

International Conference on Construction Grammar – ICCG10

Paris, 16-18 July 2018

**On the importance of lexical constructions:  
Accounting for the distribution and polysemy of a  
motion verb**

**Kiki Nikiforidou** (National & Kapodistrian University of Athens)

**Thanasis Georgakopoulos** (University of Liège)

**Anna Piata** (University of Neuchâtel)

**Eliese-Sophia Lincke** (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)



“Motion verbs in Ancient Greek and Ancient Egyptian: A diachronic study on the linguistic, cognitive and cultural encoding of space”

Research scholarships- IKYDA



**DAAD**

Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst

**IKYDA**



## General aims:

- To shed light on the encoding of motion events in Ancient Greek and Ancient Egyptian by putting forward a corpus-based, diachronic study of motion verbs
- To provide a plausible route of the semantic change that motion verbs undergo
- To address the cognitive underpinnings in and cultural differences between the two languages, as reflected in the language of motion



## We focus on:

- The ancient Greek motion verb *βαίνω* (*baínō* ‘go’)
- **Arguing** that:
  - Lexical polysemy in general inheres in particular contextual features
  - Long standing tradition in cognitive linguistics

“From words as building blocks to usage events, in all their contextual detail” (Cuyckens et al. 2003: 21).
  - Focusing exclusively on de-contextualized semantic nodes or niches is inadequate



## We focus on:

- The ancient Greek motion verb *βαίνω* (*baínō* ‘go’)
- **Arguing** that:
  - Lexical polysemy in general inheres in particular contextual features
  - Long standing tradition in cognitive linguistics

“From words as building blocks to usage events, in all their contextual detail” (Cuyckens et al. 2003: 21).
  - Focusing exclusively on de-contextualized semantic nodes or niches is inadequate
  - Enriched lexical constructions containing morphosyntactic, lexical, semantic, and discoursal information are necessary



## We focus on:

- The ancient Greek motion verb *βαίνω* (**baínō** 'go')
- **Showing** that its various meanings correlate with:
  - a) the type of syntactic complement they appear with
  - b) morphological features
  - c) the verb-complement word order
  - d) the type of sentence they are found in
  - e) the lexical fillers of the complements



- **Corpus-based** or **-driven** approaches that seek for objective measures to distinguish between senses
  - **Atkins (1987)**: “ID tags”: “syntactic or lexical markers in the citations which point to a particular dictionary sense of the word”.
  - **Fillmore & Atkins (1992)**: analysis of the polysemy of *risk* relies on the distinction of the different types of complements in corpus-derived examples (cf. **Hanks 1996**; **Croft 2009**)
  - **Gries (2006)** and **Berez & Gries (2009)**: behavioral profiles of the verbs *run* and *get* respectively
  - **Newman & Rice (2006)**: semantic properties of the verbs *eat* and *drink* may inhere not only in the type of complement but also in individual inflections of the verb



- **Corpus-based** or **-driven** approaches that seek for objective measures to distinguish between senses
  - **In semantic change:**
    - **Jansegers and Gries (2017)**: dynamic behavior profile of the Spanish *sentir* (cf. **Ioannou 2017**)
    - **Hilpert (2016)**: highlights the relationship between the collocates of *may* and its different senses
      - Shift in collocational preferences correlates with semantic change and the different meanings of the modal





## Why Construction Grammar for AG motion verbs?

- Motion events in AG have been investigated from either a semantic or syntactic perspective  
(see Skopeteas 2002, Skopeteas 2008a, 2008b, Nikitina 2013, Nikitina & Maslov 2013, Georgakopoulos *forthcoming*[2018])
- By adopting a constructional perspective, we expect to arrive at holistic descriptions of the verbs we analyze since particular senses arise **in particular morpho-syntactic, lexical and/or discoursal configurations**  
(see Georgakopoulos et al. *submitted*)

# (Some) previous accounts of *baínō*

- **Problems:**
  - Diverging treatment in dictionaries
  - Diverging treatment in the literature (e.g., Spano 2015)
  - Different rendering of the relevant passages in the translations of these texts
- Napoli (2006: 165): telic verb inherently denoting “a goal-directed movement”
  - “This basic semantics interacts with perfective and imperfective morphology respectively in order “to represent the movement by including its final goal” or “to represent the movement as not having attained its final goal, or indicate that such a goal-directed movement is habitual or iterative”

