

## The origin of grammatical terminology

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A hundred years ago, to be called ‘the first gentleman of Europe’ was the privilege of the King of England. Those days are gone. But there is still room for the title of ‘first gentleman-linguist of Europe’ and, as it is, this title goes to Anders Ahlqvist, who, though not himself British, is the impeccable embodiment, in manners and mind, of the British ‘gentleman’, an ideal developed in the public schools and universities of eighteenth-century Britain. As this ideal was derived from the ancient Stoics (who will have found inspiration in Pindar’s wise admonition μηδὲν ἄγαν or ‘nothing in excess’) and came to Britain through the frequent reading of Cicero’s stoically inspired *On Duties* in the public schools of Britain as it was two-and-a-half centuries ago, it is perhaps not too unfitting to honour the first gentleman-linguist of Europe on his sixtieth birthday with an essay that takes us back to Greek and Roman antiquity. For there one must go to find the origin of practically all of present-day standard grammatical terminology.

The Greeks had two reasons for analysing sentences. The first was a consequence of the theory of truth, first presented by Plato in his dialogue *The Sophist*, and further developed by Aristotle in his metaphysical and logical writings. Aristotle was a Macedonian, son of a distinguished physician, and had come to the Academy at the age of seventeen, in 367 BCE, when Plato was in his mid-sixties. Though in many ways disagreeing with Plato in philosophical matters, he agreed with him wholeheartedly in rejecting the relativistic and opportunistic notion of truth put into circulation by the itinerant philosophers called Sophists, who preached that truth is, essentially, of one’s own making: convince the majority that some statement is true, and it is true. For the Sophists, in Plato’s rendering, ‘man is the measure of all things’.

For Aristotle, on the contrary, the truth of a statement depends on what is actually the case. The statement is about something in the world, and when the world is in fact the way the statement describes it to be, the statement is true; otherwise it is false. Speaking of truth and falsity, Aristotle says (*Metaphysics* 1051<sup>b</sup>16):

We must be clear about the meaning of these terms. You are not white because we truly think you are, but it is because you are white that we speak the truth when we say you are.

This is called the 'correspondence theory of truth', as opposed to relativistic notions of truth that make truth and falsity dependent on opinions, not on facts.

An immediate corollary of this theory is the need for analysis. For one cannot speak of 'correspondence' without analysis: there has to be a 'mapping' procedure. To show how a statement (assertive sentence) corresponds with what is the case in the world, one has to specify what parts of the statement correspond with what elements in the world. This requires a double analysis, a grammatical one that shows the structural parts (constituents) of sentences, and an ontological one that shows what elements one can distinguish in the world.

Aristotle's ontology consisted of entities on the one hand, and properties on the other. Of entities there are, in his view, many kinds, including properties, which can be considered *qua* entities. Properties can be ordered into more and more general classes, until a list of ten basic properties ('categories') is reached that allow for no further reduction. These are, as is well-known, the categories of 'substance', 'quantity', 'quality', 'relation', 'place', 'time', 'position', 'state', 'action' and 'affection'. These ten Aristotelian categories are seen as the most primitive, axiomatic, general properties in the (or any) world.

Statements are analyzed in terms of a subject and a predicate. (This distinction had already been made by the early fifth-century Thracian philosopher Democritus, who spoke of *ὄνομα* 'name, noun' and *ῥῆμα* 'verb' respectively. This terminology persisted till late Antiquity, though professional grammarians tended to adopt the Aristotelian terms that will be discussed in a moment and used *ὄνομα* and *ῥῆμα* for the word classes 'noun' and 'verb' respectively.) For Aristotle, the subject refers to an entity, while the predicate denotes a property. Just as properties can be classified under ten general categories, so can predicates. A statement is a linguistic structure in which the speaker assigns a property to an entity (or a set of entities). The statement is taken to be true just in case the property denoted by the predicate really adheres to the entity (entities) referred to. When the entity in question does not

have the property in question, the statement is false. This gives us a first analysis of statements in terms of subject and predicate.<sup>1</sup>

Nowadays, of course, linguists no longer worry about reference and correspondence. Children are now taught, in whatever remains of grammar classes, that the main predicate — say, “was singing” — has to be found first (usually on morphological grounds), whereupon the subject is found by answering the question “who or what was singing?”, the answer to which is “Judith” if the sentence is: “Judith was singing.” Further checks are then applied to see if indeed the main predicate agrees with the subject term in the respects required by the language in question (case, number, gender). Other sentence constituents, such as direct or indirect objects, preposition phrases, adverbial adjuncts and the like, were not recognized as such at this early stage. When pressed, our ancient philosopher friends would have said that these are all part of the predicate in a wider sense.

