

A grammarian's capacity is a problem in many ways. In addition to the actual linguistic material – every word-form and its meaning in its context – he should be equally able to explain the content of the text under study. As is well known, a poem or a prose text may be about almost anything, and the grammarian should have the equipment for understanding and interpreting it. This problem does not escape Sextus, according to whom it is obvious that a grammarian will not be able to understand things that belong to natural science, mathematics, medicine, or music, for example; understanding these would require an expert in each discipline. Sextus savours this point. His argument is that in order to be able to analyze the texts of poets and prose-writers, a grammarian should understand either words or the underlying things, or indeed both. This, according to Sextus, is not the case, because texts comprise things from other arts, things that are outside the grammarian's domain.<sup>402</sup>

According to Asclepiades of Myrlea, grammar is comparable to music and philosophy in that it is not based on assumptions and is thus not subject to chance, as is the case with navigation and medicine.<sup>403</sup> This statement makes Asclepiades' position clear with regard to the question of empiricist and rationalist approaches towards the gaining of grammatical knowledge: grammar has to be distinguished from the empirical arts, which can only be based on the idea of 'for the most part'. Dionysius' definition strongly associates grammar with the empiricist scene. Asclepiades' view is the opposite, as is that of Ptolemaeus the Peripatetic. Moreover, at least as mediated by Sextus and his source, Asclepiades takes the question seriously (and with some indignation). It is also evident that the anonymous scholars whom the Scholiast cites (“γραμματική ἐστὶν ὡς ἐπὶ πολὺ τῶν λέξεων ἐμπειρία, κατὰ δὲ τὸ πλεῖστον τέχνη”) do not understand the issue the way Dionysius did. For Dionysius, methodical ἐμπειρία did not mean compromising the τέχνη status of grammar, whereas Ptolemaeus is taking part in a discussion where the basic assumption is that something that consists purely of ἐμπειρία (that is, excluding λόγος) is by definition not a τέχνη. However, the above definition by the anonymous scholars is so deficient that it is dubious whether they had any kind of philosophical approach to the issue. They might be grammarians doing their job, scholars who were every day facing the fact that grammar is practiced under rational principles, along with a fair amount of empirical knowledge and consulting the tradition.

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<sup>401</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,74–75.

<sup>402</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,300.

<sup>403</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,72.

### 3.6.3 CHAERIS

The discussion of the capacity of an individual grammarian continues with Sextus citing another definition, from an otherwise unknown grammarian he calls Chares, referred to as the author of a treatise *περὶ γραμματικῆς*. The same grammarian is cited in the Scholia to Dionysius Thrax under the name of Chaeris, which seems more reliable. A person named Chaeris was a student of Aristarchus;<sup>404</sup> it is possible that this is the Chaeris who is in question here.<sup>405</sup> Chaeris would thus have been a contemporary of Dionysius Thrax, also a student of Aristarchus, and of Asclepiades of Myrlea. The other grammarians cited by Sextus are from the first century BCE or earlier (Crates and his pupil Tauriscus), and we may assume that Chaeris belongs to that era as well. Aristarchus' pupil Chaeris was among those grammarians who did not leave Alexandria in 145 BCE, while Aristarchus himself – according to the *Suda* – went to Cyprus<sup>406</sup> and Dionysius Thrax went to Rhodes; at least some of the Aristarchean grammatical knowledge thus remained in the city. Sextus' citation is as follows:

Χάρης δὲ ἐν τῷ πρώτῳ περὶ γραμματικῆς τὴν τελείαν φησὶ γραμματικὴν ἕξιν εἶναι ἀπὸ τέχνης <καὶ ἱστορίας><sup>407</sup> διαγνωστικὴν τῶν παρ' Ἑλλησι λεκτῶν καὶ νοητῶν ἐπὶ τὸ ἀκριβέστατον, πλὴν τῶν ὑπ' ἄλλαις τέχναις.<sup>408</sup>

In the first book of his *On Grammar* Chaeris says that complete grammar 'is a skill which diagnoses from expertise <and tradition> the things said and thought by the Greeks as accurately as possible, except those things which come under other kinds of expertise'.<sup>409</sup>

There are several points that deserve consideration about this definition.

(1) Grammar as *ἕξις*, translated here as 'skill', is a term we have already encountered in the early Alexandrian definition of *γραμματική* by Eratosthenes (*γραμματική ἐστὶν ἕξις παντελής ἐν γράμμασι*, "grammar is the complete mastering of literature"<sup>410</sup>). Chaeris' definition reads like an improved – or at least more elaborate – version of this definition. A Scholiast to Dionysius Thrax, who cites the same definition, shortens it from the end because it is not relevant to the point he wants to make, which is to criticize the choice of genus:

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<sup>404</sup> West 2001, 81.

<sup>405</sup> Blank 1998, 137.

<sup>406</sup> *Suda* α 3892.

<sup>407</sup> The addition is based on GG1.3 118,10–16.

<sup>408</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,76–77.

<sup>409</sup> Blank (1998) translates *ἱστορία* as 'research'; otherwise I have followed his translation.

<sup>410</sup> Schol. D.T. GG1.3 160,10–11; see section 3.1.

Ὅθεν ὁ Χαῖρις οὐκ ὀρθῶς ὠρίσατο τὴν γραμματικὴν, λέγων “γραμματικὴ ἐστὶν ἕξις ἀπὸ τέχνης καὶ ἱστορίας διαγνωστικὴ τῶν παρ’ Ἑλλησι λεκτῶν” καὶ γὰρ ἀπέχοντι γένει ἐχρήσατο, διὰ μέσου γὰρ τῆς τέχνης ἐστὶν ἢ ἕξις τῆς γραμματικῆς γένος· τῆς μὲν <γὰρ γραμματικῆς> γένος ἐστὶν ἢ καθόλου τέχνη, τῆς δὲ τέχνης ἢ ἕξις, ὡς δηλοῖ καὶ ὁ Ζήνων, λέγων “τέχνη ἐστὶν ἕξις ὁδοποιητικὴ”<sup>411</sup>. τουτέστι δι’ ὁδοῦ καὶ μεθόδου ποιούσά τι.<sup>412</sup>

That is why Chaeris did not define grammar correctly when he said “grammar is a skill which diagnoses from expertise and tradition the things said by the Greeks.” For he used a genus that is remote, because ‘skill’ is the genus of grammar through expertise. The genus of grammar is universal expertise, and the genus of expertise is skill, as also Zeno shows when he says, “expertise is a skill to construct ways”, that is, it produces something by a route and according to a method.

Choosing the nearest genus is a basic Aristotelian requirement in the construction of a definition,<sup>413</sup> and the Scholiast (or his source) is familiar enough with dialectic to be able to criticize the definition of a poor technical execution. Chaeris, however, does have a valid point here: since he considers ‘expertise’ one of the two means whereby grammar is able to distinguish the things said in Greek, it is necessary to use another, more ‘distant’ genus. Those who define grammar using the word ἕξις aim at explaining the concept of τέχνη γραμματικὴ; they are not at all concerned about the imbalance of genus they might be causing.<sup>414</sup> The ‘ideal’ (or at least unproblematic) definition would simply state that γραμματικὴ ἐστὶ τέχνη – and so on.

<sup>411</sup> SVF I frg. 72; see sections 2.2, 3.6.3 and 5.4.3.

<sup>412</sup> GG1.3 118,10–16.

<sup>413</sup> Ar. *top.* 143a15–28.

<sup>414</sup> For example, Schol. D.T. GG1.3 300,4–9: Τί ἐστὶ γραμματικὴ τέχνη; Γραμματικὴ ἐστὶν ἕξις θεωρητικὴ καὶ πρακτικὴ τῶν παρὰ ποιηταῖς τε καὶ συγγραφεῦσι, δι’ ἧς ἐκάστω τὸ οἰκεῖον ἀποδιδόντες ἐξ ἀπείρου καταληπτὸν ποιούμεθα. Καὶ ἄλλως. – Τί ἐστὶ γραμματικὴ τέχνη; Ἐξὶς θεωρητικὴ καὶ πρακτικὴ, τὸ εὖ λέγειν καὶ τὸ εὖ γράφειν διδάσκουσα ἡμᾶς· οὐ γὰρ πᾶς ὁ γράφων ἢ ὁ ἀναγινώσκων λέγεται γραμματικός, ἀλλ’ ὁ τὸν κανόνα καὶ τὸν ὅρον ἀποδιδούς (Grammar is the theoretical and practical mastering of the texts of poets and prose-writers that allows us to determine the appropriate place for each individual word and make it comprehensible from the unlimited. And in another way. – What is the art of grammar? Theoretical and practical skill that teaches us to speak and write well; not everyone who can write or read is called a grammarian, but he who transmits rules and definitions). The first definition given by the Scholiast is found also in GG1.3 3,11–13 and paraphrased in GG1.3 164, 5–8; it is also cited without the word ἕξις in GG1.3 7,5–8. The phrase δι’ ἧς ἐκάστω τὸ οἰκεῖον ἀποδιδόντες ἐξ ἀπείρου καταληπτὸν ποιούμεθα in the first defini-

(2) What is encompassed in a *τελεία γραμματική*, a ‘complete grammar’? Philo of Alexandria offers a point of comparison. He mentions the more elementary grammar, which teaches basic literacy as ‘incomplete grammar’ (*γεμὴν γράφειν καὶ ἀναγινώσκειν γραμματικῆς τῆς ἀτελεστέρως ἐπάγγελμα*). ‘Complete grammar’ (*τελειότερα*) refers to the more advanced level, the study of literature.<sup>415</sup>

(3) The opposition of *τέχνη* and *ἱστορία* as the two ways of ‘diagnosing’ Greek reveals that to Chaeris, *γραμματική* is methodologically two-headed: there are always cases in language that do not follow a rule. In these cases, tradition – which I take as referring to both the literary and the scholarly tradition – must be consulted. In the study of the subject matter of literature, original research on every point is simply a waste of time, and relying on the research tradition is a part of the job. As *τέχνη*, grammar depends on rules and regularities. As *ἱστορία*, it depends on already collected knowledge that is available through the scholarly literature. The definition has a commonsensical air to it, and the question of rationality is not touched upon explicitly. However, the reference to *ἱστορία* as a method equal to technical knowledge in grammar suggests that Chaeris was familiar with the epistemological and methodological discussion of the empiricists and the rationalists. If Chaeris indeed was a pupil of Aristarchus and a contemporary of Dionysius Thrax, it is conceivable that he was influenced by empiricist ideas as well.

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tion quoted here seems like a formulaic expression, receiving no explanation or an attribution. It is found in various loci in the Scholia to Dionysius Thrax, but I have not been able to locate it outside these texts. The definition is clearly drawn up with care: the genus *ἔξις* is specified with two attributes, which are carefully explained, and it covers the same broad literary genres as the Dionysian definition, poetry and prose. The rest of the definition is less unambiguous. The most obvious interpretation would be that grammar’s aim is to find the true (and original) sense for each word and also give the word an interpretation in a particular context – this would be the “unlimited”. The concept of *ἀπείρον* refers to a state of indefiniteness, meaning “that which has no boundaries”. As the Scholiast says, the qualifications of a grammarian comprise making these boundaries: rules and definitions. Another Scholiast adds an explanation to the sentence *δι’ ἧς ἐκάστῳ τὸ οἰκεῖον ἀποδιδόντες ἐξ ἀπείρου καταληπτὸν ποιούμεθα* (GG1.3, 3,16–18): *Τὸ λείπον δὲ τοῦ ὅρου, ἐπειδὴ ταύτης τῆ ἀναλογία χρώμενοι καὶ κανονίζοντες τὸ ἄπειρον πλῆθος τῶν λέξεων δι’ ὀλίγου εὐδιάγνωστον ποιούμεθα* (The rest of the definition is there because, by using analogy and canonizing, we make an unlimited number of words distinguishable by few words). In this explanation, it becomes clear that the indefiniteness of the word pertains to morphology: an unlimited number of words can be described accurately through grammatical paradigms. The technical, even mechanical, character of grammar could hardly be more evident. The expression *δι’ ἧς ἐκάστῳ τὸ οἰκεῖον ἀποδιδόντες ἐξ ἀπείρου καταληπτὸν ποιούμεθα* could derive from a grammar in which it serves as a justification of the prominence of the theory of the parts of speech.

<sup>415</sup> Philo *congr.* 148; cf. *somm.* 1.205. On Philo, see section 5.1.

(4) The concepts of λεκτόν and νοητόν. These are the objects of study, and Chaeris considers that grammar should study both λεκτόν, ‘the thing said’ and νοητόν, ‘the thing thought’. The former connotes all the words that can be uttered, by which – according to Sextus – Chaeris means things concerning the dialects; the latter means the signified. Sextus explains this, because it is incongruous with the Stoic terminology<sup>416</sup> with which his readers were presumably more familiar. But the concepts may reflect Stoic theories; the use of the word ἕξις may also suggest that Chaeris, like Eratosthenes, was familiar with philosophy, although it is possible that he simply adopted the word ἕξις from Eratosthenes’ definition. However, at least from a Stoic viewpoint Chaeris would not sound convincing, because his terminology is confused. To Sextus, who clings to the idea of the limited capacity of the individual grammarian, the study of (all) things said and thought by the Greeks is not even possible. This is not only because the material is unlimited, but also because it is in a constant state of change.<sup>417</sup> What is noteworthy about Chaeris’ definition is that in emphasizing the accurate diagnosis of individual words and meanings, it does not refer directly to literature; this makes it a rarity among definitions of grammar in the ancient tradition.

(5) Finally, Sextus links Chaeris’ ideas with those of Crates of Mallus: ἔοικε δὲ καὶ Κρατήτειόν τινα κινεῖν λόγον, “he seems to be bringing an argument from Crates”.<sup>418</sup> Crates had said that the critic was better than the grammarian: the critic must be experienced in all of logical science (καὶ τὸν μὲν κριτικὸν πάσης, φησί, δεῖ λογικῆς ἐπιστήμης ἔμπειρον εἶναι<sup>419</sup>), while the grammarian’s activities consist in minor tasks, such as interpreting individual words and assigning accents. This makes the critic like an architect and the grammarian like his servant. What precise point Sextus wants to make by bringing up the Cratetean κριτικός and his domain is not entirely evident from the passage. Chaeris’ definition concerns the ‘complete grammar’ (τελεία γραμματική), thus including literary criticism, which Crates tries to make the monopoly of the critic, so this is probably not what Sextus is referring to. Another and more likely possibility is that Sextus is referring to the restriction

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<sup>416</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,78: λεκτῶν δὲ τῶν περὶ τὰς διαλέκτους, οἷον ὅτι τοῦτο μὲν εἴρηται Δωρικῶς τοῦτο δ’ Αἰολικῶς, καὶ οὐχ ἦπερ οἱ στωικοὶ τὸ σημαίνόμενον, ἀλλ’ ἀνάπαλιν τὸ σημαίνον· τὸ γὰρ νοητόν ἐπὶ τοῦ σημαινομένου [μόνου] παρείληπται (By the ‘things said’ he means those concerning the dialects as, for example, that one thing is said in Doric and another in Aeolic, not referring, as the Stoics do, to the signified (*sēmainomenon*) but on the contrary to the signifier, since the ‘thing thought’ is said of the signified. – Translation by Blank 1998).

<sup>417</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,81–84.

<sup>418</sup> This passage is also discussed in section 3.3.

<sup>419</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,79 = frg. 94 Broggiato.

Chaeris places on the material of grammar, when he says that all that falls under other arts (πλὴν τῶν ὑπ' ἄλλαις τέχναις) is outside the grammarian's domain. Crates makes it clear that compared to the critic, the grammarian's knowledge is indeed restricted. The grammarian knows his individual words and accents, but Crates' argument seems to suggest that he is incapable of scrutinizing the actual content for example of a philosophical text. The critic on the other hand is experienced in all of logical science, which in this case would encompass all of human comprehension, all that which is it is possible to put in words: everything within the human capacity to think and speak.<sup>420</sup> It is another matter to consider if Sextus is right in his argument – if Chaeris was an Alexandrian grammarian, as I am inclined to think, it does not seem likely that he is “bringing an argument” from the opposite, Pergamene side, but has rather come up with this argument independently, confronted with texts he could not easily fathom. It is not hard to imagine that grammarians often decided that certain things fell outside their domain, as reported later by Aulus Gellius in *Noctes Atticae* (for example, 16,6,10–12 and 20,10,5). Some of Gellius' grammarians refuse to try to solve problems that in their opinion are not strictly grammatical, even if the questions have arisen out of old literature.

### 3.6.4 DEMETRIUS CHLORUS

After Chaeris' definition, Sextus discusses that by Demetrius Chlorus, an almost completely unknown grammarian who presumably flourished somewhere in the middle of the first century BCE; he is mentioned several times in the Scholia to Nicander.<sup>421</sup>

Δημήτριος δὲ ὁ ἐπικαλούμενος Χλωρός καὶ ἄλλοι τινὲς τῶν γραμματικῶν οὕτως ὠρίσαντο· “γραμματική ἐστὶ τέχνη τῶν παρὰ ποιηταῖς τε καὶ τῶν κατὰ τὴν κοινὴν συνήθειαν λέξεων εἴδησις”.<sup>422</sup>

Demetrius, who is known as Chlorus, and certain other grammarians defined grammar as follows: “grammar is an expertise of what is in poets and knowledge of the words in common usage”.<sup>423</sup>

The problem for Sextus, once again, is that the field of grammar is too vast for anyone to be completely in command of it. In addition to the problems that arise from the requirement that the grammarian has to understand everything that is

<sup>420</sup> See Siebenborn 1976, 131–132.

<sup>421</sup> *New Pauly s.v.* Demetrius Chlorus.

<sup>422</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,84.

<sup>423</sup> Translation by Blank 1998.



in literature, technical literature included, it is also utterly impossible to have knowledge of the words in common usage, considering the existence of various dialects and the special vocabulary of different disciplines.<sup>424</sup>

‘Common usage’, κοινή συνήθεια, here makes its first explicit appearance in a definition of grammar. Implicitly, it is also present in the definition of Chaeris (γραμματική ἐστὶν ἕξις ἀπὸ τέχνης καὶ ἱστορίας διαγνωστικὴ τῶν παρ’ Ἑλλησι λεκτῶν). Demetrius Chlorus’ definition seems to have been formed by taking the undisputed core of existing definitions of grammar – that γραμματικὴ is a τέχνη that concerns literature – and adding the new notion of ‘common usage’, which is a somewhat awkward fit with the definition as a whole. For Chlorus, κοινή συνήθεια probably meant the Hellenistic Koine, used for administrative, commercial, and scholarly purposes. Sextus refuses to see Chlorus’ definition as pointing towards a commonly accepted variant of language, understanding κοινή συνήθεια in the broadest possible sense; this is a viewpoint that obviously offers the best possibilities for demolishing the definition. Chlorus’ definition, according to Sextus, was to some extent accepted among grammarians. The grammarian has to be aware of the living language, but for what purpose? Chlorus defines grammar as a τέχνη that concerns the texts of the poets (γραμματικὴ ἐστὶ τέχνη τῶν παρὰ ποιηταῖς); technical treatment is not extended to common usage, for which simple ‘knowledge’ (εἶδησις) is enough. Knowledge of language in use is important for (at least) three obvious reasons: first, the work of a grammarian as a textual critic requires a thorough familiarity with the variants of language. Secondly, there was a growing amount of literature written in the Koine, towards which the grammarians could not pretend to be blind – for example Polybius in historiography. There was also technical prose, such as treatises on philosophy and science, for which it proved useful because of its formal precision of style and evolved technical vocabulary.<sup>425</sup> The works of for example Zeno, Chrysippus, or Epicurus were written in the Koine, whereas the Platonic and Aristotelian texts were not. A vivid commentary tradition rose in order to explain both the content of the latter and their antiquated linguistic form.<sup>426</sup> Finally, and not unrelated to the aforementioned point, the textual products of the grammarians themselves had to be written in credible language.<sup>427</sup>

The word εἶδησις in Chlorus’ definition seems to be quite a neutral word for ‘knowledge’, not referring specifically to any (philosophical) form of knowing. Its origin is in the verb \*εἶδω, ‘to see’; emphasis is thus laid on a personal encounter with the object of knowledge, which in Demetrius Chlorus’ definition

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<sup>424</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,86–89.

<sup>425</sup> For Koine in use, Horrocks (1997, 48–50).

<sup>426</sup> Sedley 1997, 114–115.

<sup>427</sup> See Lallot 1995, 80.

of grammar is quite suitably common usage. Chlorus' definition does not seem to imply that the interest of a grammarian is widening to concern literary language and language in common use equally; the starting point of the grammarian's work is still poetry, but the grammarian also understands that it is best to take cognizance of the role of κοινή συνήθεια. In practice, Chlorus' definition divides grammar into two methodologically different parts. One is literary exegesis and all that is related to it (probably understood as in the list of parts of grammar by Dionysius Thrax). This exegesis follows the rules of the art. The other, the method of studying common usage, is inevitably empiricist, but for this Chlorus chose the word εἶδησις, managing to avoid the direct clash of views that would have been caused by speaking of ἐμπειρία.

Contrary to the Dionysian definition, Chlorus only mentions poets as the object of study; prose-writers are not mentioned. It could be argued that poetry is the primary literature, at least to the grammarian: in the curricular model in which grammar stands as the preliminary study for rhetoric, poetry is read in the grammarian's school and prose in the rhetorician's school. This model, however, is a Roman one, familiar from Quintilian.<sup>428</sup> For the Chlorus passage, Di Benedetto (1966, 322) suggests a corrected reading, τῶν παρὰ ποιηταῖς τε καὶ <συγγραφεῦσι λεγομένων καὶ> τῶν κατὰ τὴν κοινήν etc., following the definition of Dionysius Thrax. Thus the definition by Demetrius Chlorus (as also the one by Asclepiades of Myrlea) appears as a revised version of Dionysius' definition: the problematic parts – ἐμπειρία and ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πλεῖστον / ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ – have been eliminated.

Chlorus distinguishes between two objects of study: poetry and usage. By Chlorus' time both literary authority and usage were established as criteria of linguistic purity,<sup>429</sup> but the definition does not explicitly take a stand on the matter of correct language. Introducing common usage into the definition may sound like an innovation, but as the aim of grammar is not redefined, Chlorus' definition still appears very much the definition of a philologist, alongside the definition of γραμματική by Dionysius Thrax.

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<sup>428</sup> See Colson 1924, xxx.

<sup>429</sup> Diomedes *GL1* 439,16–17: [*Latinitas*] *constat autem, ut adserit Varro, his quattuor, natura analogia consuetudine auctoritate.*

### 3.7 The grammatical manual of Asclepiades of Myrlea

The subject of this section is the grammar of Asclepiades of Myrlea. The definition of γραμματική by Asclepiades has already been discussed; here I concentrate on the structural division of the grammar, as far as it can be reconstructed from Sextus' work. According to Sextus, in addition to the definition that is provoked by the Dionysian definition, the school of Asclepiades (οἱ περὶ τὸν Ἀσκληπιάδην) also gave a definition of grammar which appeals to etymology: γραμματιστική derives from γράμματα 'letters', γραμματική from συγγράμματα 'writings'.<sup>430</sup> Sextus reports that among grammarians there is endless disagreement concerning the parts of grammar (περὶ μερῶν γραμματικῆς).<sup>431</sup> He discusses the divisions of grammar by Asclepiades of Myrlea and Dionysius from *Adversus mathematicos* 1,248 onwards. He ascribes a tripartite division to Asclepiades: γραμματική is divided into τεχνικόν, ἱστορικόν and γραμματικόν.<sup>432</sup> This is actually the same division Sextus presents as the standard one in 1,91–95, with the difference that Asclepiades calls the third part 'grammatical' while Sextus prefers 'special' (ἰδιαιτέρον; see section 3.5). Sextus accepts the Asclepiadean division, while Dionysius' list of parts is "strangely divided" (ἀτόπως διαιρούμενος). He assumes that Dionysius turned some of grammar's results (ἀποτελέσματα) and sub-parts (μόρια) into parts (μέρη).<sup>433</sup> What exactly Sextus means by 'results' is not clear; perhaps skilful reading (ἀνάγνωσις) could be considered the result of a process of grammatical education. This is supported by the fact that Asclepiades does not explicitly mention this function of grammar. The critical assessment of poems (κρίσις ποιημάτων), however, is not a 'final result', but forms the 'grammatical' part of grammar. Textual and literary criticism can be named 'grammatical' because the primary functions of grammar, reading and writing instruction, are separately covered by γραμματιστική. The 'grammatical part' is that which covers the functions peculiar to γραμματική: the assessment of the authenticity of a textual product does not professionally interest anyone except the grammarian. By sub-parts (μόρια) Sextus means etymology and analogy, which belong to the technical part, from which they are taken (ἐκ τοῦ τεχνικοῦ λαμβάνων). Di Benedetto (1990, 38) points out that Sextus is guilty of an anachronism in saying that Dionysius has "taken" his parts from Asclepiades' technical part; this is literally impossible, since Asclepiades' division into three parts is later (if not by much) than that of

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<sup>430</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,47. Cf. the Scholiasts to Dionysius Thrax (GG1.3 160,10–11), who explain Eratosthenes' definition: "γραμματική ἐστὶν ἕξις παντελῆς ἐν γράμμασι", γράμματα καλῶν τὰ συγγράμματα. See section 3.1.

<sup>431</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,91.

<sup>432</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,252.

<sup>433</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,250–251.

Dionysius. As Di Benedetto suggests, however, Sextus evidently saw the tripartite division as universal, and as such timeless.

There is more to these divisions: as already mentioned, Sextus claimed that Dionysius divided the art into parts “strangely”, by which he refers to the fact that Dionysius approached the subject in a manner different from the way Sextus considered conventional. Rather than conceptually analysing the genus by dividing it into its species (‘technical’, ‘historical’, ‘grammatical’), Dionysius presented a list of ‘members’. This difference is exactly the one Cicero explains:<sup>434</sup> a definition by *partitio* (μερισμός) means that the defined is divided by enumerating the parts of which the defined consists – the actual numbers (πρῶτον... δεύτερον... τρίτον... etc.) of the parts are also found in the Τέχνη γραμματικῆ; Sextus too refers explicitly to the number of Dionysius’ parts.<sup>435</sup> A definition by *divisio* (διαίρεσις), the model Asclepiades prefers, exhibits all the species, or qualities, grammar holds: a technical, a historical and a grammatical quality. The problem is that we cannot say whether the Dionysian or the Asclepiadean list of parts is the result of a conscious process of definition. Sextus does not explicitly say that there is a different method underlying the two lists of parts, but he does testify that many grammarians have discussed the parts of grammar and have held different opinions. It was a question of some importance, and this importance derived from dialectical and rhetorical sources. However, rather than consulting dialecticians or rhetoricians, the grammarians followed the example of other grammarians. Accordingly, the relevant terminology was not used: Dionysius and Asclepiades divide grammar into parts (μέρη), although more accurately the latter divides it into species (εἶδη).

Asclepiades seems to have been explicit in his clarification of the parts of grammar, and indeed to have succeeded in dividing them further into credible sub-parts. Sextus next reports that the historical part consists of ‘true’ (ἀληθῆ, actual history), ‘false’ (ψευδῆ, myths) and ‘as if true’ (ὡς ἀληθῆ, realistic fiction) sub-parts. The division is based on the qualities of the text being studied, not on methods or stages of work. After this, the clear structure of the discussion seems to disintegrate slightly, when Sextus claims that the part concerning words (γλῶτται) is commonly placed under the historical part. This is based on methodology: the method used in this part is ἱστορεῖν, to inquire or seek in books. Sextus mentions that this is Dionysius’ opinion as well, and indeed Dionysius Thrax places the study of words and histories together in the third part of grammar (λέξεων καὶ ἱστοριῶν ἀπόδοσις).<sup>436</sup> Words can also be examined by

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<sup>434</sup> Cic. *top.* 28; see section 1.3.1.

<sup>435</sup> *math.* 1,250: Διονύσιος ὁ Θράξ ἔξ μέρη γραμματικῆς εἶναι λέγων --.

<sup>436</sup> Sext. *Emp. math.* 1,250.

etymology and could thus be placed under the technical part; and this is probably why Sextus uses the word κοινῶς, ‘commonly’.<sup>437</sup>

Sextus ends his discussion of the subdivisions of the historical part by adding ὡσαύτως δὲ καὶ τὸ περὶ παροιμιῶν καὶ ὄρων:<sup>438</sup> the same method, research in books, is applicable to the study of proverbs and definitions. These were textual entities that had further use in oratory and, basically, at least when it comes to sayings, in everyday life as a cultural symbol.<sup>439</sup> A grammarian’s job here would be to try to determine the origins of the proverbs and definitions: the user and the wording. The method for this analysis would be ἵστορεῖν, research in books. Furthermore, just as the meaning of obscure words, the meaning of unclear definitions and proverbs can be deciphered by a grammarian.<sup>440</sup> Paroemiography had Aristotelian roots: Aristotle thought that proverbs were survivals of ancient wisdom and encouraged his disciples to collect them. In Hellenistic Alexandria, Aristophanes had an interest in proverbs, especially in their complete and proper wording and their different meanings.<sup>441</sup> Placing the study of definitions in the same category as the study of proverbs suggests that the definitions were not studied from a dialectical point of view. Nevertheless, a grammarian should at least be able to recognize definitions in the text as bits of condensed knowledge, perhaps even wisdom. To grammarians, definitions might even present themselves more as literary entities than as a means of constructing knowledge they too could – and should – apply.

Based on the assumption that Sextus followed the course of Περί γραμματικῆς by Asclepiades of Myrlea through his Epicurean source, we can reconstruct the structure of the grammar:

TABLE 2. RECONSTRUCTION OF ASCLEPIADES OF MYRLEA’S GRAMMAR

<p><b>‘Introduction’</b>  definition of grammar: γραμματικὴ ἐστὶ τέχνη τῶν παρὰ ποιηταῖς καὶ συγγραφεῦσι λεγομένων.  discussion of other definitions  etymological definition of γραμματικὴ and γραμματιστικὴ  grammar compared to other arts: grammar, music and philosophy vs. conjectural medicine and navigation  division of grammar: τεχνικόν, ἱστορικόν, γραμματικόν μέρος</p>
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<sup>437</sup> Blank 1998, 270.

<sup>438</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,253.

<sup>439</sup> Criboire 2001, 178–179.

<sup>440</sup> Sextus states (*math.* 1,278–9) that if sayings, exhortations and such need grammatical explaining at all, they are in fact useless.

<sup>441</sup> Aristophanes published two collections of proverbs, Μετρικαὶ παροιμίαι in two books and Ἄμετροι παροιμίαι in four books; Pfeiffer 1968, 208.

### **I τεχνικόν 'technical part'**

elements

syllable

parts of speech

noun

gender and number

verb

article (etc.?)

sentence ("speech", λόγος)

partition (μερισμός)

distribution into feet

partition into parts of speech

subtraction and addition

orthography

quantity

quality

division

Hellenism

criteria: analogy and usage

barbarism and solecism

etymology (also a criterion of Hellenism)

### **II ιστορικόν 'historical part'**

types of histories

true (history)

persons, gods, heroes, famous men

places and times

actions

false (mythography)

genealogy

as if true (fiction)

comedy, mime

obscure words

definitions and proverbs

### **III γραμματικόν 'grammatical part'**

interpretation of the poem

the author's thought

(judgement of the authenticity and originality of the text)<sup>442</sup>

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<sup>442</sup> This part is not mentioned again in the systematic treatment of the parts of grammar, but is mentioned in section 1,91–96 where Sextus briefly discusses the parts of grammar.

It is very probable that the work by Dionysius Thrax referred to by Sextus as παραγγέλματα included an initial section, in which definitory notions concerning the art of grammar were placed. By Sextus' account, it is evident that this was the case with Asclepiades' Περὶ γραμματικῆς as well. This initial section of Περὶ γραμματικῆς included a definition that reveals what is essential to grammar, a nominal definition of grammar based on etymology, and a division of grammar into three parts.

The technical part of Asclepiades' grammar included discussions of the elements, the syllable and the parts of speech. In *Adversus mathematicos*, the parts of speech (μερῆ τοῦ λόγου) are discussed as a whole in a short chapter concerning the two ways in which the grammarian divides speech: into feet (scansion) and into parts of speech (partition).<sup>443</sup> Sextus only names three parts of speech: the noun, the verb and the article.<sup>444</sup> I assume that Asclepiades' grammar entailed a fuller set of parts of speech, although their number in Asclepiades is not known.<sup>445</sup> Of these named parts of speech, the only one Sextus actually discusses is the noun; it is enough to give a taste of the grammarians' skills in the matter, he says.<sup>446</sup> Sextus does not mention any definitions of the parts of speech, which may mean that Asclepiades' grammar did not contain any. Definitions would seem like ideal material for criticism, and as we have seen, Sextus quoted and analyzed many definitions of the art itself. He also presents definitions of barbarism and solecism.<sup>447</sup> Sextus mentions that the grammarians discuss the accidents of the noun: gender, number and "the rest of their divisions" (καὶ ἤδη τὰς ἄλλας ἐπισυνείρωσι διαίρεσεις).<sup>448</sup> The rest may include at least case, since we know that Aristophanes recognized the accidents of the noun: case, number and gender.<sup>449</sup> Sextus only discusses the topics of gender and number in terms of whether they can be said to arise 'by nature' (φύσει) or not, and case could not have been discussed from this viewpoint. However, as Sextus acknowledges, the grammarians do not take this discussion further. They do not make the φύσει claim with regard to name-giving; Sextus says that the grammarians would not have a standing argument for the claim, because 1) it is difficult for even the most advanced natural philosophers and 2) if gender (and

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<sup>443</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,159–161.

<sup>444</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,132.

<sup>445</sup> Nor do we know with certainty that Asclepiades really used the concept μερῆ τοῦ λόγου, which is the term used by Sextus; the earliest grammarian we know to have employed the concept is Tyrannion (discussed in section 4.5), perhaps in the middle of the first century BC.

<sup>446</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,141; the discussion on the noun 1,142ff.

<sup>447</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,210.

<sup>448</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,142. The word Sextus uses of the grammarians' work on the noun as διαίρεσις, division, although these categorizations actually concern the accidents.

<sup>449</sup> Char. 149,26–150,2 (Barwick); see section 3.2.

number) were truly 'by nature', there would be no variance at all in these matters. Based on what we know of the grammarians' attitude toward this question, Sextus is right in saying that they do not discuss it: the topic of name-giving is not discussed in any existing grammar.<sup>450</sup> Sextus' discussion of this issue thus draws on philosophical sources.<sup>451</sup> His goal is to argue against their existence 'by nature', and to show that gender and number are merely a question of usage; in which case there is no technical rule to be given in the matter – another proof of grammar's non-expert status.<sup>452</sup>

The topic following the discussion of the noun in Sextus, under the heading *περὶ λόγου καὶ μερῶν λόγου*, is also a non-grammatical one: the question whether sentence (*λόγος*) is the corporeal voice itself (*αὐτὴ ἢ σωματικὴ φωνή*) or the incorporeal sayable (*ἄσώματον λεκτόν*).<sup>453</sup> These are the two topics discussed by Sextus related to the parts of speech: the ancient *φύσει* question and the Stoic classic *φωνή – λεκτόν*, which Sextus very vaguely ascribes to grammarians. The purpose of raising the latter topic is unclear, as it is not relevant to the grammarians. The reason for mentioning it seems to have been that Sextus wanted to discuss such philosophical issues pertaining to grammar, but the sources available to him did not really offer any material in support of this aim. The discussion remains quite brief, and the actual parts of speech are not discussed in it at all. Sextus did not know the work of Apollonius Dyscolus, which he probably would have found interesting.<sup>454</sup> Why, then, did Sextus choose to use as his sources grammars and grammarians dating back several centuries before his time? Asclepiades' work was available to Sextus through his Epicurean source; it had already been found susceptible to a systematic philosophical refutation. We get the picture of Asclepiades as a debater among the grammarians, as he responds to the controversial issues raised by Dionysius' definition. Asclepiades' grammar also offered a clear structural foundation for a sceptic philosopher's work. It is possible that Asclepiades' authority in the field of *γραμματική* was generally recognized: he was a renowned Homerist and had authored a treatise on the history of philology, *Περὶ γραμματικῶν*.<sup>455</sup>

Sextus devotes a good deal of attention to the subject of Hellenism, which he divides into two kinds: one based on grammatical analogy, the other on usage. The first of these Sextus deems useless, the second one he approves of.<sup>456</sup>

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<sup>450</sup> Luhtala 2002, 265. Varro's *De lingua Latina* discusses the topic, but it is not a representative of *τέχνη γραμματική*; see sections 4.3.1–4.3.3.

<sup>451</sup> See Blank 1998, 176ff.

<sup>452</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,153.

<sup>453</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,155.

<sup>454</sup> See Luhtala's discussion (2002, 265–266; 2005, 4; 9).

<sup>455</sup> The fragments of Asclepiades' Homeric studies are collected by Pagani (2007).

<sup>456</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,176–177.



Etymology as a criterion of Hellenism is discussed in a separate short chapter;<sup>457</sup> it is clear that its relevance to Hellenism is smaller. The crucial question is whether Hellenism as an expertise can exist.<sup>458</sup> The answer is that as there is no expertise of usage, the only coherent form of Hellenism for Sextus, there consequently cannot be an expertise of Hellenism. Moreover, Sextus demonstrates that in order to speak good Greek, one does not need grammar. The concepts of barbarism and solecism are also discussed. We know from the titles (περὶ ἑλληνισμοῦ) that have survived that ‘correct language’, meaning the criteria of Hellenism, and the order of the application of these criteria became an important subject of systematic study in the first century BCE. These questions were now integrated into the grammatical system.<sup>459</sup> Hellenism and Latinity were discussed in various works, both in those dedicated solely to the subject and in those dealing with grammatical issues more widely. Various scholars devoted attention to it: the grammarian Tryphon, who was perhaps mainly interested in grammatical categorization,<sup>460</sup> the grammarian Philoxenus, who was interested in linguistic variation (dialectology),<sup>461</sup> and Antonius Gniphō, who worked as both a grammarian and a rhetorician.<sup>462</sup> In addition to these, we have the polymath Varro (*De sermone Latino*), and Julius Caesar (*De analogia*), who among other things was a practising orator. In the early first century CE, at least Ptolemaeus of Ascalon, Seleucus and Pliny the Elder (*Dubius sermo*) paid attention to the issue.<sup>463</sup> The criteria of Hellenism were also discussed in Asclepiades’ Περὶ γραμματικῆς, as is suggested by the arrangement of Sextus’ argumentation. According to Schenkeveld (1994, 287 n. 57), the specialized τέχναι περὶ ἑλληνισμοῦ were probably an offshoot of the regular τέχναι γραμματικάι, offering an opportunity for more detailed discussion of subjects that were dealt with at a general level in grammars containing all parts of γραμματικῆ.<sup>464</sup> The Stoics had their own interest in correct language, as did practicing orators. There are no indications that philologist grammarians before Asclepiades of Myrlea

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<sup>457</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,241–247.

<sup>458</sup> In his treatment, Sextus approaches the issue of Hellenism in a similar manner to his approach to the whole art of grammar, making it claim a status of an expertise inside the expertise; see Blank 1998, 204–205.

<sup>459</sup> The issue has been discussed by Siebenborn (1976, 32ff).

<sup>460</sup> Tryphon wrote treatises on the individual parts of speech and perhaps on tropes; see section 4.2.

<sup>461</sup> See section 4.2.

<sup>462</sup> See section 4.1.

<sup>463</sup> Siebenborn 1976, 33–34.

<sup>464</sup> The opposite has been argued earlier by Fehling (1956 and 1957): technical treatises originated in the treatises on correct Greek as an expansion of the introductory sections of these treatises.

were concerned with the question of correct language; Asclepiades seems to have recognized at least three criteria, analogy, usage and etymology.

Sextus discusses the two remaining parts of grammar, the historical part (ἱστορικόν) and that concerning poets and prose-writers (γραμματικόν). According to him, the former part rises out of unsystematic matter and is methodically non-expert. As such, it cannot form part of anything called an expertise. Sextus condemns the historical part of grammar as unmethodical: it is based on the knowledge of details rather than on theory, and its treatment of the material is unsystematic. The 'special' or 'grammatical' part of grammar, which concerns poets and prose-writers, is not refuted on methodical grounds but for reasons of morality: poetry and prose, which grammar helps us to understand, do not provide the reader with wisdom and happiness, contrary to the claim the grammarians like to make.<sup>465</sup>

Asclepiades must have played a role of some significance in the process of the systematization of grammar: starting from the definition and division of grammar by Dionysius Thrax, he provided an insight into grammar as an expertise with its own peculiar order and methods. For example, Sextus explicitly attributes to Asclepiades the view that the part of grammar concerning individual words, as well as that concerning definitions and proverbs, is generally placed under the historical part.<sup>466</sup> Sextus has a way of making it seem as though the definitions and divisions of grammar he cites were reactions to each other: Chaeris "seems to bring an argument from Crates", Ptolemaeus the Peripatetic and Asclepiades object and try to improve the Dionysian definition, and Dionysius "has taken" the parts of his grammar from those of Asclepiades. Although some of this is fictitious, it is evident that during the first century BCE the subject of what grammar is by nature was open to debate, and an unfriendly attitude towards ἐμπειρία seems to have been intensifying.

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<sup>465</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,270–271. In *math.* 1,272–276, Sextus gives plenty of examples of how it is commonly thought that old literature and the wisdom found in it is the basis of grammar's usefulness.

<sup>466</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,253.

### 3.8 Philosophers' definitions of grammar

Sextus Empiricus preserved a handful of Hellenistic definitions of grammar. Although the grammarians certainly adopted Hellenism as well as Latinity in the first century BCE, the definitions – perhaps mostly dating to the previous century – do not yet show clear signs of γραμματική developing into an art that has correct language as one of its focal points. The scope of the art is expanded from literature to τὰ παρ' Ἑλλησι λεκτὰ καὶ νοητά, 'the things said and thought by the Greeks' and κοινὴ συνήθεια. As the first century BCE proceeds, definitions that point explicitly at correct language eventually begin to surface.

The first definition of grammar to involve the notion of correct language is that preserved, in Latin translation, by the fourth century CE scholar Marius Victorinus. He attributes the definition to Ariston, by whom he may mean Ariston of Alexandria, who flourished in the first century BCE.<sup>467</sup> Only a handful of fragments are preserved from this Ariston. He was a pupil of Antiochus of Ascalon, an Academic philosopher from Alexandria and a man of eclectic views. Ariston was one of the early commentators on Aristotle, and the original context of the definition may have been a commentary (or a treatise in some other literary form) on Aristotle's *Categoriae*.<sup>468</sup> I return to the question of the identity of Ariston below (page 102).

In the initial section of his grammar, Marius Victorinus cites Ariston's definition of *grammatica* as well as his definition of *ars* (corresponding to τέχνη); obviously, the definition of *ars* is given because grammar is taken to be an *ars*. In his commentary on Cicero's *De inventione*, Marius Victorinus explicates (*rhet.* 155,24–27) that the word *ars* in itself is not enough to yield a complete meaning: it must always be indicated of *what* it is the art – *ars poetica*, *ars grammatica* and so on. From this it seems to follow that the word *ars* is not even necessary in every case, as for instance in the definition of *grammatica* quoted by Marius Victorinus. The genus of grammar is defined as *scientia*, probably corresponding to ἐπιστήμη, a higher form of knowing. This is the genus assigned to grammar by Aristotle.<sup>469</sup> Marius Victorinus quotes Aristotle's definition of τέχνη in Greek, whereas the definitions of *ars* and *grammatica* by Ariston he quotes in Latin. This is probably because Marius Victorinus was using an already published copy of his own Latin commentary of *Categoriae*, and he no longer had Ariston's original Greek commentary text at hand.<sup>470</sup>

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<sup>467</sup> *RE s.v.* Ariston [54].

<sup>468</sup> Simplicius (sixth century CE) testifies (*in cat.* 159,32) that Ariston was among the early interpreters (ἐξεγητήρας) of Aristotle's *Categoriae*, but the form of the exegesis is not specified; see Falcon 2012, 23.

<sup>469</sup> *Ar. metaph.* 1003b20 and *top.* 142b31–32; see section 2.3.

<sup>470</sup> Mariotti 1966, 100–101.

Ars, ut Aristoni placet, collectio est ex perceptionibus et exercitationibus ad aliquem vitae finem pertinens, id est generaliter omne quicquid certis praeceptis ad utilitatem nostram format animos. Aristoteles quo modo? Τέχνη ἐστὶ σύστημα ἐκ καταλήψεων συγγεγυμνασμένων πρὸς τι τέλος εὐχρηστον τῷ βίῳ συνουσῶν.<sup>471</sup> -- Ut Aristoni placet, grammaticae est scientia poetas et historicos intellegere, formam praecipue loquendi ad rationem et consuetudinem dirigens.<sup>472</sup>

Art, as Ariston claims, is a body (of doctrines) consisting of perceptions and exercises pertaining to some goal in life. Generally, it is everything that with firm precepts moulds the soul for our own benefit. What does Aristotle say? It is a system of cognitions unified by exercise for some goal useful in life. -- According to Ariston, grammar is the science of understanding poets and historians, and it especially directs the form of speaking towards regularity and usage.

Ariston's definition of grammar is clearly twofold: grammar is about literature and language. He specifies that it especially directs the form of speaking, *forma loquendi*; this may be a deliberate choice of words, in order to emphasize the function central to oratory. *Forma scribendi* or orthography no doubt also belongs to grammar.<sup>473</sup> The linguistic focus Ariston determines for *grammatica*, directing language towards forms that are justified by analogy (*ratio*) or by usage (*consuetudo*), has been seen as an attempt to harmonize the analogist position of the Alexandrian philologists and the anomalist positions of the Pergamene scholars.<sup>474</sup> This view is based on the alleged dispute between the representatives of the two schools; as noted in section 3.3, however, there is no real need to presume such a controversy. In Ariston's definition of grammar, the literary material that grammar sets out to study is defined as *poetae et historici*. Restricting prose to history seems like a narrow delineation, whereas the natural point of comparison, the definition of grammar by Dionysius Thrax, first mentions poets, then prose-writers in general. Does this difference imply something? Perhaps so: Ariston's definition seems to rule out the same literary products as does that of Chaeris, namely the technical writings that represent

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<sup>471</sup> This definition of art is more commonly attributed to the Stoic Zeno (see section 2.1). It is not found in any of Aristotle's extant works. There might be a mix-up in the sources for Marius Victorinus' part.

<sup>472</sup> Mar. Victorin. *gramm.* GL6 3,7-4,9 = frg. 5 Mariotti.

<sup>473</sup> See Dahlmann 1970, 12. However, it is possible that *loqui* here may be understood more widely as referring to the use of language in general and thus including *scribere*.

<sup>474</sup> Barwick 1922, 220 n. 1; Mariotti 1966, 15.

other fields of study (πλήν τῶν ὑπ' ἄλλαις τέχναις<sup>475</sup>). As seen in the refutation of grammar by Sextus Empiricus, along with actual historiography 'history' includes mythography and fiction, although much of this naturally falls under the category of poetry. On the other hand, *historici* may be a direct translation of the word συγγραφεῖς – the word used by Dionysius Thrax in his definition – which can refer particularly to historians.<sup>476</sup>

At this point of the discussion, it must be acknowledged that the attribution of the definitions in Marius Victorinus to Ariston of Alexandria is somewhat problematic.<sup>477</sup> Another possible attribution is Ariston the Younger, a Peripatetic of the second century BCE and a student of Critolaus.<sup>478</sup> This attribution of the definition to him seems possible due to a Quintilian passage, in which we find a definition of rhetoric Quintilian attributes to Ariston, the pupil of the Peripatetic Critolaus (*Ariston, Critolai Peripatetici discipulus*).<sup>479</sup> In the definition of grammar cited by Marius Victorinus, Ariston clearly states that grammar deals with two different aspects, the interpretation of literature and language study, the latter of which has a prescriptive outlook. We find the same division in Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria* (1,9,1): the art of grammar is divided into two main heads, *ratio loquendi* and *enarratio auctorum*. Quintilian at least knew (some of) the work of the Ariston who had defined rhetoric – perhaps the same Ariston who had also defined grammar, and with whom Quintilian agreed. In my view, this does not seem strong enough a claim to identify the person whose definition Victorinus quotes as Ariston the Younger. Mariotti refutes the attribution of the definition of grammar to Ariston the Younger because it seems chronologically implausible. In his view, Ariston the Younger flourished at the time the analogy / anomaly debate was still ongoing; this would have meant that a defi-

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<sup>475</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,76–77.

<sup>476</sup> Cf. Xen. *Hell.* 7,2,6; Dion. Hal. *Thuc.* 5.