# (Some) previous accounts of *bainō*

- **Problems:**
  - Diverging treatment in dictionaries
  - Diverging treatment in the literature (e.g., Spano 2015)
  - Different rendering of the relevant passages in the translations of these texts
- Napoli (2006: 165): telic verb inherently denoting “a goal-directed movement”
  - “This basic semantics interacts with perfective and imperfective morphology respectively in order “to represent the movement by including its final goal” or “to represent the movement as not having attained its final goal, or indicate that such a goal-directed movement is habitual or iterative”



**But:** In no way accounts for the full range of actual uses in AG

# Ancient Greek motion events



Motion verb:

**Deixis**

ἐλθόντες

*elthóntes*

go:PART.AOR.NOM.PL

Preposition + Case: **Path**

δ'

*d'*

PTC

ἐς

*es*

to

δῶμα

*dōma*

house:ACC.SG.N

Διὸς

*Diòs*

Zeus:GEN.SG

νεφεληγέρεται

*nephelēgerétai*

cloud-gatherer:GEN.SG

ξεστῆς

*ksestêis*

polished:DAT.PL.F

αἰθούσῃσιν

*aithoúsēisin*

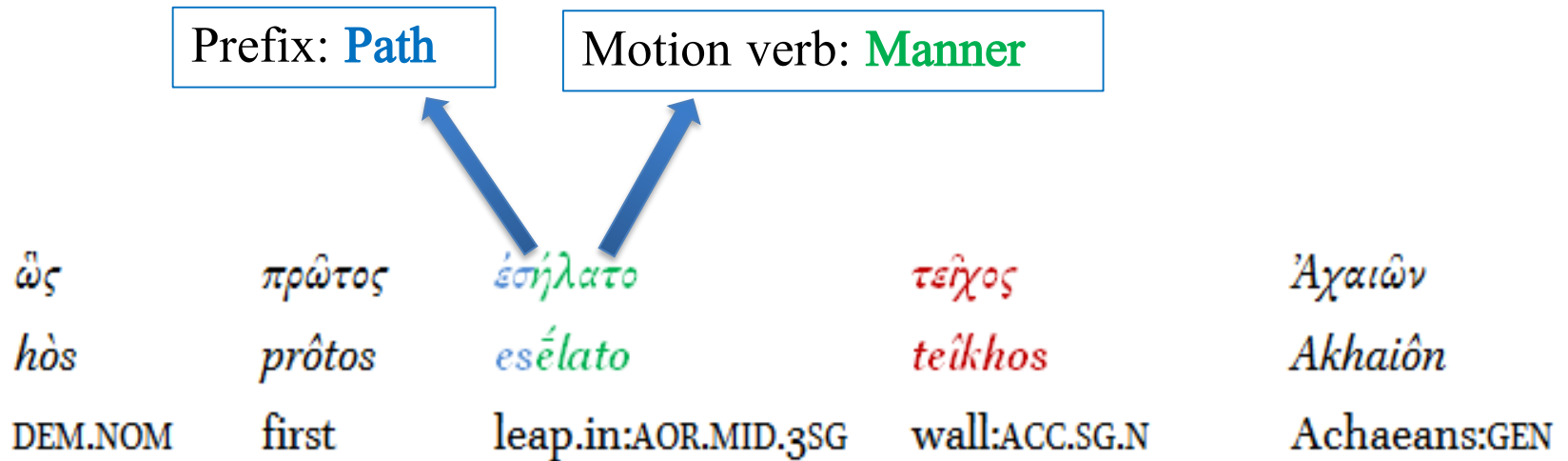
colonnade:DAT.PL.F

ἐνίζανον

*enízanon*

sat.down:IMPF.3PL

'And being come to the house of cloud-gatherer Zeus, they sat them down within the polished colonnades' (Homer, *Illiad* 20.10-11)



‘who was first to leap into the wall of the Achaeans’ (Homer, *Iliad* 12.438)

- **Homeric and Classical Greek:** mostly use Satellite-framed patterns  
(see Skopeteas 2002; Imbert 2010; Nikitina 2013; cf. Verkerk 2014)