The precise origin of the terms ‘subject’ and ‘predicate’ is as follows: ‘subject’ (*ὑποκείμενον* or ‘that which underlies’) originally denoted the entity to which a property was assigned, but its Latin translation *subiectum* began to be used, during the Middle Ages, for the sentence constituent now called ‘subject’. A different translation of the same Greek term *ὑποκείμενον*, namely *suppositum*, was reserved for the entity. The term ‘predicate’ is a direct translation of Aristotle’s *κατηγορούμενον*, which means literally ‘that which is said of something’.

Another term Aristotle gave us is ‘case’ (Greek *πτῶσις*, Latin *casus*), which literally means ‘fall’. This term was used by Aristotle as a metaphor for any form of morphological modification of a word: just like dice may fall one way or another, so a word can ‘fall’ one way or another, depending on what it is meant to express. Originally, the term was used not only for verbal conjugation and nominal declension, but also for the derivation of adverbs from adjectives or of adjectives from nouns (e.g. ‘golden’ from ‘gold’). The Stoic philosophers later began to

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<sup>1</sup> Quantified statements like “All humans are mortal” also have their subject and predicate, the subject being ‘all humans’, which refers to the entire collection of humans in the world and assigns the property of being mortal to each of them individually. Statements like “Some humans are mortal” are problematic in that what must be taken to be the subject term does not refer to any specific entity or entities in the world but is happy with any arbitrary specimen or collection of specimens of the human species. This particular semantic problem remained unsolved until the advent of modern quantification theory, developed by Frege, Russell and a few other heavies about a century ago, which provided a solution in terms of variables.

limit the use of the term to the nominal cases, just as in modern grammar.

Hardly any other terms are due to Aristotle, either in the context of his theory of truth or in different contexts. Surprisingly, Aristotle had no term for our 'sentence', nor did any other ancient Greek philosopher or linguist. Occasionally one finds λόγος in the sense of 'sentence', but this terminology is not systematic — also because λόγος has so many other meanings. Aristotle's term πρότασις does not really stand for 'sentence', but is, rather, his term for what we call 'proposition' — a term that falls outside the realm of grammar and belongs more properly in logic. The Greek-Alexandrian grammarian Apollonius Dyscolus (second century CE) uses the term λόγος ἀπτοτελής 'full and complete expression', which was to have a long career in the Middle Ages and after, but as a concept, not as a term. Cicero has the term *periodus*, especially when he wishes to refer to long, complex sentences as used by literary authors and public orators. The sixth-century Latin grammarian Priscian uses *sententia*, which carried the day in English, but not in the Romance languages, which all have their version of Greek φράσις 'saying'. German *Satz* and Dutch *zin* or *volzin* are products of the Renaissance habit of coining new vernacular terminology for the arts and sciences. (Our *celebratus* will no doubt supply the Scandinavian and Finnish counterparts.)

The Aristotelian theory of truth thus gave rise to barely a handful of grammatical terms, needed for the analysis of statements, so that true statements could be seen to correspond to elements in the world as distinguished in Aristotelian ontology. But other, rather more dramatic, developments in the Greek and Middle-Eastern world were soon to lead to more intensive linguistic activity, providing the Greeks with a second and much more powerful reason for grammatical analysis, and thus for grammatical terminology.

These developments had everything to do with Alexander, called 'the Great'. Alexander was born in 356 BCE as the son of the Macedonian king Philip II and as heir to the kingdom of Macedonia. Macedonia was considered a barbarian kingdom by the Greeks. Their language, Old-Macedonian, now almost completely lost, had nothing to do with any variety of Greek. Yet Greek language and culture were rapidly gaining ground (the names of the Macedonian kings of the period are all Greek). When Alexander was twelve years old, his father summoned Aristotle, who had left Plato's Academy and was living in the island of Lesbos, to the Macedonian court to become Alexander's private tutor. Aristotle was well acquainted with the royal family, as his father had been the

private physician of Philip's father, king Amyntas III. In 336 Alexander succeeded Philip II, who had been killed by an assassin, and immediately brought Athens under his rule. The year after, in 335, he allowed Aristotle to set up school in Athens, the famous Lyceum. Here Aristotle taught till 323, when news of Alexander's death reached Athens and Aristotle thought best to seek refuge in the city of Chalcis in Euboea, which harboured a Macedonian garrison and where Aristotle's family had some possessions. There he died of a stomach ailment in 322.