<sup>477</sup> In fact, the number of potentially confused Aristons is four (see Stork, Dorandi, Fortenbaugh and van Ophuijsen 2006, 3): Ariston of Keos (*RE* 52), Ariston of Chios (*RE* 56), Ariston the Younger (*RE* 53<b>) and Ariston of Alexandria (*RE* 54). The Stoic Ariston of Chios has been identified as the definer by at least Schmid (1910) and Ioppolo (1980); however, this Ariston of Chios showed no interest in questions outside ethics and is therefore an unlikely candidate (Diog. Laert. 6,103; Mariotti 1966, 75). Mariotti identifies Ariston of Alexandria behind the definition, and Di Benedetto (1966, 323ff) and Hadot (1971, 69) accept this identification. Dahlmann (1970, 7 n. 1) takes no clear stand but notes that the doubt Krafft (1969, 105–106) casts on Mariotti's identification is not uncalled for. Gottschalk (1987, 1121) sees the attribution to Ariston of Alexandria as "very doubtful" and notes that there is only one fragment that is universally agreed to come from Ariston of Alexandria.

<sup>478</sup> Colson (1914, 35) finds it possible that the Ariston in question here indeed is Ariston the Younger.

<sup>479</sup> Quint. *inst.* 2,15,19. This Ariston's definition of rhetoric is *scientia videndi et agendi in quaestionibus civilibus per orationem popularis persuasionis*. Cf. also Sext. Emp. *math.* 2,61.

nition of grammar could not have said that it directs the form of speaking towards the analogist concept of regularity (*ratio*) and the anomalist concept of usage (*consuetudo*). As noted above, the consensus nowadays is that an analogy / anomaly debate on that scale never actually took place, and there is thus no such reason to reject the identification as Ariston the Younger. Based on the dating of the known chronology of Critolaus, who took part in the Athenian philosophers' delegation to Rome in 155 BCE, Ariston the Younger would have been born somewhere between 210 and 160 BCE.<sup>480</sup> Accordingly, the time of creation of the definition of grammar would be somewhere between 185 and 80 BCE, and the last twenty years or so of this timespan are entirely plausible: as we have seen, from what we can infer from Sextus Empiricus, the grammar of Asclepiades of Myrlea dealt to some extent with the criteria of correct language.<sup>481</sup> The matter remains a conjecture, as the evidence is inconclusive; nevertheless, I consider Ariston of Alexandria to be the more plausible identification, for two reasons. First, he lived at a time during which many definitions of grammar were created (although the context of his work is not grammatical, and thus the influence of the grammatical tradition may be insignificant). Secondly, the later the time of a definition of grammar, the more likely it seems that it will take into account the role of the study of correct language within the art of grammar.

Ariston gives a definition and Quintilian a division, but both present grammar as having two main heads, or objects: literary exegesis and correct language. What is notable about Ariston's definition, which is most likely a definition by a trained philosopher, is that he manages to formulate a definition proper that presents grammar as having two heads, but avoids the problem encountered both by Demetrius Chlorus and by the unnamed definers cited by a Scholiast to Dionysius Thrax in their attempts to do the same. According to Chlorus, grammar is on the one hand a τέχνη, which examines what is said by poets, on the other an εἶδησις of common usage;<sup>482</sup> the anonymous scholars say that grammar is partly ἐμπειρία and partly τέχνη.<sup>483</sup> These definitions give a double genus to the definiendum, which is inappropriate, as the genus cannot be partly one thing and partly another.<sup>484</sup> The definition of grammar that has two main structural heads is also found in later grammars;<sup>485</sup> the Ariston quoted

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<sup>480</sup> Mariotti 1966, 78.

<sup>481</sup> See section 3.7.

<sup>482</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,84; see section 3.6.4.

<sup>483</sup> Schol. D.T. GG1.3 165,16–24; see also GG1.3 448, 22–25.

<sup>484</sup> See section 3.6.1.

<sup>485</sup> For example, Asper (*GL5* 547,7–9), Dositheus (*GL7* 376,3–4), and (ps.-)Victorinus (*GL6* 188,1–2).

by Marius Victorinus, as far as we can tell, is the earliest scholar to suggest such a division.

Besides the definition by Ariston, there is another definition of grammar by a philosopher that merits discussion. This definition is much later than that of Ariston, but I discuss it here because of the similarities in their context. Alexander of Aphrodisias (second half of the second century – 211 CE<sup>486</sup>), the head of the Aristotelian school in Athens, defined γραμματική in his commentary on Aristotle's *Topica*. According to Alexander, "grammar is the expertise of writing well and reading well" (γραμματική ἐστὶ τέχνη τοῦ εὖ γράφειν καὶ τοῦ εὖ ἀναγινώσκειν<sup>487</sup>). The context is a discussion of defining technique, where this definition of grammar serves as an example; as in the commented text, it is not part of a discussion of the nature of grammar. Aristotle's definition of grammar in the *Topica* presents grammar as having very practical and even modest pretensions: "-- for example, if he has defined 'grammar' as 'the science of writing from dictation': he should add that it is also the science of reading --" (οἷον εἰ τὴν γραμματικὴν ἐπιστήμην τοῦ γράψαι τὸ ὑπαγορευθέν· προσδεῖται γὰρ ὅτι καὶ τοῦ ἀναγνῶναι --<sup>488</sup>). Now Alexander's goal in his work as a commentator was always to render the original text as perfectly intelligible and coherent, and in a strictly Aristotelian spirit.<sup>489</sup> What may be said of Alexander of Aphrodisias' simple definition is that it shows disregard, or unawareness, of the defining tradition of the grammarians: he only pays attention to the functions of grammar that are evident from the lessons of a grammarian. In drawing up their definitions of grammar, the philosophers Ariston and Alexander of Aphrodisias were not trying to affiliate themselves with the grammatical tradition. The definitions appear reliable, reduced to the essentials. Alexander's idea of defining the arts is visible in his interpretation of a Stoic definition of dialectic, which, according to him, is "the science of speaking well" (οἱ μὲν ἀπὸ τῆς Στοᾶς ὀριζόμενοι τὴν διαλεκτικὴν ἐπιστήμην τοῦ εὖ λέγειν<sup>490</sup>). The similarity to the definition of γραμματική is obvious, although the latter definition appears more as a definition of logic that covers both rhetoric and dialectic, or rather rhetoric alone.<sup>491</sup>

If we assume that the Ariston cited by Marius Victorinus is Ariston of Alexandria, as I am inclined to think, the context of both of these definitions is a philosophical commentary on Aristotle. To be more precise, in Alexander's case, and in all probability in that of Ariston, the definition of grammar is part of a

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<sup>486</sup> Tuominen 2009, 127.

<sup>487</sup> Alex. Aph. in Ar. top. 456,18.

<sup>488</sup> Ar. top. 142b31–33; see section 2.3.

<sup>489</sup> Spranzi 2011, 103.

<sup>490</sup> SVF II frg. 124; cf. for example the Stoic definitions of dialectic, frg. 122 and 123.

<sup>491</sup> See the discussion in Long 1978, 102–103.

discussion of the theory and practice of defining. In this discussion, grammar is chosen as an example probably because of its familiarity and its unambiguous nature. Perhaps a philosopher is more ready to modify the definition to correspond to current practice than a grammarian would be. A grammarian may be keen to align himself with the Alexandrian tradition and to define the discipline in accordance with its emphasis on literary exegesis. In a definition of the art, this would mean that the emphasis would remain on literary exegesis, even though in reality the grammarian's interest could have been divided between the question of correct language and that of textual and literary criticism. Compared to the Aristotelian version of the definition, Alexander of Aphrodisias has added the word εὔ. Aristotle's definition of grammar is the definition of a very elementary science, while in Alexander's version the orientation of grammar seems to be determined by the demands of rhetoric. Alexander's grammar is still instructive, but it is on a higher level than that of Aristotle. Alexander defines grammar as a τέχνη, Aristotle as an ἐπιστήμη; this change does not seem to be significant. In general, the chosen genus seems to hold little importance, unless it is ἐμπειρία, as seen in the case of Dionysius Thrax. Moreover, there is no inconsistency in defining grammar as a τέχνη: it clearly fulfils the requirements Aristotle generally posited for an expertise.<sup>492</sup>

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<sup>492</sup> See section 2.1.



## 4. THE ROMAN GRAMMATICAL EXPERIENCE

Our picture of the early Roman art of grammar and its practices is largely based on the treatise *De grammaticis* by C. Suetonius Tranquillus. This treatise is the subject of the first section of this chapter; it is followed by a general account (4.2) of the scholars present in Rome mainly in the first century BCE. Separate sections are devoted to Varro and Cicero (4.3 and 4.4 respectively), as well as to the Greek grammarian Tyrannion (4.5). The last author to be discussed will be Dionysius of Halicarnassus (4.6).

### 4.1 Suetonius' professors

Suetonius' *De grammaticis*<sup>493</sup> is a part of an extensive collection of biographies called *De viris illustribus*, probably written between 107 and 118 CE. The book consists of 20 lives – or rather, biographical notes – of esteemed grammarians, professors of language and literature (*grammatici, professores, doctores*), in rough chronological order.<sup>494</sup> In addition to the actual biographical notes, there are four introductory chapters, in which Suetonius mentions sixteen other names of scholars who were responsible for forming Roman grammar 'from scratch'.<sup>495</sup> *De grammaticis* is a socio-historical work rather than a survey of doctrinal history. For example, he tells us practically nothing of the work of the esteemed scholars Crates and Aelius Stilo, known to us from other contexts; instead, he chooses to concentrate on things of more human interest, such as twists of fate, illnesses, and financial details. The profession of the grammarian as a teacher of language and literature had been established as separate from that of the rhetorician by the first century BCE. Suetonius' treatise on grammarians was written a considerable time after the first stages he describes, but it is the only description of the subject available to us today. In the following, I give an overview, based on *De grammaticis*, of the kind of grammar that was practiced in Rome from approximately the mid-third century BCE to the Tiberian-Claudian era. Suetonius does not include any actual definition of grammar. A definition of the art would have been misplaced here: what these men shared in common was that they were professional teachers of an expertise of which everyone had some conception, and what was mainly interesting about them were the circum-

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<sup>493</sup> I have taken the text (as well as the orthography of names) from Robert A. Kaster's edition (1995).

<sup>494</sup> See Viljamaa (1991) on *De grammaticis*.

<sup>495</sup> In addition to these names, there are four more grammarians mentioned in *de grammaticis* not well-regarded enough to get a biographical note of their own: Suetonius' own teacher, named Princeps (4,6), Orbilius Pupillus' son Orbilius (9,6), Santra (14,4) and Modestus, freedman of Julius Hyginus (20,3).

stances in which they carried out their work. Here I focus on information that helps us to form a picture of the scope of Roman grammar between Livius Andronicus and Valerius Probus.

The earliest teachers (*antiquissimi doctorum*) of both Greek and Latin, Suetonius reports, were Livius Andronicus (fl. mid-third century BCE) and Ennius (239–169 BCE). Their grammatical activity was limited to ‘interpreting’ Greek poets (*Graecos interpretabantur*),<sup>496</sup> meaning perhaps just a little more than mere translation, or heavy glossing of a text that is less than lucid – not the profound *interpretatio* in the sense of literary exegesis as understood in Quintilian’s *Institutio oratoria*.<sup>497</sup> In terms of their activity, Livius and Ennius are not yet to be called *grammatici*. Ennius, however, called himself *dicti studiosus*, a calque of φιλόλογος, a man of manifold learning.<sup>498</sup> It is too early in the Roman grammatical tradition to introduce treatises covering the study of language: Suetonius rejects the idea of Ennius (239–169 BCE) having written on syllables and metrics (*de litteris syllabisque, item de metris*<sup>499</sup>), although as a poet Ennius would have known a great deal about these.

According to Suetonius, grammatical activity in Rome began thanks to the ‘sewer incident’ (see 3.3) suffered by Crates of Mallus sometime in the late 160s BCE.<sup>500</sup> The discipline he introduced to the Romans was the *studium grammaticae*. Crates’ work inspired the Romans to inquire into their own literature:

Hactenus tamen imitati, ut carmina parum adhuc divulgata vel defunctorum amicorum vel si quorum aliorum probassent diligentius retractarent ac legendo commentandoque etiam ceteris nota facerent --.<sup>501</sup>

Still, they imitated him only to the extent that they carefully reviewed poems that had as yet not been widely circulated – the works of dead friends, or of any others they approved – and by reading and commenting on them made them known to the rest of the population as well.<sup>502</sup>

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<sup>496</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 1,2.

<sup>497</sup> Kaster 1995, 52–53.

<sup>498</sup> Enn. *ann.* 209; Kaster 1995, 50.

<sup>499</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 1,3. Suetonius finds the claims of Ennius’ authorship implausible; he concludes that the treatises on syllables and metrics were wrongly attributed and were in fact the work of a later Ennius (*iure arguit L. Cotta non poetae sed posterioris Enni esse*), who remains unknown to us.

<sup>500</sup> Kaster 1995, 43.

<sup>501</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 2,2.

<sup>502</sup> Translation by Kaster 1995.

The earliest phase of proper Roman *grammatica* begins with the modest editorial work on Naevius' *Punicum Bellum*<sup>503</sup> by C. Octavius Lampadio (fl. probably mid-second century BCE),<sup>504</sup> and by Q. Vargunteius on Ennius' *Annales*. Thus philological activity in a Roman context is almost as old as Roman national poetry. According to Suetonius' testimony, it was philological expertise that was introduced by Crates: an expertise with the clear goal of preserving and interpreting literature.<sup>505</sup> Blaensdorf (1988, 142) suggests that the three areas of grammatical study referred to in Suetonius' text on Crates, *retractare*, *legere*, *commentare*, correspond to the parts of grammar known as διορθωτικόν, ἀναγνωστικόν and ἐξηγητικόν. The critical part, κριτικόν or *iudicium*, is not mentioned.<sup>506</sup> These are known in Latin from Varro (*Grammaticae officia, ut adserit Varro, constant in partibus quattuor, lectione enarratione emendatione iudicio*).<sup>507</sup> It has been seen as curious that Suetonius fails to mention the critical aspect of grammar, given its importance to Crates. Blaensdorf (1988, 143) remarks that κρίσις ποιημάτων was "sans doute" the proper subject of Crates' Roman lectures. The story of grammar's first steps among the unpolished Romans need not be taken literally, but it is also conceivable that as an advocate of a new discipline Crates found it practical to concentrate on lecturing on those parts of grammar that precede the judgement of literature. Crates' own specialty, euphonist criticism, required a high degree of expertise – the Romans could not yet follow all the way. The grammatical activities Suetonius mentions (*retractare*, *legere*, *commentare*) resemble Varro's division and certainly reflect the central functions of the art of grammar, but it has to be noted that the Varronian division clearly belongs to a technical discussion and is governed by dialectical principles, whereas no such dialectical element is present in the Suetonian passage.

A new chapter both in the Roman *studium grammaticae* and in Suetonius' text begins with L. Aelius Stilo (Praeconinus) (c. 154–75 BCE) and his son-in-law Servius Clodius, who brought order and advancement to every part of grammar (*Instruxerunt auxeruntque ab omni parte grammaticam --*).<sup>508</sup> Suetonius refers to 'parts' without specifying them, and we know that at the time there was a divi-

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<sup>503</sup> This is also confirmed by the grammarian Santra in his treatise *De antiquitate verborum* (GRF frg. 5); Christes 1979, 8.

<sup>504</sup> I have adopted the datings of Suetonius' grammarians mainly from Christes (1979).

<sup>505</sup> See Viljamaa 1991, 3833. There were also other Greek grammarians around at the time of Crates' mishap, as well as other professionals – philosophers, rhetoricians, artists, horse and dog overseers, and hunting teachers, all with influence over Roman youth – this according to Plutarch's life of Aemilius Paullus (*Aem.* 6,9), who was consul for the second time in 168 BCE.

<sup>506</sup> The division into four is found in the Scholia to Dionysius Thrax, for example GG1.3 12,3–5.

<sup>507</sup> Diom. GL1 426,21–22; the definition is discussed in section 4.3.1.

<sup>508</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 3,1.

sion by Crates' pupil Tauriscus, although this properly concerned the art of criticism (κριτική),<sup>509</sup> as well as the Dionysian six-part system. It is plausible that Aelius Stilo and Servius Clodius, who took on the organizing of the discipline, were also familiar with a formal division of grammar, or even with several different divisions and partitions. It is also likely that applying a popular dialectical method of defining, Aelius Stilo and Servius Clodius came up with some kind of division or partition of grammar that did not depart radically from their Greek antecedents. However, the only thing Suetonius tells us about Aelius Stilo's professional life is that he had been a speechwriter for the aristocracy – hence the epithet. According to Suetonius, after Aelius Stilo and Servius the art of grammar begins to gain in both appreciation and attention (*posthac magis ac magis et gratia et cura artis increvit*) and suddenly grammar is a most fashionable thing among the notable men in Rome (-- *ut ne clarissimi quidam viri abstinuerint quominus et ipsi aliquid de ea scriberent*). The order Aelius Stilo and Servius brought to the discipline was surely a significant factor in this development. Suetonius thus points to the late second – early first century BCE as the period of the rise of grammar, which is also immediately reflected in the salaries paid to the grammarians, and the prices paid for them.<sup>510</sup>

The above-mentioned men of letters represent the stage of the proto-grammarians, before the actual biographies begin. As Kaster points out (1995, 44), the four introductory chapters in *De grammaticis* hardly give us a coherent picture of what *grammatica* is, or what grammarians do. There is also a significant time-span – years, even centuries – between Suetonius and the early grammarians, and we are justified in asking whether Suetonius' account is reliable. On the other hand, Suetonius realizes that he does not really know that much, and refrains from overly elaborating these early stages. Here I give a relatively brief survey of the lives of the twenty professors, taking special notice of how Suetonius describes their education, philosophical background, works and methods. My purpose, even though Suetonius himself does not present any remarks defining grammar, is to form a conception of what is central in a grammarian's work. Suetonius has chosen to write biographies of those grammarians who have distinguished themselves as teachers, and this is a good starting point; we do not know, for example, what the grammatical manuals they used in their work were like, but Suetonius records some of their grammatical interests.

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<sup>509</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,248–9; see section 3.3.

<sup>510</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 3,5.

The era of grammarians begins with Sevius Nicanor, who is the first one to achieve fame and status through teaching (*primus ad famam dignationemque docendo pervenit*).<sup>511</sup> This must have happened sometime between the end of the second century and the first half of the first century BCE. His work consisted of commentaries (though these were possibly misappropriated by Nicanor from others) and *saturae*; Suetonius does not tell us anything about the subject of Nicanor's commentaries. The career development of Aurelius Opillus (floruit c. 100 BCE) is described in more detail, but still in few words: *philosophiam primo, deinde rhetoricam, novissime grammaticam docuit*.<sup>512</sup> The order of the disciplines seems oddly reversed, as if he was climbing a tree from the top. Suetonius nevertheless mentions this matter-of-factly. It is probable that Opillus was simply responding to the demands of the situation; as an entrepreneur, he depended on the fees collected from his disciples.<sup>513</sup> Opillus was a versatile scholar and seems to have written a great deal, most notably a work that in its title resembles the famous work of Callimachus, *Pinax*.<sup>514</sup> He was a freedman of an unknown Epicurean, and it is thus possible that Opillus taught Epicureanism. Another grammarian connected by Suetonius to Epicureanism is M. Pompilius Andronicus (c. 110–50 BCE), who is not known aside from Suetonius. He was less ambitious as a professor, his talent lying in research: Pompilius is said to have written a remarkable critique of Ennius' *Annales*.<sup>515</sup> Whether his Epicureanism had any effect on the nature of his grammatical practice remains unclear, but it seems probable that it would have meant a way of life and ethical precepts rather than anything that was reflected in his art. Some Epicureans were actually hostile towards the arts.

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<sup>511</sup> Suet. *gramm* 5,1.

<sup>512</sup> Suet. *gramm*. 6,1.

<sup>513</sup> See Christes 1979, 18.

<sup>514</sup> Suet. *gramm*. 6,2–3. According to Aulus Gellius (3,3,1), someone called Aurelius worked on the authenticity question of Plautus' comedies; this study may be included in the *Pinax*; Christes (1979, 19).

<sup>515</sup> Suet. *gramm*. 8,3. Suetonius reports that another grammarian called Orbilius has claimed to have rescued Pompilius' books, previously kept from circulation, and to have seen to their publication under Pompilius' name. The above-mentioned L. Orbilius Pupillus is the subject of the next biographical sketch (Suet. *gramm*. 9), in which the lack of information concerning the grammarian's education, publications and working methods is striking. A book called Περὶ ἀλογίας is mentioned. According to Suetonius, it contained complaining on how the student's parents have wronged the professors. Thus, the only relevant information about Orbilius is his alleged editorial work on Pompilius' books.

Suetonius does not generally pay attention to the education of the grammarians, but he indicates that M. Antonius Gniphō (*terminus ante quem non* 116 BCE) was educated in Alexandria. Gniphō was a talented and learned man in both languages, and taught rhetoric and grammar equally;<sup>516</sup> indeed, elsewhere Suetonius mentions that in the early days, it was customary for the same professors to teach both grammar and rhetoric, and to publish treatise on both arts.<sup>517</sup> Suetonius informs us that Gniphō wrote on the Latin language (*de Latino sermone*) which puts him in the same category with Varro (*De sermone Latino*) and Julius Caesar (*De analogia*), who in his youth had been Gniphō's pupil.<sup>518</sup> Another of Gniphō's pupils was L. Ateius Philologus (born c. 105 BCE), one of the most interesting grammarians in Suetonius' treatise. He too practiced grammar as well as rhetoric; but where his teacher had succeeded in combining his interests in both fields, there was something obscure about Ateius' professional identity. His fate was to be a rhetorician among grammarians, a grammarian among rhetoricians (*inter grammaticos rhetor, inter rhetores grammaticus*).<sup>519</sup> The two fields of expertise were distinct and their respective practitioners took pride in belonging to a certain group: neither the grammarians nor the rhetoricians wanted to recognize Ateius as a bona fide fellow-practitioner. Rather than claiming exclusive membership of either profession, he identified himself with Eratosthenes, who had been a φιλόλογος. According to Asinius Pollio, Suetonius says, Ateius had assumed the name Philologus as a *declamantium auditor atque praeceptor*, and – like Eratosthenes, the first to assume the title – as a man of manifold and versatile erudition (*multiplici variaque doctrina*).<sup>520</sup> Philologus was not used as a *cognomen* but as a self-assumed title of honour (*appellatio*): -- *ad summam Philologus ab semet nominatus*.<sup>521</sup> There is indeed something similar in the reception of the scholarship of Eratosthenes and Ateius Philologus. Among his Alexandrian peers, Eratosthenes was called Beta because in his wide-ranging learnedness – in mathematics, astronomy, geography, history, literary criticism and others – he was always second best to the specialist.<sup>522</sup> The title of Philologus

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<sup>516</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 7,1–2.

<sup>517</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 4,4

<sup>518</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 7,2.

<sup>519</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 10,2.

<sup>520</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 10,2–4.

<sup>521</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 10, 2; Viljamaa 1991, 3835 n. 36.

<sup>522</sup> *Suda* ε 2898. This information is also preserved by a geographer in Late Antiquity, Marcianus of Heraclea (*Marc. epit. peripl. Menipp.* 2 = GGM 1,565) and *excerpt. Strab.* 1,20 (= GGM 2,531); Geus 2002, 34 and 34, n. 163. See also Rawson (1985, 73–74) on Eratosthenes and Ateius Philologus.

never quite caught on. Ateius was to remain nearly the sole Latin representative that we know of.<sup>523</sup>

Already in Suetonius' time, the most part of the 800 books by Ateius Philologus, a true word-lover, was lost. Suetonius defines the nature of his writings as *commentaria*,<sup>524</sup> self-standing commentaries on texts, a form of grammatical writing introduced in Alexandria as ὑπομνήματα. We also learn something about his activities and values as a scholar:

Coluit postea familiarissime C. Sallustium et eo defuncto Asinium Pollionem; quos historiam componere adgressos, alterum breviario rerum omnium Romanarum, ex quibus quas vellet eligeret, instruxit, alterum praeceptis de ratione scribendi – quo magis miror Asinium credidisse antiqua eum verba et figuras solitum esse colligere Sallustio, cum sibi sciat nihil aliud suadere quam ut noto civilique et proprio sermone utatur vitetque maxime obscuritatem Sallusti et audaciam in translationibus.<sup>525</sup>

After that he was on very familiar terms with Gaius Sallustius and, when he had passed away, with Asinius Pollio; he helped both of them to compose historical writings, the former with a compendium of all Roman history, from which he could pick out what he wished, the latter with advice on how to write – all the more I am amazed that Asinius believed that Ateius used to collect archaic words and figures for Sallust, since he knew that all he ever urged *him* to do was to use familiar, unassuming, and proper language, and to avoid, above all, Sallust's obscurity and his audacity in metaphors.<sup>526</sup>

Suetonius' description suggests that Ateius' grammatical work was manifold: he provided assistance concerning the subject matter and the *ratio scribendi*. As it turns out, the latter here means stylistic advice, which was more typically perceived as a job for the rhetorician than for the grammarian.<sup>527</sup> The influence of

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<sup>523</sup> There is no mention in textual sources of any other named individual that we know of who described as a philologist, in name or in profession, except for one case in Latin epigraphy mentioned by Kuch (1965, 59 n. 5).

<sup>524</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 10,5.

<sup>525</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 10,6.

<sup>526</sup> Translation by Kaster 1995.

<sup>527</sup> Cf. Sextus Empiricus (*math.* 1,268): Καὶ μὴν οὐδὲ δι' ὧν ἂν ἱστορία καλῶς γραφεῖται διδάσκουσιν οἱ γραμματικοί, ἵνα κατ' ἀναφορὰν τὴν ὡς ἐπὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα θεωρήματα λέγωμεν τεχνικόν τι μέρος ὑπάρχειν παρ' αὐτοῖς τὸ ἱστορικόν· τοῦτο γὰρ ῥητορικῶν ἐστὶ τὸ ἔργον (In fact, grammarians do not even instruct us as to how history would be well

Antonius Gniphos perhaps shows here: the precepts of another disciple of Gniphos, Julius Caesar, closely resemble those related by Ateius Philologus to Asinius Pollio, “familiar, unassuming and proper language”.<sup>528</sup>

Like Ateius, the next professor in *De grammaticis* was a tutor for those with literary ambitions, and gained fame through that line of work. While Ateius assisted in writing treatises on history, P. Valerius Cato, a notable figure of the first century BCE, specialized in poetry: he coached aspiring poets and composed some poems himself.<sup>529</sup> He was renowned equally as a grammarian and a poet<sup>530</sup> – not unlike many of the early scholars of Hellenistic Alexandria, particularly Callimachus, of whom the young gentlemen of Rome were so fond. Unfortunately, their grammatical writings are of lesser interest to Suetonius than the other achievements of the grammarians. He briefly mentions that Valerius Cato left some treatises on grammar, but does not go as far as to give titles or subjects.<sup>531</sup>

The following six grammarians from the Ciceronian-Augustan era seem to represent the more prototypical grammarians in *De grammaticis* – grammarians whose scholarly work consisted of philological work, literary criticism, and/or teaching: Curtius Nicias, Q. Caecilius Epirota, M. Verrius Flaccus, Scribonius Aphrodisius, and L. Crassicius Pansa. Most of the chapter dedicated to Curtius Nicias comes close to trivial gossip (by which Suetonius is supposedly striving to characterize his subject), but the last short sentence has some meaning for us: Nicias showed philological interest in Lucilius’ works, and Santra, a grammarian of some esteem, approved of his writings.<sup>532</sup> Santra is

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written, so that with reference to such rules we could say that their historical part was expert: this is the job of rhetoricians. – Translation by Blank 1998).

<sup>528</sup> Garcea 2012, 20–21.

<sup>529</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 11,1–2.

<sup>530</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 4,2.

<sup>531</sup> He mentions one book (*libellum*) by Valerius Cato called *Indignatio* (“Indignation”), but, as suggested by the title and the passage quoted by Suetonius’ (*ingenuum se natum ait et pupillum relictum eoque facilius licentia Sullani temporis exutum patrimonio*, *gramm.* 11,1), this particular book seems rather an autobiographical report than a treatise on language and literature. Two cases hardly make a topos, but Pompilius Andronicus also wrote something similar, complaining about his conditions of his life. Even if they are not topical issues among grammarians, these are obviously the type of publications Suetonius likes to make mention of. The three biographical notes following Valerius Cato are from my point of view very brief and uninformative. According to Suetonius, Cornelius Epicadus did some ghost-writing, completing the final book of Sulla’s memoirs after his death (*gramm.* 12,2). There is practically nothing to report about L. Staberius Eros from the few lines Suetonius dedicates to him. He simply briefly mentions Staberius’ honourable character and his most noteworthy students (*gramm.* 13). The same goes for Lenaeus (born after 100 BCE), whose most notable characteristic is his love and devotion to his patron Pompey the Great (*gramm.* 15,1–3).

<sup>532</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 14,4.



omitted from the lives of the grammarians, receiving only this brief mention in a biographical note concerning another grammarian. He was probably not a professional teacher and therefore not included in Suetonius' collection. We know of an etymological treatise, *De verborum antiquitate*, in at least three books by Santra, and he was also known as a biographer; Suetonius may in fact have used him as a source.<sup>533</sup> Caecilius Epirota is credited as the first to hold unprepared debates in Latin; he is also responsible for introducing certain contemporary poets, including Vergil, to his pupils.<sup>534</sup>

It is especially clear in the case of Verrius Flaccus that he is included in Suetonius' canon of professors because of his didactic merits: his method of teaching was the arrangement of grammatical combats between compatible students.<sup>535</sup> A little more light is shed on Verrius' scholarly nature in the short biography of Scribonius Aphrodisius, where Suetonius notes that Scribonius composed a polemical and personal reply to Verrius' books on orthography.<sup>536</sup> Outside *De grammaticis*, this Scribonius is unknown. Verrius, on the other hand, is better known for his treatise *De verborum significatu*, a dictionary in alphabetical order and a kind of encyclopaedia of scholarship, preserved to us through an epitome by Sextus Pompeius Festus from the second century CE. Suetonius mentions that Crassicius Pansa wrote a memorable commentary on Helvius Cinna's epyllion *Zmyrna*, and also that Pansa abruptly closed down his successful school and joined the philosophical school of Quintus Sextius; nothing is said of his possible previous philosophical ideas.<sup>537</sup>

C. Iulius Hyginus was a grammarian, an antiquarian, a head librarian, and a friend of Ovid and the historian Clodius Licinus.<sup>538</sup> Other sources tell us that Hyginus was also quite a prolific author, writing commentaries on Vergil and Cinna. Hyginus' works also include treatises on such practical arts as bee-keeping and agriculture in general; he thus bears some resemblance to Varro, who was also widely interested in various aspects of life.<sup>539</sup> Hyginus had time for teaching as well, as specifically mentioned by Suetonius (perhaps in reference to Varro, who did not, and is thus not included in *De grammaticis*). Another grammarian who also worked as a librarian was Gaius Melissus, who served Maecenas as a grammarian and was in charge of organizing Augustus' library

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<sup>533</sup> Santra *GRF* frg. 1–16; Rawson 1985, 231.

<sup>534</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 16,3.

<sup>535</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 17,1.

<sup>536</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 19,1–2.

<sup>537</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 18,2–3. Sextius' school combined Stoic and Pythagorean ideas, and it seems to have concentrated on ethics. Seneca mentions Sextius a number of times (*ep.* 59,7; 64,2–5, 73,12 and 15; 98,13; 108,17–19, *dial.* 4,36,1; 5,36,1; *nat.* 7,32,2).

<sup>538</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 20,1–2.

<sup>539</sup> A list of loci is found in Kaster 1995, 207–208.

in the Portico of Octavia. Suetonius tells us a great deal more about Melissus' socio-economic vicissitudes and his publications, none of which seem to have been grammatical. Suetonius' sketch presents Melissus as an innovative writer: among other publications he is said to have written a collection of jokes (*Ineptiae* or *Ioci*), and to have created a new kind of comedy, the *fabula trabeata*.<sup>540</sup>

The ordinary work of a grammarian is hardly interesting to Suetonius. This is also clear in the case of the grammarian Marcus Pomponius Porcellus, of the Tiberian era. He was a man of many talents: he had a past as a boxer,<sup>541</sup> and was both a language professional (*sermonis Latini exactor*; i.e. chiefly a linguistic 'censor') and an occasional advocate. Porcellus makes an unsympathetic impression – Suetonius calls him *molestissimus*, 'most tiresome' – and he is indeed the only professor in *De grammaticis* to be described as a kind of guardian of language. The aspect of correct Latin as part of grammarians' activity is not strongly attested in Suetonius. Porcellus is presented as an example of a grammarian whose uncompromising grammatical accuracy led to awkward situations: Suetonius reports an incident in court, where Porcellus managed to couple his two interests by claiming that his opponent had committed a solecism (*soloecismum ab adversario factum usque adeo arguere perseveravit*).<sup>542</sup> On another occasion, Porcellus shows his willingness to defend the purity of language against even the most powerful: Suetonius relates an anecdote in which Porcellus rejects a usage by Emperor Tiberius ("*tu enim, Caesar, civitatem dare potes hominibus, verbo non potes*").<sup>543</sup> The guardian of language fluctuates somewhere between ridiculousness and integrity.

Writing about Quintus Remmius Palaemon (c. 5 – before 76 CE), must have been highly satisfying for Suetonius. Remmius' biography (*gramm.* 23) is one of the longest in *De grammaticis*; he may even have been one of the key figures that inspired Suetonius to compose the whole book about this particular group of people. The picture drawn before us is that of the classic obnoxious social climber. Of Remmius Palaemon's professional life, we read the following: (1) he held first place among grammarians in Rome (*postea manumissus docuit Romae ac principem locum inter grammaticos tenuit*); (2) he was not morally the kind of teacher anyone would have approved of (-- *quamquam infamis omnibus vitiis palamque et Tiberio et mox Claudio praedicantibus nemini minus institutionem puerorum vel iuvenum committendam*); (3) he was a charismatic figure, whose learning and rhetorical skills were exceptional (*sed capiebat homines cum memoria rerum tum facilitate sermonis*); (4) he used to compose poems *ex tempore* and in various metres (*nec non poemata faciebat ex tempore; scripsit vero variis nec*

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<sup>540</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 21,1–4.

<sup>541</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 22,3.

<sup>542</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 22,1.

<sup>543</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 22,2. The same anecdote can also be found in Cassius Dio 57,17,2.

*vulgaribus metriis*), (5) he saw himself as a supreme judge of poetry (*nomen suum in Bucolicis non temere positum sed praesagiente Vergilio fore quandoque omnium poetarum ac poematum Palaemonem iudicem*); (6) his school was extremely successful and made him a significant amount of money (-- *nec sufficeret sumptibus quamquam ex schola quadringena annua caperet*).<sup>544</sup>

Suetonius concentrates on such aspects in Palaemon's life as seem to contribute little to the actual grammatical tradition. This is problematic, because Palaemon tends to be seen as an influential character behind many significant developments in the history of Roman grammar. Supposedly, he was the author of the first Latin *ars grammatica*; he replaced the article with the interjection in the parts of speech system; he discovered the Latin conjugations and declensions, and organized Latin grammar into its traditional form.<sup>545</sup> To Suetonius, however, Palaemon is the greatest only in immoderation, not as an innovator in grammatical theory. Given the lack of evidence, Palaemon's true role in the development of the art remains obscure. His famous *Ars* is lost except for some meagre fragments, but his name has been connected with several grammatical works: *Ars Palaemonis*, *Liber Palaemonis de arte*, and *Liber Palaemonis de metrica institutione*.<sup>546</sup> The one part of grammar Suetonius explicitly credits Palaemon with is *iudicium*, or critical assessment, and it is clear that Palaemon (at least in Suetonius' interpretation) associates himself firmly with the study of literature.

After Palaemon, Suetonius introduces the last of his grammarians, the Flavian-era Marcus Valerius Probus. Coming from Berytos, where ancient authors were still remembered (which was no longer the state of things in Rome), he specialized in the oldest literature. He restricted himself to editorial work on ancient texts that no-one else in Rome saw as worthy of study, thereby finding himself in an academic cul-de-sac. The part of grammar (*grammaticae pars*) to which Probus dedicated himself was textual criticism: correcting (*emendare*), punctuating (*distinguere*) and marking with critical signs (*adnotare*).<sup>547</sup> Probus is an exception among Suetonius' grammarians. He is mainly characterized as a scholar with followers (*sectatores*), not a professor with pupils (*discipuli*). His teaching methods were not the ordinary ones: rather than giving lectures, he used to hold conversations with a few interested pupils in quite a casual man-

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<sup>544</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 23,2–5.

<sup>545</sup> These achievements as listed by Taylor 1995b, 108.

<sup>546</sup> Palaemon is also known from the satires of Juvenal. In 6,452 Juvenal refers to the *Ars* and its contents as *lex et ratio loquendi*. In 7,215ff., the emphasis is on the socio-economical realities of a grammarian. Juvenal's writings have made Palaemon seem like the archetypical grammarian (Baratin 2000, 460), whereas Suetonius' description clearly draws a picture of an exceptional character.

<sup>547</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 24,1–2.

ner.<sup>548</sup> Grammatical volumes were spuriously attributed to Probus as well, showing that he was an authoritative figure. In any case, Suetonius' acceptance of Probus as a scholar in the canon must be seen as irregular, in that the absence of such names as Varro in *De grammaticis* can be most conveniently explained by the nature of Varro's work: he was seen mainly as a public figure and a scholar – definitely not a teacher. Varro's absence is not total: although not mentioned by name, he lurks in the background as one of the *clarissimi viri* who cultivated grammar after Aelius Stilo.<sup>549</sup> Varro makes an actual appearance on stage only once: Suetonius reports that Remmius Palaemon is arrogant enough to call Varro a 'pig' (*arrogantia fuit tanta ut M. Varronem porcum appellaret*).<sup>550</sup>

Suetonius' focus was on the professors of the Ciceronian-Augustan period: his sources – Varro, Cornelius Nepos, probably Santra and Hyginus – did not cover the imperial period, for obvious reasons. It also seems that the majority of the later grammarians simply did not represent the type of *clarus professor* that Suetonius wanted to 'canonize'. Suetonius' own age, to some extent an age of self-advertisement and ostentation, favoured rhetoricians over grammarians, who were even seen as "sorry and contemptuous figures".<sup>551</sup> Ostentation and self-advertisement were essential in establishing one's professional reputation, as there were neither diplomas nor institutional affiliations to secure the status of a professional.<sup>552</sup> The one grammarian who certainly understood this was Remmius Palaemon. It seems obvious that he is a central figure in the whole book, as well as a symbol of the cultural decay of the first century CE, and as such a source of inspiration for Suetonius.

The Suetonian account of the early development of grammar answers questions significant to this thesis: what are the grammarians remembered for, and what did it mean to be a Roman grammarian? Literature, obviously, plays the main part: poetry, history, speeches. But it was not only the study of literature that occupied the grammarians: they also played an active part in its making. Many of the grammarians were writers themselves, and literary advisers to others: L. Ateius helped Sallust and Asinius Pollio, and Cornelius Epicadus completed Sulla's posthumous memoirs. L. Crassicius Pansa is said to have helped the mime-writers, but it is unclear whether this means the kind of help a grammarian could provide or something of a more general nature.<sup>553</sup> Some of the grammarians were also responsible for promoting new literature; Caecilius

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<sup>548</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 24,3.

<sup>549</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 3,4; Kaster 1995, 46.

<sup>550</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 23,4.

<sup>551</sup> Viljamaa 1991, 3842. According to Fronto, the next big thing were the dialecticians, who replaced the rhetoricians in fashion; see section 1.3.1.

<sup>552</sup> Vardi 2001, 51–52.

<sup>553</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 18,2: *hic initio circa scaenam versatus est et dum mimographos adiuvat.*

Epirota, for example, made Vergil known to the public, while the role of Valerius Cato in shaping a new kind of Latin poetry was substantial. From *De grammaticis*, we learn of poems, satires, biographical pamphlets, comedy, and even a collection of jokes published by the grammarians, but none of the professors are reported to have written treatises that could be described as systematic grammatical manuals. Only a few of them are reported to have written anything that can be said to have been devoted to the study of language. Their activities have lain in poetry, speechwriting and history, and (in the early stages) in the editing of texts.

The fruits of Roman grammatical efforts outside of Suetonius' little book can be viewed in the fragment collections of Funaioli. These grammatical achievements consist primarily of orthography,<sup>554</sup> etymology,<sup>555</sup> analogy,<sup>556</sup> glossography,<sup>557</sup> and stylistics.<sup>558</sup> The standard parts of speech and their definitions do not make an appearance in our Latin sources until Remmius Palaemon, who is reported by Quintilian (*inst.* 1,4,20) to have recognized the canonical eight parts of speech. The grammarians whom Suetonius specifically mentions as having written commentaries on certain authors or literary genres are Sevius Nicanor (whose subject is not mentioned), L. Crassicius Pansa on the *Zmyrna* of Helvius Cinna, Curtius Nicias on Lucilius, and M. Pompilius Andronicus on Ennius' *Annales*.<sup>559</sup> Other types of mainly unspecified grammatical writings are ascribed to Aurelius Opillus (*variae eruditionis aliquot volumina*), M. Antonius Gniphos (*duo volumina de Latino sermone*), L. Ateius Philologus (*helen nostram -- quam omnis generis coegimus octingentos in libros*), P. Valerius Cato (*grammatici libelli*), Verrius Flaccus (*libri de orthographia*) and M. Valerius Probus (*nimis pauca et exigua de quibusdam minutis quaestiunculis edidit. reliquit autem non mediocrem silvam observationum sermonis antiqui*). The question of correct language plays a modest role in Suetonius: M. Pomponius Porcellus is depicted as a guardian of language, and Suetonius refers to M. Antonius Gniphos' writings on the Latin language (*de Latino sermone*).<sup>560</sup>

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<sup>554</sup> E.g. C. Lucilius *GRF* frg. 10–14; Antonius Rufus *GRF* frg. 1.

<sup>555</sup> E.g. L. Aelius Stilo *GRF* frg. 6–32; Aurelius Opillus *GRF* frg. 3, 5, 7.

<sup>556</sup> E.g. Antonius Gniphos *GRF* frg. 4; C. Iulius Caesar *GRF* frg. 1–28.

<sup>557</sup> E.g. L. Ateius Philologus *GRF* frg. 2–9.

<sup>558</sup> E.g. C. Lucilius *GRF* frg. 38 on solecisms; Sinius Capito *GRF* frg. 1–2.

<sup>559</sup> Outside of Suetonius' *De grammaticis*, we know of the philological interests of certain learned men (see *GRF*): Octavius Lampadio on Naevius; Q. Vargunteius and Pompilius Andronicus on Ennius; Aelius Stilo, Volgatus Sedigitus, Servius Clodius, Aurelius Opillus, Sisenna, and Varro on Plautus; Laelius Archelaus and Vettius Philocomus on Lucilius.

<sup>560</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 7,3.

Teachers' manuals covering the parts of speech were not works that brought fame to the grammarians; they probably had such works at their disposal, but they were not widely circulated. The first reference we know of to a Latin *ars grammatica* is in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, dating from the early first century BCE, possibly the eighties.<sup>561</sup> The author first gives definitions of 'solecism' and 'barbarism', and mentions that he will discuss the issue of how to avoid these faults in his grammatical manual: *Haec qua ratione vitare possumus, in arte grammatica dilucide dicemus*.<sup>562</sup> Unfortunately, this is where our information about this particular *ars grammatica* ends. It is uncertain whether the author ever actually wrote the treatise or whether he merely intended to.<sup>563</sup> In any case, his casual use of the term *ars grammatica* suggests that it was already a familiar concept.<sup>564</sup> Avoiding errors in language, namely solecisms and barbarisms, is certainly a central function of grammar from the point of view of rhetoric, and the writer clearly intended the *ars grammatica* as a resource for rhetoricians. Following the practice of Suetonius' *veteres grammatici*,<sup>565</sup> the author claimed competence in the fields of both rhetoric and grammar. Very little is known about the author of *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, but once the notion of Cicero as the author was abandoned there has been some speculation. The writer may have been a student of rhetoric,<sup>566</sup> and the text might originally have consisted of lecture notes taken down from an unknown teacher. If ever written or published in the first place, the *ars grammatica* the author is referring to certainly did not gain the popularity of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, or *ars rhetorica*, as it came to be known during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

## 4.2 Other scholars in Rome

The general goal of the grammarians was to preserve and transmit literature, and in this work they had the Alexandrian models at their disposal. The Greek grammarians whom we know to have been influential in Rome during the first century BCE included such scholars as Tyrannion, Tryphon, Philoxenus of Alexandria, and Didymus. Asclepiades of Myrlea, discussed in the preceding chapter, may also have worked in Rome in the early first century BCE, but this is not certain. Tyrannion will be discussed in a separate section. As to the other

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<sup>561</sup> Rawson 1985, 120.

<sup>562</sup> *rhet. Her.* 4,17,13–18.

<sup>563</sup> The author of *Rhetorica ad Herennium* suggests (3,2,3) that he might also write on the military art or state administration; the fate of those writings is equally unclear.

<sup>564</sup> Kaster 1995, 47.

<sup>565</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 4,4.

<sup>566</sup> Possibly in Rhodes where the Stoic ideas reflected in the text were flourishing; e.g. Rawson 1985, 150.

grammarians mentioned, the Alexandrian grammarian Tryphon worked in Rome during the second half of the first century BCE. He was highly valued by later grammarians and used especially by Apollonius Dyscolus,<sup>567</sup> but his work survives only in fragments.<sup>568</sup> He is known to have written on the parts of speech in several volumes, each dedicated to a separate part of speech; he also wrote on pronunciation, accents, orthography, and dialects.<sup>569</sup> We do not know of commentaries or monographs on literature by Tryphon, whose interest seems to have been directed towards language study. This is reflected in Apollonius Dyscolus, who cites him more than fifty times. A pupil of Tryphon's, Habron, was also a grammarian of the Augustan age, and we know of a treatise on the pronoun by him.

Philoxenus of Alexandria came to Rome probably some time around the middle of the first century BCE. He wrote on dialects, including the 'Roman dialect', which he saw as one of the dialects of Greek, and on etymologies,<sup>570</sup> the topic of his main work, *Περὶ μονοσυλλάβων ὀημάτων*.<sup>571</sup> His work survives in over 600 fragments in various later grammars and lexica.<sup>572</sup> Similarly, some fragments are all we have left of the prolific Augustan age grammarian Didymus. His achievements included commentaries on poets, lexicography, antiquities, and literary history, as well as works on orthography, linguistic pathology, and a title *περὶ Ῥωμαικῆς ἀναλογίας*, analogy in Latin.<sup>573</sup> His vast oeuvre was noted by Seneca (*ep.* 88,37), who claimed that it consisted of 4000 books. The titles we know of by Didymus do not include either a general grammatical manual or a title referring to the parts of speech.

One of the striking features of developments in scholarship during the first century BCE is the wave of retrospective writing, as grammarians began to feel the weight of the tradition. Asclepiades of Myrlea had published a treatise on grammarians (*Περὶ γραμματικῶν*), some form of history of grammar and grammarians; to Asclepiades, *γραμματική* was an expertise in its own right, with a distinguishable history. Since the actual treatise is lost, no further conclu-

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<sup>567</sup> Di Benedetto 1990, 32.

<sup>568</sup> Several extant treatises have been attributed to Tryphon, but they are all dubious. A large papyrus fragment (c. 300 CE) containing a *τέχνη γραμματική* probably belongs to a grammarian of a much later time by the same name; Dickey 2007, 84.

<sup>569</sup> *RE s.v.* Tryphon [26]; the fragments of Tryphon are collected by Velsen (1965, published originally in 1853).

<sup>570</sup> Philoxenus *GRF*; *Suda* φ 394; Pfeiffer 1968, 274.

<sup>571</sup> Dickey 2007, 85.

<sup>572</sup> Gambarara 2009 *s.v.* Philoxenus. The grammarian Epaphroditus (active during the first century CE) seems to have mainly been interested in etymology, and his scholarship bears resemblance to and is largely derived from Philoxenus. Fragments from his glossographical work and literary commentaries survive. Braswell and Billerbeck 2007, 56 and 56 n. 61.

