

Speaker's Commitment, Assertion & Presupposition in Classical Greek Complements

In Classical Greek, declarative complement clauses after verbs of saying and mental processes can take the form of an infinitive, participle or finite clause introduced by a number of complementizers, the most frequent of which are ὅτι (*hoti*) and ὡς (*hōs*). In assessing the different semantic and pragmatic contributions each of these syntactic configurations make to a sentence, scholars have frequently invoked the term presupposition: the infinitive does not carry a presupposition, while participles do. On the other hand, it has also been argued that complementary participle phrases contain focal and salient information, an idea that does not seem to square with current pragmatic definitions of presupposition. The question whether, and if so, in which circumstances, *hoti/hōs*-clauses also trigger a presupposition is even more controversial.

In my paper I will first give a brief outline of the several views of the Classical Greek complement system. After that I will focus on four problems that come out of the literature: 1) the need to differentiate between speaker's commitment (is the proposition referred to in the complement 'true' or 'false?') and presupposition (is the proposition referred to in the complement asserted or taken for granted?); 2) the presuppositional status of participles as opposed to infinitives; 3) the information status of participles and *hoti/hōs*-clauses; 4) possible differences between the complementizers *hoti* and *hōs*.

I will take into account complements after a number of verbs of saying, perception and mental processes. My sample of texts will include Herodotus, Xenophon, Plato, Aristophanes, Antiphon, Andocides, Lysias and Demosthenes.