Between 336 and 323 Alexander conquered the entire Middle East, as far as present-day Pakistan, turning himself into a figure of mythological proportions. Alexander was fond of founding cities, almost all of which were called *Alexandria*.<sup>2</sup> The most important Alexandria, of course, was the city in Egypt, still called that name (*El-Iskandarīa* in Arabic), founded in 331 BCE and situated at the western end of the Nile delta. In principle, Alexander left all his conquered territories under Greek government, which led to a rapid hellenization of the entire Middle East. In Egypt, hellenization was particularly strong, as Ptolemy, one of Alexander's generals and perhaps also his elder half-brother, later called *Σώτηρ* 'saviour', took Egypt for himself after Alexander's death and established Greek-Macedonian rule, with Alexandria as his capital. In Egypt it thus became imperative for young men and women who aspired to a career in the civil service, the army, the education system, or even in commerce, to have a good command of the Greek language. This gave rise to an immediate, massive demand for Greek language teaching. Yet there were hardly any schools and no teaching materials.

Ptolemy, however, knew what to do about it. Being quite an intellectual himself, he founded about 300 BCE the first university in history, the *Μουσεῖον* 'shrine of the Muses'), financed by the state and housed within the palace precinct. He also set up, as part of the *Μουσεῖον*, the famous great library, which served scholars for many centuries until it was finally destroyed, probably in the late fourth century CE, and possibly by Christian mobs.<sup>3</sup> Ptolemy's son, Ptolemy II Philadelphus, continued his father's work, expanding the university and the library and in-

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<sup>2</sup> An exception was the city of Bucephala, near modern Jhelum in Pakistan, called after his beloved and likewise legendary horse Bucephalus, who died there in 326 BCE. Another of his foundations was the now Afghan city of Kandahar, originally *Iskandaria* — after Alexander's oriental name *Iskander*. The many places in India called *Iskanderabad* are connected with Alexander only because of the widespread belief that Alexander will return to earth as a god and saviour.

<sup>3</sup> The story about the great fire set to the library by Julius Caesar's troops is almost certainly a fabrication; see Canfora 1990.

viting scholars in all fields to come and teach there. The *Μουσεῖον* had faculties, called 'schools', just like a modern university. There were faculties for medicine, geography, history, mathematics, astronomy, and also for languages, mainly, but not exclusively, Greek. In the Greek department, some of the professors and staff had the task of devising and selecting proper teaching materials for the language schools in the country.

The teaching materials were mainly of two kinds, literary texts and small grammatical treatises or *τέχναι γραμματικάι*. The literary texts provided documented usage of good — though perhaps somewhat antiquated — Greek. But the *τέχναι* were meant to assist speakers and writers in keeping up good morphology. According to Householder (1994: 931–2):

If ... an ordinary man wishes to decline a strange noun correctly or form the correct aorist of a new verb that he has met in reading, and there is no complete Greek grammar or dictionary available, how does he do it? He might ask a *grammatikós*, but how did he, in turn, find out? The normal answers given to this question were two: (a) analogy, and (b) usage. Analogy means (to the grammarian) finding the rules for saying that two or more words are inflected alike, when one is well-known but not the other. Usage means finding out how Demosthenes or Thucydides inflected the word, or else how one's college-educated neighbor did so. By and large, *grammatikóí* began to set themselves up as experts on both analogy (knowledge of the correct inflection) and usage (knowledge of the dialect of Demosthenes, etc.).

It is in Alexandria that linguistics was born as an autonomous academic discipline. As good academics, the Alexandrian grammarians searched for generalizations, which they found first and foremost in what we now know as the morphological paradigms, especially the nominal declensions. For us, these are the bread and butter of first grammar teaching. But for them, the discovery of formal regularities largely corresponding with semantic categories such as person, gender, number, sentence function, etc. must have been a matter of great intellectual excitement. In fact we owe the traditional analysis of the nominal system largely to the Alexandrian grammarians, terminology and all.