**Table 1. The corpus constructed for the current study**

<b>Diachronic Stage</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Work</b>	<b>Text types</b>	<b>Words</b>
Homeric	8 <sup>th</sup> B.C.	Homer	Iliad, Odyssey	Epic poetry	≈ 200T
Classical	5 <sup>th</sup> B.C.	Euripides	Andromache, Phoenissae, Iphigenia in Aulis, Hecuba, Iphigenia in Tauris, Hippolytus, Medea, Heracles, Electra, Bacchae, Orestes	Tragedy	> 96T
	5 <sup>th</sup> B.C.	Plato	Euthydemus, Protagoras, Gorgias, Meno, Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Phaedo	Philosophy	> 108T

Source: Perseus digital library (<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper>)



- **Retrieve and clean up:**
  - $N=339$  in Homer
  - $N= 195$  in Classical Greek
- **Coding of data** (cf. Gries 2006: 73–75, for the English *run*).
- Separate pivot tables for each language with MS Excel 2016
  - Display data in a multidimensional chart and extract significant patterns
  - Which senses are attracted to which morpho-syntactic, and lexical and semantic features.
  - We have adopted a corpus-based approach: our analysis sought to confirm certain observations made from the perusal of the data.



**Table 2. The morpho-syntactic, lexical, and semantic features coded**

<b>Animacy of subject</b>	<i>Animate</i> ( <i>Human vs. Non human</i> )	<i>Inanimate</i>			
<b>Transitivity</b>	<i>Transitive</i>	<i>Intransitive</i>			
<b>Syntactic complement</b>	<i>Prepositional Phrase</i>	<i>Noun in Accusative</i>	<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Participle</i>	<i>Zero</i>
<b>Semantic specification of the complement</b>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Path</i>	<i>Goal</i>	<i>Other</i>	
<b>Sentence type</b>	<i>Main</i> ( <i>Declar., Inter., Imper.</i> )	<i>Subordinate</i>			
<b>Inflection of Verb</b>	<i>Tense</i>	<i>Mood</i>			
<b>Number/ Person</b>	<i>1sg, 2sg, 3sg</i>	<i>1pl, 2 pl, 3pl</i>	<i>3du</i>		
<b>Word order</b>	<i>Verb-Complement</i>	<i>Complement-Verb</i>	<i>Complement-Verb-Complement</i>		
<b>Type of text</b>	<i>Epic poetry</i>	<i>Philosophy</i>	<i>Tragedy</i>		





- Retrieve and clean up:
  - $N=339$  in Homer
  - $N= 195$  in Classical Greek
- Coding of data (cf. Gries 2006: 73–75, for the English run).
- Separate pivot tables for each language with MS Excel 2016
  - Display data in a multidimensional chart and extract significant patterns
  - Which senses are attracted to which morpho-syntactic, and lexical and semantic features.
  - We have adopted a corpus-based approach: our analysis sought to confirm certain observations made from the perusal of the data.



**Table 3. The meanings and their contextual cues of *baínō* in Ancient Greek**

	Meaning	Constructional Cues	N of the pattern	Total N
Homer	GO	1. Human, intransitive, Goal element (PP, noun in accusative, adverb or suffix)	114	163
		a. Human, intransitive, Goal element (PP, noun in accusative, adverb or suffix), aorist	88	
		2. Human, intransitive, PP, Path	22	
	SET OUT	1. Human, intransitive, infinitive, declarative, aorist, Indicative	76	80
		a. Human, intransitive, infinitive, declarative, aorist, indicative, 3 <sup>rd</sup> person (3SG or 3PL), Verb-Complement	72	
	MOUNT	Human, intransitive, Goal PP (lexically specified, in particular the nouns <i>naús</i> 'ship', <i>diphros</i> 'stool', <i>púrgos</i> 'tower, castle', <i>ókhea</i> 'chariot', and <i>hárma</i> 'chariot')	26	38
	LEAVE	1. Human, intransitive, Source element (PP or adverb or suffix)	19	37
2. Human, intransitive, zero complement, declarative, aorist, indicative		13		
MAKE GO	Human, transitive	6	6	
Euripides	GO	1. Human, intransitive, Goal element (PP, Noun in accusative, adverb or suffix)	35	62
	DIE	Human, intransitive, zero complement, past tense (aorist, perfect, pluperfect)	5	6
	LEAVE	1. Human, intransitive, Source PP	3	10
		2. Human, intransitive, Zero complement	5	
	COME	1. Human, intransitive, PP/ adverb or suffix, Source	6	38
2. Human, intransitive, PP/ adverb or suffix/ NP, Goal/ Goal animate		13		
3. Past tense (Aorist, Perfect)		21		
Plato	OVERSTEP	Human, intransitive, PP, Source non location (lexically specified, in particular nouns relating to justice, e.g., <i>dikē</i> , or legislation, e.g., <i>nomothesia</i> )	3	5
	STAND	1. PP, other non location, perfect, CV	3	6
2. Inanimate, perfect		4		