<sup>573</sup> Schmidt 1854, 11–13.

sions can be drawn. Scholarly self-esteem was growing, and the status of certain grammarians and their work is reflected in the rise of commentaries on grammatical treatises. The grammarian Diocles commented on a work on the assigning of words to classes by his own teacher, Tyrannion (Εξήγησις τοῦ Τυραννίωνος μερισμοῦ). Didymus' works included a treatise called Περὶ τῆς Ἀρισταρχείου διορθώσεως, a review of Aristarchean Homeric criticism. The grammarians Aristonicus and Seleucus also commented on Aristarchus' use of critical signs. The latter was active until the first century CE.<sup>574</sup> Didymus, Aristonicus and Seleucus were originally Alexandrian. They were active in Rome; perhaps were responding to a current need for instructive texts concerning textual criticism, and Aristarchus' work was a good place to start. Similarly, Ptolemaeus of Ascalon (early first century CE), who taught in Rome, wrote on Aristarchus' textual criticism of Homer.<sup>575</sup> Close to the field of the grammarians come the doxographic notions concerning the parts of speech, preserved in Varro's *De lingua Latina* (8,11) and in Dionysius of Halicarnassus *De compositione* (2,6,1–18).<sup>576</sup> This retrospective fascination with the past is also observable in the not so remote field of medicine: the first century BCE was in general a time when Greek medicine in Alexandria had a philological aspect, and several authors wrote works on the history of medicine and commentaries on Hippocratic treatises.<sup>577</sup> The clarifications of the Aristarchean practice of textual criticism were perhaps written in response to popular demand. Towards the end of the first century CE, however, at least part of this type of work was seen as old-fashioned – or this is how Suetonius relates the fate of Valerius Probus, who concentrated on *emendatio*.<sup>578</sup> By this time, work on old texts was perhaps being overshadowed by a rising aspect of the art of grammar: the question of correct language.

The first century BCE marks a clear rise in intellectual standards in Rome: philosophers were migrating to the city from turbulent Athens, stimulating an interest in philosophy among the Romans. From the 50s and 40s onwards, there was a fairly steady flow of Alexandrian scholars visiting or moving to Rome. Political leaders enticed competent specialists in various arts to the city: according to Suetonius (*Iul.* 42,1), Caesar granted citizenship to foreign practitioners of medicine and to teachers of the liberal arts. In *De grammaticis*, the professors are not in general followers of any philosophical system. There

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<sup>574</sup> Hatzimichali 2011, 32 and West 2001, 47–48. On the doxographic texts concerning the parts of speech, see also Swiggers and Wouters 2011.

<sup>575</sup> *Suda* π 3038; *New Pauly s.v.* Ptolemaeus of Ascalon [63].

<sup>576</sup> On the doxographic texts concerning the parts of speech, see also Swiggers and Wouters 2011. For Varro, see section 4.3.2 and for Dionysius of Halicarnassus, see section 4.6.

<sup>577</sup> Hatzimichali 2011, 30–31.

<sup>578</sup> See section 4.1.



are only three names in the whole body of Suetonius' *dramatis personae* that are in any way associated (at least by Suetonius) with a particular philosophical school: Aurelius Opillus and M. Pompilius Andronicus, both of whom are linked with Epicureanism, and L. Crassicius Pansa, who followed Quintus Sextius, a Roman philosopher of the early Augustan Principate. Sextius founded a sect combining Stoic ethics and some Pythagorean features, such as abstaining from food of animal origin. His philosophy does not seem to have been concerned with language but rather focused on the ethical side, and it is thus probable that Crassicius Pansa's career as a grammarian was not influenced by philosophical ideas. According to Suetonius, he joined the sect after closing down his successful school.<sup>579</sup> The eclectic school of the Sextians is the closest we get to Stoicism in *De grammaticis*. Suetonius does not mention the alleged Stoicism of either Crates of Mallus or Aelius Stilo, nor are there signs of Stoic influences in the grammatical work of the early grammarians as depicted by Suetonius. We are thus justified in asking whether philosophical orientation entailed any drastic differences in opinions, practices, or attitudes regarding *grammatica*.

The most notable of the Latin scholars of the first century BCE before Varro was Lucius Aelius Stilo, who had a direct connection to Varro as the latter's teacher<sup>580</sup> (a fact on which Suetonius so conspicuously keeps silent). We know enough of Stilo to view his scholarship as representing a mixture of traditions: Greek and Roman, Stoic and Alexandrian. He was in exile with Q. Caecilius Metellus Numidicus in Rhodes, populated with scholars, during the years 101–99 BCE. As the two men had shared interests and Rhodes is a relatively small island, Stilo most probably also had contact with Dionysius Thrax. Stilo is considered to have been the first writer in the Roman tradition to produce philosophical treatises in the Alexandrian fashion, including commentaries and interpretations of old texts such as *carmina saliarum*, and probably Plautus.<sup>581</sup>

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<sup>579</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 18,3: *dimissa repente schola transit ad Q. Sexti sectam*. Sextius' philosophical school fell into decline and quite rapidly came to an end after his death: Seneca (*nat.* 7,32,2) reports that the Sextian school is extinct.

<sup>580</sup> Gell. 16,8,2: -- *L. Aelii, docti hominis, qui magister Varronis fuit* --.

<sup>581</sup> L. Aelius Stilo, *GRF* frg. 1–4. There is an anonymous text, *frg. Parisinum de notis*, in which Stilo is also mentioned as having critically notated the texts of Ennius, Lucilius and historians; eventually, this line of work was carried on by Valerius Probus, who in fact reached a level of diligence similar to Aristarchus on Homer; *GRF* test. 21 (cf. frg. 51): *his solis* [i.e. critical notations] *in adnotationibus Ennii Lucilii et historicorum usi sunt Varro S. Ennius Aelius aequae et postremo Probus, qui illas in Vergilio et Horatio et Lucretio apposuit, ut Homero Aristarchus*. However, it should be noted that in *GL7* 534,4–6 the text actually reads *his solis in adnotationibus Ennii Lucilii et historicorum usi sunt + uarrus hennius haelius aequae et postremo Probus, qui illas in Virgilio et Horatio et Lucretio apposuit, ut <in> Homero Aristarchus*. The text is extremely corrupt, and it is doubtful whether it actually refers to Aelius Stilo at all.

Stilo also taught Cicero for some time, and the latter informs us that his teacher wanted to be a Stoic, but never aspired to be an orator: *Stoicus esse voluit, orator autem nec studuit unquam nec fuit*.<sup>582</sup> It has been suggested that Cicero's remark on Stilo could refer to the "lack of mastery of his doctrine". Accordingly, the comment need not have much to do with Stilo's career as a grammarian.<sup>583</sup> Stilo did not practice oratory himself, but wrote speeches for others, speeches that Cicero did not rate very highly.<sup>584</sup> In Suetonius' report, Stilo was a competent systematizer of the art of grammar: he and his son-in-law excelled at arranging and enriching the art of grammar (*instruxerunt auxeruntque ab omni parte grammaticam L. Aelius Lanuvinus generique Aelii Ser. Clodius*).<sup>585</sup> Our information on Stilo's further activities support this claim: he also published a treatise on dialectic, the very expertise that is used in arranging knowledge. Aulus Gellius mentions that he found Stilo's writings on dialectic in the temple of Peace, but that he thought that they were confusing and not particularly useful for someone who wanted to become familiar with dialectic.<sup>586</sup> This shows Stilo's work in a curious light, as one of the things dialectic should teach is the art of unambiguous and systematic argumentation. Stilo's works survive only fragmentarily, but his influence on his students can be detected in their own writings. Varro is the most famous of his students, and he speaks highly of Stilo; but also shows independence from Stilo's linguistic thinking, and indeed surpassed his teacher.<sup>587</sup>

P. Nigidius Figulus (died about 45 BCE) was Varro's contemporary, and one of Cicero's friends. He was a prominent scholar, with Pythagorean affinities, and something of a public figure of his own time, acting as praetor in 58 BCE. His grand work, the *Commentarii grammatici* in at least 29 books, a collection of notes on grammatical and antiquarian questions, is lost save for some fragments. Aulus Gellius has preserved various etymological and lexicographical comments; he held Nigidius in high esteem, considering him second in erudition only to Varro.<sup>588</sup> Despite the remarkable size of Nigidius' work, it was no longer widely known in Gellius' time due to its obscure and subtle nature.<sup>589</sup>

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<sup>582</sup> Cic. *Brut.* 206.

<sup>583</sup> Rawson 1985, 120.

<sup>584</sup> Cic. *Brut.* 207.

<sup>585</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 3,1.

<sup>586</sup> Gell. 16,8,1–3.

<sup>587</sup> Varro praises Stilo for his scholarly work (*ling.* 7,2), but does not hesitate to criticize Stilo in regard to his etymologies; for example, Gell. 1,18,2 = Varro *GRF* frg. 130. Several etymologies by Stilo survive: see *GRF* frg. 59–76.

<sup>588</sup> Gell. 4,9,1: *Nigidius Figulus, homo, ut ego arbitror, iuxta M. Varronem doctissimus --.*

<sup>589</sup> Gell. 19,14,1–4.

The examples of the ‘Stoic’ Stilo and the Pythagorean Nigidius Figulus both show that adherence to traditional philosophical sects was met with some distrust – Suetonius’ example of Crassicius Pansa, with his less known Sextian sect, likewise shows this tendency. Varro is the perfect example of a scholar with no formal allegiance to any of the philosophical sects, but whose thinking was deeply affected by ideas that were available in the Late Hellenistic era.

### 4.3 Varro on the art of grammar

#### 4.3.1 THE DEFINITION OF GRAMMATICA

The most remarkable of the Roman scholars in the first century BCE – and in many ways of all times – was Marcus Terentius Varro (116–27 BCE). He was a polymath, whose massive corpus is now for the most part beyond our reach. The majority of his works dealing with language have come down to us only by their titles. These include *De antiquitate litterarum* (85 BCE, probably his earliest work), and *De sermone Latino* (after 45 BCE); others, which cannot be dated, include *De origine linguae Latinae*, *De similitudine verborum* (on analogy), *De utilitate sermonis* (on style), *De proprietate scriptorum* (on individual style) and *Περί χαρακτηρῶν* (probably on word forms). Varro also wrote philological treatises, such as the *Quaestiones Plautinae*.<sup>590</sup> Especially regrettable is the loss of *Disciplinarum libri IX* (completed c. 33 BCE), a work that very probably contained a book on *grammatica*.<sup>591</sup> Varro dedicated his great linguistic work, the partly preserved *De lingua Latina*, to Cicero, indicating that it was presumably published before Cicero’s death in 43 BCE.<sup>592</sup> Numerous citations from the other books also survive; Varro is the most frequently cited author in the Roman grammatical tradition.<sup>593</sup>

Before taking up Varro’s definition of grammar, let us briefly consider him as an author of technical texts. Varro was a prolific writer, and his telegraphic style has not always found admirers. Nor was he always careful in the execution of the work: the sizeable *De lingua Latina* contains contradictions and repetitions.<sup>594</sup> However, it is evident that Varro took the methods of technical writing seriously. Philosophy was a significant factor in Varro’s intellectual profile. His Menippean satires were an early reaction, dating perhaps to the seventies, to the flow of ideas of the philosophical schools into Rome in the first cen-

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<sup>590</sup> Gambarara 2009 *s.v.* *Varro, Marcus Terentius*; on the subject of the work *Περί χαρακτηρῶν* see Varro, *GRF* frg. 50.

<sup>591</sup> On the books in *Disciplinarum libri IX*, see section 4.3.2.

<sup>592</sup> For the dating of the work see Taylor 1996, 7.

<sup>593</sup> Taylor 2000, 458. See also Collart (1978, 3–4) on Varronian prestige *apud* grammarians.

<sup>594</sup> See Collart 1978, 7–8.

tury BCE, and he also published works called *De philosophia* and *De forma philosophiae*.<sup>595</sup> He is certainly a philosophical figure in Cicero's *Academica*, and during later centuries he was regarded as a philosopher: Appian calls him "philosopher and historian"; to Jerome he is "philosopher and poet".<sup>596</sup> Varro studied philosophy under the Academic (yet eclectic) Antiochus of Ascalon, who came to Rome in 88 BCE. We know that Antiochus discussed each of the three divisions of philosophy (ethics, physics, and logic), and that he thought that the Stoa, Aristotle and Plato were essentially in agreement. The logic he taught Cicero was Stoic.<sup>597</sup> Lévy (2012, 306) estimates Antiochus' influence among his prominent Roman auditors (in addition to Varro and Cicero, including such names as Piso, Lucullus, and Brutus) as encouraging them "to claim philosophy as a non-negligible component of their own identity". It is plausible that Antiochus helped Cicero to become aware of the tradition of the *veteres* on the issues of defining and dividing that he refers to in the *Topica* (29).

Cicero attributes to Varro a great deal of 'technicality', which means writing in an analytical and systematic way that follows the rules of logic:

Vides autem (eadem enim ipse didicisti) non posse nos Amafini aut Rabiri similes esse, qui nulla arte adhibita de rebus ante oculos positus vulgari sermone disputant, nihil definiunt, nihil partiuntur, nihil apta interrogatione concludunt, nullam denique artem esse nec dicendi nec disserendi putant. nos autem praeceptis dialecticorum et oratorum etiam, quoniam utramque vim virtutem esse nostri putant --.<sup>598</sup>

"You see, of course, since you've studied the same philosophical doctrines yourself, that *we* can't be like Amafinius or Rabirius. They argue unsystematically about what's under their noses in ordinary language; they have no recourse to definition, division, or formal argument; and, in fact they consider the systematic study of speech and argument worthless. For our part, however, we must obey the precepts of dialecticians and orators as if they were laws, since our school thinks that dialectic and rhetoric are virtues."<sup>599</sup>

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<sup>595</sup> Rawson 1985, 282–283.

<sup>596</sup> Cic. *Acad.* 1,8; App. 4,47; Hier. *chron.* 106; Rawson 1985, 286.

<sup>597</sup> See Cic. *Luc.* 97–98; 116. Also Philodemus reports on Antiochus in his work on the history of the Academy (*PHerc.* 1021 col. 34; see Blank 2007, 89–90, in which the relevant passage of the papyrus is transcribed; for Antiochus' philosophical views, see Gerson 2005, 293).

<sup>598</sup> Cic. *Acad.* 1,5.

<sup>599</sup> Translation by Brittain 2006.

Amafinius and Rabirius, whom Cicero refers to as examples of users of a non-technical prose-style in matters of philosophy, were early (first century BCE) Epicurean Latin writers, whose works no longer survive. The same accusation is cast upon Epicurus himself in *De finibus* (1,22): he does not make use of definitions, divisions or partitions. The issue here is important to Cicero: there are such things as natural talent and experience, but eventually they will fail you. Therefore, it is better to do things methodically and according to an art. This requires, among other things, the use of definition and partition. The influence of dialectic was present in Varro's Menippean satires, as Varro says through Cicero: there is *multa dicta dialectice*.<sup>600</sup> Whether Varro's *Disciplinarum libri IX* contained a book on *dialectica* is a matter of some dispute,<sup>601</sup> but Varro's dialectical approach to argumentation – defining, dividing, classifying – is clearly visible in the few works preserved to us. A wide scale of dialectical interest shows in his surviving dialogue on agriculture, *De re rustica*: the subject field is defined and divided using the basic terminology of defining – *genus, species, and pars*.<sup>602</sup> His use of these terms, however, is not altogether coherent: Fuhrmann (1960, 73–74) finds several discrepancies in Varro's usage. In *De re rustica*, as well as in *De lingua Latina*, Varro follows a strict numerical principle in the classificatory processes, and this apparently sometimes happens at the expense of the natural course of things. It has been suggested that behind this numerical scheme lies Pythagorean mysticism.<sup>603</sup> There was some interest in Pythagoreanism in the first century BCE Rome, and Varro does appeal to Pythagoras when he introduces a fourfold division of nature, but he does not use Pythagoras as a direct authority.<sup>604</sup> The explanation for the systematic use of the scheme probably has a great deal to do with his wish to make use of dialectical principles in organizing large amounts of information, principles that were familiar to him from his education.<sup>605</sup> In any case, as Varro notes in *De lingua Latina* (10,75), technical writing is not easy:

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<sup>600</sup> Cic. *Acad.* 1,8; Rawson 1985, 140. According to Mansfeld (1992, 327) in the surviving fragments there is “little worthy of note”.

<sup>601</sup> See Hadot 2005, 163–164. Rawson (1985, 132) considers that the definition of dialectic presented by Augustine in his *De dialectica* (1,1) might be of Varronian origin: *dialectica est bene disserendi scientia*. There is no direct evidence, but it seems possible; *scientia* was Varro's choice for the genus of *grammatica*, which quite certainly was one of the nine *disciplinae*, and Cicero, who was close to Varro, refers to dialectic as *ars disserendi* (*Acad.* 1,5, above).

<sup>602</sup> For example, Varro *rust.* 1,8,1; 3,3,1ff.

<sup>603</sup> See for instance Collart 1978, 9.

<sup>604</sup> Varro *ling.* 5,11–12. Stoic influence in this issue has been detected by Blank (2008, 59–60).

<sup>605</sup> Rawson 1985, 136–138; Blank 2008, 60. Pliny the Elder reports (*nat.* 35,160) that Varro requested a Pythagorean funeral for himself. Varro took an interest in matters Pythagorean, but it seems that unlike his contemporary, the learned Nigidius Figulus, he was not a confessed Pythagorean. For Blank (2012, 251), there is not “much Pythagoras in Varro's

haec diligentius quam apertius dicta esse arbitror, sed non obscurius quam de re simili definitiones grammaticorum sunt, ut Aristee, Aristodemi, Aristocli, item aliorum, quorum obscuritates eo minus reprehendendae, quod pleraeque definitiones re incognita propter summam breviter non facile perspicuntur, nisi articulatim sunt explicata<e>.

I think that this is said with more care than clarity, but no more obscurely than the definitions of the same issue by the grammarians, such as those by Aristee, Aristodemus, Aristocles and others as well. Their obscurities should not be reprehended severely, because most definitions, concerning an unfamiliar topic, are not easily understood because of their extreme brevity, unless they are explained point by point.

The definitions in question here are those of analogy, and the grammarians mentioned are probably representatives of Alexandrian γραμματική. *Summa brevis* in definitions does not work very well, but there are signs that there was a doctrine of brevity put forward by some writers, at least by Stoics.<sup>606</sup>

Varro's definition of *grammatica* has been preserved by Marius Victorinus. It is found in the same introductory chapter as the definition of *grammatica* by Ariston and the definition of *ars* / τέχνη, discussed in section 3.8. Victorinus' interest in definitions resulted in a dialectical manual, *liber de definitionibus*. According to Marius Victorinus, Varro defines *grammatica* as follows:

ut Varroni placet, ars grammatica, quae a nobis litteratura dicitur, scientia eorum quae a poetis historicis oratoribusque dicuntur ex parte maiore. Eius praecipua officia sunt quattuor, ut ipsi placet, scribere legere intellegere probare.<sup>607</sup>

As Varro thinks, the art of grammar, which is called *litteratura* among us, is a science that concerns what is said for the most part in poets, historians, and orators. Its special tasks are fourfold, as is his opinion: writing, reading, understanding, evaluating.

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theology or etymology, despite a reference to him in *On the Latin language*." For Pythagoreanism in the first century BCE, see for example Kahn (2001, 88f.).

<sup>606</sup> Zeno famously compared dialectic (under which the definitions belong) with a clenched fist, representing the compactness and brevity of the art; for example, Sext. Emp. *math.* 2,7. There are at least two definitions of definition in which brevity is mentioned. Both are found in ps.-Galen (*hist. phil.* 19,236–237 Kühn): ὁρος δέ ἐστι λόγος σύντομος εἰς γνῶσιν ἡμᾶς ἄγων ἐκάστου πράγματος ἢ λόγος διὰ βραχείας ὑπομνήσεως ἐμφανὲς ἡμῖν ἀπεργαζόμενος τὸ ὑποκείμενον πράγμα --.

<sup>607</sup> Mar. Victorin. *gramm.* GL6 4,4–7 = GRF frg. 234.

The word *litteratura* does not seem to be widely used to denote ‘art of grammar’ outside this type of context, which gives the Latin equivalent of the Greek word. Referring to the etymological relation of *gramma* / *grammatica* and *littera* / *litteratura*, Marius Victorinus may simply mean to demonstrate that the Latin calque for γραμματική is *litteratura*, even if the word itself is not actually used. The grammarian Asper mentions that Varro says that *grammatica* was called *litteratura* when it was still undeveloped (*quam Terentius [et] Varro primum ut adhuc rudem appellatam esse dicit litteraturam*).<sup>608</sup> According to another corroboration from Isidore of Seville, Varro used the word *litteratio* of the elementary stage of grammar (sometimes called γραμματιστική in the Greek tradition): *quarum disciplina velut quaedam grammaticae artis infantia est; unde et eam Varro litterationem vocat*<sup>609</sup> (“The discipline of the letters is like the childhood of the art of grammar, and this is why Varro calls it *litteratio*, ‘lettering’”). These terminological clarifications are all likely to belong to the same original context in Varro as the definition of grammar, along with the list of its tasks and parts (see section 4.3.2).

Varro was familiar with the Alexandrian grammatical tradition; this is evident from the extant *De lingua Latina*. He does not mention Dionysius Thrax, but it is probable that through his teacher Aelius Stilo, who spent time in Rhodes around 100 BCE, Varro knew the scholars who worked there. As Stilo himself was interested in dialectic and contributed to the arranging of the art of grammar,<sup>610</sup> he could have been responsible for introducing to Varro some of the definitions and lists of parts that were made by the Alexandrian scholars. There is such similarity in the definitions of grammar by Dionysius Thrax and Varro that it is plausible that Varro has rendered the Dionysian definition (γραμματική ἐστὶν ἐμπειρία τῶν παρὰ ποιηταῖς τε καὶ συγγραφεῦσιν ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ λεγομένων) in Latin.<sup>611</sup> I first focus on the genus of grammar, *scientia*, in Varro’s definition. Grammar’s engagement with empiricism was to remain relatively brief,<sup>612</sup> and Varro’s choice of genus could be read as an informed statement against empiricist ideas in grammar. Varro’s alternatives for choice of genus – which had to represent a certain level of ‘knowing’ – were narrower than those of the Greeks writing on the issue; Latin simply lacks the diversity of Greek vocabulary in this respect. The concept of ἐμπειρία has a formally close Latin equivalent in *experientia*. Varro himself uses the term *experientia* in the

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<sup>608</sup> GL5 547,9–10 = GRF frg. 235. The *Ars* of Asper is of uncertain date and provenance, but Law (2003, 66) places him before Sacerdos, who was active in the late third century.

<sup>609</sup> Isid. *orig.* 1,3,1.

<sup>610</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 3,1; see sections 4.1 and 4.2.

<sup>611</sup> So also Taylor 1990, 17.

<sup>612</sup> Siebenborn 1976, 135; see section 3.4.2.

sense of ‘trial’ or ‘experiment’ (corresponding to πειρα) in his *De re rustica: bivium nobis enim ad culturam dedit natura, experientiam et imitationem. Antiquissimi agricolae temptando pleraque constituerunt, liberi eorum magnam partem imitando*.<sup>613</sup> The passage has been seen by Frede (1987, 245) as reflecting empiricist ideas, but it seems difficult to tell with certainty that this truly is the case.<sup>614</sup> *Experientia* is also attested in a context where empiricist ideas flourished, namely in medical texts; Cornelius Celsus (c. 25 BCE – 50 CE) uses the word frequently.<sup>615</sup> As far as we can tell, however, the word never made its way into grammatical texts in this form. With the waning success of the empiricist school of medicine and the opposition to Dionysius’ definition, it is not surprising that Varro ended up with *scientia* rather than *experientia* or something similar. It is also arguable – as the Romans lacked a Latin equivalent of Homeric epic – whether a truly solid tradition of Roman philology, in which empiricist methods would have been of greater use, ever emerged. However, individual authors published treatises of textual criticism: Suetonius testifies in his *De grammaticis* (4,1) that philological work among the Romans was set in motion by the revision of two Roman epic works, the *Punicum Bellum* by Naevius and the Ennian *Annales*.<sup>616</sup> But what older literature there was in Latin was more or less ignored by scholars after the change in taste in the first century BCE that accompanied the emergence of the new poets, Vergil and Horace.<sup>617</sup>

The precise meaning of *scientia* in Varro is not entirely clear. We do not know whether he intends it to correspond to ‘scientific knowledge’ (ἐπιστήμη) or ‘knowledge’ (perhaps εἶδσις, which occurs in the definition of γραμματική by Demetrius Chlorus, see section 3.6.4) in general. In the surviving texts, Varro does not use the word often enough for us to determine its meaning in this context.<sup>618</sup> A passage in *De re rustica* (1,3,1), in which the concepts of *ars* and *scientia* are used, may, however, be of help. The discussion is about whether knowledge (*scientia*) of the things used in agriculture can be called an expertise (*ars*). Of the individuals present, the one with *aetas*, *honos*, and *scientia* is given

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<sup>613</sup> Varro *rust.* 1,18,7 and again in 1,19,2 and 1,40,2.

<sup>614</sup> Varro also uses the word *experientia* in the sense of “endeavour” as he criticizes his teacher Lucius Aelius Stilo for giving false etymologies (Gell. 1,18,2): *In quo non modo L. Aelii ingenium non reprehendo, sed industriam laudo: successum enim fert fortuna, experientiam laus sequitur. Experientia* as a teacher is also a commonplace in Latin literature. For example in Lucretius and Tacitus, we find the proverbial *experientia docet*: Lucr. 5,1452 (*usus et impigrae sicut experientia mentis / paulatim docuit*) and Tac. *hist.* 5,6 (*certo anni bitumen egerit, cuius legendi usum, ut ceteras artis, experientia docuit*).

<sup>615</sup> Cels. 1*pr.*,11,1; 5 *pr.*,1,4; Plin. *nat.* 1,29a8; 20,120,6; 29,5,6. Celsus also uses the Greek form ἐμπειρικοί of the empiricist physicians: Cels. 1*pr.*,2,30; 1*pr.*,5,18; 5*pr.*,160,4.

<sup>616</sup> See section 4.1.

<sup>617</sup> Rawson 1985, 267.

<sup>618</sup> Taylor 1974, viii.



the first chance to answer the question: *non modo est ars, sed etiam necessaria ac magna; eaque est scientia, quae sint in quoque agro serenda ac facienda, quo terra maximos perpetuo reddat fructus*. Agriculture is indeed an expertise, and a necessary and noble one too; moreover, it is a *scientia* that concerns the various questions of producing crops. In this passage, the meaning of *scientia* is quite unambiguously ‘knowledge’ that, on the first and third occasion, forms the contents of the expertise – in the second one, *scientia* amounts to something like ‘wisdom’. *Scientia* thus appears as quite a neutral choice for the genus of *grammatica*, referring simply to the possession of knowledge, to a bundle or set of facts. It is in the concept of *ars* that the different aspects are combined: the knowledge, its organization and application.<sup>619</sup> Varro might well have agreed with Cicero, who states in his *Lucullus* (146) that there is no art without knowledge (*ego nunc tibi refero artem sine scientia esse non posse*).<sup>620</sup> There is good evidence that Varro found epistemological questions important: in *De lingua Latina* (7,109) Varro mentions that he has already written a good deal on etymology as an expertise (*ars*) – whether it is an expertise, and whether it is useful – and that he has recorded views both for and against its status as a useful branch of learning. However, the epistemological status of grammar is not an issue for Varro, or at least we know of nothing that suggests otherwise.

Varro’s definitory notions on *grammatica* are scanty, but it can be said that his scientific basis for discussion in *De lingua Latina* was a rationalist one: regularity is a feature that language shares with nature.<sup>621</sup> Language works on analogical principles: using only a few rules; out of a relatively small number of original verbs, an almost infinite number of words can be generated. These primitive words cannot be explained; in other words, their ultimate *causa* cannot be stated. There are two origins for individual words: *impositio* and *declinatio*, the spring and the brook.<sup>622</sup> In discussing these origins, Varro gives the appropriate methods of investigation according to their nature (emphasis mine):

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<sup>619</sup> See Menuet-Guildbaud (1994, 84), who is referring to H. Altevogt’s work *Der Bildungsbegriff im Wortschatze Ciceros* (1940), which I have not seen.

<sup>620</sup> Cf. also Cic. *fin.* 5,26.

<sup>621</sup> This shows most clearly in *ling.* 9,33: *Quare qui negant esse rationem analogiae, non vident naturam non solum orationis, sed etiam mundi; qui autem vident et sequi negant oportere, pugnant contra naturam, non contra analogiam, et pugnant volsillis, non gladio, cum pauca excepta verba ex pelago sermonis <po>puli minus <u>usu trita afferant, cum dicant propterea analogias non esse, similiter ut, si quis viderit mutilum bovem aut luscum hominem claudicantemque equum, neget in bovum hominum et equorum natura similitudines proportionem constare*. See also *ling.* 10,53 and 10,60.

<sup>622</sup> Varro *ling.* 8,5; see Blank 2008, 60ff.

Ad illud genus, quod prius, **historia** opus est: nisi discendo enim aliter id non pervenit ad nos; ad reliquum genus, quod posterius, **ars**: ad quam opus est paucis **praeceptis** quae sunt brevia.<sup>623</sup>

As for the first class, history is necessary, because such words do not reach us except by learning; for the other class, which is later, an expertise is necessary, and for this, there is need of a few brief precepts.

Thus an *ars* is identified as something containing rules, *praecepta*. Varro excludes *historia* from actual expertise; it belongs to the empiricist tripod, a method that consists of familiarizing oneself with cases recorded by others – in other words: the research tradition. Varro avoids (at least at this point in his discussion) commenting on the technicality of *historia*, but the dichotomy of *historia* and *ars* is perhaps sufficient. However, the non-technical status of *historia* can hardly be said to connote anything derogatory. As we recall, Asclepiades' tripartite division also contains a 'historical part' (ἱστορικόν), which includes the typology of history ('true', 'false', 'as if true'), the study of individual words, and the study of definitions and proverbs.<sup>624</sup> *Historiarum cognitio* also occurs in Cicero's list of the contents of grammar.<sup>625</sup> These references to *historia* as part of grammar do not seem to be very relevant here. While the basic method may be the same – reading what others have to say about things – Asclepiades and Cicero are referring to such things as stories, people and places; they are explaining the contents of literature, not the method as such. Varro's *historia* is a means of interpreting the natural basis of each word.

Dionysius' definition of γραμματική includes another distinctly empiricist part, namely 'for the most part' (ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ or πλεῖστον<sup>626</sup>); in Varro's definition this is rendered *ex parte maiore*. As we have seen, in Dionysius' definition this expression (also known from an empiricist account of medicine<sup>627</sup>) is related to the empiricist practice of acquiring knowledge. In his reformulation of Dionysius, Asclepiades of Myrlea rejected the expression 'for the most part', as well as the use of the word ἐμπειρία.<sup>628</sup> For Asclepiades, calling grammar ἐμπειρία was simply wrong. He saw a deep chasm between the empiricists and the rationalists, and removed 'for the most part' for the same reason. It is possible that Varro did not register the less obvious empiricist element in Dionysius'

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<sup>623</sup> Varro *ling.* 8,6.

<sup>624</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,253; see section 3.7.

<sup>625</sup> Cic. *de or.* 1,187; see section 4.4.

<sup>626</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,72.

<sup>627</sup> See section 3.4.2.

<sup>628</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,74: γραμματική ἐστι τέχνη τῶν παρὰ ποιηταῖς καὶ συγγραφεῦσι λεγομένων. See section 3.6.2.

definition or that he did recognize it as such, taking it as a necessary reality check for a grammarian, whose knowledge cannot grasp all of literature – unlike Asclepiades of Myrlea, who maintained that there are no limits to grammatical knowledge:<sup>629</sup> τέχνη is a universal enterprise, which powered by λόγος encompasses everything within its range, regardless of the human limitations of its practices. Varro does not reject the value of practical experience as a method of grammar, as we shall see (section 4.3.3). In general, a rationalist approach is more tolerant of experience than an empiricist approach is of theory; still, there is a long way from simply recognizing the validity of essentially empiricist methods in grammar to defining the epistemological status of grammar as methodical ἐμπειρία.

The expression ‘for the most part’ has another context in the epistemological field, as noted already in section 2.3. It is related to the Aristotelian concept of ἐπιστήμη in the *Metaphysica* (1027a20), according to which there can be no ἐπιστήμη of the accidental; scientific knowledge concerns that which is either always or ‘for the most part’ (ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ) so. This seems like a considerable concession: ἐπιστήμη is by no means absolute knowledge – it is only capable of grasping the regular in nature. Aristotle’s opinion of grammar, also stated in the *Metaphysica*, was in any case that it was ἐπιστήμη.<sup>630</sup> Could this notion be behind Varro’s *grammatica est scientia*? According to Cicero’s testimony in the *Topica* (1–3), one of his last works from 44 BCE, Aristotle’s work was then still poorly known; even philosophers, let alone rhetoricians, hardly knew it. Cicero himself might not have used Aristotle’s *Topica* itself as a source in his work, but some other Peripatetic source: the general lines of Peripatetic philosophy were common knowledge among the educated.<sup>631</sup> In any case, an interest in Aristotelian texts was revived during the first century BCE, though exactly how this happened remains unclear. In all probability, the bulk of Aristotle’s texts had been available already before Andronicus of Rhodes and his editorial work, traditionally seen as a turning point in Aristotelian studies.<sup>632</sup> I am not suggesting that Varro formulated his definition on the basis of

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<sup>629</sup> See section 3.6.2.

<sup>630</sup> *metaph.* 1003b20; see section 2.3.

<sup>631</sup> Huby 1989, 61; Barnes 1997a, 45.

<sup>632</sup> See for example Frede 1999, 772–776. An edition of the *Metaphysica* had probably been put together and was available well before Varro’s time. At the very latest, the *Metaphysica* was known as a textual entity by the time of Nicolaus of Damascenus (born about 64 BCE), who wrote a commentary on the text; Barnes 1997a, 61–63. Moreover, there are signs that Cicero knew some of the ideas presented in the *Metaphysica*: see Rubinelli 2009, 130 n. 69. Varro’s interest in metaphysical phenomena is attested in his fragments on theology from the *Antiquitates rerum divinarum*. Varro is known to have amalgamated many philosophical ideas in his work on language (Taylor 1996, 14), and at least in *De re rustica* (1,1,8), Varro lists Aristotle as one of his “sources”.

Aristotle's ideas, or that he even knew the texts in the *Metaphysica*, which at the time Varro was writing on the nature of the *ars grammatica* had been quite recently edited; but rather that the expression ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ might have been familiar from Peripatetic sources. The use of this expression both refers to the Aristotelian tradition and is compatible with the Dionysian definition of grammar.

#### 4.3.2 OTHER DEFINITORY NOTIONS

In addition to Varro's definition of grammar as preserved by Marius Victorinus, a Varronian account of the contents of grammar is found in the fourth-century grammar of Diomedes. Neither of the Late Latin authors gives a precise source, but one possibility is the work *Disciplinarum libri IX*, more specifically a book that discussed *grammatica*.<sup>633</sup> The work included nine disciplines,<sup>634</sup> and it seems safe to assume that it was structured with one book dedicated to each discipline. These were probably grammar, dialectic, rhetoric, geometry, arithmetic, astrology, music, medicine, and architecture.<sup>635</sup> The publication date of this work is quite late, about 33 BCE, although it is probable that some parts of it were finished earlier. The difficulties pertaining to this work have been discussed by Hadot (2005, 156ff.). Funaioli (*GRF* frg. 49) attributes one fragment to the *grammatica* section of *Disciplinarum libri IX*. It concerns the letters of the Latin language, which was an integral subject of technical grammar: *litterarum partim sunt et dicuntur, ut a et b; partim dicuntur neque sunt, ut h et x; quaedam neque sunt neque dicuntur, ut φ et ψ*. It is possible, perhaps even probable, that the book on grammar was an example of a Roman technical grammar.<sup>636</sup> As such, it would have offered a natural forum for definitory notions; of course, it is possible that Varro discussed the parts and tasks of grammar in some other treatise on

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<sup>633</sup> Schanzer (2005, 79 and n. 37) identifies an Augustinian passage (*ord.* 2,12,37) as a 'bona fide fragment' from Varro's book *De grammatica*: *Poterat iam perfecta esse grammatica sed, quia ipso nomine profiteri se litteras clamat unde etiam Latine litteratura dicitur factum est, ut quidquid dignum memoria litteris mandaretur, ad eam necessario pertineret* (Grammar was already able to be perfect, but because by her very name she proclaims to profess letters – whence even in Latin she is called litteratura – it came about that whatever thing worthy of record was entrusted to writing necessarily fell under her purview. – Translation by Schanzer 2005, 79 n. 37).

<sup>634</sup> Vitr. 7pr.,14.

<sup>635</sup> *RE s.v.* Varro [84], suppl. VI (Dahlmann), 1255. Ritschl (1877) and Schanzer (2005, 101–102) suggest astronomy instead of astrology. The last two are the only disciplines whose place in the work (medicine in book eight and architecture in book nine) we know with reasonable certainty, from the testimony by Nonius Marcellus (p. 196,10–11; p. 884,13 Lindsey; Schanzer 2005, 95).

<sup>636</sup> So Luhtala 2000, 19.

grammatical matters as well.<sup>637</sup> The relevant passage in Diomedes' *ars* runs as follows:

Grammaticae officia, ut adserit Varro, constant in partibus quattuor, lectione enarratione emendatione iudicio. Lectio est artificialis interpretatio, vel varia cuiusque scripti enuntiatio serviens dignitati personarum exprimensque animi habitum cuiusque. Enarratio est obscurorum sensuum quaestionumve explanatio, vel exquisitio per quam unius cuiusque rei qualitatem poeticis glossulis exsolvimus. Emendatio est qua singula pro ut ipsa res postulat dirigimus aestimantes universorum scriptorum diversam sententiam, vel re-correctio errorum qui per scripturam dictationemve<sup>638</sup> fiunt. Iudicium est quo omnem orationem recte vel minus quam recte pronuntiatam specialiter iudicamus, vel aestimatio qua poema ceteraque scripta perpendimus.<sup>639</sup>

The tasks of grammar, as Varro maintains, consist in four parts: reading, exposition, emendation and judgement. Reading is the interpretation according to the art, or presentation of the various written texts, which takes into account the dignity of the persons involved and expresses the state of mind of each. Exposition is the explanation of obscure meanings of words or explanation of difficult questions, or inquiry in order to resolve the quality of each thing by means of poetic glosses. Emendation is that by which we – evaluating the different meanings involved in all of the writers – correct individual words as demanded by the subject itself, or correction of errors that have occurred either through writing or

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<sup>637</sup> As forcefully pointed out by Hadot (2005, 162–163).

<sup>638</sup> In this I follow Wilmanns (1864, 104–105), who believes that the text ought to read *dictatio pro dictio*.

<sup>639</sup> *GL1* 426,21–31. The above Diomedean passage continues with a kind of explanation of grammar that at least Collart (1978, 10) regards as originally Varronian (*GL1* 426,32–427,2): *Grammaticae initia ab elementis surgunt, elementa figurantur in litteras, litterae in syllabas coguntur, syllabis comprehenditur dictio, dictiones coguntur in partes orationis, partibus orationis consummatur oratio, oratione virtus ornatur, virtus ad evitanda vitia exercetur* (The roots of grammar grow from the elements; the elements are figured in letters, the letters come together into syllables, syllables make understandable expressions, expressions come together into parts of speech, the parts of speech are combined in speech, virtue is furnished with speech, virtue is exercised in order to avoid vice). *Oratione virtus ornatur* would make better sense in the form *oratio virtute ornatur* (Dammer 2001, 185 n. 422). The passage corresponds to the overall structure of grammars in Late Antiquity, and it seems possible that it echoes something already Varro had written. Also Dositheus (fourth century CE) in his bilingual manual of grammar presents the fourfold division with explanations (*GL7* 376,5–377,1).

through dictating. Judgement is that by which we especially determine whether the whole expression is delivered correctly or less than correctly; or an assessment by which we evaluate poems and other writings.

The Marius Victorinus quote (*gramm. GL6 4,4–7 = GRF frg. 234, section 4.3.1*) contains a list that clarifies the contents of grammar, following after the definition: *Eius praecipua officia sunt quattuor, ut ipsi placet, scribere legere intellegere probare*. This list differs from the above one (*lectio, enarratio, emendatio, iudicium*), and for an obvious reason: the two lists are not, in fact, lists of the same features of *grammatica*. Victorinus is listing the tasks (*officia*) of grammar, Diomedes the parts (*partes*) of which those tasks consist. The tasks and parts are quite easily intertwined, as is also suggested by Diomedes when he says that *officia constant in partibus*, although the lists do not follow a similar order. The tasks are a response to the question, “what the art should do”; the parts form the scheme within which those tasks are carried out. It has been suggested that Varro’s four-part division of grammar could derive from Tyrannion.<sup>640</sup> However, there is no direct evidence to support this claim: we do not actually know that this division was used by Tyrannion, and for example Blank (1998, 147) and Pagani (2011, 21) reject the notion as mere conjecture.<sup>641</sup>

The tasks are formulated at a more general level than the parts: it could be said that the tasks of understanding (*intellegere*) and evaluating (*probare*) alone cover the functions of the more advanced grammar. Reading (*legere*) and writing (*scribere*) are tasks that are covered by the elementary level grammar. Diomedes ascribes the parts (*emendatio, lectio, enarratio, iudicium*) to Varro, but does not explicitly say that the explanations attached to them are Varronian. The parts listed seem to form a continuum of the philological working process: first, the text in question has to be corrected, after which it can be read with due care; this leads to an understanding of the text at its every level.<sup>642</sup> Similarly, the tasks of *scribere* and *legere* can be read as consecutive stages of the philologist’s work: writing the text down and reading it with due regard for the prosody. Finally,

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<sup>640</sup> Usener 1892, 266ff. On Tyrannion and Varro, see also Lehmann 1988, 180.

<sup>641</sup> Moreover, Tyrannion’s definition (*γραμματική ἐστὶ θεωρία μιμήσεως*, discussed in section 4.5) is – at least in the tradition of the definitions of grammar known to us – a unique one, and to assume that it was accompanied by an entirely conventional division of grammar – which later became something of a standard – might be considered implausible, although not impossible.

<sup>642</sup> The order of the parts is different in Marius Victorinus and Diomedes, probably drawn from memory by one of them; reading the original text is naturally the first step, after which the grammarian writes down the corrected version. Placed after *scribere*, *legere* could be seen as meaning the placing of prosodic markings in the text, as in the list of parts by Dionysius Thrax (see section 3.4.3): ἀνάγνωσις ἐντριβής κατὰ προσοδίαν.

there is judgement. The Varronian list of parts resembles the more detailed list by Dionysius Thrax, which also describes the tasks of the philologist. The idea of the grammatical-philological continuum is illustrated very practically by a Scholiast to Dionysius Thrax, with a fanciful report of the four stages of the process of analysing a text. First, the Scholiast states that in the past there were four parts of grammar: Τὸ πάλαι μέρη τῆς γραμματικῆς ἦν τέσσαρα· καὶ εἰσὶ ταῦτα· διορθωτικόν, ἀναγνωστικόν, ἐξηγητικόν καὶ κριτικόν. In the old days, the pupil would literally proceed from one teacher to another: first, an ‘emendator’ (διορθωτής), then a ‘reader’ (ἀναγνωστικός), followed by an ‘interpreter’ (ἐξηγητικός), and finally a ‘critic’ (κριτικός).<sup>643</sup> Professionals specializing in these areas of grammar certainly existed in Antiquity: the ‘critics’ are well known, and a professional reader (ἀναγνωστής) makes an appearance for example in Gellius’ *Noctes Atticae* (18,5); Zenodotus was called πρῶτος διορθωτής τοῦ Ὁμήρου, and other ‘editors’ are known from ancient sources as well.<sup>644</sup> The existence of a systematic curriculum with these four specialists is clearly an overstatement, or rather a misconception about the glorious past. In general, a four-part division is clearly a Varronian dialectical preference.<sup>645</sup> The Varronian method here is *partitio*, a listing of the main heads of the activities of the grammarian. This is why Varro’s parts of grammar differ from the division by Asclepiades of Myrlea (τεχνικόν, ἱστορικόν, γραμματικόν),<sup>646</sup> and bear more similarity to those of Dionysius Thrax. It is logical that Varro should have used Dionysius’ parts of grammar as a model for his own, since Varro also adopted his definition of grammar as a model.

Now let us take a further look at the explanations the parts receive in Diomedes’ text. For some reason, each of the parts listed receives a double explanation. The list of *partes* is clearly ascribed to Varro, but it is quite another question whether the explanations are originally Varronian. Dionysius’ parts concern reading, literary tropes, explanation of individual words and histories, etymologies, analogies, and critical assessment. It is not difficult to find a place for these in the four Varronian parts: reading (*lectio*, ἀνάγνωσις) and judgement (*iudicium*, κρίσις ποιημάτων) are present in both divisions. Etymology and analogy function as tools of interpretation and emendation, and individual

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<sup>643</sup> Schol. D.T. GG1.3 12,3–13,6.

<sup>644</sup> For example, Diod. Sic. 15,6.

<sup>645</sup> See for example Varro *ling.* 5,12–13; Serv. *in Verg. Aen.* 3,359,16–18: *Varro autem quattuor genera divinationum dicit --. Ibid.* 6,733: *Varro et omnes philosophi dicunt quattuor esse passiones --. in Verg. georg.* 1pr.,15: *nam omnis terra, ut etiam Varro docet, quadrifariam dividitur --.* Terentius Scaurus, *de adv.* 29,8: *Varro adverbialia localia, quae alii praeverbia vocant, quattuor esse dicit --.* *De re rustica* contains numerous occasions of four *partes* or *divisiones*, for example 1,5,3–4; 1,8,2; 1,8,4; 1,39,3.

<sup>646</sup> See sections 3.6.2 and 3.7.

words and the settlement of difficult questions concerning the subject matter (persons, places, etc.) are likewise found in Dionysius' partition (Λέξεων / γλωσσῶν τε καὶ ἱστοριῶν πρόχειρος ἀπόδοσις). We can still ask whether there is something conspicuous in the case of *iudicium*: why should judgement be understood as concerning the delivery of expression? Dionysius' final part of grammar, κρίσις ποιημάτων, is related to the soundness of the text, its attribution and its literary value. However, a later interpreter of this part (such as Diomedes) – noting the absence of a clearly 'technical' part that could be understood as including the aspect of correct language – could well understand *iudicium* as also referring to the assessment of the general grammatical quality of the expression (*oratio*). In any case, the alternative explanation also mentions critical assessment.<sup>647</sup> *Emendatio* or διόρθωσις is also something not explicitly mentioned in Dionysius' list of the parts of grammar. Yet a concern for correcting errors is implicit in almost all of the parts: in the correct marking of prosody, in finding the etymologies that help to determine both the meaning and the form of the word, in analogies as the most important tool of diorthotic practice, and in critical assessment, which offers an overall appraisal of the soundness of the text. The four parts of Varro's *grammatica*, and largely also their possibly non-Varronian explanations, seem to correspond to the Dionysian idea of grammar as philology: the study of form and content. Varro's *grammatica* is the art that is concerned with literature: preserving it, evaluating it, and transmitting it to new generations.

Our picture of Varro as a technical writer can be augmented by a discussion in Cicero's early work, *De inventione*. In the beginning, Cicero discusses the preliminaries of an art: the topics that have to be considered before the actual subject matter, the contents of the art.<sup>648</sup> The roots of the discussion concerning these preliminary issues lie in Aristotle's *Metaphysica* (1025b1ff.); according to Aristotle, the sciences have causes (αἴτια), principles (ἀρχαί), and elements (στοιχεῖα). The concept of the 'final cause' or goal, τέλος, is found in the *Physica* (194b33) along with the other types of causes. In *De inventione*, Cicero lists the relevant topics of preliminary discussion:

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<sup>647</sup> See section 5.4.1 for Quintilian and his use of *iudicium*.

<sup>648</sup> In the first chapters of *De inventione* Cicero seeks to justify rhetorical study in general. The usefulness of rhetoric is stressed, and attention is paid to potential objections. A similar attitude is shown in the contemporary *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. The picture changes as the years pass: in the 55 BCE *De oratore*, the justification of rhetoric is taken for granted and any apologetic attitude is altogether cast aside, as rhetoric is hailed as the most useful and most difficult of all the arts. However in Cicero's case not only did the socio-cultural conditions become more favourable towards literary pursuits in general, but Cicero's own position changed as well: he wrote *De inventione* as a young man, while *De oratore* is a work by a statesman and an uncontested supreme orator (Janson 1964, 33–36). We cannot follow a corresponding development in the art of grammar, since no manuals or their prefaces survive.