From, say, 250 till 50 BCE Alexandria was one of the main centres, if not the main centre, of grammatical research. To maximize the yield of their investigations, the Alexandrian grammarians imposed the meth-

odological principle of *ἀναλογία* ‘regularity’. By this they meant the principle that one should search for the description that would account for the largest number of facts by means of the simplest possible rules – a methodological principle that sounds familiar to modern theoretical linguists. As a consequence, Alexandrian grammarians were called ‘analogsists’. They saw each natural language as a product of a divinely inspired social convention, no doubt perfectly regular (given a list of arbitrary primitive morphemes) at the time the convention was established but affected by all kinds of corruption through the ages, resulting in the embarrassing and regrettable irregularities and exceptions that were found in the Greek language of their day.

Meanwhile, however, the philosophers had not been idle. Not long after Aristotle’s death, the Cypriot-Phoenician philosopher Zeno of Citium (± 333–264 BCE) set up school in a public gallery, the *Στοὰ Ποικίλη* or ‘painted collonade’ on the Athenian market (*ἀγορά*), where he rented space to teach. From this sprang the longest living philosophy school in Western history, the Stoa, which lasted until the late Roman Empire and exerts its influence even today. Zeno was soon joined and followed by other philosophers, who brought to bear influences from the entire history of Greek thought, but particularly from Plato and the small Megarian school of philosophy that had existed in Megara, not far west of Athens, since about 400 BCE. Stoic philosophy was based on the principle of *λόγος* – that is, of reason, consistency and systematicity – as opposed to emotion, which was considered the main obstacle to full rational insight and just actions. The most prominent element in Stoic philosophy was its theory of morality and justice, but, besides contributions in many other fields including logic, the Stoics also developed a philosophy of nature and a philosophy of language. They were in many ways opposed to Aristotle,<sup>4</sup> and they opposed the Alexandrian grammarians, whose general views on language they found shallow and uninteresting.

For the Stoics, language was a product of nature, not of convention. Word forms may seem arbitrary, and perhaps they are to some extent, but one should not exclude the possibility of a deeper system (*λόγος*)

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<sup>4</sup> In fact, Aristotle had already been seriously embarrassed by his contemporary Eubulides, who headed the Megarian school during Aristotle’s lifetime, on account of his truth theory (Seuren 2004). Eubulides presented Aristotle with his paradoxes, the most famous of which is the Liar paradox (“this very sentence is false”), to which Aristotle had no reply—other than saying that these paradoxes were “silly” (*ἄτοπα*).

that would show at least some semantic justification.<sup>5</sup> Just as nature is imbued with system, so is language. The system, however, is only imperfectly known, as most of it is not open to direct observation and can only be unearthed by setting up explanatory theories—a thought that goes back to the philosopher Heraclitus of Ephesus (± 500 BCE), who strongly influenced Plato.<sup>6</sup> It follows that one should expect to find in language both snippets of a system and a great deal of facts that must of necessity remain unexplained for the time being. Therefore, if one wishes to understand the workings of language, it is important that one should take seriously all irregularities, exceptions and whatever else appears unexplainable right now, as it is these ‘anomalies’ that will hopefully open the eyes of future generations to the reality of language. For that reason, the Stoic philosophers of language were called ‘anomalists’, after the Greek word *ἀνωμαλία* ‘irregularity’. Again, this methodology has a familiar ring to modern theoretical linguists.

Guided by this methodological principle, the Stoics conducted a great deal of serious linguistic research, hoping to expand their vision on what is systematic in language. To mention just an example, the analysis of Greek verbal tenses, voices and moods is largely due to the Stoics.<sup>7</sup> Unfortunately, owing to an overall scarcity of written sources regarding the last three centuries BCE, almost no direct documentation is available regarding Stoic and Alexandrian grammar.<sup>8</sup> Virtually all that is known is derived from later, indirect, sources and from the reconstruction of influences in later grammarians.

It is known, however, that for at least 150 years, perhaps even longer, there was great rivalry between the Alexandrian analogist schoolmasters and the Stoic anomalist philosophers.<sup>9</sup> Yet somehow, in the busi-

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<sup>5</sup> Till late Antiquity one finds treatises aiming to establish a semantic motivation, etymological ‘truth’, for word forms. A representative example is the anonymous late Roman treatise usually found in manuscripts under the title *De Proprietate Sermonum vel Rerum*, which was strongly inspired by Stoic philosophy of language (Uhlfelder 1954).

<sup>6</sup> Consider two of Heraclitus’ sayings: “Nature likes to hide herself” and “Invisible harmony [=system] is stronger than visible harmony.”