Sed antequam de praeceptis oratoriis dicimus, videtur dicendum de genere ipsius artis, de officio, de fine, de materia, de partibus. nam his rebus cognitis facilius et expeditius animus unius cuiusque ipsam rationem ac viam artis considerare poterit.<sup>649</sup> -- quare hanc oratoriam facultatem in eo **genere** ponemus, ut eam civilis scientiae partem esse dicamus. **Officium** autem eius facultatis videtur esse dicere adposite ad persuasionem; **finis** persuadere dictione. inter officium et finem hoc interest, quod in officio, quid fieri, in fine, quid effici conveniat, consideratur. ut medici officium dicimus esse curare ad sanandum apposite, finem sanare curatione, item, oratoris quid officium et quid finem esse dicamus, intellegimus, cum id, quod facere debet, officium esse dicimus, illud, cuius causa facere debet, finem appellamus. **Materiam** artis eam dicimus, in qua omnis ars et ea facultas, quae conficitur ex arte, versatur. ut si medicinae materiam dicamus morbos ac vulnera, quod in his omnis medicina versetur, item, quibus in rebus versatur ars et facultas oratoria, eas res materiam artis rhetoricae nominamus. has autem res alii plures, alii pauciores existimarunt. -- **partes** autem eae, quas plerique dixerunt, inventio, dispositio, elocutio, memoria, pronuntiatio.<sup>650</sup>

But before I speak of the rules of oratory, I think I should say something about the genus of the art itself, about its task, its goal, its material, and its parts. For after understanding these, the mind of each reader will be able to grasp the outline and method of the art more easily and readily. - - For this reason, we will place this oratorical ability in such a **genus** as to assert that it is a part of political science. The **task** of eloquence seems to be to speak in a manner suited to persuasion; the **goal** is to persuade by speech. This is the difference between task and goal: in the case of the task, we consider what should be done, in the case of the goal what result should be produced. For example, we say that the task of the physician is to treat the patient in a manner suited to healing, and the goal is to heal by treatment. Likewise, we shall understand what we mean by the task and what by the goal of the orator, when we say that the thing that he ought to do is the task, and the purpose for which he ought to do it we call the goal. By the **material** of the art, I mean that with which the whole art and its faculty are concerned. For example, we say that the material of medicine is diseases and wounds because medicine is wholly concerned with these; in the same way we call the material of the art of

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<sup>649</sup> Cic. *inv.* 1,5,33–37.

<sup>650</sup> Cic. *inv.* 1,6,7–14.

rhetoric those subjects with which the art of oratory and eloquence are concerned. However, others have thought that there are more of these subjects, and others have thought that there are fewer. -- The **parts** of oratory, as most authorities have stated, are invention, arrangement, expression, memory, and delivery.

There seems to be some confusion as to the precise meaning of some of the terms. In the case of *officium* and *finis*, Cicero explicitly states the difference between them (*inter officium et finem hoc interest...*), which he does not do for the other terms. *Officium* is about “what ought to be done” (*quod facere debet*); *finis* about “for what purpose (teleological cause) it ought to be done” (*cuius causa facere debet*). There seems to be no difficulty in distinguishing *officia* and *partes*, and from the quotes in Diomedes and Marius Victorinus we can see that these are clear to Varro as well. According to Cicero, the task of rhetoric is *dicere adposite ad persuasionem*; Varro too gives the tasks in the infinitive (*scribere legere intellegere probare*). Similarly, the parts of rhetoric and grammar correspond to each other formally: respectively, they are *inventio, dispositio, elocutio, memoria, pronuntiatio* and *emendatio, lectio, enarratio, iudicium*. It is evident that Cicero and Varro are applying the same scheme, and this is what Cicero refers to in the *Academica*: they are both highly technical writers, who know and use the *ars dicendi et ars disserendi*.<sup>651</sup> The conventions of technical writing were already there for Varro. The definition of grammar, its tasks and its parts clearly belong to a systematic definitory discussion of the discipline, the preliminaries of an art. Three categories of these topics survive from Varro: the definition (including the genus), the tasks, and the parts.<sup>652</sup>

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<sup>651</sup> See section 4.3.1.

<sup>652</sup> We can observe a fuller list of preliminary categories, called τὰ θεωρούμενα, in the Scholia to Dionysius Thrax, where two Scholiasts give lists of as many as eight categories (GG1.3 113,11–115,19 and 170,11–25): ἐπεὶ οὖν τέχνη ἐστὶν ἡ γραμματικὴ, δῆλον ὅτι καὶ αὕτη ταῦτα τὰ ὀκτὼ ἔχει θεωρούμενα περὶ αὐτήν. These are (aetiological) **cause** (αἴτιον), **principle** (ἀρχή), **meaning** (ἔννοια), **material** (ὕλη), **parts** (μέρη), **tasks** (ἔργα), **instruments** (ὄργανα) and **goal** (τέλος). The relationships between the features seem to have been somewhat unclear: the two discussions show substantial discrepancies. This reflects uncertainty about how the terms αἴτιον, ἀρχή etc. should be understood; moreover, the discussion in GG1.3 113ff. only covers the first six categories, excluding ὄργανα and τέλος. Both of the Scholiasts who discuss the θεωρούμενα agree on the parts of grammar: they are the standard four parts, διορθωτικόν (correcting), ἀναγνωστικόν (reading), ἐξηγητικόν (interpreting), κριτικόν (evaluating). But the Scholiast’s idea of the tasks (ἔργα) of grammar is quite different; a single task is mentioned rather than a fourfold division – the technical treatment of poetry and prose, τὸ τὸν ἐμμετρον καὶ τὸν πεζὸν λόγον τεχνᾶσθαι (GG1.3 170,21; see Blank 1998, 146). Information concerning instruments is found here and there in the Scholia, and a specific list of these is given twice: in the above-mentioned list, with full discussion, and in a shorter one that includes only the four standard parts and the instruments. The instruments

Indeed, Varro appears to have given these matters some thought. There is interesting evidence for this in a commentary on Cicero's *De inventione*, by the same Marius Victorinus who has preserved the Varronian definition and list of tasks.<sup>653</sup> In the precise locus that deals with the above quoted Ciceronian passage (*inv.* 1,5,33ff.), Marius Victorinus cites Varro:<sup>654</sup> the arts are on the one hand

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are named γλωσσηματικόν (glossematic), ἱστορικόν (historical), τεχνικόν (technical), and μετρικόν (metrical), and they are compared to the tools of a carpenter (GG1.3 164,9–22). These four are also mentioned in 123,13–14 without referring to them as ὄργανα; however, they are something through which grammar is viewed theoretically (Ἐπειδὴ οὖν ἡ γραμματικὴ διὰ τοῦ γλωσσηματικοῦ καὶ μετρικοῦ καὶ τεχνικοῦ <καὶ ἱστορικοῦ> θεωρεῖται). According to the Scholiast, the instruments are not a peculiar feature of any τέχνη: for example, γλωσσηματικόν is also used by rhetoricians and physicians (GG1.3 169,1–2). This means that they are not an essential part of the definition of an art, and this is significant in the dialectical sense. In practice, an instrument might be something as concrete as a manual or a monograph devoted to one of these subjects. An example of a technical instrument of the art of grammar that would be important for an orator would be a treatise on Hellenism or Latinity (see Siebenborn 1976, 33). It is however difficult to estimate whether the list of the four instruments originally belongs to the same context as the list of the four standard parts of grammar, whose provenance itself is uncertain. The four-part system seems to argue in favour of this, but on the other hand the four-part system of tasks we know from Varro is not used by the Scholiast, as he gives only one task of grammar, τὸ τεχνᾶσθαι. It is evident that the Scholiasts were not following a common source in their discussion; it rather seems that they drew the contents of the θεωρούμενα from memory. It is also clear that some of the θεωρούμενα are more essential than others. The tradition obviously favours those parts to which the tasks are closely attached, which makes them a little less important. The instruments are not a distinguishing feature, and as such are less memorable.

<sup>653</sup> The text goes by the name of *Q. Fabii Laurentii Victorini explanationum in rhetoricam M. Tullii Ciceronis libri duo*, but is safely attributed to Marius Victorinus; see for instance *New Pauly s.v. Victorinus, C. Marius*.

<sup>654</sup> Mar. Victorin. *rhet.* 170, 23–36. *Sed ante quam de praeceptis oratoriis dicimus, videtur dicendum de genere ipsius artis] Omnis ars duplex est, id est, duplicem faciem habet secundum praeceptum sententiamque Varronis qui ait esse artem extrinsecus unam, aliam intrinsecus. Ars extrinsecus talis est, quae nobis scientiam solam tradit, intrinsecus, quae ita dat scientiam, ut illud ipsum, quod scientia dat, quibus rationibus faciamus ostendat. Ita illa ad scientiam solam proficit, haec ad scientiam, quae in actu sit. Ut puta si dicam 'grammatica ars est gnara partium orationis, gnara syllabarum, gnara litterarum; per hanc discimus omnia vitia devitare': haec cum dico cumque per hanc vitari vitia dico, non tamen quo modo vitentur ostendo: artem illam extrinsecus doceo, per quam sola scientia discitur. Si autem dicam, quae sint partes orationis, quae syllabae, quae litterae quibusque modis omnia illa constent, quo pacto vitia vitentur, tunc erit illa ars, cui est nomen intrinsecus: non quae ad scientiam nostram tantum proficit, sed quae in actu sit. Ergo et ars rhetorica duplex est; nam est extrinsecus et intrinsecus. Intrinsecus autem illa est, quae nobis ad actus praecepta artis insinuat: extrinsecus porro, quae nobis, quid sit rhetorica, demonstrat: quam cum demonstraverit, scimus tantum, sed exercere non possumus. Hanc itaque artem extrinsecus, quae solam scientiam parit, quinque rebus Tullius ostendit, genere artis, officio, fine, materia, partibus. Ipse etiam ostendit de ea arte, quae est extrinsecus, esse dicturum. Intrinsecus vero artem quae nobis ad actus praecepta dat, interim differre; ait enim 'sed ante*

‘external’ (*extrinsecus*) on the other ‘internal’ (*intrinsecus*). Again, Marius Victorinus fails to mention the precise Varronian source. However, such a discussion of *ars*, as well as the actual ‘external’ and ‘internal’ treatments of the *artes*, might have originated in the *Disciplinarum libri IX*. Hadot (2005, 157) believes that the first book of this work could have served as an introduction, as in Varro’s *Antiquitates rerum humanarum et divinarum*. The overall characterization of *ars* might have originated in such an introduction. On the other hand, Vitruvius describes the work as dealing with nine disciplines (7pr.,14: *item Terentius Varro de novem disciplinis unum de architectura*), which certainly points to a one-discipline-per-book structure, and a mere preface instead of a whole book of introduction would thus seem more plausible.<sup>655</sup> The former, ‘external’ aspect gives knowledge of how the art is structured – for example, that grammar includes knowledge of the parts of speech, syllables, and letters, and that through knowledge of these we learn to avoid all errors. The external aspect is an orientation for someone who adopts it as his business to study a certain art, helping to relate it to the other arts. It is the external aspect of the art that Cicero divided into *officium*, *finis*, *materia*, and *partes*, and this takes place before moving on to the internal aspect of the art. The latter aspect of *ars*, internal knowledge, is methodical reflection as well as the actual subject matter of the art: *intrinsecus, quae ita dat scientiam, ut illud ipsum, quod scientia dat, quibus rationibus faciamus ostendat* (“internal art that gives knowledge in such way that it shows by what means we achieve the very thing that the knowledge gives”). It is also characterized as knowledge “in action” (*in actu*); internal art enables us to apply knowledge in practice. For example, the internal aspect includes knowledge of what the parts of speech are, what the syllables are, and how errors can be avoided.

The idea of the external and internal side of an art is derived from the dialectical study of topics, and is also found in Cicero’s *Topica* (8).<sup>656</sup> Cicero differentiates between topics *in eo ipso*, corresponding to *intrinsecus* (“topics attached to the subject under discussion itself”), and topics *in extrinsecus* (“topics drawn from without”). In this discussion, the concepts are closely connected with legal practice; in the Marius Victorinus passage in which he refers to Varro, in contrast, they are generally related to academic writing and the formation of knowledge.<sup>657</sup> This division of arguments into ‘external’ and ‘internal’ is commonly found in rhetorical manuals.<sup>658</sup>

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*quam de praeceptis oratoris dicimus, dicendum videtur de genere ipsius artis’. Quoniam primo artis generi satis faciendum est, quale genus rhetoricae artis sit, explicemus.*

<sup>655</sup> Schanzer (2005, 84ff.) discusses the issue further.

<sup>656</sup> Copeland 2006, 255.

<sup>657</sup> Aristotle (*rhet.* 1355b) gives clearer examples of these concepts than Cicero does, calling the two ἀτέχνου (corresponding to *extrinsecus*, Cic. *top.* 24: *Quae autem adsumuntur extrinsecus, ea maxime ex auctoritate ducuntur. Itaque Graeci tales argumentationes ἀτέχνους vocant, id est artis*

Our picture of the Varronian concept of *ars* can be emended by a fragment transmitted by Cassiodorus: *scire autem debemus, sicut Varro dicit, utilitatis alicuius caussa omnium artium exstitisse principia*.<sup>659</sup> According to Varro, all the arts have originally come into existence for some useful purpose. In his discussion of the secular arts, which include the seven liberal arts, Cassiodorus cites Varro several times; it seems likely that the citations are from Varro's work *Disciplinarum libri IX*.

Having collected all the preserved data, we find that there is actually a great deal that Varro said about the preliminaries of the arts and of grammar in particular. In his discussion of *ars*, he at least pointed out its aetiological cause; he also discussed *ars* from two viewpoints, *intrinsecus* and *extrinsecus*, and dealt with issues belonging to the external aspect of the art, such as the definition, tasks and parts of (at least) grammar. These all reflect his principles of technical writing, but one of the best examples of his dialectical practice is his discussion of the division of *partes orationis*. In his *De lingua Latina* Varro employs the term *partes orationis*,<sup>660</sup> but he speaks more frequently of *genera verborum*, 'types of words'. This terminological variation is not exceptional at the time; in Cicero's texts, *partes orationis* do not have the meaning of 'word classes'. They are literally 'parts of speech', the parts in an oration.<sup>661</sup> This shows that the terminology was not fixed: the Greek original τὰ μέρη τοῦ λόγου was also used in theories of composition and syntax in the sense of 'words in their context'.<sup>662</sup> Varro presents a brief doxographic account of *partes orationis*:

quarum generum declinationes orientur, partes orationis sunt duae, <ni>si item ut Dion in tris diviserimus partes res quae verbis significantur: unam quae adsignificat casus, alteram quae tempora, tertia<m>quae neutrum. De his Aristoteles orationis duas partes esse dicit: vocabula et verba, ut homo et equus, et legit et currit.<sup>663</sup>

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*expertis*) and ἔντεχνοι. Arguments of the former kind do not involve the use of the art, unlike those of the latter kind. For example, ἄτεχνοι are witnesses, torture, contracts and such, and ἔντεχνοι are those the rhetorician must come up with himself, using his art.

<sup>658</sup> See Reinhardt 2003, 199 and Copeland and Sluiter 2009, 105.

<sup>659</sup> *GL7* 213,13–14 = *GRF* frg. 233.

<sup>660</sup> E.g. *ling.* 8,1.

<sup>661</sup> -- *ordinandae sunt ceterae partes orationis. eae partes sex esse omnino nobis videntur: exordium, narratio, partitio, confirmatio, reprehensio, conclusio* (Cic. *inv.* 1,19,24–27; see also e.g. *de or.* 2,310–311 and *top.* 97).

<sup>662</sup> For a detailed account of the terminology, see De Jonge 2008, 96–99.

<sup>663</sup> Varro *ling.* 8,11.

Of those types of words from which inflections develop, there are two parts of speech, unless, like Dion, we divide the things that are indicated by words into three parts: one, which indicates case, a second, which indicates time and a third, which indicates neither. Regarding these, Aristotle says that there are two parts of speech: nouns, such as *homo* and *equus*, and verbs, such as *legit* and *currit*.

Varro mentions Dion as one who divided the parts of speech according to their grammatical features. This Dion is probably the Alexandrian philosopher, who came to Rome in 56 BCE as part of an embassy. Varro and Dion were connected through Antiochus of Ascalon.<sup>664</sup> Dion was associated with the Academy, and the method used here is the one the Academy favoured, division (διαίρεσις; Pl. *soph.* 267d). Varro also specifically points out that in his time there are many different ways of dividing words into classes; he chooses a division into four because everything else in nature is divided in four. This quadripartition of nature is explained earlier, in Book Five. The elements of nature are named 'place', 'body', 'time' and 'action': *locus et corpus, tempus et actio*.<sup>665</sup> Varro's division of the parts of speech adds one more category to Dion's tripartite division:

Quod ad partis singulas orationis, deinceps dicam. quouis quoniam sunt divisiones plures, nunc ponam potissimum eam qua dividitur oratio secundum naturam in quattuor partis: in eam quae habet casus et quae habet <tempora et quae habet> neutrum et in qua est utrumque.<sup>666</sup>

I shall next discuss the individual parts of speech. Since there are several divisions of these, I shall now take by preference that in which speech is divided into four parts according to nature: one with case-forms, another with time-forms, a third one that has neither, and a fourth one with both case and time.

Each of the four basic categories is further subdivided into smaller parts. Varro continues even more emphatically on the same theme of the tradition of classifying words in *ling.* 9,31:

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<sup>664</sup> *New Pauly s.v.* Dion [I 2]. Testimonia of Dion: *PHerc.* 1021 col. 34 in Blank 2007, 89–90 and Cic. *Luc.* 12.

<sup>665</sup> Varro *ling.* 5,12–13.

<sup>666</sup> Varro *ling.* 8,44. Varro goes on to note that 'some' call the parts by the names *pars appellandi* ('naming'), *pars dicendi* ('stating'), *pars adminiculandi* ('supporting') and *pars iungendi* ('joining'). For further discussion, see for example Garcea 2012, 36ff.

An non vides, ut Graeci habeant eam quadripertitam, unam in qua si<n>t casus, alteram in qua tempora, tertiam in qua neutrum, quartum in qua utrumque, sic nos habere?

Do you not see that the Greeks have a four-part system, one in which there are cases, a second in which there are indications of time, a third in which there are neither, and a fourth in which there are both – just as we do?

Varro testifies that a binary system of classification resulting in a fourfold basic division existed before him, and that these four parts of speech were also named by one or more anonymous Greek scholars. The Varronian definitions of the parts of speech are nevertheless the oldest ones we know of that were created by a scholar who was not primarily labelled as a philosopher and who was not Greek. The definitions of the parts of speech found in the Τέχνη attributed to Dionysius Thrax are considered to be a product of later centuries.<sup>667</sup> Varro does not explicitly say whether it was the grammarians or the philosophers who used the division he prefers, only that they were Greek. The philosopher Dion, however, has already been mentioned. We also know that the parts of speech were discussed by the first century BCE grammarians Tyrannion and Tryphon, in treatises dedicated to this subject.<sup>668</sup>

In the tenth book of *De lingua Latina*, Varro discusses other ways of dividing words into categories, and the above fourfold division is given a new context. Here he introduces divisions at three levels, based on the grammatical features of words: first, whether a word ever undergoes morphological changes (if it does not, analogy cannot be applied),<sup>669</sup> secondly, whether a word that can be changed in form is changed by will or by nature.<sup>670</sup> At the third level, he discusses words that are by their nature inflected, and their subdivision into four.<sup>671</sup> The last-mentioned is the division of the words into four classes he explains in the eighth book. Varro makes the precise method of division explicit in *ling.*

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<sup>667</sup> Di Benedetto 1958–1959; see section 3.4.1.

<sup>668</sup> According to a Scholiast to Dionysius Thrax, Tryphon criticized the Stoic model of defining (GG1.3 356,7ff.); Viljamaa 1998, 266. For the Stoics, see section 2.4.

<sup>669</sup> Varro *ling.* 10,14: *prima divisio in oratione, quod alia verba nusquam declinantur, ut haec vix mox, alia declinantur, ut ab limo limae, a fero ferebam, et cum nisi in his verbis quae declinantur non possit esse analogia, qui dicit simile esse mox et nox errat, quod non est eiusdem generis utrumque verbum, cum nox succedere debeat sub casuum ratione<m>, mox neque debeat neque possit.*

<sup>670</sup> Varro *ling.* 10,15: *secunda divisio est de his verbis quae declinari possunt, quod alia sunt a voluntate, alia a natura.*

<sup>671</sup> Varro *ling.* 10,17: *tertia divisio est: quae verba declinata natura; ea dividuntur in partis quattuor: in unam quae habet casus neque tempora, ut docilis et facilis; in alteram quae tempora neque casus, ut docet facit; in tertiam quae utraque, ut docens faciens; in quartam quae neutra, ut docte et facete.*

10,17: refined by subdivisions and some exemplification, this division serves as the definition of the word classes. Varro treats words as individual entities, defined by division based on their grammatically possible forms.<sup>672</sup> Varro calls his method *divisio*, which is a Ciceronian calque of the concept of διαίρεσις, the dissection of genus into species. In choosing division as the defining model of his theory of the parts of speech, Varro was probably following a course that was widely used in the technical literature of the first century BCE. Division was the most common method of definition in the two early rhetorical manuals, *Rhetorica ad Herennium* and Cicero's *De inventione*, and in Varro's *De re rustica*.<sup>673</sup> Varro was familiar with the Alexandrian grammatical tradition, but he does not refer to the definitions of word classes by Aristophanes, Aristarchus, or any other grammarian; however, by his time, an interest in the systematization of the parts of speech was rising among grammarians as well. Tyrannion's method of defining the parts of speech is known to have been called μερισμός, and he distinguished at least the proper noun, common noun, and the participle; Tryphon discussed individual parts of speech in four separate treatises that we know of.<sup>674</sup> Varro's theory of the parts of speech (or types of words) was not revolutionary, but it did not prove successful or influential either: as far as we know, the grammarians of Antiquity did not base their definitions of the parts of speech on strictly formal features.

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<sup>672</sup> Varro *ling.* 10,17: *ex hac divisione singulis partibus tres reliquae dissimiles. quare nisi in sua parte inter se collata erunt verba, si conveniunt, non erit ita simile, ut debeat facere idem.*

<sup>673</sup> Fuhrmann 1960, 47 (*Rhetorica ad Herennium*); 62 (*De inventione*); 72 (*De re rustica*). Fuhrmann also examined the later works of Celsus and Gaius, dating to the first and second centuries CE, and arrived at similar results (92; 110). That the Varronian method of defining by division was not exceptional was first pointed out by Anneli Luhtala (paper in ICHoLS 2011, St. Petersburg).

<sup>674</sup> See section 4.2.



#### 4.3.3 DE LINGUA LATINA AND GRAMMATICAL QUESTIONS

In his main linguistic work, *De lingua Latina* Varro does not present himself to us as a grammarian, or as someone with authority in matters of correct language. He is aiming at a description of the nature of the Latin language,<sup>675</sup> avoiding the position of a ‘guardian of language’. Humbly he admits his subservience to the authority of the usage of the majority: *Ego populi consuetudinis non sum ut dominus, at ille meae est*<sup>676</sup> – “I am not the master – so to say – of the people’s usage, but it is of mine.” For Varro, the fundamental question about language was this: why do people choose to use language in the way they do, so that language consists of both regularities and anomalies?<sup>677</sup> Varro’s oeuvre on language was vast, and in his other works too he contributed to the question of how error-free language is constructed. The fourth-century grammarians Charisius and Diomedes have preserved a small part of Varro’s theory of Latinity, a simple list of four criteria, in two fragments.

Charisius does not attribute his treatment of *sermo Latinus* to anyone,<sup>678</sup> but Diomedes mentions Varro as the source for the criteria. It has been suggested that Charisius’ discussion (61,16–63,20 Barwick) of the criteria is a section originating in the treatise *Dubius sermo* by Pliny the Elder.<sup>679</sup> I discuss this passage in section 5.4. The corresponding discussion of the criteria in Diomedes is very similar to that in Charisius, and if it is accepted that the discussion in Charisius originates from the *Dubius sermo*, it is also the likely source for Diomedes; the actual Varro quote consists of the four criteria only. Diomedes begins his discussion of *Latinitas* by defining the concept: *Latinitas est incorrupte loquendi observatio secundum Romanam linguam. constat autem, ut adserit Varro, his quattuor, natura analogia consuetudine auctoritate*<sup>680</sup> (“Latinity is the observation of uncorrupted speaking according to the Roman language. As Varro asserts, it consists of these four things: nature, analogy, usage and authority”). As far as we can tell, the concept of *Latinitas*, discussed under the main head of *elegantia*, was defined for the first time in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. To serve the needs of rhetoric, correct language must be definable and certain principles for producing it must be at hand. In the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, the other ‘virtues of speech’ belong to the rhetorical discussion, but Latinity and its counterparts are understood as grammatical phenomena: the author places the practice of

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<sup>675</sup> See Taylor 1996, *Prolegomena*.

<sup>676</sup> Varro *ling.* 9,6.

<sup>677</sup> Harris and Talbot 1997, 46.

<sup>678</sup> Char. 62,14–15 (Barwick): *constat ergo Latinus sermo natura analogia consuetudine auctoritate*.

<sup>679</sup> Schenkeveld has treated this issue in two articles (1996 and 1998). That the whole preface in Charisius is from Pliny, who has assumed only the four criteria from Varro, was already suggested by Mazzarino (1948 and 1949).

<sup>680</sup> Diom. *GL1* 439,16–17 = *GRF* frg. 268.

avoiding errors in language, barbarisms and solecisms, under *ars grammatica*.<sup>681</sup> As for Varro, we do not know whether he ever discussed the notions of *soloecismus* and *barbarismus*, and even the term *Latinitas* itself is not attested in what has survived from Varro. It may be that during the first century BCE, the Romans did not have a uniform theory or terminology of barbarisms and solecisms: according to Aulus Gellius, Nigidius Figulus (d. 45 BCE) used the term *rusticus sermo* rather than *barbarismus*.<sup>682</sup>

Varro's definition of the art of grammar (*ars grammatica, quae a nobis litteratura dicitur, scientia eorum quae a poetis historicis oratoribusque dicuntur ex parte maiore*) does not involve a normative aspect either. The lists of parts (*emendatio, lectio, enarratio, iudicium*) and tasks (*scribere, legere, intellegere, probare*) appear very convincingly as task lists for a philologist, as the list of the parts of grammar by Dionysius Thrax. The normative aspect is absent from the definition of *γραμματική* by Asclepiades of Myrlea, but his division of the art includes a 'technical' (*τεχνικόν*) part, which included the question of correct language. We do not know the original context of the Varronian criteria for Latinity, and their place in the system of disciplines (which itself is unclear) thus remains unresolved. The four criteria are a regrettably unconnected piece of scholarship, unlike the criteria propounded by Quintilian, who is our most important source for the Roman theory of correct language. Quintilian discusses the theory for a clear reason: it is a self-evidently important factor in the education of an orator.<sup>683</sup>

In the extant *De lingua Latina*, Varro discusses the concepts of *natura*, *analogia*, and *consuetudo* separately, but we do not know if there was a systematic discussion in which they were explained as criteria of Latinity. The concept of *auctoritas* (in relation to language) is not attested in Varro's extant works aside from the fragment in Diomedes. The word *natura* is particularly problematic as it seems to carry more than one meaning in Varro's linguistic thought; this is discussed by Siebenborn (1976, 151ff). *Natura*, on the one hand, refers to regular inflection and conjugation as ruled by nature, its antithesis being *voluntas*, arbitrary derivation.<sup>684</sup> Following the Stoic idea, Varro holds that *natura* is uncorrupted, "unless somebody perverts it by ignorant use" (*nisi qui eam usu inscio depravabit*).<sup>685</sup> On the other hand, *natura* also refers to the natural linguistic potential of a word form, which is always proportional to reality. Thus *natura* is connected to a pragmatic aspect of language: there is language as far as there is

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<sup>681</sup> *rhet. Her.* 4,17,13–18; see section 4.1; see Schenkeveld 1990a, 107.

<sup>682</sup> Gell. 13,6; Vainio 1994, 130.

<sup>683</sup> See section 5.4.2.

<sup>684</sup> Varro *ling.* 9,34.

<sup>685</sup> Varro *ling.* 10,60. See Amsler 1989, 29.

a natural need for language.<sup>686</sup> In addition to these aspects, Taylor has shown (1974, 23–24, 37–41) that Varro uses *natura* to designate language as an abstract system.<sup>687</sup>

Whatever the original context of the notions of *natura*, *analogia*, *consuetudo* and *auctoritas* as criteria of Latinity, the concept of *analogia* at least is grammatical to Varro. By ‘grammatical’ I mean that the concept was relevant to grammar and discussed by grammarians, which is not the case with the concept of *natura*. As we know, Aristophanes and Aristarchus are identified in the grammatical tradition as developers of the criteria of analogy.<sup>688</sup> Many Greek grammarians are known to have written on analogy by the mid-first century BCE, and at least three authors before Varro discussed Latin analogy: Staberius Eros, Antonius Gniphos, and Julius Caesar.<sup>689</sup> Pliny the Elder even honoured Staberius Eros as a founding figure of Latin grammar.<sup>690</sup> It appears that Gniphos was among the first Latin authors to have written on analogy. He had studied in Alexandria, and he had a professional interest in the subject as a rhetorician, his other occupation.<sup>691</sup> The scholars Varro refers to explicitly as grammarians (*grammatici*) are above all Crates (*ling.* 9,1) and Aristarchus (10,42), who are famously presented as discussing analogy and anomaly; Varro also mentions Aristophanes in a discussion of analogy (*ling.* 10,68), along with the other, less well known *grammatici* Aristeas, Aristodemus, and Aristocles (10,75; see section 4.3.1). The main purpose for which the grammarians applied analogy was as a tool for textual criticism. Both Aristarchus and Crates were Homerists with a practical foundation for their work. *Consuetudo* or usage is linked with analogy: *est nata ex quadam consuetudine analogia et ex hac <consuetudine item anomalia>*.<sup>692</sup> Thus *consuetudo* is a concern of the grammarians: -- Aristarchus, *de aequabilitate cum scribit ei<us>de<m>*, *verborum similitudinem quandam <in> declinatione sequi iubet, quoad patitur consuetudo*.<sup>693</sup> Varro says (*ling.* 10,2) that *consuetudo* is one of the topics of the tenth book, but the section in which it is systematically discussed is

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<sup>686</sup> For example, Varro *ling.* 9,37. See Ax (1996, 107–108) for a list and discussion of the Varronian pragmatic restrictions to derivation.

<sup>687</sup> In Varro’s list of criteria, etymology – given as a criterion by Quintilian (*inst.* 1,6,1) – is not mentioned. In view of the importance given to etymology in Varro’s language study, this has led to the idea that *natura* corresponds to etymology: *natura*, as well as ἔτυμον, is the very foundation of language. Holtz (1981, 136 n. 2) suggests that Quintilian’s *vetustas* corresponds to the Varronian *natura*.

<sup>688</sup> Char. 149,26–150,2 (Barwick); see section 3.2.

<sup>689</sup> See Ax 1996, 116 n. 15.

<sup>690</sup> Plin. *nat.* 35,199.

<sup>691</sup> See GRF frg. 4; Suet. *gramm.* 7,3; see section 4.1.

<sup>692</sup> Varro *ling.* 9,3.

<sup>693</sup> Varro *ling.* 9,1.

lost. However, in *ling.* 10,73 he distinguishes three species of usage: ancient, contemporary, and that of poets.

We have already encountered a definition of the art of grammar involving the question of correct language, dating at the latest from the first century BCE: the philosopher Ariston defined grammar as *scientia poetas et historicos intellegere, formam praecipue loquendi ad rationem et consuetudinem dirigens*.<sup>694</sup> Following the Alexandrian model, Varro defined *grammatica* as philology, but the grammarians of the time were gradually assuming a role as guardians of language, and were increasingly using certain theoretically constructed precepts in this work. According to Sextus' exposition of the grammar of Asclepiades of Myrlea, the criteria of Hellenism were analogy, usage, and etymology,<sup>695</sup> whereas Varro lists an elusive philosophical criterion of *natura*, and no etymology at all. Etymology would have been a familiar concept for philologist grammarians, as we know from Dionysius Thrax's list of parts of *γραμματική* and Varro's own testimony (*ling.* 5,7–9).

In the extant *De lingua Latina*, Varro does not commit himself to any discipline; we do not really know how Varro saw his work, *De lingua Latina*, in relation to *grammatica*. Not that there was any problem here, such as occurred in the case of his contemporary L. Ateius Philologus, whose professional identity was vague.<sup>696</sup> Varro was not a teacher of the art of grammar, or for that matter of any other art. A comparison with Apollonius Dyscolus, another original scholar, may be in order here: Apollonius found it important to emphasize that his work was in fact in the service of traditional grammatical work, the interpretation of poetry, and questions of Hellenism and orthography.<sup>697</sup> Varro, the 'non-grammarians', was free to do anything any way he liked. Lambert (2000, 390) notes the risk that we may 'grammaticalize' questions that in Antiquity were not in a strict sense grammatical, such as remarks on language vs. grammatical remarks. Accordingly, there is no point in forcing the harmonization of the definition of grammar with the known contents of *De lingua Latina*. Varro divides the linguistic discussion into three sections: etymology (*quemadmodum vocabula rebus essent imposita*), inflectional morphology (*quo pacto de his declinata in discrimina ierint*), and syntax (*ut ea inter se ratione coniuncta sententiam efferant*).<sup>698</sup> Varro is fond of this kind of schematization. In various contexts his treatment of things is laid out as a theory of fourfold or threefold divisions. In every case these schematizations, although given as a starting point, are not used in the actual treat-

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<sup>694</sup> Frg. 5 Mariotti = Mar. Victorin. *gramm.* GL6 3,7–4,9; see section 3.8.

<sup>695</sup> See section 3.7.

<sup>696</sup> See section 4.1.

<sup>697</sup> See section 6.2.

<sup>698</sup> Varro *ling.* 8,1.

ment.<sup>699</sup> This threefold division of language has nothing to do with either of the fourfold divisions he gives for grammar, the tasks (*scribere, legere, intellegere, probare*) or the parts (*emendatio, lectio, enarratio, iudicium*); nor does it come as a surprise that grammarians did not feel at home with his particular frame of reference as presented in *De lingua Latina*.<sup>700</sup>

#### 4.4 Cicero and *litterarum cognitio et poetarum*

Marcus Tullius Cicero (106–43 BCE), a younger contemporary of Varro, does not discuss the art of grammar as such: there is no definition of grammar or in-depth discussion of its nature in any of his extant works. However, he mentions grammar on several occasions, many of which have to do with the liberal arts. Here I explore Cicero's views as to the role of grammar in an educational programme.

In the era of the Late Republic, the position of grammar in the general curriculum was strengthened; it became a discipline with relatively well-defined limits within the educational scheme – a development that is clearly reflected in Suetonius' *De grammaticis*. Following the ideas propounded by Plato in *Respublica*, philosophers generally saw the liberal arts as propaedeutic for philosophy. Accordingly, the art of grammar was there to offer a basis for further learning. The only study valuable in its own right was philosophy, which thus occupied a separate position, superior to the other disciplines. It was achievable through study, but only for the few.<sup>701</sup>

The term *artes liberales* is first attested in the 80s BCE by Cicero in *De inventione* (1,35). Later, we find more on the subject: the arts suitable and necessary for a young, free-born man was particularly interesting to Cicero from the mid-50s onward, when the education of two growing youths, his own son Marcus and his nephew Quintus, was a topical issue. Cicero expresses the idea of the unity of the liberal arts (here referred to as *ingenuae et humanae artes*) in *De oratore* (3,21), written in 55 BCE:

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<sup>699</sup> For the schematization, see Piras 1998. The quadripartition works also in *Antiquitates rerum humanarum et divinarum* and *De re rustica*: see Blank 2008, 60. For Varro's failure to keep to his schemes, Blank 2008, 63.

<sup>700</sup> Moreover, the largest surviving excerpt from the twelve books that deal with syntax (*De lingua Latina* 14–25) is from Aulus Gellius' *Noctes Atticae* (16,8,1–14), and it shows that Varro's syntax was in large part Stoic dialectic (Taylor 1996, 7).

<sup>701</sup> Cribiore 2001, 3.

-- est etiam illa Platonis vera et tibi, Catule, certe non inaudita vox, omnem doctrinam harum ingenuarum et humanarum artium uno quodam societatis vinculo contineri; ubi enim perspecta vis est rationis eius, qua causae rerum atque exitus cognoscuntur, mirus quidam omnium quasi consensus doctrinarum concentusque reperitur.

-- there is also the true word by Plato, which you, Catulus, have surely heard, that the whole doctrine of the liberal and humane arts is comprised within a single bond of union; when the meaning of the theory that explains the causes and results of things is perceived, it is discovered that there is a wonderful agreement and concord of all the branches of knowledge.

Cicero refers to the pseudo-Platonic *Epinomis* (991e5–992a1), in which the liberal arts are connected by a common bond, the causal principles underlying the world.<sup>702</sup> According to Cicero, the most learned consider philosophy the creator and mother of the most valuable arts.<sup>703</sup> In *De oratore*, the list of these arts (*liberales doctrinae atque ingenuae*) includes geometry, music, an acquaintance with letters and poets (*litterarum cognitio et poetarum*), natural science, ethics, and political science.<sup>704</sup> Rather than *grammatica*, Cicero uses a more complex expression for grammar, apparently still reflecting a situation where scholars hesitated to use Latin calques for Greek terminology. On the other hand, Cicero does use both *grammaticus* and *grammaticae* (in the plural) in this work – though not always without a hedge. Cicero refers to grammar (*studium litterarum*; cf. γράμμα-τα) as something of a fashionable but not yet thoroughly established expertise, whose practitioners still had to be marked in the narrative by the phrase *qui grammatici vocantur*.<sup>705</sup>

In another passage (1,210–212) in *De oratore*, Cicero discusses the practitioners of the arts he considers serious: military leader, statesman, and jurist. After these, he comes to the study of the lighter arts (*leviora artium studia*): the arts of the musician (*musicus*), the grammarian (*grammaticus*), and the poet (*poeta*). Cicero points out that he can well explain what they each claim to profess (*possim similiter explicare, quid eorum quisque profiteatur*) and the limits of their competence (*et quo non amplius ab quoque sit postulandum*). Thus, even if

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<sup>702</sup> In *Epinomis* this bond only concerns the mathematical arts, but Cicero interprets the union as wider. See Hadot 2005, 51 and 265–266.

<sup>703</sup> Cic. *de or.* 1,9,1.

<sup>704</sup> Cic. *de or.* 3,127.

<sup>705</sup> Cic. *de or.* 1,10: *Quis musicis, quis huic studio litterarum, quod profitentur ei, qui grammatici vocantur, penitus se dedit, quin omnem illarum artium paene infinitam vim et materiem scientia et cognitione comprehenderit?*

their Latin appellation is not thoroughly established, the grammarians' line of work is commonly known. At this point, Cicero apparently feels that he has given enough examples of how he would define a professional, and does not give a definition of the grammarian. Instead, he gives a definition of the philosopher, after which he goes straight to defining the orator.<sup>706</sup> What is included in the art of grammar becomes explicit as Cicero discusses the importance of systematic thinking which is offered by the "art of the philosophers". This means the art of dialectic, which is not explicitly named in the passage; what Cicero is referring to nevertheless becomes clear when he mentions the relevant terminology: *genus, species, partes, definitio*.<sup>707</sup> In this discussion, grammar is mentioned among the other arts: geometry, music, astrology, and rhetoric.

Omnia fere, quae sunt conclusa nunc artibus, dispersa et dissipata quondam fuerunt; -- in grammaticis poetarum pertractatio, historiarum cognitio, verborum interpretatio, pronuntiandi quidam sonus --.<sup>708</sup>

Nearly all the things that are now included in the arts were once without order or correlation; -- in grammar, the detailed examination of poets, the acquaintance with histories, the explanation of words, and the particular sound in pronunciation --.

Cicero is not primarily concerned with the elements included in the arts but with the indispensability of the philosopher's ability: every existing *ars*, as a system of organized knowledge, owes its existence to dialectic. Cicero situates this issue in a work concerning oratory, not grammar, and the list of what is included in *grammaticis* (cf. γραμματικά, 'grammatical things') is not a result of dialectical systematization, *partitio* or *divisio*; unlike the case of Varro, where it is quite probable that the definitory notions of the art of grammar are originally from a treatise dedicated to the subject. Cicero's list of what belongs to grammar is something of a more tentative nature. The most obvious of these is *pronuntiandi quidam sonus*, amounting to the Varronian *lectio* and to the Dionysian ἀνά-

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<sup>706</sup> Cic. *de or.* 2,213. Cicero brings the two professions – grammarian and rhetorician – together in a passage of *Orator* (93), where he proposes that ὑπαλλαγή and μετωνυμία are synonymous; the former term is used by rhetoricians and the latter by grammarians (*grammatici*).

<sup>707</sup> Cic. *de or.* 1,188–189. Cicero refers to *dialectici* elsewhere in *De oratore* (1,128) as he lists the many requirements of a good orator: *oratore autem acumen dialecticorum, sententiae philosophorum, verba prope poetarum, memoria iuris consultorum, vox tragoedorum, gestus paene summorum actorum est requirendus*. As *grammaticus*, also *dialecticus* is still a term that Cicero seems to place in quotes, so to speak (*de or.* 2,111): *Ambiguorum autem cum plura genera sunt, quae mihi videntur ei melius nosse, qui dialectici appellantur, hi autem nostri ignorare --*.

<sup>708</sup> *de or.* 1,187.

γνωσις ἐντριβῆς κατὰ προσωδίαν, “experienced reading with regard for prosody”. *Verborum interpretatio* and *historiarum cognitio* seem to be assimilated to the *enarratio* part: explanation of words and references to times, places and people. Although listed first, *poetarum pertractatio* must be based on the three other parts. The detailed examination of poets, presupposing a thorough knowledge of them, also refers to judgements consisting of the classification and assessment of the authenticity of texts, along with emendation. What Cicero – like Varro – has in mind is grammatical work that he typically ascribes to Aristarchus: textual criticism.<sup>709</sup>

Questions that now appear as more or less grammatical were definitely among Cicero’s interests: on numerous occasions, especially in his correspondence and in the philosophical texts, he takes a stand on issues of language and style; including such matters as neologisms, archaisms, etymologies, pronunciation, and the correct use of words (including translations).<sup>710</sup> These, for Cicero, were very much a matter of rhetoric. A lengthy section in the *Orator* (149–170), in which Cicero discusses hiatus and contractions, analogy and anomaly, archaisms and composition, is introduced with the comment that there is really not much of distinction in *teaching* these matters; what has dignity and honour is *using* one’s knowledge of such matters. All of these topics are discussed from the rhetorician’s point of view: how to say what has to be said in the most elegant way.

Ten years after *De oratore*, Cicero reminds his readers in *De finibus bonorum et malorum* (45 BCE) that the originally Greek words for philosophy, rhetoric, dialectic, grammar, geometry, and music were well established in Latin

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<sup>709</sup> *Piso* 73,2 (*Verum tamen, quoniam te non Aristarchum, sed Phalarin grammaticum habemus, qui non notam apponas ad malum versum, sed poetam armis persequare --*); *fam.* 3,11,5 (*ut enim Aristarchus Homeri versus negat quem non probat, sic tu (libet enim mihi iocari), quod disertum non erit, ne putaris meum*); 9,10,1 (*profert alter, opinor, duobus versiculis expensum Niciae, alter Aristarchus hos ὀβελίξει; ego tamquam criticus antiquus iudicaturus sum utrum sint τοῦ ποιητοῦ ἢ παρεμβεβλημένοι*); *Att.* 1,14,3 (*totum hunc locum, quem ego varie meis orationibus, quarum tu Aristarchus es, soleo pingere, de flamma, de ferro (nosti illas ληκύθους), valde graviter pertexuit*). Also in *fam.* 9,16,4 Cicero refers to Servius Clodius (see section 4.1) as a Plautine textual critic.

<sup>710</sup> For instance, Cicero has a topos of accusing someone of neologisms as well as of other crimes: *Planc.* 30 (one word only: *bimaritus*, no discussion); *Phil.* 13,43 (*piissimus*). He also discusses neologisms in his writings on the philosophy of science (*fin.* 3,3–5; *Acad.* 1,24–6) with the conclusion that the creation of new terminology for the needs of the arts is acceptable; etymologies *nat. deor.* 2 passim; correct use of words: 3,9–11; discussion of the Greek word *πάθη* and its Latin equivalent *perturbatio* *Tusc.* 3,20; *invidere* / *invidia* and their uses (the same theme is touched upon in *Tusc.* 4,16); *Att.* 13,21,3. That the word *inhibere* cannot be used to render the Greek word *ἐπιτοχή*; *fam.* 16,17: Cicero criticizes Tiro for wrongly using the word *fideliter*; the correct form of the word *Pireus* is discussed in *Att.* 7,3,10. See Morillon 1978.



by previous generations, and there is no need to render them in a more Latinate form.<sup>711</sup> At this point, Cicero gives full endorsement for the Greek loan-word *grammatica* – although, he himself used it rarely, preferring *litterae*, *cognitio litterarum*,<sup>712</sup> or, as in the *Partitiones oratoriae* (about 46 BCE), *studia litterarum*. On the other hand, he customarily refers to professional men of letters as *grammatici*.<sup>713</sup> In the *Partitiones oratoriae* Cicero emphasizes the propaedeutic status of the arts, presenting dialectic and rhetoric as virtue and as “servants and companions of wisdom” (*ministrae comitesque sapientiae*). The other “proper studies and arts” are propaedeutic for virtue, while virtues are the way to wisdom. The *studia litterarum* are mentioned among these arts, as are mathematical studies and the practical arts of riding, hunting, and fencing.<sup>714</sup>

Cicero probably felt that general education of the upper classes was something of a standard: it included the necessary or recommended education of a freeborn man who aspired to a career in the service of public life. However, it is clear that in drawing up his lists he was not aiming at a specific number of arts.<sup>715</sup> The system of the seven *artes liberales* as we commonly conceive it was not canonized until Late Antiquity, when the seven liberal arts were defined as consisting of grammar, dialectic, rhetoric, geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, and music. *Artes liberales* is used as a technical term from the fifth–sixth century onwards after its codification by the encyclopaedists, perhaps most significantly by Isidore of Seville. In addition to *artes* and *disciplinae*, the arts are also referred to as *doctrinae*, *scientiae*, and *studia* in Latin literature.<sup>716</sup> As we have seen, Varro too formulated his own list of the arts, in the form of a nine-book work on *Disciplinae*.<sup>717</sup>

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<sup>711</sup> Cic. *fin.* 3,5: *quamquam ea verba, quibus instituto veterum utimur pro Latinis, ut ipsa, philosophia, ut rhetorica, dialectica, grammatica, geometria, musica, quamquam Latine ea dici poterant, tamen, quoniam usu percepta sunt, nostra ducamus.*

<sup>712</sup> Burton 2005, 146.

<sup>713</sup> For example *or.* 72; 94; *Tusc.* 2,12,5; *div.* 1,34,17; *Att.* 7,3,10.

<sup>714</sup> Cic. *part.* 78–80. Cicero says (*part.* 139) that he drew his ideas of the work ‘from that middle Academy of ours’: *Expositae sunt tibi omnes oratoriae partitiones, quae quidem e media illa nostra Academia effloruerunt.* His idea of the way to wisdom, or philosophy, reflects the views of the Middle Academy rather than actual educational practice – views that Cicero had absorbed while studying under Antiochus of Ascalon in Athens. Plutarch testifies to Cicero’s studies in Athens (*Cic.* 4,1–4).

<sup>715</sup> Hadot 2005, 52.

<sup>716</sup> See Bovey 2003, 65–66. It has been demonstrated by E. Menuet-Guildbaud (1994, 85) that Cicero’s texts show a complementarity in the relationship between the two terms: *ars* generally refers to a particular science, *disciplina* to the contents of education and the subject matter of the discipline that is taught (cf. *discere*).

<sup>717</sup> Vitruvius (80–70 BCE – after c. 15 BCE), whose treatise *De architectura* was published in the mid-20s BCE, used the term *encyclios disciplina* to cover a loose collection of arts that were necessary from his viewpoint, that is, in the education of an architect, including such studies

Cicero does not mention the non-philological aspect of grammar in his list of grammar's contents. However, he perceived correct language as a central domain of the grammarians: *ut enim si grammaticum se professus quispiam barbare loquatur – hoc turpior sit, quod in eo ipso peccet, cuius profitetur scientiam;*<sup>718</sup> it is most shameful to err in the very science one claims to profess, and such an error for a grammarian would be to speak barbarously. Correct language, of course, is highly relevant for an orator; Quintilian uses Cicero as a shield in his defence of the study of grammar in the *Institutio oratoria*, fearing that an aspiring orator might find its various questions trivial. He reminds readers that in grammar, only superfluous questions are harmful. He makes an inspiring example of Cicero, who devoted much attention to the art of grammar and demanded absolute correctness of speech from his son.<sup>719</sup> In *De oratore* (3,48) learning correct Latin is approached from a practical viewpoint. For this, there are rules (*praecepta Latine loquendi*), but Cicero does not consider it necessary to go over them in this context (*rationem non arbitror exspectari a me puri dilucidique sermonis*).<sup>720</sup> The rules are learned through education from boyhood, and are further nourished by a close acquaintance with letters and by systematic study (*subtilior cognitio ac ratio litterarum*). The use of the term *ratio* suggests that it is not just about reading: getting to know letters follows the precepts of an organized art. If not *ratio*, there should be *consuetudo* to observe: another thing that can nourish the learning of correct Latin is the practice of daily conversation within the family circle (*praecepta Latine loquendi... cognitio ac ratio litterarum alit aut consuetudo sermonis cotidiani ac domestici*). Finally, good language is confirmed by books and by reading old orators and poets (*libri confirmant et lectio veterum oratorum et poetarum*). The criteria for correct language suggested by Cicero are *ratio*, *consue-*

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as arithmetic, geometry, algebra, music, philosophy, and astronomy (Vitr. 1,1,12ff.). He compared general education to a body that is put together from its members, referring to the unity of the arts: all the arts interact, their theoretical principles are similar, and this makes profound learning possible (6pr.,4). These are the earliest references to the general studies as 'encyclical'. Diogenes Laertius (6,27–28; 6,73; 7,32; 7,129) and Athenaeus (13,588a) use the term ἐγκύκλιος παιδεία in the context of Zeno, Chrysippus and Epicurus. However, this is not evidence of its use in the times of those philosophers (Joyal, McDougall and Yardley 2009, 127). See also ps.-Plutarch, *de lib.* 7c; Strabo 1,1,22.