<sup>7</sup> This appears from a lengthy *scholium* or note written in the margin of a manuscript containing the text of the *Τέχνη Γραμματική* by Dionysius Thrax, to be discussed below. The *scholium* in question is known as the *Stephanus scholium*, and is printed in full and eminently translated in Hülser (1987–1988). The most coherent interpretation of this (difficult) *scholium* is given in Pohlenz (1965: 39–86).

<sup>8</sup> For a most valuable collection of texts and commentaries on Stoic logic and philosophy of language, see Hülser (1987–1988).

<sup>9</sup> The Alexandrians derided not only Stoic philosophy of language but also Stoic logic. The Stoic notion of conditionals, now standardly accepted in propositional calculus as truth-functional material implication (“if A, then B”), caused particular ridicule among



ness of grammar teaching and grammar writing, a sense of practicality prevailed, and some sort of consensus was reached by the middle of the second century BCE. The extant writings of the first-century BCE Latin grammarian Varro, for example, are based on both Alexandrian and Stoic notions of language and grammar.

A particularly clear example of this dual influence is the famous grammatical treatise, the *Τέχνη Γραμματική*, by Dionysius Thrax (± 170–90 BCE), who had been educated in Alexandria and incorporated much of traditional Alexandrian grammatical teaching, besides being strongly influenced by Stoic grammar and philosophy of language, due to a prolonged stay in the island of Rhodes, a stronghold of Stoic philosophy, where he taught for a number of years.<sup>10</sup> It is a very short treatise of barely ten pages of print, and is the first document in Western history that aims at providing a grammatical description of a language, in this case Greek. It starts with a discussion of what grammar amounts to ('Grammar is the expert knowledge of the language forms mostly used by the poets and the prose writers'), the proper reading technique (i.e. aloud, with the right accents and pauses, and in the correct literary style), the accents, punctuation, rhapsody (three lines), the letters of the alphabet, syllables, pronunciation, nouns (three pages), verbs (two pages), participles, articles, pronouns, prepositions, adverbs, conjunctions. It ends with an appendix on verse metres. It contains no syntax and no actual morphological paradigms (which were later provided in the form of *κανόνες* 'rules', attached to the *Τέχνη*). But it does contain a whole repertory of grammatical terminology, most of which has survived into modern grammar, which in its turn has few terms not derived from Dionysius' *Τέχνη*. Small and insignificant-looking as it is, this first grammatical treatise set the tone for many centuries of grammar writing.

Eight main word classes (*μέρα τοῦ λόγου* or parts of speech) are distinguished: *ὄνομα* 'noun', *ῥῆμα* 'verb', *μετοχή* 'participle', *ἄρθρον* 'article', *ἀντωνυμία* 'pronoun', *πρόθεσις* 'preposition', *ἐπίρρημα* 'adverb', *σύνδεσμος* 'conjunction'. The (mainly Alexandrian) nominal — including ad-

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the Alexandrians, so much so that it apparently became a matter of public interest. Kneale & Kneale (1962: 128), referring to Sextus Empiricus, *Adversus Mathematicos* 1, 309, mention an epigram by the third-century BCE Alexandrian poet and royal librarian Callimachus: 'Even the crows on the roofs caw about the nature of conditionals.'

<sup>10</sup> An excellent modern edition with translation into Dutch and German and ample well-informed commentary is Swiggers & Wouters (1998). These authors also discuss the vexed questions of the authenticity of the *Τέχνη* and of Dionysius' dates (Swiggers & Wouters 1998: xii–xxx1). I follow Swiggers & Wouters' balanced views on these matters.

jectival – categories are γένος ‘gender’, εἶδος ‘species’, σχῆμα ‘figure’, ἀριθμός ‘number’ and πτώσις ‘case’. Of genders there are three: ἀρσενικόν ‘masculine’, θηλυκόν ‘feminine’ and οὐδέτερον ‘neutre’. The species were either πρωτότυπον ‘primary, irreducible’ or παράγωγον ‘derived’ – such as patronymic, possessive, comparative, superlative, diminutive, denominal, deverbal. A further hodge-podge of species is mentioned half a page down: proper name, common noun, adjective (ἐπίθετον), relational noun (πρός τι ἔχον – clearly Aristotelian), quasi-relational noun (ὡς πρὸς τι ἔχον), homonym, synonym, second name, eponym, ethnic name, interrogative, indefinite, anaphoric (also called ‘equative’, ‘demonstrative’ or ‘correlative’), collective, distributive, inclusive, onomatopœic, generic, specific, ordinal, cardinal, absolute, participating – all of which is clearly linguistically immature: the intervening twenty centuries have sorted this out more satisfactorily.

The figures are to do with nominal compounding. Three figures are distinguished: simplex (e.g. Μέμνων), derived (e.g. Ἀγαμέμνων), and twice-derived (e.g. Ἀγαμέμνονιδες ‘son of Agamemnon’). There are three numbers: ἐνικός ‘singular’, δυϊκός ‘dual’ and πληθυντικός ‘plural’. (The dual was already obsolete in the second century BCE.) Finally, the five standard cases of the Greek nominal system are given: ὀρθή πτώσις (*casus rectus*), also called ὀνομαστική ‘nominative’, γενική ‘genitive’, or the form used for your family or clan’s name, also called κτητική ‘possessive’ or πατρική (the form of your father’s name), δοτική ‘dative’, αἰτιατική ‘accusative’ and κλητική ‘vocative’.

Apart from the term ‘accusative’, these case names clearly smack of the classroom. As regards the accusative, there has been some controversy: is this a philosophical term, to do with the Aristotelian notion of ‘cause’ or a schoolroom term, meaning ‘the form used for the person you take to court’? In view of the other case names, and also because the philosophical meaning would have given Latin *causativus* instead of *accusativus*, I am inclined to believe the latter. It is, moreover, not clear what the notion of ‘cause’ could have to do with the accusative case, while it is known that judicial suing was the order of the day.<sup>11</sup>

The verb is defined as ‘a word without case, assuming forms for tense, person and number and expressing an activity (ἐνέργεια or active) or

<sup>11</sup> De Mauro (1971: 239–332) argues in favour of a philosophical origin of all case names. His arguments, however, carry little weight, first because they rely heavily on statistics of use, whereas what should count is prototypicality, not frequency, of use (and the verb ‘cause’ can hardly be regarded as a prototypical verb for the use of accusative case), and secondly because the alleged philosophical basis is either far-fetched or simply absent (see Seuren 1998: 21).

the undergoing thereof (πάθος or passive). Five moods (ἐγκλίσεις) are distinguished: ὀριστική 'indicative', προστακτική 'imperative', εὐκτική 'optative', ὑποτακτική 'subordinating' and ἀπαρέμφατος 'infinitive'. Of voices (διαθέσεις) there are three: ἐνέργεια 'active', πάθος 'passive' and μεσότης 'medium'. There are, again, two species: πρωτότυπον 'primary, irreducible' or παράγωγον 'derived'. And again, three figures are mentioned: simplex (e.g. 'put'), derived (e.g. 'put up'), and twice-derived (e.g. 'put up with'). Again three numbers: singular, dual and plural. Three persons (πρόσωπα) are distinguished: first ('from whom is spoken'), second ('to whom is spoken'), and third ('about whom or which is spoken'). Then, three main tenses are distinguished: ἐνεστώς 'present',<sup>12</sup> παρεληλυθώς 'past' and μέλλων 'future'. The παρεληλυθώς is subdivided into four minor tenses: παρατατικός 'durative', παρακείμενος 'perfect', ὑπερσυντέλικος 'pluperfect', and ἀόριστος 'indefinite'. Three 'cognate' relations are then specified: of the present tense with the durative (giving the imperfect), of the perfect with the pluperfect, and of the aorist with the future tense. It is here that the famous Stephanus scholium, mentioned in note 7, is attached.

Then follows a section on conjugations or verbal morphological classes. Dionysius distinguishes thirteen conjugations, according to the paradigms of verbal endings. No specific terminology is involved here. This is in itself a remarkable fact, since Dionysius and his fellow grammarians apparently felt that these distinctions are more or less haphazard and semantically insignificant. The remainder of the *Τέχνη* consists of definitions of the remaining six word classes (parts of speech) and lists of examples.

It thus seems that the bulk of the grammatical terminology used today in both traditional and technically more advanced grammar and grammar theory is traceable to the small grammatical treatise by Dionysius Thrax, who again relied on the traditions that existed in his day, both philosophical and practical.

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<sup>12</sup> Ἐνεστώς is the learned Stoic term for 'what is actually the case'; the commonly used term for present tense was παρόν or 'what is present'.

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