<sup>718</sup> Cic. *Tusc.* 2,12.

<sup>719</sup> Quint. *inst.* 1,7,34: *Sed nihil ex grammaticae nocuerit nisi quod superuacuum est. An ideo minor est M. Tullius orator quod idem artis huius diligentissimus fuit et in filio, ut epistulis apparet, recte loquendi asper quoque exactor?* The superfluous questions of grammar, namely those that exceed the 'grammatical' ones of reading and writing, are also the object of disparagement in Sextus Empiricus' rebuttal of the grammarians (*math.* 1,54), and according to Galen (*sect.* 76,9–17), superfluousness is one of the basic refutations of those who criticize the arts; see section 3.5.

<sup>720</sup> Cic. *de or.* 3,38.

*tudo* and (although the concept is not mentioned in this passage) *auctoritas*, for which a familiarity with literature gives licence. It is Cicero's own education that is perhaps behind this view: he became the pre-eminent master of the Latin language presumably under the tutelage of the poet Archias, whom he also later defended in court.<sup>721</sup>

What Cicero did not discuss in *De oratore*, Caesar took up in his *De analogia*, dedicated to Cicero.<sup>722</sup> In writing this manual for speaking in a convincing manner, the main principles of which were semantic clarity and rational morphology, Caesar's intention was to propose a reform of the language.<sup>723</sup> In *Brutus*, Cicero shows that he is up to date on the question of correct language when he comments on this contribution to language study: *Caesar autem rationem adhibens consuetudinem vitiosam et corruptam pura et incorrupta consuetudine emendat.*<sup>724</sup> Caesar used reason and corrected bad and corrupt usage with pure and incorrupt usage. He did not absolutely prefer analogy to usage: he preferred usage that was analogical, 'pure' usage, always aiming at clear and effective speech.<sup>725</sup> Thus *ratio* alone does not suffice as a means of finding the correct form, and it is in fact erroneous to juxtapose *ratio* and *consuetudo* in opposition, as competing criteria.<sup>726</sup> A sharp contradiction and rivalry between *ratio* and *consuetudo* were alien to Cicero as well.

Cicero wrote as someone with a thorough training in Greek and Latin grammar and rhetoric. He saw *grammatica* as a well-established art, organized with the help of dialectical tools such as *genus*, *species*, *partes* and *definitio*. The grammarians' line of work was agreed to consist of textual criticism and the overall interpretation of literature; Varro's definitory notions follow the same idea. Cicero does not refer to grammarians as 'guardians of language', although indirectly they are just that: they are in charge of the reliability of *auctoritas*, which Cicero suggests as one criterion for correct language. As for the other criteria, *ratio* and *consuetudo*, Cicero does not mention grammarians, and the most prominent author on these subjects was not indeed a grammarian, but Caesar.

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<sup>721</sup> Cic. *pro Archia oratio*; see Clarke 1968. Cicero's memories of his school-days were apparently happy; see for example *Planc.* 81,1–4.

<sup>722</sup> See Willi (2010, 231) for the relationship between Cicero's *De oratore* and Caesar's *De analogia*.

<sup>723</sup> Garcea 2012, 28.

<sup>724</sup> Cic. *Brut.* 261.

<sup>725</sup> Garcea 2012, 104.

<sup>726</sup> This notion resembles the idea in the definition of Hellenism by the Stoic Diogenes of Babylon, in which two kinds of usage are suggested, 'technical' and 'arbitrary' (Diog. Laert. 7,59): Ἑλληνισμὸς μὲν οὖν ἐστὶ φράσις ἀδιάπτωτος ἐν τῇ τεχνικῇ καὶ μὴ εἰκαία συνηθεία; see section 2.4.

#### 4.5 Tyrannion's definition of γραμματική

From the point of view of this thesis, the grammarian known as Tyrannion<sup>727</sup> is the most interesting of the Greek grammarians active in Rome in the first century BCE: we have a definition of grammar by him. Tyrannion is connected to Cicero, whose nephew was Tyrannion's student, and Tyrannion seems to have been a familiar figure in Cicero's household. Tyrannion was also put in charge of organizing Cicero's book collection in Antium.<sup>728</sup> Both Tyrannion and his pupil Diocles (sometimes referred to as Tyrannion the Elder and the Younger respectively) survive only in fragments, and their work cannot be fully distinguished due to the confusion in the *Suda* article that concerns them.<sup>729</sup> Tyrannion the Elder was originally a prisoner in the Second Mithridatic War, when Lucullus took his hometown Amisus in Pontus in 71 BCE. He was soon given his freedom, and once relocated in Rome it did not take him long to rise to the favour of such illustrious men as Pompey, Caesar and Cato. He had a successful career as a grammarian, and is said to have done very well for himself both financially and socially.<sup>730</sup> Accordingly, it is conceivable that it is partly due to Tyrannion's work that Alexandrian scholarship became known and popular in Rome.<sup>731</sup>

Tyrannion's definition is preserved in the Scholia to Dionysius Thrax:

Ἔτι δεῖ τὸν ὄρον καὶ τοῖς μὴ πάνυ λογίοις δηλοῦν, τίνος ἐστὶν ὁ ὄρος --. Ὡστε οὐκ ὀρθῶς ὠρίσατο Τυραννίων τὴν γραμματικὴν, εἰπὼν "γραμματικὴ ἐστὶ θεωρία μιμήσεως". οὐ μόνον γὰρ περὶ μίμησιν καταγίνεται, ἀλλὰ καὶ περὶ λέξεις μὴ ἐχούσας μίμησιν.<sup>732</sup>

Besides that, the definition must also make clear to the less learned what it is a definition of --. Thereby Tyrannion did not define grammar correctly when he said "grammar is contemplation of imitation"; it does not concern imitation alone but also expressions without imitation.

According to the *Suda* (τ 1184), Tyrannion's teacher was Dionysius Thrax. This need not be taken literally, but Dionysius did teach in Rhodes,<sup>733</sup> where Tyrann-

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<sup>727</sup> *RE s.v.* Tyrannion [2]; Pfeiffer 1968, 272–273.

<sup>728</sup> *Cic. Att.* 4,4a; *ad Quint. fr.* 2,4; Rawson 1985, 40–43 passim.

<sup>729</sup> Dickey 2007, 85. The information concerning Tyrannion and Diocles is from consecutive articles in the *Suda* (τ 1184 and 1185).

<sup>730</sup> *Cic. ad Quint. fr.* 2,4,2; Barnes 1997a, 17.

<sup>731</sup> Dickey 2007, 7.

<sup>732</sup> Schol. D.T. GG1.3 121,11–18 = frg. 57 Haas.

<sup>733</sup> For example Strabo 14,2,13; Varro *GRF* frg. 282; *Suda* δ 1172. See Kemp (1996, 308) for discussion.

nion was studying, and it is thus very likely that Tyrannion was familiar with Dionysius' work. It is however not necessarily the case that Tyrannion was familiar with Dionysius' grammatical manual, and indeed the definitions of γραμματική<sup>734</sup> by the two grammarians bear no resemblance to each other. As we have seen, the problems involved in Dionysius' definition were discussed by grammarians of the late second century and first century BCE; moreover, in all probability several decades elapsed between the definitions of grammar by Dionysius and Tyrannion. By the time of Tyrannion's definition he was a grammarian of some repute himself, and it is thus no wonder that he produced an original definition. Not only is Tyrannion's definition very different from that of Dionysius; it also differs greatly from all other definitions of grammar we know of. What is unique is that Tyrannion uses the word θεωρία in his definition, a word heavily loaded with ancient divine meanings, and used originally of participation in religious festivals.<sup>735</sup> In a letter to Atticus dated in 45 BCE, Cicero happens to use the same word in reference to Tyrannion's work. Atticus had read a book by Tyrannion and apparently enjoyed it immensely, and Cicero responds: *amo enim πάντα φιλειδήμονα teque istam tam tenuem θεωρίαν tam valde admiratum esse gaudeo*.<sup>736</sup> The subject of this treatise is not mentioned, and *tenuis* θεωρία, 'narrow examination' leaves room for speculation: it could refer to Homeric prosody, to the Roman dialect, or to orthography, all subjects we know (according to the information given in the *Suda*) Tyrannion wrote about. One possibility is the treatise called Περί μερισμοῦ τῶν τοῦ λόγου μερῶν, which concerned the division of the 'parts of speech'; it is here that the term τὰ μέρη τοῦ λόγου is first attested in a grammatical context. However, Cicero's play on the words 'acute' and 'grave' in the final sentence of this discussion (*Sed, quaeso, quid ex ista acuta et gravi refertur ad τέλος?*) suggests that the book he and Atticus were referring to was most probably a work concerning accents.

The definition of grammar attributed to Tyrannion is generally assumed to originate in the Περί μερισμοῦ τῶν τοῦ λόγου μερῶν.<sup>737</sup> As we do not know if Tyrannion ever wrote a general grammatical manual, like for example the Περί γραμματικῆς of Asclepiades of Myrlea, this seems plausible. However, Cicero's use of the word θεωρία referring to a treatise on accents may give us some cause to speculate on the possibility that Tyrannion's definition occurs in the treatise Cicero and Atticus discuss in their correspondence. The provenance of Tyrannion's definition remains unsolved. The following, however, is worth

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<sup>734</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,57,7–9: γραμματικὴ ἐστὶν ἐμπειρία ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πλεῖστον τῶν παρὰ ποιηταῖς τε καὶ συγγραφεῦσι λεγομένων ("grammar is experience for the most part of what is said in the writings of poets and prose-writers").

<sup>735</sup> *LSJ* s.v. θεωρία; see also Nightingale 2004.

<sup>736</sup> Cic. *Att.* 12,6,2.

<sup>737</sup> See Haas 1977, 168.

noting: in Tyrannion's time, a treatise on accents was probably just as good a forum for defining γραμματική as one on the classification of the parts of speech. Indeed, within the art of grammar the study of the parts of speech was a relative newcomer compared to the study of accentuation, which had already been a major concern of the Alexandrian grammarians. Tyrannion's Περί μερισμοῦ τῶν τοῦ λόγου μερῶν was dedicated to partition, the assignment of words to their proper class.<sup>738</sup> In the first book of Sextus Empiricus' *Adversus mathematicos*, ultimately depending on the work Περί γραμματικῆς by Asclepiades of Myrlea, μερισμός is explained as consisting of scansion and the identification of the parts of speech in the text. A line written continuously had to be divided both into metrical feet and into meaningful units, words. These were further classified according to certain principles. What these principles were remains unclear, but Sextus reports a few of the accidents of the noun.<sup>739</sup> Tyrannion's parts of speech included nouns. According to the *Suda*, proper nouns are indivisible (or individual); common nouns can form a base for derivatives, while participles cannot (ἄτομα μὲν εἶναι τὰ κύρια ὀνόματα, θεματικά δὲ τὰ προσηγορικά, ἀθέματα δὲ τὰ μετοχικά).<sup>740</sup> Tyrannion apparently understands the participle as a subtype of the noun, which has been interpreted by Matthaios (2002, 194) as a sign of Stoic influence. Apollonius cites Tyrannion for his definition of the pronoun. This definition – also probably from the Περί μερισμοῦ τῶν τοῦ λόγου μερῶν<sup>741</sup> – is based on purely semantic features: the pronoun is defined as representing a specific person.<sup>742</sup> Obviously, these notions concerning proper nouns, common nouns and participles in the *Suda* are not actual definitions of those parts of speech, merely some features of Tyrannion's original definitions. Tyrannion's treatise was devoted to the subject of assigning words to their proper class, which means that a more extensive treatment could be expected than for example in Asclepiades' general grammatical manual.

The Scholiast who cites Tyrannion's definition gives it as an example of an invalid definition – if one should ask “what is the contemplation of imitation”, the correct answer would not necessarily be found. The definition is too

<sup>738</sup> Apollonius Dyscolus also used the word μερισμός or the corresponding verb μερίζω: *pron.* GG2.1 67,6; *adv.* GG2.1 144,11; *constr.* GG2.2 150,15; 335,11. See also Sluiter 1990, 70 and 106–107.

<sup>739</sup> See section 3.7.

<sup>740</sup> *Suda* τ 1185 = frg. 56 Haas.

<sup>741</sup> Haas 1977, 169.

<sup>742</sup> *Ap. Dysc. pron.* GG2.1 4,1–2 = frg. 58 Haas. Εἰ τὰ ὠρισμένα σεσημείωται, αἱ δὲ ἀντανυμῖαι ὠρισμένα πρόσωπα παριστᾶσιν, οὐκ ἀπιθάνως ὁ Τυραννίων σημειώσεις αὐτὰς ἐκάλεσεν. Το Apollonius, this definition does not seem sufficient, because it lacks the accidents (GG2.1 4,3–4): Ἄλλ' ἴσως ἔλλειπές τὸ τοιοῦτον· οὐδὲν γὰρ τῶν παρακολουθούτων αὐταῖς παρίστησιν.

frugal.<sup>743</sup> The problem is the word μίμησις as the object of study. What does the Scholiast mean by this? In the *Poetica* (1447a13–16), Aristotle connects μίμησις specifically with poetry: epic, tragedy, comedy, dithyramb and lyric. In all probability, it is this Aristotelian concept that is behind Tyrannion’s choice of word.<sup>744</sup> Both Strabo and Plutarch attest to Tyrannion’s familiarity with Aristotle’s writings; according to their report, Tyrannion worked with the Aristotelian texts brought from Athens to Rome by Sulla.<sup>745</sup> This work may have consisted mainly of improving the physical state of the manuscripts.<sup>746</sup> The rearranging of Cicero’s library took place in the mid-50s, and there are no indications that Tyrannion was acquainted with the Aristotelian writings before that. It is therefore probable that this occurred at quite a late date, after 45 BCE. According to Plutarch, the Aristotelian texts were handed by Tyrannion to Andronicus of Rhodes, who published them. This probably took place after Cicero’s death; Cicero, who was otherwise closely engaged with Peripatetic philosophy, did not know a Roman edition of Aristotle. The terminus ante quem for the work on Aristotle’s writings is marked by Tyrannion’s death, which, according to the *Suda* (τ 1184), took place around 25 BCE.<sup>747</sup>

It is unlikely that the use of the word μίμησις in Tyrannion’s definition of γραμματική is a coincidence: there is not a single other definition or description of grammar that we know of in which the concept of μίμησις occurs. According to Aristotle (*phys.* 199a8–20), art (τέχνη) imitates nature (φύσις), and as grammar observes the products of another art, namely the art of poetry, its object of study is imitation.<sup>748</sup> Furthermore, in the *Rhetorica* Aristotle makes the point that words are imitation, meaning that language is imitation: τὰ γὰρ ὀνόματα μιμήματα ἐστίν.<sup>749</sup> Tyrannion’s object for θεωρία seems a most appropriate one for a grammarian. It is also likely that the Scholiast understood Tyrannion’s definition in Aristotelian terms as well, and wanted to point out that, as explic-

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<sup>743</sup> The Scholiast cites a Stoic definition of the sun as an example of equally unclear definition (GG1.3 121,11–16); some of the Stoics apparently supported brevity as a criterion of a good definition. See section 4.3.1.

<sup>744</sup> Haas (1977, 168) is certain about Aristotle’s influence in Tyrannion’s definition.

<sup>745</sup> Strabo 13,1,54; Plut. *Sulla* 26.

<sup>746</sup> Hatzimichali 2013, 16.

<sup>747</sup> On the dating of Tyrannion’s working with the Aristotelian corpus: Barnes 1997a, 17–19, 24.

<sup>748</sup> Τέχνη here seems to refer especially to the productive arts; Aristotle argues that art, in some cases, completes what nature cannot complete, and in other cases imitates nature (*phys.* 199a15–17: ὅλως δὲ ἡ τέχνη τὰ μὲν ἐπιτελεῖ ἃ ἡ φύσις ἀδυνατεῖ ἀπεργάσασθαι, τὰ δὲ μιμεῖται).

<sup>749</sup> *Ar. rhet.* 1404a21; Haas 1977, 168–169.

itly said in Dionysius' definition, γραμματική concerns prose-writers as well as poets.<sup>750</sup>

The term θεωρία in Tyrannion's definition needs to be investigated a little further. Plato was the first to conceptualize the philosophical θεωρία, and it receives its most complete discussion in *Respublica* 5–7: Plato's 'theory' is an intellectual seeing, transformed into practical wisdom, which forms the basis for (political) activity. Aristotle discussed θεωρία in the *Protrepticus*, one of his exoteric treatises that were highly influential in Antiquity. More detailed analyses of θεωρία are found in the *Ethica Nicomachea* and the *Metaphysica*. In contrast with Plato's idea of θεωρία, Aristotle claims that θεωρία cannot be presumed to be useful. The attributes of a useful activity would be 'practical' (πρακτικόν) or 'productive' (ποιητικόν), whereas θεωρία is neither. However, in this case, 'uselessness' does not mean anything derogatory; on the contrary, θεωρία is valuable for its own sake.<sup>751</sup> Aristotle contrasts τέχνη and θεωρία. Both productivity and practicality belong to the former, while the latter is free of these features. He regards θεωρία as the most self-sufficient and leisurely of activities, and this indeed bears socio-cultural connotations, as it seems to be an activity suitable for the noble class.<sup>752</sup> If Tyrannion's definition of γραμματική as a whole indeed reflects Aristotelian ideas, grammar is thus raised to a very high level: it suggests that in its study of imitation, it is valuable for its own sake. It cannot be denied that there are productive and practical aspects to grammar, such as orthography. However, the concept of θεωρία in Aristotle's *Protrepticus* is not consistent. He still retains certain Platonic ideas as to θεωρία forming a potential basis for productive action, even though he also emphasizes its status as separate and superior to productive and practical activities.<sup>753</sup> There is a strong element of prestige in the word θεωρία: in Aristotle's division of the sciences (*metaph.* 1025b19ff.) into the 'theoretical' (θεωρητική), the 'practical' (πρακτική) and the 'productive', (ποιητική), the theoretical sciences of physics, mathematics and theology (above all) are preferable to the others.

Around the time Cicero used the word θεωρία in the above-mentioned letter to Atticus, he also presented a defence of θεωρία in the fifth book of his

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<sup>750</sup> In Haas' opinion (1977, 169), the Scholiast misinterprets μίμησις as onomatopoeia and then criticizes the definition because the imitative nature of certain words cannot be the object of study for grammar. I find this explanation unlikely; a wider interpretation of the Scholiast's basis for criticism seems justified.

<sup>751</sup> For example, *Ar. eth. Nic.* 1177b1–15.

<sup>752</sup> *Ar. eth. Nic.* 1177a25ff.; Nightingale 2004, 209.

<sup>753</sup> *Ar. protr. frg.* 44; Nightingale 2004, 197ff.



philosophical work *De finibus* (45 BCE).<sup>754</sup> In this dialogue, Cicero represents the views of the Academic Sceptic Carneades, while the views of Antiochus of Ascalon are represented by Piso. Antiochus' views are advertised as Peripatetic. The discussion from 5,48 onwards is about the Peripatetic idea of *θεωρία* or *contemplatio*.<sup>755</sup> Antiochus/Piso argues that human beings share a natural inquisitiveness that makes them want to know things for the sake of knowledge as such. The exemplary figures who have devoted themselves to theoretical activity are Archimedes, Aristoxenus, Aristophanes, Pythagoras, Plato, and Democritus: everything they have achieved has been "for the love of learning" (*propter discendi cupiditatem*). Aristophanes' art, *litterae*, is here presented side by side with the mathematical sciences, music, astronomy, and philosophy, the fields represented by the other theorists mentioned.<sup>756</sup> It is inconceivable that these scholars could have been driven to achieve what they did by any external motivation; therefore high-level scholarship is understood as *θεωρία*. Cicero's use of this word to describe Tyrannion's work shows that he values it as a work by someone who has dedicated himself to his art, the same art as practiced by Aristophanes.<sup>757</sup>

The word *θεωρία* is not commonly used in grammatical contexts, but Philo of Alexandria uses it in relation to encyclical studies: grammar (*γραμματική*), geometry (*γεωμετρία*), astronomy (*ἀστρονομία*), rhetoric (*ῥητορική*) and music (*μουσική*) and all other forms of rational contemplation (*λογική θεωρία*), that are suitable as an introduction to virtue.<sup>758</sup> Philo of Alexandria was influ-

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<sup>754</sup> It seems possible that as the concept of *θεωρία* was a topical one in Cicero's work in the 40s, Tyrannion might have been influenced by Cicero's ideas and have adopted the term from him.

<sup>755</sup> See Tsouni 2012, 132ff.

<sup>756</sup> Cic. *fin.* 5,49–50: *Atque omnia quidem scire, cuiuscumque modi sint, cupere curiosorum, duci vero maiorum rerum contemplatione ad cupiditatem scientiae summorum virorum est putandum. quem enim ardorem studii censetis fuisse in Archimede, qui dum in pulvere quaedam describit attentius, ne patriam <quidem> captam esse senserit? quantum Aristoxeni ingenium consumptum videmus in musicis? quo studio Aristophanem putamus aetatem in litteris duxisse? quid de Pythagora? quid de Platone aut de Democrito loquar? a quibus propter discendi cupiditatem videmus ultimas terras esse peragratas. quae qui non vident, nihil umquam magnum ac cognitione dignum amaverunt.*

<sup>757</sup> Another example of the respect Cicero showed for Tyrannion and his ideas can be seen in a letter to Atticus (2,6,1, dated 59 BCE). Here Cicero complains about his work on geography, which is not going well: *etenim γεωγραφικὰ quae constitueram magnum opus est. ita valde Eratosthenes, quem mihi proposueram, a Serapione et ab Hipparcho reprehenditur. quid censes si Tyrannio accesserit* ("The geographical work I had planned is a big undertaking. Serapion and Hipparchus strongly criticize Eratosthenes, whom I had assumed as my authority. What do you think would happen should Tyrannion enter the project?")? Tyrannion, who was also Strabo's teacher, seems to have been an authority on this special field as well, but probably in relation to geography as a literary genre rather than as a field of study.

<sup>758</sup> Philo *congr.* 11.

enced by the Stoics; as already noted (page 159), some Stoic traits have been detected in Tyrannion's theory of the parts of speech, but we do not know whether the Stoics employed the concept of θεωρία. It seems more likely that Philo is using θεωρία to represent a simple way of looking at arts: there are arts that take place mostly in the heads of their practitioners, and there are others that mainly consist of doing something concrete. The adjective θεωρητική is found in some speculations on the nature of τέχνη γραμματική. According to the later Stoic philosopher Epictetus (c. 55–135 CE), the study of literature is theoretical in the sense of a 'contemplative eyeing' insofar as it diagnoses literature (*diss.* 1,1,1): ἡ γραμματικὴ μέχρι τίνος κέκτηται τὸ θεωρητικόν; μέχρι τοῦ διαγνῶναι τὰ γράμματα. For Epictetus, γραμματικὴ was only partially "theoretical", whereas Tyrannion defines the whole art as θεωρία. By διαγνῶναι τὰ γράμματα Epictetus may in fact mean the critical assessment of literature.<sup>759</sup>

It is likely that Tyrannion was aware of the discussion provoked by Dionysius' definition. It may be that Tyrannion suggested the status of a highly scientific art for γραμματικὴ, but at the least he appears to be seeking prestige from Aristotelian terminology, and in so doing he implies a rational background for his art. Tyrannion did not succeed in inserting the term θεωρία into the grammatical tradition; the term μίμησις did not become popular among grammarians either. Nevertheless, this experimentation with a new kind of definition reflects the intellectual activity, as well as the rising self-awareness, of scholars in first-century BCE Rome.

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<sup>759</sup> Likewise a Scholiast to Dionysius Thrax explains the nature of grammar as a τέχνη as being partly theoretical (GG1.3 2,9–14): Ἡς ἀδελφὴ ἐστὶν ἡ γραμματικὴ, περὶ ἧς τὰ νῦν πρόκειται λέγειν· καὶ αὐτὴ γὰρ τοῦ μικτοῦ εἶδους ἐστίν· ὅταν <μὲν> γὰρ τὰς ἱστορίας διηγῆται τοῖς νέοις, κοινωνεῖ τῷ θεωρητικῷ, ὅταν δὲ κάλαμον λαβοῦσα στίζει καὶ διορθῶται τὰς μὴ εὖ ἐχούσας τῶν λέξεων, τῷ πρακτικῷ, τῷ δὲ ποιητικῷ, ὅταν τὴν ὕλην τῶν διαλελυμένων λέξεων τέχνη καὶ μέτρῳ συναρμόσῃ καὶ τέλειον στίχον ἀπεργάσῃται ("Its [*i.e.* medicine's] sister is grammar, which will now be discussed: it also is of the mixed kind. When it explains histories to young men, it deals with the theoretical kind; when taking a reed-pen it marks and corrects the things in speech that are not expressed well it deals with the practical kind; the productive kind is dealt with when it harmonizes the material of a dispersed expression and finishes the end of the verse with expertise and meter"). The theoretical aspect of grammar is understood by the Scholiast as arising out of the didactic situation: when there is nothing but explaining the subject matter – something that cannot be approached technically – grammar is theoretical.

#### 4.6 Dionysius of Halicarnassus and γραμματική

Tyrannion's activities in Rome were coming to a close around the time Dionysius of Halicarnassus (c. 60 BCE – after 7 BCE) arrived in the city, in 30/29 BCE.<sup>760</sup> Dionysius of Halicarnassus was a historian, rhetorician and literary critic. He did not (at least to our knowledge) contribute to the theory of grammar, but he does contribute to our knowledge of the development of ancient grammar in some of his treatises, most notably by listing the parts of speech and with his observations on grammatical education. Dionysius witnessed an era during which γραμματική enjoyed a high status: he called it φανερωτάτη πασῶν καὶ θαυμασιωτάτη,<sup>761</sup> “the best known and the most remarkable of all the arts”. It was inevitably the one that was best known, because anyone with basic literacy would have attended grammar lessons of some sort. The superlatives attached to grammar reflect its fundamental position in the hierarchy of arts: the study of grammar enables further learning.

In the following, I view some passages in Dionysius' works dealing with grammatical issues. My discussion will be quite brief, concentrating on Dionysius' account of the parts of speech and their place in the curriculum: both subjects reveal something of the art of grammar in relation to the other arts and to society in the early Principate. Both the art of grammar and grammarians are mentioned only a few times in Dionysius' works,<sup>762</sup> and he provides no definition of grammar. Nor is there any discussion of the scientific basis of the expertise, i.e. whether its precepts are based on λόγος or ἐμπειρία.<sup>763</sup> For Dionysius, the scientific foundation of grammar is not relevant.

In *De compositione verborum*, Dionysius of Halicarnassus distinguishes and makes use of nine parts of speech, to which he refers by various expressions.<sup>764</sup> The parts are ὄνομα (noun), ῥῆμα (verb), σύνδεσμος (conjunction), ἄρθρον (article), προσηγορικόν (appellative), ἀντονομασία (pronoun), ἐπίρρημα (ad-

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<sup>760</sup> In his own words (*ant. Rom.* 1,7,2), he arrived in the city at the time Augustus put an end to the civil war.

<sup>761</sup> Dion. Hal. *Dem.* 52.

<sup>762</sup> He notes that Thucydides could only be understood through ‘grammatical explanation’ (*Thuc.* 51,410,15–17): τὰς δὲ αἰνιγματώδεις καὶ δυσκαταμαθήτους καὶ γραμματικῶν ἐξηγήσεων δεομένας καὶ πολὺ τὸ βεβασανισμένον καὶ τὸ σολοικοφανὲς ἐν τοῖς σχηματισμοῖς ἐχούσας μῆτε θαυμάζειν μῆτε μιμῆσθαι. By this remark Dionysius is possibly referring to the commentaries written by Alexandrian grammarians, as suggested by De Jonge (2008, 40). “Pergamene grammarians” are mentioned in *Dinarchus* (1,297,15–16): ἅμα δὲ ὁρῶν οὐδὲν ἀκριβὲς οὔτε Καλλιμάχων οὔτε τοὺς ἐκ Περγάμου γραμματικούς περὶ αὐτοῦ γράψαντας.

<sup>763</sup> This issue has lately been discussed by De Jonge (2008, 256 n. 16 and 382ff).

<sup>764</sup> τὰ τοῦ λόγου μέρη ἢ μόρια, τὰ μέρη ἢ μόρια τῆς λέξεως, τὰ τῆς φράσεως μόρια, στοιχεῖα λέξεως, and στοιχειώδη μόρια; Schenkeveld 1983, 70. Dionysius' use of the terms has been examined in detail by De Jonge (2008, 118–124).

verb), πρόθεσις (preposition), and μετοχή (participle).<sup>765</sup> The origin of the nine-part system is unknown. In *De compositione verborum*, Dionysius lists different ways of distinguishing the parts of speech. In this ‘history chapter’, as the passage is commonly referred to, he mentions the threefold division (nouns, verbs, conjunctions) applied by Aristotle and Theodectes (c. 380–340 BCE), and the fourfold division of their successors and the Stoic philosophers.<sup>766</sup> These are the only names Dionysius mentions: the originators of the rest of the divisions are simply ‘others’. The division into eight parts of speech – identified by Quintilian as that employed by Aristarchus<sup>767</sup> – is not specifically mentioned in Dionysius’ list. This rather suggests that at the time, the eightfold division (which later became canonical) was merely one type of division among many others. According to Dionysius, even more particular divisions had also been made, but he did not consider it necessary to go into them in detail. Ultimately, it is no concern of Dionysius’ how many parts of speech ought to be established. Nine is the number he implicitly suggests, but it is not a definitive or final conclusion. In this respect, Dionysius differs from later historians of linguistics.<sup>768</sup>

It has been suggested that the history of the parts of speech presented by Dionysius of Halicarnassus depends on a grammatical source, possibly Asclepiades of Myrlea’s Περὶ γραμματικῆς.<sup>769</sup> However, Sextus Empiricus does not refer to such a discussion at all. Yet one would assume that an obvious incoherence in grammatical theory, namely that there are various ways of dividing words into categories, would be an issue of interest to Sextus, if such a discussion indeed were found in his source. Dogmatic disagreement among scholars would have offered grounds for sceptical criticism. It is also likely that the actual parts of speech were not discussed at length or in depth by Asclepiades, given the cursory treatment they receive in Sextus Empiricus. There were other topics that were seen as more grammatical (vs. philosophical) at that point in the tradition, most importantly the textual and literary criticism. As far as we can infer from Sextus’ work, Asclepiades has practically no interest in philosophy.

Dionysius does not mention grammarians in his history chapter; he only says that the Stoics were followed in the tradition by οἱ μεταγενέστεροι, ‘those who came later’. What is interesting is that if we had only his description of the matter, we would be unable to say that the parts of speech belonged to the grammarian’s territory at all, only to that of the philosopher. The limits of the fields of study are flexible – in his discussion on γράμματα, Dionysius says that

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<sup>765</sup> Dion. Hal. *comp.* 2.

<sup>766</sup> According to Diogenes Laertius (7,57), the Stoics eventually distinguished as many as six parts.

<sup>767</sup> Quint. *inst.* 1,4,20; see sections 3.2 and 5.4.1.

<sup>768</sup> De Jonge 2008, 177.

<sup>769</sup> De Jonge 2008, 106–107.

the theory (θεωρία) of letters concerns the fields of grammar (γραμματική), metrics (μετρική) and philosophy (φιλοσοφία).<sup>770</sup>

In two separate treatises, the essays *De Demosthene* (52) and *De compositione verborum* (25), Dionysius of Halicarnassus describes the process of learning γραμματική. The former passage (the same one in which γραμματική is also called “the best known and the most remarkable of all the arts”) is fuller:

ταύτην γὰρ ὅταν ἐκμάθωμεν, πρῶτον μὲν τὰ ὀνόματα τῶν στοιχείων τῆς φωνῆς ἀναλαμβάνομεν, ἃ καλεῖται γράμματα. ἔπειτα <τούς> τύπους τε αὐτῶν καὶ δυνάμεις. ὅταν δὲ ταῦτα μάθωμεν, τότε τὰς συλλαβὰς αὐτῶν καὶ τὰ περὶ ταύτας πάθη. κρατήσαντες δὲ τούτων τὰ τοῦ λόγου μόρια, ὀνόματα λέγω καὶ ῥήματα καὶ συνδέσμους, καὶ τὰ συμβεβηκότα τούτοις, συστολάς, ἐκτάσεις, ὀξύτητας, βαρύτητας, γένη, πτώσεις, ἀριθμούς, ἐγκλίσεις, τὰ ἄλλα παραπλήσια τούτοις μυρία ὄντα. ὅταν δὲ τὴν τούτων ἀπάντων ἐπιστήμην περιλάβωμεν, τότε ἀρχόμεθα γράφειν τε καὶ ἀναγινώσκειν, κατὰ συλλαβὴν μὲν καὶ βραδέως τὸ πρῶτον, ἅτε νεαροῦς οὔσης ἔτι τῆς ἕξεως, προβαίνοντος δὲ τοῦ χρόνου καὶ τὸν νοῦν ἰσχυρὸν τῇ ψυχῇ περιτιθέντος ἐκ τῆς συνεχοῦς μελέτης, τότ' ἀπταιστώσ τε καὶ κατὰ πολλὴν εὐπέτειαν, καὶ πᾶν ὃ τι ἂν ἐπιδῶ τις βυβλίον οὐδὲν ἐκείνων ἔτι τῶν πολλῶν θεωρημάτων ἀναπολοῦντες ἅμα νοήσει διερχόμεθα.<sup>771</sup>

When we learn grammar properly, we begin by learning by heart the names of the elements of sound, which we call letters. Then we learn how they are written and what they sound like. When we have discovered this, we learn how they combine to form syllables, and how these behave. Having mastered this, we learn about the parts of speech – I mean nouns, verbs and conjunctions and their properties, the shortening and lengthening of syllables and the high and low pitch of accents; genders, cases, numbers, moods and countless other related things. When we have acquired knowledge on all these things, we then begin to write and read, slowly at first, and syllable by syllable, because our skill is as yet undeveloped. But as time goes on and endows the mind, through constant practice, with a sound understanding we proceed unfalteringly and with great sight, without thumbing through our text-books for all those rules.<sup>772</sup>

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<sup>770</sup> Dion. Hal. *comp.* 14. Mentioning μετρική as separate from γραμματική may have something to do with Aristotle’s remark in the *Poetica* (1456b34–38), that the study of letters and sounds belongs to metrics.

<sup>771</sup> Dion. Hal. *Dem.* 52.

<sup>772</sup> Translation by Usher 1974.

According to Dionysius, reading and writing come only after thorough theoretical knowledge about the properties, or accidents (τὰ συμβεβηκότα) of the parts of speech. He presents this view of the order of learning in two treatises, and in *comp.* 25 he adds “as we all know”, referring to a common knowledge of teaching and learning grammar. Although in practice this seems improbable,<sup>773</sup> it is nevertheless evident that in grammar, hierarchical learning was a fundamental pedagogical assumption. Since Dionysius makes a case of it, it is likely that this model of strictly hierarchical learning was collectively recognized.<sup>774</sup> The syllable-by-syllable system, at least, can be explained to some extent by the reading of poetry,<sup>775</sup> which preceded prose in the curriculum. It is further explained by the fact that, since texts were generally written without spaces to separate the words, in the process of reading the text would appear as a chain not of words but of syllabic units.<sup>776</sup> It does not seem realistic that one should have to learn the complete grammar before beginning to read and write; some principles of the parts of speech and their properties, however, were learnt before moving on.<sup>777</sup> The role of rote learning must also be taken into account: the accidents of the parts of speech may have been learned as a list of features, with no clear connection to their actual meaning. A true understanding of these issues, prior to actual literacy, might have been too much to expect, and what is more, would have been asking for a motivation that may have been hard to come up with. Whatever the case, the importance of these passages in Dionysius lies in the fact that they show that the parts of speech were now indisputably part of the school curriculum, and that despite their history in the hands of philosophers they belong to the domain of the grammarian. As to the role actually played by technical grammar in the study of γραμματική, Dionysius here clearly emphasizes it. But he does so in order to show through the example of γραμματική how learning is built up incrementally from the smallest elements until the art is mastered effortlessly – “without thumbing through our text-books”.<sup>778</sup> Syllables and word classes are best understood as steps that lead to what truly makes γραμματική the “most remarkable art” of all: a deep understanding of what literature has to offer.

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<sup>773</sup> Schenkeveld (1995, 45–46) has doubted this information about the teaching order.

<sup>774</sup> De Jonge 2008, 152.

<sup>775</sup> Hovdhaugen 1991, 382.

<sup>776</sup> Cribiore 2001, 174. ‘Tyranny of the syllables’ and reading readiness in general is discussed at length in Cribiore 2001, 172–178. Quintilian too testifies to the importance of learning the syllables thoroughly before moving on (*inst.* 1,1,30–33).

<sup>777</sup> De Jonge 2008, 115.

<sup>778</sup> Dion. Hal. *Dem.* 52.

## 5. THE ART OF GRAMMAR IN THE FIRST TWO CENTURIES CE

In Chapter 4, I reviewed the development of Latin *grammatica* and grammar practiced in Rome from the early stages until the end of the first century BCE. First-century CE testimonia to the nature of grammar are found in Philo of Alexandria, Seneca, Pliny the Elder, and Quintilian. Finally, there is Aulus Gellius, in whose miscellaneous work *Noctes Atticae* both grammarians and grammatical questions play a significant role. These authors are discussed here in chronological order.

### 5.1 Philo of Alexandria and the boundaries of γραμματική

Alexandria remained the centre of learning throughout the centuries of the Roman Empire, and in the early first century CE we meet the Jewish scholar Philo of Alexandria (c. 20 BCE – c. 50 CE). Philo's philosophical orientation was two-fold: he was a sort of Platonist as well as a Stoic, although the dominant feature in his views was religion.<sup>779</sup> He mentions ἐγκύκλιος παιδεία, education in the liberal arts, in several places in the multitude of his works,<sup>780</sup> and γραμματική is obviously one part of this education. The most comprehensive discussion is found in the treatise *De congressu eruditionis gratia*. The text belongs to the allegories of Laws, a collection of writings in which Philo attempts to merge Judaism and Greek philosophy. Each of the allegories begins with a biblical quotation, after which Philo explicates the allegorical meanings of each sentence, phrase, and word. *De congressu eruditionis gratia* is an interpretation of the story of Abraham, his wife Sarah, and her handmaiden Hagar. Hagar represents lower instruction by the lower encyclical studies (ἡ τῶν μέσων ἐγκυκλίων ἐπιστημῶν μέση παιδεία<sup>781</sup>), something Abraham must first go through before he can turn to Philosophy, represented by Sarah. Philo was not the first to employ this allegory, but previously the dramatis personae were Penelope and her handmaidens.<sup>782</sup>

The theme of encyclical studies as propaedeutic to the study of philosophy is a recurrent one in Philo's works.<sup>783</sup> The overall picture that emerges from Philo's passages is that in speaking of the encyclical disciplines he has a specific set of disciplines in mind. There is variation in the lists of arts, but he never

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<sup>779</sup> Terian 1984, 277–8.

<sup>780</sup> For instance, *leg.* I 14; III 167; III 244; *Cher.* 3–8, 105; *agr.* 9, 18, 136–141; *ebr.* 34–35; *fug.* 183, 187; *somn.* I 205; *Mos.* I 23; *spec.* I 336, II 229–30.

<sup>781</sup> Philo *congr.* 14.

<sup>782</sup> For example the allegory of Penelope and her handmaidens is attributed to Ariston of Chios (Stob. 3,4,109); it is also mentioned by Ps.-Plutarch, *de lib.* 7d.

<sup>783</sup> Philo *congr.* 11–18; 74–76; 142; 148–150. Cf. Seneca (section 5.2).

mentions a discipline that is *not* found in the later canonical liberal arts: grammar, rhetoric, dialectic, geometry, arithmetic, music, and astronomy. Grammar is mentioned in most of the lists (6 out of 8) of encyclical studies in Philo's texts.<sup>784</sup> The most definition-like of these passages describes the two stages of grammar and serves as an introduction to the role of grammar in a cyclical education:

τὸ γε μὴν γράφειν καὶ ἀναγινώσκειν γραμματικῆς τῆς ἀτελεστέρας ἐπάγγελμα, ἣν παρατρέποντές τινες γραμματιστικὴν καλοῦσι, τῆς δὲ τελειότερας ἀνάπτυξις τῶν παρὰ ποιηταῖς τε καὶ συγγραφεῦσιν.<sup>785</sup>

Again, the purported subject of the lower stage of grammar, that some call *grammatistike* by a slight modification of *grammatike*, is reading and writing, while that of the higher stage is the elucidation of the writings of the poets and prose-writers.

It is obvious that Philo is familiar with the Alexandrian tradition of defining the art of grammar; as in the definition of γραμματικὴ by Dionysius Thrax, he refers to the "poets and prose-writers". The account of the art as being divided into a 'lower' and a 'higher' stage is also found, according to Sextus Empiricus (*math.* 1,47; see section 3.7), among "those around Asclepiades" (οἱ περὶ τὸν Ἀσκληπιάδην) – by Philo's day Asclepiades' work was surely known in Alexandria as well, even if he never studied or taught there (the information in the *Suda* on this matter is complicated). In *De congressu eruditionis gratia*, the lower instruction consists of grammar, geometry, astronomy, rhetoric, and music. Together these are called λογικὴ θεωρία, 'rational contemplation', which means that in these disciplines the formation of knowledge is guided by reason.<sup>786</sup> Philo

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<sup>784</sup> Mendelson 1982, 4–5.

<sup>785</sup> Philo *congr.* 148 = *SVF* II frg. 99. The passage has been interpreted by Dahlmann (1970, 9) as a Stoic definition of grammar; but as I have argued (section 2.4), there is no need to assume a Stoic definition of γραμματικὴ from a doctrinal viewpoint, since such a discipline was not part of their system. The Stoic definitions of rhetoric and dialectic are found in Diogenes Laertius. They are clearly ascribed to the Stoics and take the form of definition proper (Diog. Laert. 7,42): τὴν τε ῥητορικὴν ἐπιστήμην οὕσαν τοῦ εὖ λέγειν περὶ τῶν ἐν διεξόδῳ λόγων καὶ τὴν διαλεκτικὴν τοῦ ὀρθῶς διαλέγεσθαι περὶ τῶν ἐν ἐρωτήσῃ καὶ ἀποκρίσει λόγων ὅθεν καὶ οὕτως αὐτὴν ὀρίζονται, ἐπιστήμην ἀληθῶν καὶ ψευδῶν καὶ οὐδετέρων (By rhetoric they mean the science of speaking well on matters set forth by narrative, and by dialectic that of correctly discussing subjects by question and answer. Hence they also define it as the science of statements true, false, and neither true nor false).

<sup>786</sup> Philo *congr.* 11: εἰκότως οὖν οὐ βραχέσι χρήσεται προομίῳ, ἀλλὰ γραμματικῇ, γεωμετρῷ, ἀστρονομίᾳ, ῥητορικῇ, μουσικῇ, τῇ ἄλλῃ λογικῇ θεωρίᾳ πάσῃ, ὧν ἔστι



is not interested in discussing the methodology of grammar (or any other discipline) further; the question is irrelevant to his subject. Nevertheless, he provides some insights into the contents of grammar. At the beginning of *De congressu eruditionis gratia*, Philo describes the uses of grammar:

γραμματική μὲν γὰρ ἱστορίαν τὴν παρὰ ποιηταῖς καὶ συγγραφεῦσιν ἀναδιδάξασα νόησιν καὶ πολυμάθειαν ἐργάσεται καὶ καταφρονητικῶς ἔχει ἀναδιδάξει τῶν ὅσα αἱ κεναὶ δόξαι τυφοπλαστοῦσι, διὰ τὰς κακοπραγίας, αἷς τοὺς ἀδομένους παρ' αὐτοῖς ἥρωάς τε καὶ ἡμιθέους λόγος ἔχει χρῆσασθαι.<sup>787</sup>

For grammar, by teaching us the history found in poets and prose-writers, produces intelligence and abundant learning. It will also teach us – through the failures the heroes and demi-gods (celebrated in such literature) are said to have suffered – to despise the vain fables of our empty imagination.

This description gives an overall picture of a not very technical and systematic art of how to read literature with the aim of gathering moral learning from it. The function of secular literature is cathartic: one is supposed to learn from the negative examples.<sup>788</sup> Philo reflects upon grammar's tasks again in *De Cherubim* 104–105: grammar is one of the “ornaments of the soul”, examining poetry and investigating the past.<sup>789</sup> In *Legum allegoriae* I (14) Philo also commends grammar as the most useful of the arts. The division of the art of grammar into ‘elementary’ and ‘advanced’ is found once again in *De somniis* I (205), where Philo discusses the arts a “lover of wisdom” (σοφίας ἐραστής) brings together:

λαβὼν γὰρ ἀπὸ μὲν τῆς παιδικῆς γραμματικῆς δύο τὰ πρῶτα, τὸ τε γράφειν καὶ τὸ ἀναγινώσκειν, ἀπὸ δὲ τῆς τελειότερας τὴν τε παρὰ ποιηταῖς ἐμπειρίαν καὶ τὴν ἀρχαίας ἱστορίας ἀνάληψιν --.

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σύμβολον ἢ Σάρας θεραπεινὸς Ἄγαρ, ὡς ἐπιδείξομεν. For Philo, as usually in Greek, λόγος is a concept with more than one meaning, one of them being ‘the rational thought of mind expressed in utterance or speech’. Because of Philo's religious disposition, the term is also widely used by him as signifying the divine mind (Williamson 1989, 104).

<sup>787</sup> Philo *congr.* 15.

<sup>788</sup> Mendelson 1982, 6.

<sup>789</sup> ἐκ δὲ τῆς ἐγκυκλίου τῶν προπαιδευμάτων μελέτης τὰ πρὸς κόσμον τῆς ψυχῆς ὡς ἐστίας ἤρηται -- γραμματικὴ μὲν ποιητικὴν ἐρευνῶσα καὶ παλαιῶν πράξεων ἱστορίαν μεταδιώκουσα --.

He takes from the grammar of children<sup>790</sup> the first two subjects, writing and reading, and from the advanced grammar the experience of the texts of poets and the acquirement of ancient histories --.

Philo's advanced grammar clearly echoes the definition of γραμματική by Dionysius Thrax, although unlike Dionysius Philo does not define γραμματική as ἐμπειρία, merely saying that it includes experience with poets; the Dionysian συγγραφεῦσιν is here replaced by a reference to 'histories'. There is nothing controversial in Philo's use of this term relating to τέχνη: his idea of the mastery of this particular art, γραμματική, in the service of wisdom is to function as a reserve of examples and quotations. The concept of τέχνη is also discussed by Philo, who is operating within a Stoic epistemological framework. He provides his reader with the Stoic definitions of art<sup>791</sup> and (scientific) knowledge (ἐπιστήμη). The definition of ἐπιστήμη brings up the crucial difference between the concepts:<sup>792</sup>

τέχνης μὲν γὰρ ὄρος οὗτος· σύστημα ἐκ καταλήψεων συγγεγυμνασμένων πρὸς τι τέλος εὐχρηστον, τοῦ εὐχρήστου διὰ τὰς κακοτεχνίας ὑγιῶς προστιθεμένου· ἐπιστήμης δέ· κατάληψις ἀσφαλῆς καὶ βέβαιος, ἀμετάπτωτος ὑπὸ λόγου.<sup>793</sup>

The definition of an art is as follows: a system of conceptions co-ordinated to work toward some useful end, 'useful' being properly added to exclude worthless arts. The definition of scientific knowledge on the other hand is this: a firm and certain conception that cannot be shaken by argument.

Philo then goes on to say that γραμματική is a τέχνη, while philosophy is an ἐπιστήμη. As to the limits of grammar's domain, Philo gives the following characterization (*congr.* 148–150): The central function of γραμματική – the same function that has become evident from his other writings as well – is to explain the works of the poets and prose-writers (ἀνάπτυξις τῶν παρὰ ποιηταῖς τε καὶ συγγραφεῦσιν). According to Philo, the theory of the parts of speech can be of no service in this function. Therefore, when grammarians dis-

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<sup>790</sup> Polybius (9,26a4) refers to "elementary studies" by παιδικὰ μαθήματα.

<sup>791</sup> The same definition of τέχνη is elsewhere attributed to Zeno of Citium; cf. Olympiod. *in Pl. Gorg. comm.* 12,1,17–19 = *SVF* I frg. 73: Ζήνων δέ φησιν ὅτι "τέχνη ἐστὶ σύστημα ἐκ καταλήψεων συγγεγυμνασμένων πρὸς τι τέλος εὐχρηστον τῶν ἐν τῷ βίῳ"; see section 2.1.

<sup>792</sup> Diog. Laert. 7,47 = *SVF* I frg. 68: αὐτὴν τε τὴν ἐπιστήμην φασὶν ἢ κατάληψιν ἀσφαλῆ ἢ ἕξι ἐν φαντασιῶν προσδέξει ἀμετάπτωτον ὑπὸ λόγου.

<sup>793</sup> Philo *congr.* 141.

cuss and define the parts of speech, Philo sees it as an attempt to take advantage of the discoveries of philosophy. Differentiating between the various parts of speech or sentence types belongs to the province of the philosophers, as do questions concerning the voice (φωνή), the elements (στοιχεία) and the parts of speech (τὰ τοῦ λόγου μέρη); these have been perfected by philosophers, and then appropriated by grammarians and paraded as their own.

Philo reacts strongly – he actually uses the word οἱ φῶρες, thieves, of grammarians who appropriate the philosophers' work – but what does it mean? His view of grammar and the use of terminology reflects the Stoic tenets,<sup>794</sup> and his indignation actually seems to take a personal tone: he is identifying with the philosophers. The Alexandrian grammarians of the previous century had already discussed the classification of words (sometimes with visible Stoic influence), but they had refrained from systematic theoretical discussion. The Alexandrian philological practice, in which philosophy did not play a significant role, was something Philo was used to, and he wanted things to stay that way. Philosophical methods and theories should remain with the philosophers. The grammarians should not meddle with questions of language that do not directly help in elucidating literature. Moreover, it is not only the art of grammar that impudently tries to expand its domain at the expense of philosophy (*congr.* 139ff.). With regard to geometry, for example, Philo says that as long as it restricts itself to figures such as triangles, circles, and polygons, it remains in its rightful domain; but in trying to *define* the nature of its central concepts, such as the point and the line, it is trespassing on the terrain of the philosopher.<sup>795</sup> Definitions, regardless of the actual subject, are something only philosophers should be making. The grammarian will manage without dialectical instruments of thought. Philo's idea of grammatical work emphasizes the role of experience and conversance, with a strong affiliation to the practice of the Alexandrian scholars and librarians – Aristarchus, Aristophanes and Eratosthenes. By the first century CE, however, philosophical ideas were evidently becoming a part of γραμματική in Alexandria as well, and it is precisely against this that Philo is reacting. The integration of philosophy into the other arts may have taken place more slowly here than in Rome, where a number of philosophers had emigrated from Athens. At least Philo – the leading scholar of Alexandria – was not ready to embrace such novelties.

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<sup>794</sup> See Schenkeveld 1990a, 105–106.

<sup>795</sup> Philo *congr.* 146–147.

## 5.2 Seneca's trivial *grammatica*

From Alexandria in the first half of the first century CE, we move on to Rome in the 60s, where L. Annaeus Seneca (c. 3 BCE – 65 CE), writer and philosopher, was writing his letters to Lucilius. In some of these letters he touches on *grammatica*, and his views form an interesting parallel to those of Philo. The most important of the writings in which Seneca refers to *grammatica* is Letter 88. Here he attacks the liberal arts (*studia liberalia*), arguing that the only truly 'liberal art' is philosophy (*studium sapientiae*, reduced to ethics), because it is the only one that truly makes a man free. Other studies may be called *pusilla et puerilia*, "petty and puerile".<sup>796</sup> His list of the arts begins with grammar (88,3) and continues with music (88,9), geometry (88,10), and astronomy (88,14). Seneca admits (88,20) that the liberal arts are useful in one respect: they prepare the soul for the reception of virtue, which is the same idea as that promoted by Philo of Alexandria. In this respect, the arts are comparable to food: they are indispensable in attaining virtue, but nothing to do with virtue as such (88,31). Thus the liberal arts have an instrumental value only. The collection of arts had been a topic of interest for several authors representing the Roman upper class, such as Varro, the Tiberian era writer Cornelius Celsus, and Pliny the Elder, all of whom were part of the formation of the cultural ideal.<sup>797</sup> In his description of the activities of the grammarian, Seneca goes into some detail:

Grammaticus circa curam sermonis versatur et, si latius evagari vult, circa historias, iam ut longissime fines suos proferat, circa carmina. Quid horum ad virtutem viam sternit? Syllabarum enarratio et verborum diligentia et fabularum memoria et versuum lex ac modificatio?<sup>798</sup>

The grammarian busies himself with the care of language, and if he wishes to go farther afield, with histories, and if he is to try his limits as far as possible, with poetry. Which of these paves the way to virtue? The exposition of syllables, the attentive care of words, the memorizing of stories, the rules and modification of verses?

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<sup>796</sup> Sen. *ep.* 88,2.

<sup>797</sup> The encyclopaedic work of Celsus, called *Artes*, included books on medicine (the only one that has survived), agriculture, military science and rhetoric, possibly also philosophy and jurisprudence. *RE s.v.* Cornelius Celsus [28].

<sup>798</sup> Sen. *ep.* 88,3.

Seneca's words are provocative: the basic task of the grammarian is the guarding of language, something that is expected of every one of them; examining poetry – traditionally seen as the core of the grammarian's profession – is stretching the limits to the extreme. Somewhere in between is research into the contents of texts. Blank (1998, 147) considers this description, in essence, the same as Asclepiades of Myrlea's threefold division of grammar: the technical (*cura sermonis, syllabarum enarratio, verborum diligentia*), the historical (*historiae, fabularum memoria*), and the grammatical (*carmina, versuum lex ac modificatio*).<sup>799</sup> Although Seneca is not, in a dialectical sense, introducing a division, these are the parts of grammar that are recognizable from his description. The grammarian approaches correct language and literature through the investigation of the form and meaning of words, the memorization of certain pieces of literature, and metrics. None of grammar's functions contributes to the search of wisdom, and the study of the contents of literature – often seen as morally uplifting and containing wisdom, in the case of Homer in particular – is not recognized as valuable either. Seneca argues that the study of literature consists of trivialities, even if literature offers plenty of themes that in terms of the advancement of virtue would deserve thorough discussion, such as love and chastity.<sup>800</sup> This utter triviality is personified in the particularly prolific author of the first century BCE, Didymus. Seneca says that he wrote four thousand books; questions dealt with in these books included Homer's birthplace, the real mother of Aeneas, whether Anacreon was more of a libertine than a drunkard, and whether Sappho was a prostitute.<sup>801</sup> Seneca also condemns the work of Aristarchus as absurd ("he pierces the verses of others"); as though he were still suffering from a trauma from his school years, Seneca asks, "should I waste away in syllables?"<sup>802</sup>

In the previous section, we saw that Philo of Alexandria disapproved of the grammarians' theoretical approach to the parts of speech because he considered this as stepping onto the toes of the philosophers. Seneca condemns the liberal arts, but finds fault with philosophy as well:

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<sup>799</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,252.

<sup>800</sup> Sen. *ep.* 88,5–8.

<sup>801</sup> Sen. *ep.* 88,37.

<sup>802</sup> *Et Aristarchi ineptias, quibus aliena carmina conpuxit, recognoscam et aetatem in syllabis conteram?* Sen. *ep.* 88,39.

De liberalibus studiis loquor: philosophi quantum habent supervacui, quantum ab usu recedentis. Ipsi quoque ad syllabarum distinctiones et coniunctionum ac praepositionum proprietates descenderunt et invidere grammaticis, invidere geometris. Quicquid in illorum artibus supervacuum erat, transtulere in suam. Sic effectum est, ut diligentius loqui scirent quam vivere.<sup>803</sup>

So far, I have been speaking of the liberal arts: how much there is purposeless, how much impractical among philosophers. They have stooped to distinctions of syllables and the apt usages of conjunctions and prepositions, being now envious of grammarians, now of mathematicians. Whatever there is that is purposeless in these arts they have brought over to their own art. The result is that they know more about careful speaking than about careful living.

The philosophers have taken over some of grammar's trivialities, such as examining distinctions of syllables (again, the syllables);<sup>804</sup> ethics has been superseded by the superfluous study of careful speaking. Although questions of good usage are part of the Stoic heritage, Seneca advocates a more specialized allocation of tasks. He makes the same claim here as in *ep.* 88,11–12: descending to the level of the grammarians, the philosophers have been diverted from their original task, the search for the good life. There may have been a certain Stoic philosopher in Seneca's mind: a fellow tutor of Emperor Nero, Chaeremon of Alexandria, who was invited to the court because of his scholarly reputation. He showed an interest in the parts of speech, and Apollonius Dyscolus cites him on the subject of conjunctions.<sup>805</sup> In comparison with Philo's account on the proper place of the parts of speech, the difference is striking: Seneca suggests that a philosopher – whose primary concern should be ethics – would do better if he kept away from this academic tinkering with language. Philo, on the other hand, suggests that the grammarians are close to criminal transgressors of boundaries in approaching the parts of speech with a theoretical orientation. What the two have in common is that neither one sees any use for the study of the parts of speech; it is entirely irrelevant either to leading a good life or to literary exegesis. For Seneca, correct language seems to be a central function of the grammarians;

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<sup>803</sup> Sen. *ep.* 88,42.

<sup>804</sup> Seneca was haunted by syllables: in *ep.* 48,6 he shows particular resentment towards syllables being a subject for philosophy, as he demonstrates the ridiculous teachings of the dialecticians: *Mus syllaba est. Mus autem caseum rodit; syllaba ergo caseum rodit* ('Mouse' is a syllable. A mouse eats cheese; therefore, a syllable eats cheese).

<sup>805</sup> Chaeremon frg. 14 Van Der Horst = Ap. *Dysc. coni.* GG2.1 247,30–248,4.

it is he who calls the grammarians the “guardians of language” – *grammatici, custodes Latini sermonis*.<sup>806</sup>

Another scornful statement concerning grammar is found in Letter 108 to Lucilius, in which we are happy to see Seneca discussing and explicitly differentiating among the approaches of the philologist, the grammarian, and the philosopher.<sup>807</sup> The man dedicated to philosophy approaches the text from an ethical point of view, whereas the *philologus* hunts for obsolete words and makes odd remarks on family relationships. A curiosity of the *philologus* is that he specializes in looking into old records (*augurales libri* and *pontificales libri*), making points of terminology on that basis. The grammarian approaches a text by observing usages, meanings, and poetic tradition. The philologist clearly sets out to study obscure words and histories in books and archives; in essence, he is an antiquarian. On one occasion, Seneca also uses the word *philologia*: *Itaque quae philosophia fuit, facta philologia est*.<sup>808</sup> The word is not used to denote a ‘discipline’: Seneca juxtaposes the words *philosophia* and *philologia* in order to gain an effective angle, opposing a profound love of wisdom as against a superficial love of words. In the other contexts where we encounter the word *philologia*, it does not refer to anything more than a delightful (or at least harmless) pastime; all of these occur in the Ciceronian correspondence.<sup>809</sup> A *philologus* simply loves knowledge that can be drawn from literary sources, and for Seneca this is trivial knowledge that contributes nothing to a truly good life. Cicero on the other hand sees *philologia* as a way of leading a civilized life. Since *philologus* is not really a professional title,<sup>810</sup> there is no actual division of tasks between ‘philologists’ and grammarians. Nor did those technical grammarians who concentrated on the elements of language (letters, syllables, words), and correct language,

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<sup>806</sup> Sen. ep. 95,65.

<sup>807</sup> Sen. ep. 108,30–33: *Cum Ciceronis librum de re publica prendit hinc philologus aliquis, hinc grammaticus, hinc philosophiae deditus, alius alio curam suam mittit. Philosophus admiratur contra iustitiam dici tam multa potuisse. Cum ad hanc eandem lectionem philologus accessit, hoc subnotat: duos Romanos reges esse quorum alter patrem non habet, alter matrem. Nam de Servi matre dubitatur; Anci pater nullus, Numaep nepos dicitur. Praeterea notat eum quem nos dictatorem dicimus et in historiis ita nominari legimus apud antiquos ‘magistrum populi’ vocatum. Hodieque id extat in auguralibus libris, et testimonium est quod qui ab illo nominatur ‘magister equitum’ est. Aequae notat Romulum perisse solis defectione; provocationem ad populum etiam a regibus fuisse; id ita in pontificalibus libris tet aliqui quit putant et Fenestella. Eisdem libros cum grammaticus explicuit, primum verba expressa, reapse dici a Cicerone, id est re ipsa, in commentarium refert, nec minus seipse, id est se ipse. -- Ex eo se ait intellegere, opem apud antiquos non tantum auxilium significasse, sed operam. -- Felicem deinde se putat, quod invenerit, unde visum sit Vergilio dicere: ‘quem super ingens porta tonat caeli’ Ennium hoc ait Homero [se] subripuisse, Ennio Vergilium.*

<sup>808</sup> Sen. ep. 108,23.

<sup>809</sup> Cic. Att. 2,17,1; Cic. fam. 16,21,4 and again 16,21,8.

<sup>810</sup> See section 3.1.

and those who practiced grammar in a very text-based sense, i. e. creating editions and commentaries, seek to draw a distinction between them. Generally, all knowledge of literature, even the oddest details, belongs to the domain of the grammarian. For example, Suetonius reports that Tiberius was highly interested in mythology, and used to test the knowledge of the *grammatici* with questions such as *quae mater Hecubae, quod Achilli nomen inter virgines fuisset, quid Sirenes cantare sint solitae*.<sup>811</sup> The ancient *philologia* is not recognized as a τέχνη or *ars*: there are no specialized teachers of ‘philology’, no textbooks, and no explicit methods. All there seems to be are occasional practitioners and ‘philological’ conversations, referring to matters within the sphere of literature.

### 5.3 Pliny the Elder on *Latinus sermo*

A younger contemporary of Seneca, Pliny the Elder (23 CE – August 25, 79 CE) contributed to the ancient art of grammar with a work called *Dubius sermo*. The treatise, preserved in fragments, consisted originally of eight books. The subject of the work is irregular expressions: cases in which usage oscillates between the analogous and the anomalous form.<sup>812</sup> The work was published about 67 CE,<sup>813</sup> and its reception was not especially kind. As Pliny himself says in his later *Naturalis historia*, the Stoics, dialecticians, Epicureans and grammarians all had something against his treatise, those “little books on grammar” (*libelli de grammatica*). The grammarians’ reception was as he had anticipated: *de grammaticis semper expectavi*.<sup>814</sup> According to Della Casa (1969, 853), by dialecticians (*dialectici*) Pliny may mean the Peripatetics. This is possible, but the term *dialectici* is slightly problematic.<sup>815</sup> According to Barnes (2012, 481–482), both οἱ διαλεκτικοί and *dialectici* are used “as a vague and general denotation”, not as referring to a particular sect. The dialecticians Pliny is referring to could well be those philosophers who showed a special interest in definitions, divisions, epistemology and dialectical debate – or those who had begun to draw attention by those fascinating logical puzzles.<sup>816</sup> The negative attention Pliny’s work re-

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<sup>811</sup> Suet. *Tib.* 70,3.

<sup>812</sup> As phrased by Colson 1919, 32.

<sup>813</sup> Della Casa 1969, 16.

<sup>814</sup> Plin. *nat. pr.* 28–29.

<sup>815</sup> Seneca distinguishes between the Peripatetics, the ‘old dialecticians’ (*dialectici veteres*), and the Stoics (*ep.* 118,11–12): *Peripateticis placet nihil interesse inter sapientiam et sapere, cum in utrolibet eorum et alterum sit. Numquid enim quemquam existimas sapere nisi qui sapientiam habet? numquid quemquam qui sapit non putas habere sapientiam? Dialectici veteres ista distinguunt; ab illis divisio usque ad Stoicos venit. Dialectici* is sometimes found as opposed to *rhetores*, according to the Stoic division of λογική. Cicero testifies (*fin.* 2,17) that in the opinion of Zeno and the Stoics, the *rhetores* spoke more amply, while the *dialectici* spoke quite densely.

<sup>816</sup> See section 1.3.1.



ceived from the Epicureans was also to be expected, because of their general dislike of the arts. The Stoics apparently were not all interested exclusively in ethics, as Pliny's work on *sermo* caught their attention as well; again, we are reminded of Chaeremon, the Stoic in Nero's court who was interested at least in conjunctions.

As the phrase *de grammaticis semper expectavi* implies, Pliny's relationship with the grammarians was not a warm one; elsewhere he refers to *perversa grammaticorum subtilitas*, the "perverse subtlety of the grammarians".<sup>817</sup> As we have seen, nit-picking was associated with grammarians by another writer of the time as well, Seneca. As is evident from Pliny's remarks on the grammarians, and despite the effort put in his *Dubius sermo*, Pliny did not belong to the group of grammarians: he was a scholar with a wide range of interests. As Pliny in fact did not have the mandate of either philosophers or grammarians, he was subject to scorn from both sides. The instructive tone he took perhaps did not please those who considered themselves as being 'guardians of language'. Still, Pliny did not hesitate in naming the field of study to which his treatise belongs: it is *grammatica*.<sup>818</sup> Here I discuss the known contents of *Dubius sermo* with this in mind. The surviving fragments reveal Pliny's attitude towards *ars* and the criteria for correct language; moreover, chronologically they form a bridge between Varro and Quintilian, the subject of the next section.

A lengthy passage in Flavius Sospater Charisius' *Ars grammatica* (fourth century CE) is identified by Schenkeveld (1996 and 1998) as originally Plinian. Charisius may have adopted the text through the third century CE author Julius Romanus;<sup>819</sup> at any rate, Charisius also cites Pliny the Elder by name eleven times.<sup>820</sup> The passage is somewhat peculiar. For one thing, it appears as introductory even though it is nowhere near the beginning of the work. Rather, it opens a section entitled *de extremitatibus nominum et diversis quaestionibus*, which does not have a clear connection to the following passages. Schenkeveld is firmly convinced that the text is originally from Pliny's *Dubius sermo*, where it may have served as a preface to the whole work or to one of its eight books. The text shows features typical of *praefationes*: the subject of the treatise is discussed in a wider context, its style is elevated, as is typical of a preface compared to the treatise itself, and the development of the argumentation is preface-like.<sup>821</sup> In the

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<sup>817</sup> Plin. *nat.* 35,13.

<sup>818</sup> Pliny the Elder also wrote a rhetorical manual called *Studiosus*, published before *Dubius sermo*. This work is lost as well.

<sup>819</sup> The dating of Julius Romanus is uncertain. Kaster (1988, 424–5) proposes parameters from the beginning of the third century to the middle of the fourth. Julius Romanus' profession or status is not known either.

<sup>820</sup> Della Casa 1969, 12.

<sup>821</sup> Schenkeveld 1996, 21.

following, I deal with the text under the assumption that it is in fact a piece of Plinian scholarship.

ne ipsa quidem rerum natura tam finita est ut nobis \* nouissimum sui adsignet, ne dum artes, quarum consummationibus inbecillitas humana non sufficit, uel propter extremum difficultatis laborem uel sola earum inuentione satiata. et sane quid potest absolutum esse, quod adsidue pro subtilitate cuiusque ingenii adstruitur? non ideo tamen nullae sunt quia illas subinde adiectionibus tutas esse non patimur. quare contenti simus eo quod repertum est, cum in omni rerum ratione artes quoque mensuram sui habeant nec aliter perfectum esse uideatur quod interim est. Latinus uero sermo cum ipso homine ciuitatis suae natus significandis intellegundisque quae diceret praestitit. <sed> postquam plane superuenientibus saeculis accepit artifices et solertiae nostrae obseruationibus captus est, paucis admodum partibus orationis normae suae dissentientibus, regendum se regulae tradidit et illam loquendi licentiam seruituti rationis addixit. quae ratio adeo cum ipsa loquella generata est ut hodie nihil de suo analogia inferat. ea enim quae ad explicandam elocutionem iam apud sensus nostros educta sunt a confusione uniuersitatis disseminauit et a disparibus paria coaluit. adprobatur autem defectionis regula argumento similibus.<sup>822</sup>

Not even the nature of things is so limited that she manifests to us its last (boundary), let alone that this is the case for the arts. Human frailty is not strong enough to make them complete, either because of the difficulty of putting in the final touch or because it [sc. frailty] is satisfied by their mere invention. And indeed, what can be finished which is continuously being added to in accordance with the ingenuity of each successive intellect? Nonetheless, the arts are not worthless because we do not have the patience to keep them safe against successive additions. Let us, therefore, be content with what has been found, as in each system of things parts too possess their own measure, and in no other way seems what is there at the moment to be advanced. As to the Latin language, it was born at the same time as the people of its state and it was at hand in order to express and to understand what they said. <However>, in successive generations language totally accepted artificers and was caught by the observations of our ingenuity, whereby very few words disagreed with its precepts. After this moment language offered itself for governing by the rule and put the licence of speech (of that time) in ser-

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<sup>822</sup> Char. 61,16–62,14 (Barwick).

vitute to reason. Reason has come into existence so closely together with speech itself that nowadays analogy does not introduce anything from and by itself. For analogy scattered those seeds which had already been sprouting in our minds in order to explicate language, separating these from the confusion of the whole and making similar grow together with similar, away from dissimilar. The rule about defectiveness is proved to be right by the evidence of similar cases.<sup>823</sup>

The central idea of the passage is that the *artes* are in constant state of change, and will never become perfect; the completion of an art is impossible because of the constant development that it undergoes through the intellectual activity of each individual thinker. The arts thus seem indefinable and lacking in clear limits – a serious defect from a dialectical viewpoint – but this does not mean that they are useless. It is unsurprising that the author should make this remark: the usefulness of the art is a common if not in fact mandatory topic of treatises on any *ars* or τέχνη. This was particularly a concern of the Epicureans, who were among those who had something against *Dubius sermo*; their main argument against the arts was that they were not useful. The usefulness of the arts is not actually backed up by an argument in the above text. After a brief general discussion on the arts, the focus shifts to the birth and development of language. The whole story has mythical features, an impression which is strengthened by the absence of actual historical individuals. A parallel text is found in Cicero's *De inventione*, which begins with a kind of foundation myth. According to Cicero, the ancient human race was uncivilized, unguided by reason, lacking all the characteristics of a society: a system of worship, marriage, law. A wise and eloquent man transformed this race from savages into people who could live decently as a society, which is ultimately based on eloquence combined with wisdom.<sup>824</sup>

In the above passage, Pliny suggests that initially there was a direct correspondence between the form of a word and its meaning. This correspondence crumbled gradually. The process, however, was controlled, taking place under the guardianship of the artificers and with a respect for analogy. This control extended to neologisms, as the reader is explicitly reminded (*hodie nihil de suo analogia inferat*). Explicating language is understood as a basic human instinct: it began spontaneously and was subsequently set in order by analogy. The above text from Charisius' *ars* continues with the introduction of the criteria of Latin-

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<sup>823</sup> Translation by Schenkeveld (1996, 18–19), with the omission of a few bracketed words: -- *its state* [OR: its city]; before *the rule about defectiveness* Schenkeveld adds [It may be added that].

<sup>824</sup> Cic. *inv.* 1,2,5.

ity; these are the same as in Diomedes, who ascribes them to Varro.<sup>825</sup> The explanations of the criteria are likely to originate from a different source, which Schenkeveld has identified as Pliny's *Dubius sermo*. The text in Charisius' *ars* runs as follows:

constat ergo Latinus sermo natura analogia consuetudine auctoritate. natura uerborum nominumque inmutabilis est nec quicquam aut plus aut minus tradidit nobis quam quod accepit. nam si quis dicat *scrimbo* pro eo quod est *scribo*, non analogiae uirtute sed naturae ipsius constitutione conuincitur. analogia sermonis a natura proditi ordinatio est neque aliter barbaram linguam ab erudita quam argentum a plumbo dissociat. plenius autem de analogia in sequentibus Romanum diseruisse inuenies. consuetudo non arte analogiae sed uiribus par est, ideo solum recepta, quod multorum consensione conualuit, ita tamen ut illi ratio non accedat sed indulgeat. auctoritas in regula loquendi nouissima est. namque ubi omnia defecerint, sic ad illam quem ad modum ad aram sacram decurritur. non enim quicquam aut rationis aut naturae aut consuetudinis habet; tantum opinione oratorum recepta est, qui et ipsi cur id secuti essent si fuissent interrogati, nescire se confiterentur. ex his ergo omnibus consuetudo non haec uolgaris nec sordida recipienda est, sed quae horridiorem rationem sono blandiore depellat. interdum enim utilibus iucunda gratiora sunt. adsiduitas et consuetudo uerba quaedam uel nomina usque ad persuasionem proprietatis sufficient, si tamen eadem [non] aspere per analogiam enuntientur; alioquin rationem malletm quam adsiduitatem. tractabimus ergo primum nomina polysyllaba polysyllaborumque quaestiones, deinde uerba uerborumque quaestiones, nouissime catholica uaga, quae multarum controuersiarum ueterem caliginem dissipant.<sup>826</sup>

The Latin language thus consists of nature, analogy, usage and authority. The nature of verbs and nouns is unchangeable and has not handed over to us anything more or anything less than what it has received. For if one says *scrimbo* instead of the word *scribo*, one is proved to be wrong, not by the virtue of analogy, but by the constitution of nature itself. Analogy is the systematisation of language produced by nature, and it divides barbarous speech from that of cultured speakers in no other way than silver is separated from lead. (Romanus has given a fuller account of analogy, which you will find later on.) Usage is equal to analogy not

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<sup>825</sup> See discussion in section 4.3.2; *GRF* frg. 268.

<sup>826</sup> Char. 62,14–63,20 (Barwick).

in being an art but because of its power. It has been accepted solely because it gained strength thanks to the consensus of the majority, in this way, however, that reason does not accede to it but is indulgent. Authority is the most recent rule of speech. For when everything has failed, one takes recourse to this as if to a sacred altar. For it has nothing of reason or nature or usage. Only because of the reputation of the orators has it been accepted. If one were to ask them why they followed this (particular form), they themselves would confess their ignorance. Among all these one should take as usage not the vulgar and sordid one but that which by a more smooth sound repels reason (i.e. a rationally acceptable form) when this is too rough. For sometimes what sounds nice is more attractive than what is useful. Frequency and usage will supply some verbs and nouns until one is persuaded that they are the proper ones, on the condition, however, that through analogy the same words will [not] be pronounced in a rough way. Otherwise I would prefer reason to frequency. We shall then deal first with polysyllabic nouns and questions of polysyllables, then verbs and questions of verbs, finally inconstant (?) general rules. These remarks (?) will drive away the ancient fog of many controversies.<sup>827</sup>

The text gives examples of how the criteria for *Latinus sermo* work. An error – in this case a misspelling – can be detected by *natura*, which seems to refer to one’s natural linguistic flair; barbarous speech (*barbara lingua*) can be detected and purified by *analogia*, the rational criterion. *Barbara lingua* probably refers to language that is generally erroneous and unpolished, that is, contains barbarisms and solecisms.<sup>828</sup> This account closely resembles Pliny the Elder’s notions of barbarism and solecism quoted by the grammarian Pompeius. Pliny defines *natura* and *ars* as the criteria violated by errors:<sup>829</sup>

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<sup>827</sup> Translation by Schenkeveld 1996, 19–20. I have omitted [OR: is based on] as the alternative translation of *consists of* on the first line and [shown to be wrong] after *refuted* a few lines below. Likewise *does not accede to it* is followed by an alternative suggestion [OR: approves of it], which I have omitted.

<sup>828</sup> Cf. Diomedes (*GL1* 449,9–11), who says that *barbara oratio* has two parts, solecisms and barbarisms, and these have multiple species or subdivisions (*barbarae orationis partes sunt duae, soloecismus et barbarismus, quorum species sunt plurimae*); see Schenkeveld 1996, 29.

<sup>829</sup> Schenkeveld 1996, 29.

et vide quem ad modum expressit Plinius, quam bene et integre dicit. quid est barbarismus? quod non dicitur per naturam. quid est soloecismus? quod male per artem dicitur.<sup>830</sup>

See how Pliny, who said it well and solidly, formulated it. What is a barbarism? That which is not said according to nature. What is a solecism? That which is said erroneously in respect of art.

According to the Plinian account in Charisius' *ars*, analogy (the rational criterion) operates within art, whereas *natura* – again, the natural linguistic flair that directs orthography to follow the phonological form of the word – does not. Nor does usage: *consuetudo non arte analogiae sed uiribus par est*. Usage is not a technical criterion; to the extent that an art of grammar exists, its backbone is analogy. The status of an *ars* claims a rationality only analogy can provide. *Auctoritas* is the most unconnected criterion of all, but its status is undeniable. It is the last resort, and if consulted it cannot be questioned: it is compared to a 'sacred altar', knowledge from a divine source.

Some practical examples of the power (*vis*) of *consuetudo* are found among the fragments of the *Dubius sermo* edited by Della Casa (1969).<sup>831</sup> The principle stands out: *consuetudo* is the most tenable criterion.<sup>832</sup> Old usage, even when authoritative, is a weaker criterion than that which is current.<sup>833</sup> Pliny

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<sup>830</sup> Plin. frg. 127 Della Casa = Pompeius *in artem Donati*, GL5 283,18–20. Also another Plinian formulation of the definition of barbarism is preserved (frg. 125 Della Casa = Servius *in Donati artem maiorem*, GL4 444,3–4): *Plinius autem dicit barbarismum esse sermonem unum, in quo vis sua est contra naturam. barbarismus autem dicitur eo, quod barbari prave locuntur, ut siqui dicat 'Rumam' pro 'Roma'*.

<sup>831</sup> There are 94 fragments from *Dubius sermo* and 27 *incertae sedis*.

<sup>832</sup> For instance, in the second declination nominatives that end in *-ius*, usage has dropped the second 'i' that is demanded by *ratio* in the singular genitive form (Plin. frg. 16 Della Casa = Char. 99,13–15 Barwick): *et Plinius quoque dubii sermonis V adicit <esse quid>em rationem per duo 'i' scribendi, sed multa iam consuetudine superari*.

<sup>833</sup> Cicero and other ancient writers wrote *orbi*, whereas current usage demands *orbe*; the latter form is also secondarily backed up by *ratio* (Plin. frg. 33 Della Casa = Char. 176,23–117,2 Barwick): *'orbi' pro 'orbe'*. *Ciceronem de re publica libro V 'orbi terrarum comprehensos', sed et Puplium Rutilium de vita sua V 'ex orbi terrarum', et frequenter an<ti>quos> ita locutos Plinius eodem libro VI notat: quia consuetudo melior, inquit, quam faciat 'ex orbe', non sine ratione, quam <in> nomine 'rure' diximus*. Perhaps this is a case where reason 'indulges' usage (*ita tamen ut illi ratio non accedat sed indulgeat*): the *ratio* Pliny gives (*orbe – rure*) is not altogether solid, but in any case indicative. Pliny disregards Cicero also on another occasion: Pliny prefers the form *volucrum*, which is in common usage over *volucrium*, used by Cicero (Plin. frg. 68 Della Casa = Char. 186,5–8 Barwick): *'volucrium' Cicero de finibus bonorum et malorum nec non et Fabianus causarum libro II et III; 'volucrum' Maecenas in dialogo II et consuetudo, ut idem ait Plinius*.

recommends the use of 'authority' as a criterion in the case of derivatives.<sup>834</sup> From the fragments, we get a picture of Pliny the Elder as a defender of linguistic common sense. In a broader sense, this practical disposition towards knowledge also shows in his *Naturalis historia*. In this work, Pliny quite often mentions such concepts as *experimenta*, *observationes* and *usus*,<sup>835</sup> acknowledging that experiments are necessary in certain practical tasks.<sup>836</sup> However, it is not methodical, systematic ἀποψία in the sense that the empiricists understood it. For Pliny, the foundation of everything is *ratio*; but he also sees the two ways to knowledge, the rational and the experience-based, as complementary, not as contradictory. As in the passage preserved by Charisius, the topic of the imperfection of man (*imbecillitas humana*) is present in the *Naturalis historia*: human *ratio* is part of the natural order,<sup>837</sup> and while nature itself is perfect, the emotional, psychological and physical imperfection of man can pervert the results of his rational process.<sup>838</sup>

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<sup>834</sup> Plin. frg. 95 Della Casa = Pompeius *GL5* 144,14–16: *Idcirco in derivationibus sequere praecepta Plinii Secundi. ait enim: debes quidem acquiescere regulis, sed in derivativis sequere auctoritatem.* Cases in which 'rules' must be followed are *diminutiva* (see discussion in Vaahtera 1998, 62 and 67). There are cases that fall outside the scope of analogy altogether. Pliny notes that in monosyllables it is important to adhere to usage (Plin. frg. 78 Della Casa = Char. 175,25–27 Barwick): '*os<se>*'. *monosyllaba extra analogiam esse Plinius eodem libro VI scribit et addit eo magis consuetudinem in eo esse retinendam*); the grammarians have failed to provide a rule for the declination of monosyllables (Plin. frg. 79 Della Casa = Char. 178,24–29 Barwick): '*pacium*' an '*pacum*' et '*lucium*' an '*lucum*'? *addubitari etiam nunc ait Plinius, quoniam nec finitionem ullam in monosyllabis, inquit, grammatici temptaverunt. nam ut 'fax', 'faex' 'nux' 'crux' 'rex' 'lex' sine 'i' genetivo plurali sunt dictitanda, ita contra 'nox' 'falx' 'calx' 'arx' 'lanx' cum 'i' pronuntianda sunt.* Incidentally, giving a 'rule' (*finitio*) in this case would be giving a *finitio*, 'ending'.

<sup>835</sup> *Usus* (equivalent to *consuetudo*) is mentioned as a factor determining correct language by some late grammarians, for example Pompeius (*GL* 5,232,4) and Donatianus (*GL6* 275,13): *Loquendi facultatem usus invenit, ratio comprobavit.*

<sup>836</sup> Such as in proving the authenticity of gold and other valuable substances, or in the search of water; for instance, *nat.* 37,199–200 and 31,46.

<sup>837</sup> Beagon (1992, 67–68) illustrates the relationship between the human and the natural *ratio* with two Plinian passages, *nat.* 22,117–118 and 29,24–26.

<sup>838</sup> Plin. *nat.* 7,1ff.; Beagon 1992, 67. However, Pliny is not altogether consistent in his understanding of the relationship between *ratio* and *usus*. In discussing medicine, he refuses to accept the complementary relationship he has otherwise suggested. Instead, he stresses the utter functionality of *usus*, rejecting *ratio*, which he associates with Greek science, whereas by *usus* he means Roman herbal medicine; *nat.* 26,11; Beagon 1992, 227. In his report on the history of the medical art, empiricists are only briefly mentioned, and in a neutral tone (*nat.* 29,5).

When we look at the Plinian discussion of *sermo Latinus* and its four criteria found in Charisius' *ars*, we find that the complementarity of *ratio* (represented by *analogia*) and *consuetudo* is there, and they both have 'powers' (*consuetudo non arte analogiae sed uiribus par est*). *Natura* is the unchangeable order of things in nature that has given rise to *analogia*. Natural order is always present; the human *ratio* strives toward systematic comprehension, as manifested in the application of analogy. The general epistemological framework of the *Naturalis historia* seems to follow the same lines that are visible in the passage in Charisius' *ars*. Pliny's *grammatica* has evolved into a field of study very interested in language use. His account takes a highly theoretical form, at least partly setting literature aside and reserving for it a position of 'ultimate refuge'. This may have been the factor that especially alienated contemporary grammarians such as the famous Remmius Palaemon, who (in his own opinion) was a "supreme judge of poetry", as well as Marcus Valerius Probus, whose main interest was old literature.<sup>839</sup>

#### 5.4 Quintilian on *grammaticae* in the education of an orator

The grammarians of the first century CE could no longer expect success and popularity to follow from their choice of profession: rhetoricians had risen to fame at the grammarians' expense. The supremacy of rhetoricians was also confirmed by the educational system. Grammar was now a clear propaedeutic for rhetoric, and this was directly reflected in the grammarians' social status and salary. Rhetoric's demands on grammar were twofold: grammar had to provide material for the orator, who had to know his literature, as well as a high linguistic capacity to produce effective speech.<sup>840</sup>

It is in these circumstances that we meet the well-known author Marcus Fabius Quintilianus, of whom we actually know only little. He was probably born about 35 CE, and as a native of Hispania he was brought to Rome by Galba in 68 to open his own rhetorical school. He rose to such fame and esteem that he became the first teacher ever to receive his salary from the imperial treasury.<sup>841</sup> His main work, and the only one that survives, is the *Institutio oratoria*, published around 96.<sup>842</sup> It is a synthesis of the pedagogical relations between grammar and rhetoric, based on Quintilian's twenty years of experience as an edu-

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<sup>839</sup> See section 4.1.

<sup>840</sup> Viljamaa 1991, 3842.

<sup>841</sup> A fragment (frg. 7 Kaster) preserved in Jerome's *Chronicon: ad annum 68 post Christum natum: M. Fabius Quintilianus Romam a Galba perducitur. . . Quintilianus, ex Hispania Calagurritanus, primus Romae publicam scholam et salarium e fisco accepit et claruit.*

<sup>842</sup> E.g. Kennedy 1969, 28; Colson 1924, xvi.



cator and orator.<sup>843</sup> In the preface, Quintilian tells us about how he began his treatise: many authors, both Greek and Roman, had already written on the same subject, and it thus was not Quintilian's original intention to create a theory of oratory of his own but to "pass definitive judgement" on the views expressed by his predecessors.<sup>844</sup> However, the authors who had previously written on rhetorical training had systematically failed to discuss the preliminary stages of education, and this was now Quintilian's agenda. Accordingly, the result was a work of some originality after all.<sup>845</sup> His purpose was to cover the whole lifespan of the orator, from birth to retirement. In looking at Quintilian's outline of *grammaticae* – discussed in the first eight chapters of Book 1 – it should therefore be kept in mind that his purpose is to comment on those aspects of grammar that are relevant in terms of the education of an orator. These chapters do not form a significant contribution to our knowledge of the art of grammar in the first century CE. Not a single definition of grammar that takes the form "*grammatica* is + genus --" from this century survives, although Quintilian's treatment of both grammar and his actual subject, rhetoric, clearly reveal that definitions were regarded as important in discussing an expertise.

#### 5.4.1 THE PARTS OF GRAMMATICAE

Quintilian's definition of the art of grammar takes the form of a division. He divides the profession of *grammaticae* into two parts: *Haec igitur professio, cum breuissime in duas partis diuidatur, recte loquendi scientiam et poetarum enarrationem, plus habet in recessu quam fronte promittit*<sup>846</sup> ("This profession, most briefly divisible into two parts, the science of correct language and the interpretation of poets, has more to it than meets the eye"). Later in the text (1,9,1), these two parts are called *ratio loquendi et enarratio auctorum*, and are described as 'methodical' (*methodice*) and 'historical' (*historice*) respectively. The terms *methodice* and *historice* properly divide the genus of grammar into the species that correspond to the parts. We may assume – as Quintilian makes a point of his division being made *breuissime* – that he was aware of the previous structural divisions of grammar: most probably the four-part division of Varro, perhaps also that of Dionysius Thrax and the tripartite division of Asclepiades of Myrlea.<sup>847</sup> However, Quintilian's object is not to give a technical and rigorous

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<sup>843</sup> Quint. *inst.* 1pr.,1; 2,12,12.

<sup>844</sup> Quint. *inst.* 1pr.,2: -- *non inueniendi nova at certe iudicandi de veteribus iniungere laborem non iniuste viderentur.*

<sup>845</sup> Quint. *inst.* 1pr.,3–5.

<sup>846</sup> Quint. *inst.* 1,4,2.

<sup>847</sup> It has been suggested by Blank (1998, xlvi and 2000, 410) that it is likely that Quintilian knew Asclepiades' work. The strongest implication of this is Asclepiades' division of the

description of grammar, although his discussion (naturally) takes a dialectically organised course. Perhaps he does not think that it is reasonable to talk about more than the minimum number of clear-cut parts of the art; as we shall see below, the more finely drawn parts tend to overlap. Moreover, Quintilian makes it clear that he has not set out to cover all there is to grammar, but to focus on those things that are “most necessary”.<sup>848</sup>

Quintilian knows the theory and practice of defining. There is a detailed discussion of the issue in Book 5 of the *Institutio oratoria*, covering the central concepts: *genus*, *species* or *forma*, *differentia*, *propria*, *diuisio* and *partitio*.<sup>849</sup> The division of grammar given by Quintilian is a working definition for the purpose of the *Institutio oratoria*, while rhetoric, the actual subject of the work, is approached from a more theoretical angle: the various definitions of rhetoric proposed by rhetoricians and philosophers are listed in a substantial section (*inst.* 2,15,1–37). Quintilian notes – disapprovingly – that it is a custom among those who write manuals (*artes*) not to use the same words in their definitions (*fines*) as others have used.<sup>850</sup> It is plausible that those technical writers who wrote on *grammaticae* followed this custom as well. In the Greek tradition, this is reflected by Sextus Empiricus.<sup>851</sup> Definitions were also fashionable in medicine: Galen complains that physicians seem unable to begin healing a patient without playing with definitions, which are of course irrelevant to the patient’s survival. This phenomenon was common enough to be named as a ‘disease’ – φιλοροιστία, ‘love of definitions’.<sup>852</sup>

Quintilian’s terminology shows some traces of the then current discussion on epistemology. Particularly noticeable is his use of the term *methodice*. According to Glück (1967, 22 n. 2), neither of the terms (*methodice* and *historice*) used by Quintilian for the two main heads of *grammaticae* is used in this sense anywhere else. This seems to be true of *methodice*; in the case of *historice*, there is a clear enough parallel in Sextus Empiricus, who, following Asclepiades of Myrlea, uses the term ἰστορικόν to name the part of grammar that deals with the subject matter of the text. In Latin texts, however, Quintilian’s *historice* is

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‘histories’ (Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,252), which is similar to Quintilian’s division of ‘narratives’ (*inst.* 2,4,2): unrealistic fiction, realistic fiction, and non-fiction. However, a similar division is already found in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (and is thus a part of the Latin rhetorical tradition) under the discussion of the sub-types of *narrationes* (1,13); these are *fabula* (unrealistic fiction, such as the plots of tragedies), *historia* (facts), and *argumentum* (realistic fiction, such as the plots of comedies).

<sup>848</sup> Quint. *inst.* 1,10,1: *Haec de grammaticae, quam breuissime potui, non ut omnia dicerem sectatus, quod infinitum erat, sed ut maxime necessaria.*

<sup>849</sup> Quint. *inst.* 5,10,53–64.

<sup>850</sup> Quint. *inst.* 2,15,37.

<sup>851</sup> See section 3.7.

<sup>852</sup> Gal. *diff. puls.* 8,698.

indeed the only instance. A methodological division in two that bears resemblance to Quintilian's is found in Sextus Empiricus' citation of Chaeris, for whom grammar "diagnoses from expertise and tradition the things said and thought by the Greeks" (εἶναι ἀπὸ τέχνης <καὶ ἱστορίας> διαγνωστικὴν τῶν παρ' Ἑλλησι λεκτῶν καὶ νοητῶν<sup>853</sup>). The methodical starting points of 'expertise', i.e. rules, and 'tradition', i.e. literature and the material available through research, amount to Quintilian's 'methodical' and 'historical' parts. Although 'expertise' and 'method' are not synonymous, they are closely related: expertise arises from method.<sup>854</sup> Tauriscus' threefold division of κριτική into λογικόν, τριβικόν and ἱστορικόν reveals the same dichotomy of 'methodical' and 'historical': the notion of ἀμεθόδος ὕλη, 'unordered, accidental raw material', which is the concern of the historical part is contrasted with the rational part (λογικόν), characterized by the orderly nature of its material.<sup>855</sup>

While parallels can be found for Quintilian's name for the 'historical part', we may ask where he got his name for the 'methodical part'. There are two aspects to Quintilian's methodical part: speaking (*loquendi regula*) and writing (*scribentibus custodienda, orthographia, recte scribendi scientia*).<sup>856</sup> It might be justified to consider the possibility that the concept of *methodice* here originates from the methodological debate occurring within the art of medicine. The closeness of the arts of grammar and medicine had been brought up already by Varro (see section 3.4.2), and from Quintilian's viewpoint too it could be said that the usefulness of grammar for the orator bears a resemblance to the function of medicine, i.e. maintaining good health. By Quintilian's day, the medical theorists were once again in the middle of another heated debate. In the early first century CE, in reaction against the established empiricist and rationalist approaches, a third party had introduced itself: the so-called methodists, who found great success in Rome.<sup>857</sup> The methodists were very much part of the influential medical debate down till the third century, their views regarding knowledge falling somewhere between the rationalists and the empiricists: the methodists claimed that theories were acceptable as long as it was understood that they could not serve as the foundation of medical practice. The methodists defined medicine as 'knowledge of manifest generalities'.<sup>858</sup> This characterization was meant to be applicable to any art; each art would take into account those things that are relevant to its aim. The methodists claimed to have finally

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<sup>853</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,76–77; see section 3.6.3.

<sup>854</sup> See section 2.1.

<sup>855</sup> Sext. Emp. *math.* 1,248–9; the connection between Quintilian, Chaeris and Tauriscus (section 3.3) was pointed out by Colson 1924, 115–116.

<sup>856</sup> Quint. *inst.* 1,7,1.

<sup>857</sup> Frede 1982, 2; Hankinson 1995, 78.

<sup>858</sup> Frede 1985, xxx.

discovered a true method – solid and reliable – for medicine, previously seen as a conjectural art.<sup>859</sup> What I am suggesting is not that Quintilian was methodologically influenced by the methodist school of medicine, merely that quite possibly his use of the word *methodice* was inspired by the current discussion in the field of medicine.

After the division of grammar, Quintilian continues his general discussion of the contents of the art:

Nam et scribendi ratio coniuncta cum loquendo est et enarrationem praecedat emendata lectio et mixtum his omnibus iudicium est: quo quidem ita seuerè sunt usi ueteres grammatici ut non uersus modo censoria quadam uirgula notare et libros qui falso uiderentur inscripti tamquam subditos summouere familia permiserint sibi, sed auctores alios in ordinem redegerint, alios omnino exemerint numero.<sup>860</sup>

The principles of writing are closely connected with those of speaking, correct reading is a prerequisite of interpretation, and judgement is involved in all these. The old *grammatici* indeed were so severe in their judgements that they not only allowed themselves to mark lines with a sign of disapproval and disinherit, as it were, as bastards any books which seemed to be wrongly attributed, but also listed some authors in a recognized canon, and excluded others altogether.<sup>861</sup>

The four Varronian parts of grammar, *lectio*, *enarratio*, *emendatio* and *iudicium* (in the sense of textual criticism and canonization of authors) are all included in this section. Quintilian knows what is meant by *iudicium* in the context of the ‘old grammarians’, but the philological groundwork of textual criticism and the construction of literary canons is not that relevant to the education of an orator – even if literature itself is important. There is a more significant level of *iudicium*: the critical assessment that is involved in every part of grammar. Examples of this are found later in the text, for instance in the discussion of the criteria of *latinitas*: “in all these cases, we need judgement, especially as regards analogy” (*Omnia tamen haec exigunt acre iudicium, analogia praecipue*<sup>862</sup>). And again, in his discussion of matters concerning orthography: “in all this the grammarian must use his own judgement, for that is what should count most” (*Iudicium autem suum grammaticus interponat his omnibus: nam hoc ualere plurimum debet*<sup>863</sup>).

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<sup>859</sup> Gal. *sect.* 81,9–14; see Frede 1987, 262, 268.

<sup>860</sup> Quint. *inst.* 1,4,3.

<sup>861</sup> Translation by Russell 2001.

<sup>862</sup> Quint. *inst.* 1,6,3.

<sup>863</sup> Quint. *inst.* 1,7,30.

Quintilian's agenda is to remind the grammarians of their duty.<sup>864</sup> Sometimes the tone he takes is an encouraging, mostly advisory one: the grammarian should use his judgement in deciding on what grounds something is correct language or not, and no rule is to be swallowed without chewing.

Quintilian describes the typical grammatical instruction (*inst.* 1,2,14): the grammarian speaks of the rules of language (*grammaticus -- de loquendi ratione disserat*), explains problems (*quaestiones explicet*) – for example, orthographic and semantic problems that arise in the text under scrutiny –, expounds histories (*historias exponat*), and paraphrases poems (*poemata enarret*), which was a common drill.<sup>865</sup> The first three chapters of the first book of *Institutio oratoria* form a kind of introductory section, after which Quintilian proceeds to describe what he calls *grammatices elementa* (*inst.* 1,4,6). As soon as the pupil has learned to read and write, he is ready to move on to the school of the grammarian,<sup>866</sup> where it is time to begin with sounds, letters and syllables (1,4,6–17). For someone who is already literate, these are naturally familiar in practice, but the grammarian adds a new, more theoretical dimension to the study of these elements. For example, under the grammarian's guidance the students consider such matters as whether there are letters lacking in the Latin alphabet (such as the digamma), and the fact that certain vowels (*i* and *u*) sometimes assume the role of a consonant. The grammarian also pays attention to both synchronic and diachronic changes in language, such as *cadit – excidit* and *duellum – bellum*. Learning proceeds from the smallest element to a whole word, as the parts of speech are listed, and finally, the vices and virtues of speech, *vitia virtutesque orationis* (1,5,1–71). This structure of grammatical instruction reflects that of the grammatical manuals we know from later times, in which the elements are learned hierarchically from the smallest to the largest, culminating with the vices and virtues.

Quintilian's discussion of the parts of speech (*inst.* 1,4,17–21) takes the form of a doxography, resembling that of Dionysius of Halicarnassus.<sup>867</sup> As already mentioned in section 3.2, Quintilian testifies to Aristarchus' division into eight parts of speech, which in Quintilian's opinion is the classification with the best authority; its Latin proponent is Remmius Palaemon (*Alii tamen ex idoneis dumtaxat auctoribus octo partes secuti sunt, ut Aristarchus et aetate nostra Palaemon*). However, from the Quintilian passage it is clear that there was no canonized theory: individual grammarians of the time were free to teach the parts of

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<sup>864</sup> Quint. *inst.* 1,5,7: *Sed ut parva sint haec, pueri docentur adhuc, et grammaticos officii sui commonemus.*

<sup>865</sup> See Quint. *inst.* 1,9,2.

<sup>866</sup> Quint. *inst.* 1,4,1: *Primus in eo, qui scribendi legendique adeptus erit facultatem, grammaticis est locus.*

<sup>867</sup> See section 4.6.

speech as they considered appropriate,<sup>868</sup> and Cleonius testifies that Valerius Probus (active around the middle of the first century CE) divided the parts of speech into two main categories.<sup>869</sup> Quintilian does not refer to Probus any more than to Varro, whose division was very different from those he mentions. Whatever the number of parts, it always depends on some kind of definition; even if this definition exists only as a faint idea behind the classification, rather than anything explicit. In any case, Quintilian's interest in the theory of the parts of speech is limited. Although there are classifications he does not accept (*Adiciebant et adseuerationem, ut 'eheu', et tractionem, ut 'fasciatim': quae mihi non adprobantur*), he also explicitly says that the details of the common noun are not important, at least to him (*Vocabulum an appellatio dicenda sit προσηγορία et subicienda nomini necne, quia parui refert, liberum opinaturis relinquo*). The history of the development of the parts of speech, according to Quintilian, begins with a familiar pair, Aristotle and Theodectes – also suggested by Dionysius of Halicarnassus in his doxography of the parts of speech.<sup>870</sup> It was Aristotle and Theodectes who determined the three major groups of words: verbs, nouns, and conjunctions. The philosophers, above all the Stoics, increased the number of the parts of speech. Quintilian does not make a point of naming the proponents of the various divisions or characterizing their professions. As there is a lot that is similar in the accounts of Quintilian and Dionysius of Halicarnassus, it is possible that they drew from the same source, although which particular source this was is unclear. Quintilian's remark concerning the preferable number of parts of speech (in contrast with Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who is more tolerant of different numbers) is understandable: he is a teacher who wants to teach definite things, not something in a state of flux, even if the parts of speech do not strictly belong to the rhetorician's domain.<sup>871</sup>

The elements of grammar (*grammatices elementa*), discussed within the two divisions of grammar (*recte loquendi scientia* and *poetarum enarratio*), are sounds, letters, syllables, the parts of speech, and the vices and virtues of speech. *Recte loquendi scientia* consists of rules for correct speech (*ratio loquendi* 1,6,1–45) and rules for writing (*ratio scribendi* 1,7,1–35). The rules of correct

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<sup>868</sup> Plutarch (c. 46–120 CE) too mentions eight parts of speech, apparently indicating that it is a standard number. Philosophers and grammarians are placed in antithesis in a discussion in the *Platonicae Quaestiones* (1009b10–c8): grammarians recognize eight parts of speech, whereas Plato only distinguishes two. Plutarch's solution is that nouns and verbs are the 'language-making' components of speech, while the rest are not autonomous (1010a7–b3).

<sup>869</sup> *GL* 5,10,6–7 = Varro *GRF* frg. 244: *Probus et Varro, alter eorum in duas partes [orationem divisam] scribit et reliquas subiectas facit, alter in quattuor, prout quisque potuit sentire*. See sections 4.1 and 4.3.2.

<sup>870</sup> *Dion. Hal. comp.* 2; see section 4.6.

<sup>871</sup> On the differences between Quintilian and Dionysius of Halicarnassus as historians of linguistics, see De Jonge 2008, 180–181.

speech consist of the four criteria of Latinity – *ratio, vetustas, auctoritas, and consuetudo*; these will be discussed in the next section. *Ratio scribendi* gives rules for orthography. The latter part, the interpretation of poets (*poetarum enarratio*, including prose authors) is dealt with in Chapter eight of the first book; in this part, the objects of study are subject matter and vocabulary.<sup>872</sup> The study of vocabulary comes back to *recte loquendi scientia*: the authority of words often derives from the use of certain authors.

According to Quintilian (*inst.* 1,8,13–21), when the grammarian is lecturing on a text, he must pay attention to certain things: *in praelegendo grammaticus et illa quidem minora praestare debet*. Quintilian lists the following as such ‘smaller points’ of grammar: the parts of speech (*partes orationis*), the features of the feet in the verse (*pedum proprietates*);<sup>873</sup> the peculiarities of language (*deprendat quae barbara, quae inpropria, quae contra legem loquendi sint posita*); obscure words (*glossemata etiam, id est uoces minus usitatas*); tropes (*tropi*); stylistic matters (*quae in oeconomia uirtus, quae in decore rerum, quid personae cuique convenerit, quid in sensibus laudandum, quid in uerbis, ubi copia probabilis, ubi modus*), and the explanation of the subject matter (*enarratio historiarum*). This list rather resembles the six parts of grammar as presented by Dionysius Thrax;<sup>874</sup> however, etymology and analogy are not included among Quintilian’s *minora*. This is understandable, in that in Dionysius’ list they both function as tools for textual criticism, which does not play a role in *Institutio oratoria*.<sup>875</sup> For Quintilian, the place of etymology and analogy in the grammatical system is the theory of correct language, where they represent *ratio*, reason.<sup>876</sup> As to the methods of explaining *quae barbara* (barbarisms), *quae inpropria* (words used in the wrong sense), *quae contra legem loquendi sint posita* (solecisms) and *glossemata* must to some extent depend methodologically on etymology and analogy, even if the two are not named as individual phases of school lectures. An example of such use is found in *inst.* 1,4,25–26, where Quintilian stresses that a capable teacher will also go into such details as the origins of names. One part of the analysis of literature is parsing, determining the parts of speech represented by the individual words, followed by metrical analysis. The function of the parts-of-speech analysis is to

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<sup>872</sup> Quint. *inst.* 1,4,4: *Nec poetas legisse satis est: excutiendum omne scriptorum genus, non propter historias modo, sed uerba, quae frequenter ius ab auctoribus sumunt.*

<sup>873</sup> Sextus Empiricus (*math.* 1,159–161) deals with scansion and partition of words under the same title, μερισμός.

<sup>874</sup> Dion. Thrax GG1.1 5,4–6,3: Μέρη δὲ αὐτῆς ἐστὶν ἕξ· πρῶτον ἀνάγνωσις ἐντριβῆς κατὰ προσῳδίαν, δευτέρον ἐξηγησις κατὰ τοὺς ἐνυπάρχοντας ποιητικοὺς τρόπους, τρίτον γλωσσῶν τε καὶ ἰστοριῶν πρόχειρος ἀπόδοσις, τέταρτον ἐτυμολογίας εὐρεσις, πέμπτον ἀναλογίας ἐκλογισμός, ἕκτον κρίσις ποιημάτων, ὃ δὴ κάλλιστόν ἐστι πάντων τῶν ἐν τῇ τέχνῃ.

<sup>875</sup> von Fritz 1949, 363.

<sup>876</sup> Quint. *inst.* 1,6,1; see below.

make the pupil pay attention to such literary devices as will help him in shaping his own imposing orations.

In those chapters of the *Institutio oratoria* that deal with grammar, the only grammarians referred to by name are Aristarchus and Palaemon. The former was widely recognized as the exemplary grammarian, and it seems natural that Quintilian also wanted to mention a Latin grammarian, his famous contemporary Remmius Palaemon.<sup>877</sup> Quintilian does not go into details; he accepts Palaemon's account of the parts of speech because it recognizes the authoritative number of parts. At first, it appears that what makes Aristarchus and Palaemon's lists more acceptable than the others is that they both regard the appellative as a species of noun; at the end of the passage, however, this question is deemed insignificant. Quintilian was not interested in the rationale whereby the parts of speech were formed. He was aware that the lists of parts proposed by Aristarchus and Remmius Palaemon were dissimilar because the Latin language lacks the article. In the Greek system, interjections, classified by Palaemon as a separate part of speech, fall under the category of adverbs.<sup>878</sup> Palaemon's definitions of the parts of speech have been preserved in Charisius' *ars*. These definitions are diverse, and are formed by different methods; nevertheless, Charisius recognizes them as definitions, adding *Palaemon ita definit* before each one.<sup>879</sup> The interjection is defined according to its semantic function: to signify the 'condition of the soul' (*interiectiones sunt quae nihil docibile habent, significant tamen adfectum animi*<sup>880</sup>). The preposition is defined etymologically (*praepositiones sunt dictae ex eo quod praeponantur tam casibus quam uerbis*<sup>881</sup>). The conjunction is defined by means of division, as having three subdivisions: *coniunctionum quaedam sunt principales, aliae subsequentes, aliae mediae, quibus utralibet parte positae sine uitio coniungitur oratio*.<sup>882</sup> These definitions hardly focus on what is peculiar to the definiendum, appearing more as mnemonics than as part of an established theory.

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<sup>877</sup> For Remmius Palaemon, see section 4.1.

<sup>878</sup> Priscian mentions (*inst.*, GL3 90,6–12) that the separate status of interjections was an informed decision by the Latin grammarians, according to whom the presence of a verb is not necessary for the interjection to signify what it signifies.

<sup>879</sup> On Palaemon's definitions, see Luhtala (2002, 272), according to whom the definition of the conjunction attributed to Palaemon by Diomedes (GL1 415,16–17: *Palaemon eam ita definit, coniunctio est pars orationis conectens ordinansque sententiam*) is more likely to come from Cominianus (first half of the fourth century), as Charisius claims (289,19–20 Barwick: *de coniunctione, ut ait Cominianus. coniunctio est pars orationis nectens ordinansque sententiam*).

<sup>880</sup> Char. 311,10–11 (Barwick).

<sup>881</sup> Char. 299,14–16 (Barwick).

<sup>882</sup> Char. 290,12–14 (Barwick).



#### 5.4.2 CRITERIA FOR ACCEPTABLE LANGUAGE

From our point of view, the most remarkable thing about Quintilian's account of grammar seems to be the introduction of *recte loquendi scientia* as the other half of the art. There had been indications already in the previous century of the strengthening position of correct language within the art of grammar. In the definition by the Hellenistic philosopher Ariston,<sup>883</sup> grammar clearly means both the study of literature and a prescriptive linguistic art. None of the surviving definitions by grammarians from the first century BCE say this explicitly. Nevertheless, Quintilian says that this division into these two parts is not his innovation; it was already there and used by grammarians. This division suits Quintilian well: grammar is in the service of rhetoric, and 'speaking correctly' (*recte loquendi scientia*) must precede 'speaking well' (*bene dicendi scientia*)<sup>884</sup>.

Quintilian's criteria of *sermo Latinus* are preserved in their original context with a full discussion; this makes them easily approachable, unlike those of Varro, which survive only as fragments. It is evident that as a theorist and teacher of imposing speech, in which correct language plays a crucial role, Quintilian had to devote attention to the issue. In Quintilian's ideal education of the orator, correct language is a pervasive feature, beginning from birth: the two most important characteristics of a child's nurse are a good nature and the correct use of language.<sup>885</sup> There are actually two sets of criteria, one for speech and one for writing: *est etiam sua loquentibus observatio, sua scribentibus*.<sup>886</sup> Quintilian's focus is on the first. These are known as the criteria of Latinity, although it must be pointed out that Quintilian never actually uses the term *Latinitas* in the *Institutio oratoria*. Nor does he mention any source for the criteria. The methods by which acceptable usage is achieved are four in number: *ratio* or reason, manifested mainly in analogy and sometimes in etymology; *vetustas* or antiquity; *auctoritas* or authority; and *consuetudo* or usage.<sup>887</sup> The second set of criteria that concerns orthography consists of usage (*consuetudo*) and "how it sounds" (*quomodo sonat*). *Iudicium grammatici*, the judgement of the grammarian, is also emphasized.<sup>888</sup>

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<sup>883</sup> Frg. 5 Mariotti = Mar. Victorin. *gramm. GL6* 3,7–4,9: *grammaticae est scientia poetas et historicos intellegere, formam praecipue loquendi ad rationem et consuetudinem dirigens*; see section 3.8.

<sup>884</sup> Quint. *inst.* 2,15,38.

<sup>885</sup> Quint. *inst.* 1,1,4.

<sup>886</sup> Quint. *inst.* 1,6,1.

<sup>887</sup> Quint. *inst.* 1,6,1.

<sup>888</sup> Quint. *inst.* 1,4,3; 1,7,30.

There is an inherent possibility of conflict in the rules of correct language: rational criteria (analogy and etymology) vs. criteria that are based on empirical observation (authority, antiquity and usage). Quintilian makes it clear that the foundation of *grammaticae* must lie in the observance of usage rather than in the following of technical rules. It is a whole other matter to ‘speak Latin’ (*Latine loqui*) than to ‘speak grammar’ (*grammaticae loqui*).<sup>889</sup> This is the rhetorician’s viewpoint; it is not necessarily shared by the majority of grammarians of his time. It is of vital importance for grammarians’ self-assertion to have a set of rules and methods to follow, to have their field of knowledge called an *ars* or τέχνη.<sup>890</sup> The most tenable of the criteria is usage: *consuetudo uero certissima loquendi magistra*.<sup>891</sup> The other criteria are either arbitrary or – when applied strictly – produce deficient language. Accordingly, *consuetudo* must be clearly defined: *Ergo consuetudinem sermonis uocabo consensum eruditorum*,<sup>892</sup> “I call usage the commonly accepted usage of the educated”. *Consuetudo* cleverly manoeuvres with linguistic variation: on the one hand it permits variation that arises out of the historical development of the language, on the other it prevents stylistic, individual, social and ethnic variation.<sup>893</sup>

Of the two rational criteria, etymology is less useful than analogy; at this point, Quintilian mentions Varro’s etymological ventures as a warning example.<sup>894</sup> The role of etymology in the *Institutio oratoria* (discussed in 1,6,28–38) is ambivalent. Quintilian considers it very useful in the case of words that need interpretation, but it can also result in absurdities (1,6,32). Thus it is to be handled with care; Quintilian states (1,6,29) that the primary uses of etymology are in the interpretation of obscure words and in definitions, rather than in finding the correct word form. This explains why he did not include etymology in his list of ‘smaller points’, which otherwise seems to correspond to the parts of γραμματική by Dionysius Thrax (see section 3.4.3) – the teacher should not encourage his pupils to use etymology as a productive tool. Quintilian does not elaborate upon the use of etymology in definitions, but it is obvious that underlying this notion is what Cicero said in the *Topica* (10): etymology is one of the sound arguments in definitions.<sup>895</sup>

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<sup>889</sup> Quint. *inst.* 1,6,27.

<sup>890</sup> Blank 2005, 216.

<sup>891</sup> Quint. *inst.* 1,6,3.

<sup>892</sup> Quint. *inst.* 1,6,45.

<sup>893</sup> Vainio 1999, 20.

<sup>894</sup> Quint. *inst.* 1,6,37–38.

<sup>895</sup> Quint. *inst.* 1,6,29–30; see Colson (1924, 111).

Quintilian discusses analogy, giving multiple examples and explaining its nature:

Non enim, cum primum fingerentur homines, Analogia demissa caelo formam loquendi dedit, sed inuenta est postquam loquebantur, et notatum in sermone quid quoque modo caderet. Itaque non ratione nititur sed exemplo, nec lex est loquendi sed obseruatio, ut ipsam analogian nulla res alia fecerit quam consuetudo.<sup>896</sup>

Analogy was not sent down from heaven to frame the rules of language when men were first created, but was discovered after they began to speak and to note the ways in which each word ended in speech. Therefore, it is based not on reason but on example; it is not a law of language, but rather it is observation, and in fact analogy is the offspring of usage.

The foundation of analogy is not in fact rational at all: it is constituted by usage. Accordingly, it goes against this hierarchy to insist on analogical forms over usage itself. Analogy, however, is presented as a subdivision of *ratio* even though it is now pronounced not to be based on *ratio*. Colson (1924, 80) has the following explanation: "Men do not speak originally on 'ratio', in the sense of some reasoned principle, but the observation of what they say may be reduced to 'ratio' in the sense of system." It is some such notion that is probably behind Quintilian's choice of words.<sup>897</sup>

For Varro, analogy and etymology could not be brought together under a common head; or at least this can be said of the discussion in *De lingua Latina*, where the concepts are not primarily discussed from the viewpoint of correct language. In contrast, Quintilian is interested in etymology and analogy exclusively as criteria for correct language. If analogy is only modestly rational, what is Quintilian's motivation in placing etymology and analogy under *ratio*? He obviously wanted to present four criteria (quite possibly following Varro, who seems to have especially favoured a fourfold division), and *ratio* is a convenient hypernym for analogy and etymology. One solution might have been to make a single criterion out of the two criteria of antiquity, *vetustas* and *auctoritas*. This, however, would not have been acceptable, as the most important factor in these criteria is how they work in practice. Authority (*auctoritas*) refers to the appreciation of certain authors, found among orators and historians. As a rule, poets

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<sup>896</sup> Quint. *inst.* 1,6,16.

<sup>897</sup> The same notion of analogy as an offspring of *consuetudo* had been put forward by Varro (*ling.* 9,3): *est nata ex quadam consuetudine analogia et ex hac <consuetudine item anomalia.*

are not to be followed, because they are constricted by the metrical rules; this sometimes makes them contravene the rules of language, at the same time allowing them to use poetic expressions.<sup>898</sup> The criterion of antiquity (*vetustas*) can be applied when a certain archaistic style is wanted.<sup>899</sup> Later grammarians do not mention *vetustas* as a criterion, probably because it shares common ground with *auctoritas* and *etymologia*; applying it also requires extreme caution, as Quintilian reminds his readers.<sup>900</sup> Antiquity and etymology are connected in that both are essentially a matter of ancient usage, and they function at the level of meaning.<sup>901</sup> The main difference between the application of the criteria of antiquity, *vetustas* and *auctoritas*, seems to be that the former primarily concerns the meaning of the word while the latter pertains to the form.<sup>902</sup> With regard to *auctoritas* – and this is an essential factor in its effectiveness – there is also a shared opinion as to the set of authoritative texts that can be used as stylistic models; the same cannot be said of *vetustas*.<sup>903</sup> What is common to etymology and analogy is that they share a tendency to produce hypersystematic word forms. The claim for systematicity, unreasonable as it may sometimes seem, is rationalism,<sup>904</sup> to which Quintilian avoids absolute adherence.

#### 5.4.3 THE STATUS OF GRAMMATICAE

Although Quintilian discusses grammar as a stepping-stone to a successful career for an orator, the status of grammar outside rhetoric is in no way questioned. On the contrary, it is commended as the only branch of study that has more of the actual substance than “ostentation”: *necessaria pueris, iucunda senibus, dulcis secretorum comes, et quae uel sola in omni studiorum genere plus habeat operis quam ostentationis*.<sup>905</sup> However, Quintilian also warns against self-display, a potential vice of anyone with talent above the average (*inst.* 1,8,18–21): he advises grammarians to avoid empty speculations on endless details in explaining stories, because there is a danger that this might turn into boasting.<sup>906</sup>

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<sup>898</sup> Quint. *inst.* 1,6,2.

<sup>899</sup> Quint. *inst.* 1,6,39–40.

<sup>900</sup> Quint. *inst.* 1,6,42 on the similarity of *auctoritas* and *vetustas*; see Vainio 1999, 18.

<sup>901</sup> Vainio 1999, 18.

<sup>902</sup> Vainio 1999, 53ff.

<sup>903</sup> von Fritz 1949, 350.

<sup>904</sup> von Fritz 1949, 349.

<sup>905</sup> Quint. *inst.* 1,4,5.

<sup>906</sup> Didymus, the hyper-prolific grammarian of the Augustan age (see section 4.2), is Quintilian’s warning example, not unlike Seneca’s (section 5.2).

For Quintilian, grammar is an *ars*,<sup>907</sup> and is practiced as a *professio*.<sup>908</sup> He uses the terms *scientia* and *ars* for the structural parts of *grammaticae* more or less interchangeably: orthography is called both *scientia* and *ars*,<sup>909</sup> and the part of correct language (to which orthography belongs), known as *methodice*, is also a *scientia*, whereas the other division, *historice*, is simply *poetarum enarratio*, without any reference to the orderly nature implied in the terms *ars*, *scientia*, and *methodice*. Quintilian explains *ars* as something that is gained through *disciplina*: *ars erit, quae disciplina percipi debet --*.<sup>910</sup>

Quintilian does not systematically discuss the epistemological status of the art of grammar. This is not due to a lack of interest in such matters in general, as we can conclude from his meticulous discussion of the definitions of rhetoric, extending from *inst.* 2,15 to 2,21: he first goes through a list of definitions of rhetoric proposed by different schools and authors, after which he offers his own definition.<sup>911</sup> The next step is to define the goal (*finis* or τέλος) of rhetoric, followed by a discussion of its usefulness (*sequitur quaestio, an utilis rhetorice*), whether rhetoric is an *ars* (*transeamus igitur ad eam quaestionem, quae sequitur, an rhetorice ars sit*),<sup>912</sup> and what kinds of *artes* there are (θεωρητική, πρακτική,

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<sup>907</sup> This is not asserted directly, but there is really no doubt about it – and really no other option for Quintilian (*inst.* 1,3,18): *Nunc quibus instituendus sit artibus qui sic formabitur ut fieri possit orator, et quae in quaque aetate inchoanda, dicere ingrediar.*

<sup>908</sup> Quint. *inst.* 1,4,2: *Haec igitur professio, cum brevissime in duas partis diuidatur --*. Cf. Cic. *de or.* 1,21 (*professio bene dicendi*); Suet. *gramm.* 8,1 (*professio grammatica*); Scrib. Larg. 8 (*professio medicinae*).

<sup>909</sup> Quint. *inst.* 1,7,1: *Nunc, quoniam diximus quae sit loquendi regula, dicendum quae scribentibus custodienda, quod Graeci orthographian uocant, nos recte scribendi scientiam nominemus. Cuius ars non in hoc posita est, ut nouerimus quibus quaeque syllaba litteris constet (nam id quidem infra grammatici officium est), sed totam, ut mea fert opinio, subtilitatem in dubiis habet --*.

<sup>910</sup> Quint. *inst.* 2,14,5.

<sup>911</sup> Quint. *inst.* 2,15,38.

<sup>912</sup> Quintilian discusses epistemological terminology in detail, including definitions of *ars*. The first definition is from the Stoic Cleanthes, the successor of Zeno. In this definition, the significance of method (*via*) is emphasized (*inst.* 2,17,41): (*Nam sive, ut Cleanthes voluit, ars est potestas via, id est ordine, efficiens, esse certe viam atque ordinem in bene dicendo nemo dubitaverit --*). “If, as Cleanthes suggested, art is ‘a capability which acts by method’, that is to say in an orderly way, then no one can doubt that there is method and order in speaking well” Translation by Russell 2001. A similar definition is also attributed to Cleanthes by Olympiodorus (*in Gorgiam* 69,26–27 Westerink): Κλεάνθης τοίνυν λέγει ὅτι “τέχνη ἐστὶν ἕξις ὁδῶ ἀνύουσα”; this definition closely resembles the one attributed to Zeno (Schol. D.T. GG1.3 118,14–16 = SVF I frg. 72; see sections 2.2, 3.1 and 3.6.3): δηλοῖ καὶ ὁ Ζήνων, λέγων “τέχνη ἐστὶν ἕξις ὁδοποιητική”, τουτέστι δι’ ὁδοῦ καὶ μεθόδου ποιούσά τι. Quintilian also gives what he calls an “almost universally accepted” definition of *ars*, which is Stoic (*inst.* 2,17,41): *sive ille ab omnibus fere probatus finis observatur, artem constare ex perceptionibus consentientibus et coexercitatis ad finem utilem vitae, iam ostendimus nihil non horum in rhetorice*

ποιητική). The components of *ars* are, in general, *inspectio* and *exercitatio*: theory and exercise.<sup>913</sup> Quintilian also discusses the material (*materia*) and instrument (*instrumentum*) of rhetoric, although, as he remarks, the latter subject is not commonly brought into the discussion.<sup>914</sup> This is true at least of Cicero, who does not mention *instrumentum* in his list of preliminary questions in *De inventione* (see section 4.3.2); nor do we know whether Varro discussed these questions. Quintilian regards *instrumenta* as the instruments of the *artifex*, the orator, rather than of the art itself.<sup>915</sup>

The question whether *eloquentia* is based more on nature than on education Quintilian considers as lying outside the scope of his work, whereas the types of *mediae artes*, ‘indifferent arts’ (ἀτεχνία, κακοτεχνία, ματαιοτεχνία) and their relationship to rhetoric are discussed at length. This discussion – as well as the *quaestio an utilis* – reflects the typical disparagement of the arts; the Epicureans were keen on pointing out usefulness, and for example Ammianus Marcellinus (30,4,3) explicitly says that Epicurus had accused forensic rhetoric of being κακοτεχνία, ‘bad art’. A fuller list of the ‘indifferent arts’, with their explanations, is found in the Scholia to Dionysius Thrax: τεχνοειδές, ἡμιτέχνιον, μικροτεχνία, κακοτεχνία, ματαιοτεχνία, ἀτεχνία. This list belongs to a broad discussion of the theory and practice of defining an expertise, intended as a prolegomenon to the Τέχνη γραμματική.<sup>916</sup> The arts proper are divided into four: productive, theoretical, practical, and mixed (ποιητικάί, θεωρητικάί, πρακτικάί, μικταί). Grammar represents the last-mentioned category, the mixed arts: it combines the productive (as in correcting texts and in orthography) and the theoretical (in the theory of the parts of speech). There are many ways of dividing the arts, and one way is attributed to a Cretan grammarian known as Lucillus of Tarrha. He was a contemporary of Quintilian, flourishing around the middle of the first century CE. Lucillus is quoted in the Scholia to Dionysius Thrax by the name Λούκιος Ταρραῖος. Lucillus wrote a commentary on the *Argonautica* by Apollonius of Rhodes and a collection of proverbs, which survives as an epitome by Zenobius (under the emperor Hadrian). Among Lucillus’ works was a grammatical treatise called the Τεχνικά.<sup>917</sup> According to the Scholia, Lucillus says that the four εἶδη (species) of expertise are the productive (of material objects), the practical, the instrumental, and the theoretical (ἀπο-

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*inse*. For a discussion of these definitions of *ars*, see Reinhardt and Winterbottom 2006, 349–350.

<sup>913</sup> Quint. *inst.* 2,17,42.

<sup>914</sup> Quint. *inst.* 2,21,24.

<sup>915</sup> Quintilian returns to the question in *inst.* 12,5 where he discusses the orator specifically. Cf. note 650 for ὄργανα in the Scholia to Dionysius Thrax.

<sup>916</sup> GG1.3 106,15–124,25.

<sup>917</sup> *New Pauly s.v.* Lucillus [1].

τελεσματικόν, πρακτικόν, ὀργανικόν, θεωρητικόν). These categories are richly exemplified; grammar, however, has no place anywhere in this scheme. The Scholiasts do not specifically attribute a definition of grammar to this Lucillus, but it is evident that the Τέχνηκα – probably a grammatical manual – included such definitory notions.

Definitory notions concerning the categorization of the τέχνηαι – a matter in which Quintilian was ready to do his part – had already since Plato traditionally been part of the preliminary discussion of the arts. Diogenes Laertius reports (3,84) that Plato had divided scientific knowledge (ἐπιστήμη) into three species, the practical, the productive, and the theoretical: Τῆς ἐπιστήμης εἶδη ἐστὶ τρία· τὸ μὲν γάρ ἐστι πρακτικόν, τὸ δὲ ποιητικόν, τὸ δὲ θεωρητικόν. In light of the Platonic examples given by Diogenes Laertius, it is not easy to pin down the right category for grammar. Matters of the state and playing the flute or the kithara are practical in that they do not produce anything concrete, yet they are clearly ‘doing’ something that has an effect; house-building and ship-building are productive and yield a visible result; the theoretical species of ἐπιστήμη, such as geometry, harmonics and astronomy, neither produce nor do anything. Grammar as a species of τέχνηαι has an unambiguous position only in the most basic kind of division between craftsmanship and the intellectual arts.<sup>918</sup>

Quintilian places grammar in the *orbis doctrinae*, his translation of ἐγκύκλιος παιδεία.<sup>919</sup> In Quintilian’s time, *grammaticae* formed an educational and disciplinary entity of its own, but it is clear that grammar’s status among the *artes* is below rhetoric. Quintilian cannot picture a scheme where grammar and rhetoric are independent disciplines studied for their own sake. *Grammaticae* held an indisputable place in the educational system and as a discipline with its own devoted practitioners, but in his discussion of grammar in the first book Quintilian does not name any of these except for Aristarchus and Palaemon, whose names are connected to the doxography of the parts of speech. Quintilian’s authorities for rhetoric are Aristotle and Cicero, whereas for grammar they are ‘Greeks’ and ‘scholars’. Although Quintilian draws a picture of grammar as a well-defined discipline that by and large recognizes its own limits, one of his points of criticism is aimed against the expansive nature of grammar, at the expense of rhetoric.<sup>920</sup> The very name of grammar, translated as *litteratura*, suggests that its proper place is the study of letters, as it used to be. It is grammar’s

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<sup>918</sup> A twofold division of the arts is implied for example in Xen. *Oec.* 4,1–3; *Ar. pol.* 1337b; *Schol. D.T.* GG1.3 112,4.

<sup>919</sup> *inst.* 1,10,1. *Orbis doctrinae* was not used by later writers; the educational vocabulary included *institutio, educatio, studia, liberalia studia, artes, principia, cura docendi, praecipienda*, and *litterae* (Morgan 1998, 35).

<sup>920</sup> *inst.* 2,1,4–6.

vice to try to annex the tasks and domains of the other arts, not being content with its original content, the *ratio recte loquendi*; rhetoric, on the other hand, somewhat shamefacedly has given up some of its duties. From Quintilian's perspective there is no problem drawing the boundary between philosophy and grammar. The Latin grammarians he knew, above all Remmius Palaemon, were probably no threat to philosophers; they did not use philosophical methods or terminology in their work. Besides, in a possible confrontation over boundaries there would have been no reason for Quintilian to side with the philosophers.

Quintilian briefly refers to a few of the other arts. In the education of an orator, basic musical education is needed in order to perfect the grammatical part of the training. Metre and rhythm must be covered, because a command of these is required in the part of *lectio emendata*. Besides music, Quintilian mentions two other fields of study that are vital for the grammarian to master: astronomy and philosophy. They pertain to the contents of literary works that must be thoroughly understood by someone who is about to analyze them. Empedocles, Varro and Lucretius are mentioned as examples – Varro is probably mentioned for his philosophical poetry. The requirements also comprise eloquence.<sup>921</sup> With this list of requirements for a grammarian, and a description of what grammar contains, anyone who suspects that the art is not to be taken seriously is proven wrong: *Quo minus sunt ferendi qui hanc artem ut tenuem atque ieiunam cauillantur*.<sup>922</sup> This last remark reminds the reader that the art of grammar, just like the other arts, had met with criticism and disdain – we remember Seneca's moral letters from the 60s. Seneca made the accusation of the triviality of grammatical learning in the search of wisdom – in other words he deplored the lack of moral guidance in grammar;<sup>923</sup> Quintilian emphasizes the complexity and depth of grammatical erudition. However, it rather seems that Quintilian was responding less to Seneca's claim concerning grammar's (indisputable) inferiority to philosophy with regard to precepts for leading a good life, than to a critique that had been directed against the very content of the art. The Epicurean and Pyrrhonian critics, such as Philodemus and (later) Sextus Empiricus, were not satisfied with grammar's status as a rationalist art. Judging from his extensive treatment of definitions of rhetoric and its epistemological status (*inst.* 2,15ff.), Quintilian is sensitive to these issues. The criticism of grammar to which Quintilian is responding in *inst.* 1,4,5, and again in 1,7,33, concerns the alleged triviality and superfluousness of grammar's contents. According to Galen, superfluousness was among the standard objections made by empiricist critics of

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<sup>921</sup> Quint. *inst.* 1,4,4–1,4,5. The Varro mentioned could be Varro Atacinus rather than M. Terentius Varro, but it is likely that the latter is meant; for discussion, see Ax 2011, 99–100.

<sup>922</sup> Quint. *inst.* 1,4,5.

<sup>923</sup> Sen. *ep.* 88,5–8.



the arts, whose goal was to discredit all rationalist claims.<sup>924</sup> Such criticism, inasmuch as it largely could not deny the usefulness of grammar, was quite easily disregarded by Quintilian, whose viewpoint is nothing if not pragmatic. Complaints by rhetoricians as to the inadequacy of grammar, on the other hand, would be something to be taken seriously: if grammar did not prepare students adequately for rhetoric, that would be a problem. This, however, is not the case. Quintilian presents us with an expertise that when carried out carefully is capable of fulfilling its responsibility quite precisely.

### 5.5 Aulus Gellius and *grammatici*

After Quintilian, our sources on the nature of the *ars grammatica* are silent for a few decades. It is not until the first surviving Latin grammatical manuals, by Sacerdos and Asper, that we find a proper definitory discussion. However, I have already referred on occasion to the work of the second-century Roman aristocrat, antiquarian, archaist and miscellanist Aulus Gellius (c. 125 – after 180 CE). His *Noctes Atticae* is a treasure-trove of grammatical remarks of various kinds. As much as one third of the whole work is devoted to questions of language study; word formation, semantics and etymology receive particular attention, with copious citations.<sup>925</sup> Gellius also discusses the most traditional territory of the grammarians, that of critical assessment; for example in 3,3, where there is a section dedicated to the subject of authenticity. Here Gellius' authorities are Varro and Lucius Aelius Stilo. The overall scheme of the twenty-book work is education: Gellius is a responsible father, who intends his work for his son's educational benefit.<sup>926</sup> He makes it clear that knowing good Latin is a requirement for every Roman citizen;<sup>927</sup> moreover, poor use of language makes one look foolish, as exemplified in various articles.<sup>928</sup> Gellius also records other practical uses for the art of grammar: elucidating archaic texts such as laws (for example 16,10), explaining religious practices (5,12), comparing Greek and Latin, and resolving difficulties in translation (11,16).<sup>929</sup> In this section, in order to clarify the post-Quintilian development of the scope of the art of grammar, I examine Gellius' views insofar as they concern 1) the formation of grammatical knowledge, 2) the limits of grammatical and philosophical knowledge.

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<sup>924</sup> Gal. *sect.* 76,9–17; see section 3.5.

<sup>925</sup> Springer 1958, 121–122. For word formation in Gellius, see Vaahtera 1998, 147ff. Interpreting etymology broadly, Cavazza (2004, 68) has calculated as many as 366 etymologies in *Noctes Atticae*.

<sup>926</sup> For Gellius and education, see Morgan 2004.

<sup>927</sup> Gell. 4,1,18; in *pr.* 13, more generally on the importance of being *civiliter eruditus*.

<sup>928</sup> For example Gell. 1,10; 11,7.

<sup>929</sup> Morgan 2004, 192.

Gellius is in the habit of putting learned men to shame, and grammarians are his favourite target.<sup>930</sup> He seems to think that where grammarians go astray is that they concern themselves mostly with the formal categories of language instead of with meaning.<sup>931</sup> While a grammarian is compelled to give rules and focus on things that he is able to schematize, Gellius is free to discuss any phenomenon of language, without having to provide a definitive answer. For Gellius, blind dependence on dogmatic rules is something to be dreaded.<sup>932</sup> Accordingly, the rules are also cast aside in Gellius' article on euphony, in which he discusses poetic licence: the most elegant writers do not follow the rules made by grammarians, but consult their own ears. In Gellius' text, the grammarian Valerius Probus encourages aspiring writers to do so;<sup>933</sup> rather in the same spirit as Quintilian's remark, *mihi non inuenuste dici uidetur aliud esse Latine, aliud grammaticae loqui*.<sup>934</sup> Other unusual practices were ascribed to Valerius Probus as well, as we recall from Suetonius' report that Probus had 'followers' rather than disciples, and that his teaching methods were out of the ordinary; we also know that Probus had a 'peculiar' take on the parts of speech.<sup>935</sup> Gellius never ceases to criticize those who neglect the study of ancient authors and rely on technical rules. Grammarians' dependence on reason (*ratio*) is mocked harshly. The most blatant example is the case of the grammarian who insists that Gellius should give him a rule on a question of grammatical case. Gellius has already given an answer based on authoritative literary evidence, but the grammarian still wants a rule; Gellius gives him a false *ratio* that he has just invented. As it turns out, despite knowing that the *ratio* is falsely fabricated, the grammarian is unable to prove it wrong.<sup>936</sup>

Gellius strongly emphasizes the primacy of authority (*auctoritas*).<sup>937</sup> Accordingly, his approach to grammatical problems is essentially empiricist. However, this criterion was not dictated by a linguistic principle but by a cultural project, archaism.<sup>938</sup> Time after time, Gellius proves a word form to be valid by quoting authoritative writers, or refuses to accept some rule that has been stated because it is not supported by literary evidence.<sup>939</sup> In cases where it clearly supports authority (here *consuetudo veterum*), *ratio* can be accepted.<sup>940</sup> Gellius ex-

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<sup>930</sup> See Vardi 2001.

<sup>931</sup> Gell. 4,1; 14,5; 13,26; Beall 2004, 217.

<sup>932</sup> Vaahtera 1998, 147; Vardi (2001, 44).

<sup>933</sup> Gell. 13,21 *pr.*

<sup>934</sup> *inst.* 1,6,27.

<sup>935</sup> Suet. *gramm.* 24,3; Varro *GRF* frg. 244.

<sup>936</sup> Gell. 15,9.

<sup>937</sup> See Holford-Strevens 2003, 178.

<sup>938</sup> Holford-Strevens 2003, 354.

<sup>939</sup> See for example Gell. 6,17; 11,15,3; 13,6,3; 13,26; 18,6.

<sup>940</sup> Gell. 1,16; 5,21 (*ratio*); 10,24,3 (*consuetudo veterum*); Holford-Strevens 2003, 179–180.

presses his admiration for Caesar's learnedness and in a few cases he quotes *De analogia*, although he does not use the treatise as an authority in its own right but rather as additional confirmation for data he has already collected from literary sources.<sup>941</sup> Gellius also contributes to the controversy over analogy vs. anomaly; this discussion he adopts in its entirety from Varro.<sup>942</sup> In his discussion, Gellius uses grammatical terminology, such as the terms for the parts of speech, quite casually. In most cases he uses the terms – often labelled as *grammatici vocant* or *grammatici appellant* – as classificatory aids, and as a rule does not discuss the topic further.<sup>943</sup> The term *pars orationis* appears once in the *Noctes Atticae* (6,7,4): the word *affatim* consists of one *pars orationis* rather than two (*ad* and *fatim*).

Gellius contributes to the theme that already surfaced with Philo and Seneca: what a philosopher should do and what a grammarian should do. A memorable Gellian character, the ill-tempered grammarian Domitius Insanus, accuses Favorinus the philosopher (c. 80–160 CE) of an improper interest in grammatical details.<sup>944</sup> Favorinus raises the question whether he has used a certain rare word correctly:

Tum Domitius uoce atque uultu atrocior 'nulla' inquit 'prorsus bonae salutis spes reliqua est, cum uos quoque, philosophorum inlustrissimi, nihil iam aliud quam uerba auctoritatesque uerborum cordi habetis. Mittam autem librum tibi, in quo id reperias, quod quaeris. Ego enim grammaticus uitae iam atque morum disciplinas quaero, uos philosophi mera estis, ut M. Cato ait, "mortualia"; glossaria namque colligitis et

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<sup>941</sup> Gell. 1,10,4 (quotes a stylistic notion, not to do with analogy per se); 4,16,9 (Gellius primarily uses Caesar's speeches as evidence, secondarily a rule given in *De analogia*); 9,14,25 (quotes a recommendation of a correct form); 29,8,3ff (Caesar's suggestion of correct use of *pluralia tantum*).

<sup>942</sup> Fehling 1956, 223–224; Blank 2005, 211. Gellius' account (2,25) is a concisely laid out piece with examples quoted from Varro concerning the predominance of *consuetudo*, although Gellius mentions that Varro's treatment equally contains *multa pro ἀναλογία*.

<sup>943</sup> With the exception of the case of conjunctions. The interjection (for example 11,6) and the pronoun (10,4,4) are discussed but not named. The named parts of speech are *nomina*, which has two subdivisions, *nomen* (3,16,9) and *vocabulum* (2,20 lemma), *uerba* (2,19,1), *participia* (9,6,3), *aduerbia* (5,21,15; 12,15,1), *coniunctiones* (10,29,1; 17,13,1), and *praepositiones* (2,17,6; 7,16,5). See Cavazza 1986, 265.

<sup>944</sup> Favorinus of Arelate was both a valued teacher and a friend of Gellius', as well as a source of inspiration; he appears in numerous articles in the *Noctes Atticae*. The respect Gellius has for him is made clear, the adjective that is used of him being *lepidus* (for instance, Gell. 2,5 lemma; 8,14 lemma) referring to the philosopher and sophist's smooth and witty expression. Domitius Insanus is otherwise unknown.

lexidia, res taetras et inanes et friuolas tamquam mulierum uoces prae-ficarum. --<sup>945</sup>

Then Domitius, with dark voice and expression, replied: “There is absolutely no hope left of anything good, when even you, the most distinguished of philosophers, value nothing but words and the authority of words. But I will send you a book, in which you will find what you ask. In fact, I, a grammarian, am inquiring into the disciplines of life and manners; you philosophers are nothing but funeral songs, *mortualia*, as Marcus Cato says; for you collect glossaries and little words – repulsive, useless, pitiful things, like the voices of women hired to lament.--”

These gloomy and pessimistic words must be regarded as unusual for Gellius’ grammarians, who typically portray a range of feelings: from arrogance to sweaty shame and fleeing the scene.<sup>946</sup> Domitius’ assessment of the current intellectual situation is not quite like that of Seneca or Philo, who both complain only that one side has taken over the functions of the other, not, as Domitius claims, that they have completely reversed positions. It is a world hastening towards its end: Gellius actually refers metaphorically to a funeral, in the form of hired mourners. What is being buried is the traditional way of things, where philosophers confine themselves to strictly philosophical questions – understood as moral ones – and grammarians to their *uerba auctoritatesque uerborum*. An especially worthless level of grammatical work is collecting glossaries and ‘little words’, something Favorinus is now after.

Domitius’ outburst is given sympathetic treatment: Favorinus understands that the grammarian is having one of his bad spells (*Videtur enim mihi ἐπισημαίνεσθαι*), but that there is an apparent seed of truth in his words: *nonne, si id Antisthenes aut Diogenes dixisset, dignum memoria uisum esset?*<sup>947</sup> Would not there have been something worth remembering in the words Domitius said about the philosophers, had they been uttered by Antisthenes or Diogenes, the Cynic philosophers? Gellius records no personal reaction to the incident, although the whole critique Domitius lays out is directed against Gellius’ own intellectual disposition: the archaism-driven inquiry into ancient literature and words.<sup>948</sup> However, even to Gellius, not all such inquiry was valuable. In 14,6, he mentions an anonymous miscellanist who offers his own work for Gellius’ use, but he finds his offerings unworthy in their triviality. This anonymous miscella-

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<sup>945</sup> Gell. 18,7,3.

<sup>946</sup> As observed also by Hogan 2009, 242. Hogan also provides a summary of modern interpretations of the Domitius incident (2009, 250ff).

<sup>947</sup> Gell. 18,7,4.

<sup>948</sup> Hogan 2009, 256.

nist, as it happens, is widely considered to be none other than the witty Favorinus of Arelate,<sup>949</sup> whose work is now made to seem utterly trivial. Domitius insists that he, a grammarian, has taken up the questions of moral philosophy; literature could be discussed mainly from this viewpoint rather than mulling over ancient words or other dilettante antiquarian and philological problems. To Domitius – and to Seneca as well<sup>950</sup> – there certainly is a lesson to be drawn from grammar that contributes to the issue of a good life, but the tragedy is that nothing deeper can be expected even from the education provided by philosophers, since their attention is drawn to the most insignificant questions of grammar. The relationship between grammarians and philosophers remains peculiarly problematic. Philosophy, mostly reduced to ethics, is too important and too high in the hierarchy of knowledge to be associated with *grammatica*.

As a teacher of rhetoric, Quintilian was thoroughly familiar with dialectical concepts; according to him, grammarians too, as well as philosophers, used these concepts in their debates about tropes.<sup>951</sup> The picture Aulus Gellius paints in *Noctes Atticae* is quite different. Favorinus discusses the meaning of the word *penus* with a grammarian who is depicted as ‘boastful’ (*grammaticus iactantior*):<sup>952</sup>

‘Sed potesne mihi non speciem aliquam de penu dicere, sed definire genere proposito et differentiis adpositis, quid sit “penus”?’ ‘Quod’ inquit ‘genus et quas differentias dicas, non hercle intellego.’ ‘Rem’ inquit Fauorinus ‘plane dictam postulas, quod difficillimum est, dici planius; nam hoc quidem peruolgatum est definitionem omnem ex genere et differentia consistere. --’<sup>953</sup>

“Instead of giving me a species of *penus*, can’t you define the word by stating its genus and adding its differentia?” “By Hercules!” said he, “I don’t understand what you mean by genus and differentia.” “You are asking,” replied Favorinus, “to have a clearly stated matter to be said still more clearly, which is very difficult; for surely it is common knowledge that every definition consists of genus and differentia. --”

Favorinus then goes on to explain the principles of defining and gives a familiar example of a definition: *homo est animal mortale rationis et scientiae capiens*. The grammarian still does not understand what Favorinus is asking of him. The method of defining is simply beyond his grasp:

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<sup>949</sup> Beall 2001, 102; Hogan 2009, 257.

<sup>950</sup> Sen. *ep.* 88,5–8; see section 5.2.

<sup>951</sup> See section 1.3.2.

<sup>952</sup> Gell. 4,1 *lemma*.

<sup>953</sup> Gell. 4,1,9–10.

'philosophias' inquit 'ego non didici neque discere adpetui et, si ignoro, an hordeum ex "penu" sit aut quibus uerbis "penus" definiatur, non ea re litteras quoque alias nescio.'<sup>954</sup>

"I have never learned philosophy, nor desired to learn it, and if I do not know whether barley is included under *penus*, or in what words *penus* is defined, I am not on that account ignorant also of other branches of learning."

Is Favorinus exaggerating when he says that the concept and terminology of defining is 'common knowledge'? This is a complex question. Considering that it is a recurring pattern in the *Noctes Atticae* to put ostentatious learned men to shame, and that takes place several times via Favorinus, who is described in many instances as 'witty' (*lepidus*),<sup>955</sup> this could be just one more instance in which a grammarian is ridiculed by pointing to the gaps in his knowledge. Favorinus could merely be referring to basic rhetorical training, which included some dialectical issues; in any case, it is likely that he understood defining in Aristotelian terms,<sup>956</sup> since according to Plutarch (*quaest. conv.* 734f), Favorinus was a devoted Aristotelian. A grammarian's work should be based on dialectical principles, but the grammarian mocked by Favorinus has not learned enough philosophy to know that it is necessary for his art. But it is symptomatic that Seneca related the same notion to his young correspondent: these things should be known, but they are not. The regular training did not include such concepts or the techniques of defining and dividing; or perhaps this division of philosophy (to which Gellius' grammarian above ascribes it) failed to interest the students – perhaps because it was overridden by another division of philosophy, namely ethics. Those scholars who were theoretically oriented were able to discuss matters in dialectical terms, but these things were not common knowledge. Regular grammarians, who taught pupils to read and write and to understand literature and the values and morals it offers, were probably mostly happily ignorant of the concepts related to defining, like the grammarian in the *Noctes Atticae*, who does not acknowledge the role of dialectic in the formation of grammatical knowledge.

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<sup>954</sup> Gell. 4,1,13. *Penus* is given by Quintilian (*inst.* 7,3,13) as an example of familiar words that may sometimes need explaining.

<sup>955</sup> See Vardi 2001.

<sup>956</sup> *Ar. top.* 101b37ff.; see section 1.3.1.

## 6. QUESTIONS OF METHODOLOGY: THE CASE OF APOLLONIUS DYSCOLUS

In this final chapter, before drawing some general conclusions, I examine the views of the Alexandrian grammarian of the second century CE, Apollonius Dyscolus, concerning the methodology of γραμματική. Apollonius' achievement in the field of language study is remarkable: to our knowledge, he was the first to treat syntax systematically as a question of grammar. We know that Varro had an interest in syntax, which for him meant Stoic dialectic,<sup>957</sup> but this section of his *De lingua Latina* does not survive. After Apollonius, syntax was once again virtually ignored until Priscian, who took the work of Apollonius and his son Aelius Herodian<sup>958</sup> as the basis of his massive treatise, the *Institutiones grammaticae*. For Priscian, Apollonius and Herodian were the foremost developers of systematic grammatical description. They stood out among their predecessors, as well as among those who came after them – they were the grammarians who emended the art of grammar according to the fixed laws of reason (*ratio*).<sup>959</sup> Priscian thus attributes to Apollonius a rational approach to the formation of knowledge, which will be the focus of section 6.2.

### 6.1 Apollonius Dyscolus and his work

Some of Apollonius' work survives almost completely: his last work, an extensive treatise on syntax in four books, and single-book treatises on pronouns, adverbs and conjunctions respectively. His earlier work included treatises on smaller linguistic components, such as the elements (letters and sounds), prosodic markings, forms, and the division of the parts of speech.<sup>960</sup> Herodian has mostly survived in fragments. As grammarians, Apollonius and Herodian are far from identical: Lallot (1997, 12) describes the father as more of a linguist (τεχνικός), an independent theorist, and the son as the more philological (γραμματικός), more attached to philological empiricism and Aristarchean practice. Herodian concentrated on subjects that appear characteristic of the traditional grammarian, such as prosody – the subject of his magnum opus in

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<sup>957</sup> Taylor 1996, 7.

<sup>958</sup> We know Herodian's approximate years due to the dedication of his magnum opus on prosody to the Emperor Marcus Aurelius, who ruled 161–180 AD.

<sup>959</sup> GL2 1,8–12: -- *quid enim Herodiani artibus certius, quid Apollonii scrupulosis quaestionibus enucleatius possit inueniri? – cum igitur eos omnia fere uitia, quaecumque antiquorum Graecorum commentariis sunt relicta artis grammaticae, expurgasse comperio certisque rationis legibus emendasse* --.

<sup>960</sup> For a list of titles and testimonia see Schneider (GG2.3 vii–x, with corrections by Maas, rev. of GG2.2/3,14). Apollonius' life and works are discussed in detail by Blank (1993).

twenty books, Περὶ καθολικῆς προσωδίας – and orthography.<sup>961</sup> There were differences in the approaches of the father and the son, but in comparison with the later popular Τέχνη γραμματικὴ attributed to Dionysius Thrax, their similarity becomes evident: their style consists of analysis and argumentation that is almost nonexistent in the Τέχνη γραμματικὴ. The grammarians Apollonius cites the most are Tryphon (52 times), Aristarchus (24), Zenodotus (fourteen) and Habron, a pupil of Tryphon (nine times).<sup>962</sup> Dionysius Thrax is mentioned once in the surviving works of Apollonius.<sup>963</sup> In addition to Apollonius and Herodian, fragments survive of some Greek grammatical texts from the first centuries CE. Of the works titled περὶ γραμματικῆς before the Τέχνη γραμματικὴ, none survives.<sup>964</sup> In sum: prior to the vast grammatical Scholia to Dionysius Thrax of the Byzantine era, our Greek grammatical sources are sparse and scattered.<sup>965</sup>

No definitions of the art of grammar survive from either Apollonius or Herodian. The surviving works of Apollonius and Herodian also lack convenient loci for the kind of preliminary discussion that might include definitory notions. Either no substantial introductory sections have survived, or they never existed in the first place. Priscian, who modelled himself upon Apollonius, did not include such introductory chapters in his work. Herodian's works do not offer material relevant to this study, but Apollonius' work does. Here I discuss Apollonius' work, focusing on his method and its context – a subject that is related to the important question of ἐμπειρία and λόγος.

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<sup>961</sup> One of the steps taken in the tradition of grammar that has been linked to Herodian is the practice of parsing, a subject that was dealt with by Apollonius as well; we know of a title from him, Περὶ μερισμοῦ τῶν τοῦ λόγου μερῶν βιβλία τέσσαρα (Glück 1967, 31ff.). Herodian's role in the development of parsing is not altogether clear (Blank 2005, 189). Parsing was a practice known to Sextus Empiricus, probably by way of his Hellenistic source Asclepiades of Myrlea. Sextus gives a detailed example of parsing in *Adversus mathematicos* (1,133), dealing with the first verse of the Iliad.

<sup>962</sup> Householder 1981, 5.

<sup>963</sup> Ap. Dysc. *pron.* GG2.1 5,18–19.

<sup>964</sup> The grammarians mentioned here are only examples; the list could be continued with such names as **Apion**, who wrote on Homeric glosses in the first half of the first century AD, and **Pamphilus of Alexandria** (active sometime between 50 and 120 AD), who wrote on Homeric prosody and lexicography; **Lesbonax** (uncertain dating, before the end of the second century AD; Blank 1988, 145) wrote a treatise Περὶ σχημάτων, on grammatical or rhetorical figures. From **Agathocles** (second century AD) we have a few surviving fragments of philological commentaries.

<sup>965</sup> The grammatical papyri are mostly elementary school texts, many of which contain lists of declensions and conjugations.



## 6.2 The rationalist approach

In the opening section of *De constructione* (on syntax), Apollonius states the scope and motivation of the work. He is setting out upon a study of syntax, i.e. the combining of words in the correct construction of independent sentences. His study arises out of the needs of γραμματική: according to Apollonius, the study of syntax is of essential importance for the interpretation of poetry, ἐξήγησις τῶν ποιημάτων.<sup>966</sup> Apollonius understands his line of work essentially in the same sense as his Hellenistic-era Alexandrian colleague, Dionysius Thrax, and many others: the purpose of grammar is to interpret literature. Apollonius thus aligns himself with the philological tradition, with γραμματική, as it had been known for several centuries. The introduction suggests that even though already Aristarchus had observed syntactical peculiarities in Homer,<sup>967</sup> syntactical theorizing had been intimately associated with philosophy, and Apollonius felt a need to justify the relevance of the explicitly named framework, syntax, to the explication of literature.<sup>968</sup> In the light of his grammatical examples, however, his commitment to literature seems to have been less firm than one would expect from his argumentation in the opening section. While the majority of the examples are citations from ancient writers, Homer in particular, there are also plenty – some four hundred, out of somewhat over a thousand – that are drawn from non-literary sources.<sup>969</sup>

Apollonius wants to demonstrate the usefulness of his work for the study of literature, but it is obvious that a technical grammarian such as himself is no longer interested in making corrections in manuscripts.<sup>970</sup> The new grammarian approaches syntax, as well as morphology, with λόγου συνέχεια, “coherence of reason”.<sup>971</sup> This reflects a new stance towards the function of grammar: Homer, from whom the largest part of the grammatical examples derives, now serves as a means rather than an end purpose. The Homeric examples, supplemented by

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<sup>966</sup> Ap. *Dysc. constr.* GG2.2 1,3–2,2: Ἐν ταῖς προεκδοθείσαις ἡμῖν σχολαῖς ἢ περὶ τὰς φωνὰς παρὰδοσις, καθὼς ἀπῆται ὁ περὶ αὐτῶν λόγος, κατελείκεται· ἡ δὲ νῦν ῥηθησομένη ἔκδοσις περιέξει τὴν ἐκ τούτων γινομένην σύνταξιν εἰς καταλληλότητα τοῦ αὐτοτελοῦς λόγου, ἦν πάνυ προήρημαι, ἀναγκαιοτάτην οὖσαν πρὸς ἐξήγησιν τῶν ποιημάτων, μετὰ πάσης ἀκριβείας ἐκθέσθαι.

<sup>967</sup> For example Aristarchus frg. 55–57 Matthaios.

<sup>968</sup> See Luhtala 2000, 195–196. It was not only the grammarians and philosophers who touched on syntax, but also rhetoricians, as we see from the example of Dionysius of Halicarnassus on Thucydides; see De Jonge 2011.

<sup>969</sup> These figures are from Householder (1981, 5). Apollonius follows the practice of the logicians, who customarily invent examples to support the theory; his invented examples often take the form of Stoic propositions (Luhtala 2000, 195); see Diog. Laert. 7,69–70.

<sup>970</sup> For example, Schmidhauser 2010.

<sup>971</sup> Ap. *Dysc. constr.* GG2.2 52,2.

invented ones, are analyzed, and general principles are formed on their basis. It is the opposite process to the traditional philological one, in which grammar serves to help in understanding Homer.<sup>972</sup>

Perhaps we can say that Apollonius really had no choice but to follow the traditional path in describing syntax as a necessary aid for interpreting poetry. Along with the expert status of a τέχνη / *ars* comes the requirement of usefulness: a purpose had to be determined for the art of grammar. In this case, this requirement was taken even more seriously, as the theory of syntax was something of a novelty in the grammatical curriculum. We have already seen that grammar, like other τέχναι, had been a target of attacks by various scholars; one of the most ardent critics of the τέχναι, Sextus Empiricus, was a near-contemporary of Apollonius. Apollonius' introduction to syntax reflects the doctrinal space a grammarian was granted: while ancient γραμματική consists of various fields of study, arts within the art, at its core is always literature. Apollonius' contribution touches upon διόρθωσις and ἑλληνισμός, but the purpose of his work is wider, aiming at an explanation of the system of language at the level of meaning. It is this explanation that justifies decisions made in philological work or in determining correct language.<sup>973</sup> It is hard to imagine that Apollonius' highly advanced work would have been useful in the classroom, although it is possible that Apollonius worked as a teacher, as Householder (1981, 6) asserts, on the basis of grammatical examples that seem to be traceable to a classroom situation.<sup>974</sup>

The framework of Apollonius' theory is derived from the Stoics; the outcome is not wholeheartedly 'Stoic', but cannot be understood without this background. According to the Stoics, the world is rationally organized and is guided by λόγος.<sup>975</sup> For Apollonius, this means in practice the assumption of orderliness (καταλληλότης) in language at every level,<sup>976</sup> he particularly emphasizes the orderliness of syntax, i.e. congruity. The concept of καταλληλότης now replaces ἀναλογία as the representative of λόγος.<sup>977</sup> This congruity means complete transparency of the constructions in a sentence, constructions in which each element occupies its proper place.<sup>978</sup> According to Apollonius, the orderliness of syntax arises from φωναί, by which he seems to be referring to words as

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<sup>972</sup> Schironi 2002, 154. Apollonius' use of Homer is discussed in Pontani (2011, 98–102).

<sup>973</sup> Sluiter 1990, 61.

<sup>974</sup> In any case, if Apollonius' work was indeed used in classroom, the nickname Δύσκολος, 'difficult', was probably well earned.

<sup>975</sup> See Sluiter 1990, 40.

<sup>976</sup> Blank 1982, 12.

<sup>977</sup> Blank 1982, 27–28.

<sup>978</sup> Sluiter 1990, 61.

sensible units as well as semantic ones (λόγος).<sup>979</sup> He suggests that just as defective spelling can be corrected by hearing or by the theory of correct spelling, errors occurring in sentences can similarly be corrected.<sup>980</sup> It is important, he says, to be able to explain the actual cause of disorderliness in language; it is not enough to merely cite examples, as is the practice of ‘some’<sup>981</sup> – by which Apollonius probably means certain grammarians working with no theoretical framework.

Apollonius puts forward a rationalist theory of language: language, like everything else in nature, is orderly. The key rationalist point is that mere observation without theory – as the background against which observations can be interpreted – is worthless when it comes to establishing true knowledge. True knowledge emerges independently of sense experience. However, not all the rationalists believed absolutely in the unconditional supremacy of theory; there was variation in their attitude toward empirical knowledge.<sup>982</sup> The advantages of λόγος, reason, are attested in situations where the expert faces phenomena of which he has no previous experience, or situations that do not resemble cases with which he or his sources are already familiar. Theory allows the expert to deal with such phenomena.<sup>983</sup> In the first book of *De constructione*, Apollonius justifies the study of the orderliness (ζήτησις τῆς καταλληλότητος) in language.<sup>984</sup> Apollonius introduces the concept of syntactical correctness by

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<sup>979</sup> Ap. *Dysc. constr.* GG2.2 1,3–4; Blank 1982, 29.

<sup>980</sup> Ap. *Dysc. constr.* GG2.2 7,6–10: Παρεπόμενον ἔστιν ἔσθ’ ὅτε ταῖς λέξεσιν καὶ παρὰ τὰς γραφὰς ἀμαρτάνεσθαι, ἃς ἢ προφανῶς ἔστι καταλαβέσθαι διὰ τῆς ἀκοῆς, ἢ ἀδήλου τοῦ τοιούτου ὄντος ἢ κατὰ τὸν ἐπιλογισμὸν ἐξέτασις κατορθοῖ, ἣν καλοῦμεν λόγον τὸν περὶ ὀρθογραφίας.

<sup>981</sup> Ap. *Dysc. constr.* GG2.2 271,5–272,3: Χρηὶ οὖν ἐπιστήσαντας ἐκθέσθαι τί δήποτ’ ἔστι τὸ ποιοῦν τὸ ἀκατάλληλον, οὐ παραθέσει τρόπων χρησάμενον μάτην, καθάπερ τινὲς αὐτὸ μόνον ἐκήρυξαν τοὺς σολοικισμοὺς, οὐ μὴν ἐδίδαξαν τὸ ποιοῦν, ὅπερ εἴ τις μὴ συνίδοι, εἰς οὐδὲν συντείνουσιν ἔξει τὴν παράθεσιν τῶν τρόπων.

<sup>982</sup> Blank 1982, 12 and Frede 1987, 235; see section 3.4.2.

<sup>983</sup> Frede 1985, xxiv.

<sup>984</sup> Ap. *Dysc. constr.* GG2.2 51,1–52,16. Προφανῶν οὐσῶν τῶν τοιούτων συντάξεων οἰήσονται τινες, κὰν μὴ παραλάβωσι τὸν λόγον, διασφάζειν τὰ τῆς συντάξεως. οὗτοι δὲ ὅμοιον τι πείσονται τοῖς ἐκ τριβῆς τὰ σχήματα τῶν λέξεων παρεπιληφόσιν, οὐ μὴν ἐκ δυνάμεως τῶν κατὰ παράδοσιν τῶν Ἑλλήνων καὶ τῆς συμπαρεπομένης ἐν αὐτοῖς ἀναλογίας· οἷς παρακολουθεῖ τὸ εἰ διαμάρτοιεν ἔν τινι σχήματι μὴ δύνασθαι διορθοῦν τὸ ἀμάρτημα διὰ τὴν παρακολουθοῦσαν αὐτοῖς ἀπειρίαν. καθάπερ οὖν πάμπολλός ἐστιν ἡ εὐχρηστία τῆς κατὰ τὸν Ἑλληνισμὸν παραδόσεως, κατορθοῦσα μὲν τὴν τῶν ποιημάτων ἀνάγνωσιν τὴν τε ἀνὰ χεῖρα ὀμιλίαν, καὶ ἔτι ἐπικρίνουσα τὴν παρὰ τοῖς ἀρχαίοις θέσιν τῶν ὀνομάτων, τὸν αὐτὸν δὲ τρόπον καὶ προκειμένη ζήτησις τῆς καταλληλότητος τὰ ὅπωςδὴποτε διαπεσόντα ἐν λόγῳ κατορθώσει. Ἦδη μέντοι καὶ τινὰ τῶν κατὰ παράδοσιν οὐ διεσταλμένην ἔχει τὴν προφορὰν, τῶν μὲν δισταζόντων εἰ τὸ εἰρηκας Ἑλληνικὸν ἤπερ τὸ εἰρηκες διὰ τοῦ ε, ἢ ὡς τινες ἀποφαίνονται, Ἑρμεῖ διὰ διφθόγγου, τοῦ λόγου αἰτοῦντος

comparing it with Hellenism concerning individual words; this is a familiar concept, which he can make use of in introducing the study of syntax. First, he seems to refer to a group of people who ignore λόγος in their use and study of syntax. He compares these people to those who take word forms (τὰ σχήματα τῶν λέξεων) from their own natural proficiency (ἐκ τριβῆς), or grammatical intuition, guided by current usage, without resorting to the literary tradition (παράδοσις τῶν Ἑλλήνων) and the analogies it provides. Better results can be achieved by familiarizing oneself with the research tradition on Hellenism (κατὰ τὸν Ἑλληνισμόν παράδοσις). However, the tradition cannot provide exact answers to certain questions of orthography, and in these cases only reason (λόγος) can help. Syntax, too, can obviously be learned naturally and non-methodically, but the successful production of correct syntax by conjecture rather than reason will not work out ad infinitum. That is why Apollonius' art is needed: it provides an infallible correcting mechanism for syntax as well as for the other levels of language. It is not the objective of *De constructione* to deal exhaustively with every possible construction or combination of the parts of speech. What Apollonius offers is an organized scheme within which to scrutinize language.<sup>985</sup> In this exposition of his theory, Apollonius proceeds from the most arbitrary level of the mastery of language to the most rationalist. At the most arbitrary level there is the non-technical language user, who will fail when he encounters an error in the text. Fairly good results can be achieved through relying on tradition (παράδοσις). Finally, there is the rational system, which will work in every case: λόγου συνέχεια, the coherence of reason. Language is orderly at its every level, and thus the correct form of speech for every phenomenon of language can be identified by rational means. Even irregularities cause no threat to the system, because they themselves follow the rules in their formation.<sup>986</sup>

It is clear from the passages (*constr.* GG2.2 1,3–2,2 and 51,1–52,16) reflecting on the construction of grammatical knowledge that Apollonius felt a need to defend his method – but what exactly is the discussion in which he is involved in so doing? Apollonius was a rationalist. Were there empiricists on the other side, grammarians who refused to recognize the value and relevance of the rational principle in grammar? Apollonius mentions people who do not use λόγος; those could be empiricists, but no further empiricist features are referred

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τὴν διὰ τοῦ ἡ γραφῆν. Ἐρμεῖ διὰ διφθόγγου, τοῦ λόγου αἰτοῦντος τὴν διὰ τοῦ ἡ γραφῆν. καὶ φαίνεται ὅτι ἡ τοῦ λόγου συνέχεια τὸ ἐν κακίᾳ εἰρημένον παρατρέψει. τοιοῦτον οὖν πάλιν τι παρακολουθήσει καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς προκειμένης τηρήσεως· ἀμφιβαλλομένων γὰρ τινῶν τὰ τοῦ λόγου ἐγγενόμενα μετὰ τίνος φυσικῆς παρακολουθήσεως ἀποστήσει τὸ οὐ δέον τῆς συντάξεως.

<sup>985</sup> Blank 1982, 7.

<sup>986</sup> Blank 1982, 17; Blank 1994, 160.

to in connection with those people in particular; furthermore, as already mentioned, Apollonius also refers (*constr.* GG2.2 271,5–272,3) to those who merely collect ungrammaticalities without a theoretical explanation – a practice that apparently holds only antiquarian value. The group of people who rely on natural linguistic proficiency (τιρίβη) alone, without resorting to tradition (παράδοσις) of any kind, do not sound like grammarians at all: relying on nothing but personal experience does not constitute a τέχνη, and the literary tradition is the grammarian’s daily bread. These arguments are typical of anti-analogist thinkers such as Sextus Empiricus,<sup>987</sup> and clearly Apollonius is responding to these, but in general the sharpest point of Apollonius’ criticism is directed against those who see language as a phenomenon that can be mastered and wielded without any kind of technical knowledge, whether based on systematic ἐμπειρία or on rationalist principles.

By the time of Galen and Apollonius, both of whom flourished in the second century CE, the sharpest contrast between empiricists and rationalists had already waned. More and more, the empiricists were recognizing the role of theory, and rationalism gave way to experience.<sup>988</sup> As Galen saw it, in medicine and in the other arts as well, there were simply two sources of knowledge: experience and reason.<sup>989</sup> At least to Galen, the most significant of the physicians since Hippocrates, the only matter of dispute was how to find the proper treatment, which would not differ on the empiricist and the rationalist side.<sup>990</sup> Reflecting the general spirit of the age – not only Galen in medicine but also Ptolemy in astronomy were tolerant in this sense – Apollonius shows a tolerant attitude towards the position of non-rational practice in grammar, admitting that (up to a certain point) relying on παράδοσις will produce correct language.<sup>991</sup>

The post-Hellenistic grammarians may not have entrenched themselves too deeply in their rationalist or empiricist positions, but there was still a debate as to the use of the word ἐμπειρία as the genus of grammar in the definition by Dionysius Thrax. We know that the debate arose at the latest shortly after the publication of Dionysius’ grammatical work, in which he presented his definitional notions. To the Byzantine Scholiasts, the debate was as relevant as ever. One of the Scholiasts claims that calling grammar ‘experience’ is unbecoming:

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<sup>987</sup> Blank 2005, 217.

<sup>988</sup> Frede 1987, 248.

<sup>989</sup> For example Gal. *de meth. med.* 10,29; see list of loci in Frede 1987, 370 n. 11.

<sup>990</sup> Frede 1985, ix–x.

<sup>991</sup> Frede 1987, 287 for Galen; see for example Long (1988) for Ptolemy.

Ἐμπειρίαν εἰπὼν ἐξεφάυλισε τὴν τέχνην· ἐμπειρία γάρ ἐστιν ἡ ἄλογος τριβή, ὡς καὶ ἐμπειρικοὺς λέγομεν ἰατροὺς τοὺς ἄνευ λόγου τὰς θεραπείας τοῖς πάσχουσι προσάγοντας· ὅτι μὲν γὰρ θεραπεύειν οἷόν τέ ἐστι τὸ φάρμακον πρὸς τὸ ἔλκος, πίστανται· εἰ δέ τις ἔροίτο, τίνας ἔνεκα πρὸς τὸδε τὸ πάθος ἐπιτηδεύεις ἔχει, ἀποροῦσιν. Ἡδὲ γραμματικὴ πάντα μετὰ λόγου καὶ τῆς δεούσης ἀναλογίας κανονίζει.<sup>992</sup>

By calling grammar ‘experience’, he insulted the expertise: experience is an irrational practice, for example when we call a physician treating his patients without reason an ‘empiricist’. They know that the proper treatment may be, for example, ointment for a wound, but if someone were to ask why a certain medicine is the proper one for a certain disease they would not know what to answer. But grammar canonizes everything through reason and inevitable analogies.

This Scholiast strongly holds his rationalist position, and makes no effort to soften his opinion: like Apollonius, the Scholiast (or his source) supports *λόγος* and *ἀναλογία* in every grammatical action, but not in the tolerant spirit we find in Apollonius. The comparison to an empiricist physician is made with some resentment: a physician treating his patient empirically bases his treatment on relevant precedents, but does not derive absolute laws from them. However, as the Scholiast goes on in discussing the reasons for Dionysius’ choice of terminology, he comes to the conclusion that for Dionysius, *ἐμπειρία* did not have the specialized meaning the Scholiast is criticizing:

Πῶς οὖν ὁ τεχνικός εἶρηκεν ἐμπειρίαν τὴν γραμματικὴν; ἄρα ὡς ἄλογον οὖσαν, ἢ ὡς αὐτὸς ἄγνωστος ὢν τοῦ καλῶς ἔχοντος; Φαμὲν ὅτι οὐ, ἀλλ’ ἐπειδὴ ὁ σκοπὸς αὐτῷ πρὸς εἰσαγομένους γράφειν, δεῖ δὲ τὰς εἰσαγωγικὰς τέχνας ἀπέχεσθαι τῶν δυσχερῶν προβλημάτων, τῶν δὲ εὐλήπτων ἀντέχεσθαι, εἰδῶς δὲ ὅτι καὶ ἡ ἐμπειρία πολλαχῶς παρὰ τοῖς ἀρχαίοις φράζεται· ἔστι γὰρ ἡ ἄλογος τριβή καὶ ἡ λογικὴ γνῶσις, ἔστι δὲ καὶ ἡ ἀκριβὴς μάθησις. Ἀπλούστερον δὲ τὸν λόγον ἐποίησατο ὡς πρὸς εἰσαγομένους, σημαίνων ἀπὸ ἐμπειρίας τὴν γνῶσιν· ὥστε ἡ γραμματικὴ γνῶσις ἐστι --.<sup>993</sup>

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<sup>992</sup> GG1.3 166,25–30.

<sup>993</sup> GG1.3 166,30–167,4.

Why did the technician call grammar ‘experience’? Is it because it is irrational or because he does not know the matter well? I say no; since his aim was to write for beginners, difficult problems had to be left out of these preliminary grammars, while easier things had to come first, for he knew that ‘experience’ is frequently discussed by ancient writers: it is ‘irrational practice’ and ‘rational knowledge’, and it also means ‘accurate learning’. He made the definition of grammar simpler for the beginners to understand by using the word ‘experience’ for ‘knowledge’. Therefore, grammar is knowledge.

According to the Scholiast, Dionysius was aware of the prevailing debate over epistemological terminology; ultimately, however, the Scholiast chooses the same explanation as Sextus Empiricus: in the general ancient usage, the meaning of the word ἐμπειρία was not necessarily epistemologically fixed.<sup>994</sup> It is noteworthy that the Scholiast does not imply that there were grammarians who wanted to claim that grammar was purely ‘experience’. He simply takes the meaning the word has in medicine, observing that it is inapplicable to grammar, and concludes that Dionysius could not have meant grammar to be an ‘irrational practice’. He does not recognize a tradition in which a grammarian worked on strictly empiricist principles. However, as grammatical discussion was a part of a larger academic epistemological discussion, these things had to be acknowledged.

Let us look at one further example from a grammatical text that reflects on the meaning and achievability of correct language, also featuring that rarity in grammatical texts, ἐμπειρία. In an introductory passage from Ps.-Herodian’s treatise Περὶ σολοικισμοῦ καὶ βαρβαρισμοῦ, the word ἐμπειρία is used in a peculiar manner:

Πᾶς λόγος μὴ ἀκριβῆ τὴν ὁμιλίαν ἔχων ἀπαιδευσίας ἱκανὰ φέρει τεκμήρια· ὅθεν τοὺς πειρωμένους τὴν γραμματικὴν μεταδιώκειν ἀναγκαῖον ἐστὶν ἀσολοίκιστον καὶ ἀβαρβάριστον τὴν προφορὰν τῶν λόγων ποιῆσθαι, εἰδότας τὴν ἐν αὐτῇ γινομένην ἀμαρτίαν. μήτηρ γὰρ φιλοσοφίας καὶ ρητορικῆς γέγονε γραμματικὴ καὶ πάσης καλῶς λεγομένης ἐπιστήμης τε καὶ τέχνης ῥίζα καὶ γένεσις πέφυκεν αὕτη, θρέψαι δυναμένη παιδὸς ἀρετὴν, ἀκριβομένη διὰ τεχνικῆς ἐμπειρίας εἰς τὴν ἀναμάρτητον τῆς λέξεως ἐμπειρίαν, ἐξ ἧς πᾶς ἔπαινος ὑψοῦται.<sup>995</sup>

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<sup>994</sup> See section 3.6.1. The same explanation of Dionysius’ use of ἐμπειρία is found in GG1.3 6,31–7,4.

<sup>995</sup> *Lexicon Vindobonense* 294,1–295,1 (Nauck 1867).

All language in which there is inexact usage is a clear symptom of an insufficient education. Therefore, it is necessary that those who aspire to grammar make sentences they utter free from solecism and barbarism and that they watch out for mistakes in their speech. For grammar is the mother of philosophy and of rhetoric, and the natural root and origin of every science and expertise truly deserving that name; it is able to foster a child's virtue; and through technical experience, it leads to infallible experience of diction, and for that, it deserves all praise and approval.<sup>996</sup>

Whereas Apollonius Dyscolus mainly links correct language with the demands of philological work, this passage reflects the everyday needs of anyone using language publicly. Literature is mentioned because of its improving effect on one's character. A certain kind of experience is needed in order to be able to produce correct language. This experience is said to be technical; this is a peculiar combination, whose meaning is not immediately obvious. It is conceivable that technicality here is brought up as a contradiction to language itself, which is a natural capacity.<sup>997</sup> Technicality is needed in order to adhere to the limits of grammatical correctness. The word ἐμπειρία in this context does not seem to refer to actual empiricist practice, but rather to something that Sextus Empiricus (*math.* 1,61–62) and the above-cited Scholiast to Dionysius Thrax say: that 'experience' is not merely a way to firm knowledge – τέχνη or ἐπιστήμη – but in some cases, the knowledge itself. The terminology concerning knowledge is indeed traditionally quite confusing. Accordingly, what Ps.-Herodian is saying is that grammar provides technical knowledge about language, ultimately leading to reliable knowledge about correct language.

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<sup>996</sup> In this translation I have benefited from the translation by Hyman (2002).

<sup>997</sup> See Blank 1995, 187: the technicality of rhetoric in Philodemus works analogously.



## 7. CONCLUSION

In this brief final chapter, I summarize the central findings of this thesis. I have examined the definitions of the art of grammar, their form and meaning, and the relationships between the definitions and the art itself. In addition to the definitions as such, I have taken into account other definitory notions, which can take various forms. The epistemological status of grammar is a central feature in the definitions, and this notion is in many cases connected with methodology. Accordingly, I have examined such epistemological and methodological questions as have been discussed by ancient grammarians and by others who have contributed to the field of grammar.

One recurrent theme throughout the study has been the influence, or even pressure, from outside the art, under which definitions of grammar are formed. Three main aspects have emerged in the development of these definitions. The first of these is the influence of dialectic, which provides the general methods of 'technical' writing, i.e. writing according to the rules of the art. The second involves empiricist and rationalist influences, and the lively debate that springs from the juxtaposition of these main lines of thought through the centuries, reflected in the terminology and in the methodological debate. The contradiction between 'reason' and 'experience' gains strength from the theorists of medicine; another theoretical frame of the debate is the long-standing tradition of attacks against the τέχναι. These attacks, mainly by Epicurean and Sceptic philosophers rather than by rival grammarians, are directed against the very grounds by which the arts claim the status. Finally, there is the grammatical tradition, comprising both the definitions available within the art and the actual substance, those matters that are understood as belonging to the art.

In the technical literature, it became necessary to carry out a certain preliminary discussion – the length and depth of which varied – before actually getting to the actual subject matter. Material from such discussions has been preserved from some Hellenistic grammatical manuals, most notably those by Dionysius Thrax and Asclepiades of Myrlea. A little later, Cicero, in his *De inventione*, provides a theoretical approach to the issue, identifying five topics (*genus, officium, finis, materia, and partes*) of such preliminary discussion. Varro, a technical writer with a thorough philosophical education, discussed at least some of these topics, as well as the more general question of the nature of *ars*. According to the testimony of Quintilian, theorists of rhetoric tended to draw up individual definitions of their art, and it is plausible that this was the case with the authors of the grammatical manuals as well, as also suggested by the remnants of Hellenistic grammar. The first century BCE was a fruitful time for the development of the intellectual arts, and it is probable that only a fraction of the

definitions of the art of grammar produced during that century has survived. Much of this intellectual development took place in Rome, where novel ideas were subsumed into disciplines and developed on a philosophical foundation. The development of language science was perhaps not primarily in the hands of the grammarians, but of philosophers and others who had had a thorough education and were thus equipped with dialectical tools. The grammarians did not, as a rule, shift their focus from textual criticism and literary exegesis to linguistic questions.

As we have seen, the importance of defining relates to the dialectical tradition: definitions and divisions were understood as a valid way of producing knowledge. Accordingly, dialectic, or more broadly logic, is the most important source of influence for the very existence of the definitions. However, it is difficult to determine just how much an individual scholar defining the art of grammar was directed by the example of existing definitions in the grammatical tradition, and what role was played by his training (whether or not it was distinguished from rhetorical training) and his competence in dialectic. Some conjectures, however, are possible, beginning with the earliest surviving definition of grammar in a grammatical context, that by the Alexandrian Eratosthenes. He was profoundly trained in philosophy, which allowed him to produce an informed definition, especially in his choice of genus for γραμματική, which was ἔξις, a word frequently associated with the concept τέχνη by earlier philosophers. Dionysius Thrax studied in Alexandria under Aristarchus, and was quite clearly influenced by theorists of medicine. Dionysius' definition of grammar obviously involved problems: there was a debate throughout Antiquity, more or less extending to the present day, as to what it actually means. Some grammarians attempted to improve Dionysius' definition. These 'counter-definitions', as displayed in Sextus Empiricus' *Adversus mathematicos*, are reacting in particular to Dionysius' definition of γραμματική as ἐμπειρία. Asclepiades of Myrlea appears as a strong adversary of the empiricist content of Dionysius' definition, and the definitions by Chaeris and Demetrius Chlorus reflect the debate provoked by that of Dionysius. A significant exception among the grammarians is Tyrannion, who shows Aristotelian influence – and very little, if any, from the grammarians – in his definition of the art of grammar. It seems very possible that he was familiar with the Peripatetic dialectical and rhetorical theories, in which definitions and division held a prominent place. The surviving definitions of grammar by philosophers (Aristotle, Ariston and Alexander of Aphrodisias) are all by-products of their philosophical work; more precisely, they appear as examples of the practice of defining. These definitions hardly rely on the grammatical tradition, but as definitions they are presumably faultless.

In the grammatical tradition, certain grammarians are referred to as important systematizers of the art, which reflects their dialectical skills: these include Varro's teacher L. Aelius Stilo and Apollonius Dyscolus. In Hellenistic Alexandria, bringing explicit philosophical know-how to bear upon the art of grammar was not a normal practice: Aristophanes and Aristarchus cannot be credited with a systematic theory of grammar. Towards the end of the first century BCE, things were starting to change in Alexandria as well. As a sign of this new development, Philo of Alexandria rejects grammarians' attempts, in applying the tools and concepts of Stoic dialectic, at trespassing in the domain of the philosophers.

To a certain extent, the preliminary discussion – with its definitions, divisions, lists of parts and tasks – that precedes the actual content of a grammatical manual serves what we might almost call a ritualistic function. A good example of this is the discussion of the nature of art (τέχνη) by the first-century CE grammarian Lucillus of Tarrha, who (as quoted by a Byzantine Scholiast) discussed the different species of τέχνη at length but did not place γραμματική under any of the categories, making the whole discussion seem somewhat irrelevant. However, as I have shown, the various definitions did provoke real debate concerning the nature of grammatical work. This debate had to do in particular with the genus. The genus is important because it pertains to a question the majority of the grammarians, for the sake of their professional status, were bound to take seriously: whether they were practitioners of some 'irrational practice' or a 'rational expertise'. There is no doubt that the grammarians agreed that grammar was fundamentally an expertise (τέχνη or *ars*), satisfying certain commonly recognized requirements: it was systematic, useful, and transferable. This agreement was equally true of the empiricists and the rationalists; although to the latter, the empiricist practice, with its three main 'irrational' methods – autopsy (αὐτοψία), consulting the research tradition (ἱστορία), and the heuristic use of analogy (μετάβασις καθ' ὁμοίτητα) – did not satisfy the requirements of a τέχνη. There were also other genera to which grammar could be assigned, such as ἔξις, or simple 'knowledge' (γνώσις or εἶδησις) – even θεωρία, as in Tyrannion's unusual definition. In the Latin definitions by Varro and Ariston (originally in Greek but translated into Latin, possibly by the author who has preserved them, Marius Victorinus), *scientia* may have been meant as a neutral genus, even if it was a translation of the Greek word for the highest form of scientific knowing, ἐπιστήμη. The Aristotelian concepts of knowing are not always clear, but the Latin authors had to face the fact that Latin is largely lacking in comparison to the extensive Greek vocabulary for various concepts of knowing, and it is therefore difficult to make elaborate or subtle distinctions. Generally, this does not cause problems: there are consequences for the choice of genus in the case of Dionysius Thrax, who refers to the methodological foundation of his

expertise by the word ἐμπειρία, but if this problematic concept is avoided, it seems that practically any other genus, as long as it is recognized as belonging to the semantic field of knowledge, is acceptable.

The development of Dionysius' position in the history of the art of grammar and linguistics is extraordinary. The present form of the Τέχνη γραμματική attributed to Dionysius has lost its former status as the culmination of Alexandrian grammar; but its initial section, preserved by Sextus Empiricus, is now often viewed as representative of the empiricist approach towards the study of literature and language. The conceptualization of this approach instantly provoked negative attention, and such explicitly empiricist definitions of γραμματική are not encountered after Dionysius. Whether Dionysius received true understanding for his view of γραμματική as ἐμπειρία remains unclear. It seems, however, improbable that he was the only grammarian to recognize the relevance of empiricist methods and principles in practical grammatical work, especially in textual criticism. It may be the case that those grammarians who held an empiricist position applied it in editing Homeric texts and in other philological tasks without really giving it more thought, coping with the work without postulating the concept of λόγος as the foundation of their art. 'Reason', λόγος or *ratio*, is a principle that is generally acknowledged by later grammarians. In his revision of Dionysius' definition of γραμματική, Asclepiades rejects the Dionysian definition, maintaining that grammar is a τέχνη in which ἐμπειρία cannot play a decisive role: its methodological foundation is λόγος. From a rationalist point of view, the hierarchy of the concepts is obvious. 'Experience' is conjectural; although it may lead to τέχνη, the concepts cannot be equal, and to define an expertise as ἐμπειρία is a methodological misinterpretation. In practice, however, things rarely appear as black and white: for example, it is possible to determine from the extant evidence that Crates of Mallus – a critic whose work did not essentially differ from that of a grammarian – was in favour of the rationalist position. Yet it was by no means a position that denied experience a place in Crates' expertise; his pupil Tauriscus also shows this attitude in his division of κριτική. 'Rational' (λογικόν) is only a name for one of the three parts, whereas in the names of the other two parts (τριβικόν and ιστορικόν) a personal acquaintance with the critic's material is emphasized. We meet with rationalist and empiricist methods conjoined in all our grammatical sources until Apollonius Dyscolus and Aulus Gellius, the chronological end point of this thesis. The art of grammar is a compromise between on the one hand experience (of texts and tradition), on the other the rules of analogy that are the backbone of any expertise worthy of the name. This is especially well illustrated by the example of Pliny the Elder, who paid attention to the methodological questions and found a balance between analogy and usage, as manifested in his *Dubius sermo*. He was not a grammarian, he did not write a systematic grammatical

manual, nor did he define grammar; nevertheless, he recognized that his work that concerned the issue of correct language was a work of grammar (*libelli de grammatica*).

The relationship between definitions of grammar and the art itself cannot be fully observed, for obvious reasons: the actual texts from which the definitions originate are mostly lost. Nevertheless, three main phases can be distinguished in the development of the definitions. In the Classical era, γραμματική has to do with letters – basically, reading and writing – for which we have the testimony of Hippocrates, Plato and Aristotle; the Hellenistic γραμματική or Republican *grammatica* (or *studium litterae* etc.) chiefly concerns the interpretation of literature, including textual criticism; finally, we have the late Hellenistic and post-Hellenistic γραμματική or imperial *grammatica*, which recognizes correct language as the second main head of the art. Correctness is first included in the definitions around the same time it starts to gain popularity: by the first century BCE, both ἑλληνισμός and *Latinitas* were the object of study. In the earliest Hellenistic definition of γραμματική, by Eratosthenes, there are no signs at all of normativity; nor are there any in the definition and list of parts by Dionysius Thrax. Starting with Dionysius' definition, Asclepiades of Myrlea identifies grammar as the art of what is said in literature (γραμματική ἐστὶ τέχνη τῶν παρὰ ποιηταῖς καὶ συγγραφεῦσι λεγομένων). However, Asclepiades also divides grammar into three parts, the first of which is the technical (τεχνικόν). The question of correct language belongs to this part, which, as its name implies, depends on rules and precepts. Sextus mentions three criteria of Hellenism that probably derive from Asclepiades: analogy, usage, and etymology. Varro's definition of grammar, essentially translating the Dionysian definition and providing the list of parts with only slight modification, still describes grammar as philology; his criteria of *Latinus sermo* cannot be traced to any particular work of his, and it remains unclear how, as a set of criteria, they were related to grammar and grammarians. However, the first century BCE did bring grammarians and correct language together at the level of definitions. The prominence of the theory of correct language shows clearly in the definition by the philosopher Ariston, along with the understanding of poets and historians: *grammaticae est scientia poetas et historicos intellegere, formam praecipue loquendi ad rationem et consuetudinem dirigens*. One of the first century BCE definitions, that by Demetrius Chlorus, also mentions 'common usage' as one head of grammatical study (γραμματική ἐστὶ τέχνη τῶν παρὰ ποιηταῖς τε καὶ τῶν κατὰ τὴν κοινὴν συνήθειαν λέξεων εἴδησις). This is a carefully constructed definition that points in the same direction as Ariston's, but less explicitly as far as normativity goes: Ariston's *grammaticae* directs' towards regularity and usage, while Demetrius Chlorus' γραμματική merely 'knows' common usage.

The theory of the parts of speech, which became dominant in the art of grammar during later centuries, does not – unlike correct language – appear explicitly in the definitions of the art of grammar. The whole idea of a ‘technical grammar’ is implicit in the statement that grammar is a τέχνη or *ars*; this means that it is methodical, it has precepts, and it is teachable. This, combined with the fact that grammar’s domain is literature, is enough to cover letters, syllables, and words. Compared with the theory of the word classes, which in fact had meaning only for professionals of language, the theory of correct language was quite another matter. It bore significance for every citizen, at least for those who aspired to a higher position in the society. The definitions of grammar are true with regard to one requirement of a τέχνη in particular: that it is directed towards some useful end. The uses of a proper understanding of literature – from individual words to poetic expressions and allusions – and of correct language were plain to see, but the classification of words does not quite rise to the same level.

From the Hellenistic era onwards, the definitions mostly maintain that the subject of the art of grammar is literature: whatever is incorporated in the art, it is in the service of interpreting texts, both poetry and prose. The aspect of correct language that gradually arises as the second main head of grammar cannot endanger this mission, but rather supports it, by creating an intellectual environment in which language in general is the object of serious interest and appreciation. The theory of correct language becomes more prominent towards the first century CE, a development which culminates in Quintilian’s division of the art of grammar into two main parts: *enarratio auctorum* and *recte loquendi scientia*. In the following century, the Aristotelian commentator Alexander of Aphrodisias defines grammar as “the art of writing well and reading well” (γραμματική ἐστὶ τέχνη τοῦ εὖ γράφειν καὶ τοῦ εὖ ἀναγινώσκειν). Γραμματική as thus defined does not rise substantially above the traditional notion of ‘lower’ grammar, γραμματιστική, but the definition is not refutable either – the verbs γράφειν and ἀναγινώσκειν seem to encompass the important aspects of literature and correct language. Aulus Gellius shows himself to be more committed to the principle of *auctoritas*, the usage of esteemed old writers, than the grammarians, who are analogy-driven. The picture Gellius draws of the grammarians as being overly loyal to *ratio* is a caricature; nevertheless the second century CE undoubtedly saw a significant debate on these matters. Apollonius Dyscolus devotes himself to the grammarian’s domain, that of literary exegesis and correct language. He insists that his account of syntax is indispensable for the interpretation of literature – a notion that comes as close as he gets to a definition of the art he is practicing. In reality, however, Apollonius turns the whole array upside down. He does not explain Homer by means of grammar, but uses Homeric examples, as well as invented ones, as evidence for grammatical phenomena.

Defining the various fields of study – and constructing their relative hierarchy – was important for philosophers, grammarians and rhetoricians, whose interests overlapped in many cases. There was also scholarship of a high quality that did not fall clearly under any of these defined fields, such as two works we now easily read as ‘linguistic’ – Caesar’s *De analogia* and Varro’s *De lingua Latina*. One type of definitory notion involves the mutual comparison of fields of knowledge, and there are a few examples: Crates of Mallus seeks to establish the relative status of κριτική and γραμματική, Cicero discusses the contents of different fields, including *grammatica*. A good deal of the history of the art of grammar is shared with the history of philosophy; towards the end of the Hellenistic era and throughout the early Imperial period, grammarians and philosophers continued to have shared interests. Boundaries between the fields are drawn memorably by Philo of Alexandria, Seneca and the Gellian character, Domitius Insanus; all three complain about grammarians and philosophers, who cannot stay in their proper place. In all of these notions, the philosophers are those who seem to be losing. For Philo, the grammarians have stolen the philosophers’ ideas; for Seneca and Domitius, the philosophers have abased themselves to the level of the grammarians by taking an interest in such matters as correct language and glossography. The relationship between grammar and rhetoric – into which Quintilian offers insights – is also to some extent overshadowed by the fact that grammar’s position was so clearly ancillary to that of rhetoric. Quintilian complains that rhetoric has relinquished some of its duties to the art of grammar; again, the grammarians seem to be content. The art of grammar is minor and ancillary, yet necessary and attractive; its only concern is that it is constantly forced to struggle against triviality.

During the first century BCE, the art of grammar took shape and found a place in the standard curriculum. It had its own professionals and a self-evident usefulness for the leading class in the society. As one sign of this enhanced status, a retrospective attitude towards the art was arising: attention was now focused on its history. In particular textual criticism, an art that could be seen as having been perfected by the Alexandrian masters, was considered interesting in Rome. This is understandable for several reasons. For one thing, there must have been a general need for texts that supported the practical work of textual criticism; secondly, Aristarchus was widely considered the grammarian par excellence, whose work was well deserving of admiration. Moreover – and perhaps most importantly for the growing sense of autonomy – textual criticism seems to have been the one part of grammar that had not originally been claimed to belong to some other art, or to professionals who were not called ‘grammarians’ (γραμματικοί or *grammatici*). The six-part list of grammar by Dionysius Thrax may serve as an illustration: (1) accurate reading with due attention to prosody, (2) interpretation according to the poetic tropes present, (3)

explication of words and historical references, (4) discovery of etymologies, (5) setting out of analogies and (6) critical assessment of poems. The first item on Dionysius' list, reading, is recognized from the Classical era onwards as the basic function of this art. Perhaps there is nothing too exciting about it, and perhaps reading is a little too basic: one does not have to be a grammarian in order to read – of course the Alexandrian grammarians were able to contribute some aids to this part of the art, such as prosodic markings, and 'reading' here refers to the uncovering of the correct reading. Literary tropes were a well-established part of rhetorical theories, and Quintilian testifies that the tropes were a subject of much debate among grammarians and philosophers. Glossography was developed by the Alexandrian scholars in the Museion, but it had already been well established in the Classical period as part of Homeric study, the foundation of Greek παιδεία. Of parts four and five, we may say that etymology has its origins in philosophy, and analogy had been used in the mathematical sciences. But there is one part of Dionysius' art to which only the grammarian seems to have a claim: critical assessment. In Dionysius' list of parts, this last and most important part consists of textual and literary criticism. Textual criticism remains as the only domain peculiar to the grammarian; literary criticism is a different matter, and even had its own manuals written by renowned non-grammarians, most notably by Aristotle.

The ancient definitions of the art of grammar may seem quite conservative at first glance, but there is actually a great deal in these meagre lines that is responding and reacting to developments within the art itself and the surrounding intellectual climate. In the second century CE, the chronological endpoint of this thesis, the Latin tradition of defining the art of grammar had not yet reached full bloom. Such issues as defining the art of grammar or listing its parts are discussed in the Late Latin grammars, with the notable exception of the standard grammatical manuals by Donatus and the complete grammar by Priscian, in which definitions of the *ars grammatica* are conspicuous by their absence. Definitions of grammar in Late Antiquity and through the early Middle Ages, with the growing influence of dialectic and the significant place grammar came to hold in the system of the *artes liberales*, are a topic for further research.



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