### The 'go' construction

(1) *énth'* *ébē* *eis* *eunèn* *pollà* *phresì*  
there go:AOR.3SG to bed:ACC.SG.F many:NOM.PL.N heart:DAT.SG.FEM

*mermērizōn.*

be\_anxious:PTCP.NOM.SG.M

'thither went to his bed, pondering many things in mind' (Homer, *Odyssey* 1.427)

#### Contextual cues:

- *Human subject*
- *Goal or path prepositional complement*



#### Principal meaning:

Directed, self-propelled motion



### The 'go' construction

(1) *énth'* *ébē* *eis* *eunèn* *pollà* *phresì*  
there go:AOR.3SG to bed:ACC.SG.F many:NOM.PL.N heart:DAT.SG.FEM

*mērmērízōn.*

be\_anxious:PTCP.NOM.SG.M

'thither went to his bed, pondering many things in mind' (Homer, *Odyssey* 1.427)

#### Contextual cues:

- *Human subject*
- *Goal or path prepositional complement*
  - (Core Frame Element)



#### Principal meaning:

Directed, self-propelled motion



### The 'go' construction

(1) *énth'* *ébē* *eis* *eunèñ* *pollà* *phresì*  
there go:AOR.3SG to bed:ACC.SG.F many:NOM.PL.N heart:DAT.SG.FEM

*mermērizōn.*

be\_anxious:PTCP.NOM.SG.M

'thither went to his bed, pondering many things in mind' (Homer, *Odyssey* 1.427)

#### Contextual cues:

- *Human subject*
- *Goal or path prepositional complement*  
(Core Frame Element)
- *Perfective aspect*



#### Principal meaning:

Directed, self-propelled motion

# Lexical meaning in constructional niches

Table 3. The meanings and their contextual cues of *bainō* in Ancient Greek

	Meaning	Constructional Cues	N of the pattern	Total N
Homer	GO	1. Human, intransitive, Goal element (PP, noun in accusative, adverb or suffix)	114	163
		a. Human, intransitive, Goal element (PP, noun in accusative, adverb or suffix), aorist	88	
		2. Human, intransitive, PP, Path	22	
	SET OUT	1. Human, intransitive, infinitive, declarative, aorist, Indicative	76	80
		a. Human, intransitive, infinitive, declarative, aorist, indicative, 3 <sup>rd</sup> person (3SG or 3PL), Verb-Complement	72	
	MOUNT	Human, intransitive, Goal PP (lexically specified, in particular the nouns <i>naūs</i> 'ship', <i>diphros</i> 'stool', <i>pūrgos</i> 'tower, castle', <i>ōkhea</i> 'chariot', and <i>hārma</i> 'chariot')	26	38
	LEAVE	1. Human, intransitive, Source element (PP or adverb or suffix)	19	37
		2. Human, intransitive, zero complement, declarative, aorist, indicative	13	
	MAKE GO	Human, transitive	6	6
	Euripides	GO	1. Human, intransitive, Goal element (PP, Noun in accusative, adverb or suffix)	35
DIE		Human, intransitive, zero complement, past tense (aorist, perfect, pluperfect)	5	6
LEAVE		1. Human, intransitive, Source PP	3	10
		2. Human, intransitive, Zero complement	5	
COME		1. Human, intransitive, PP/ adverb or suffix, Source	6	38
		2. Human, intransitive, PP/ adverb or suffix/ NP, Goal/ Goal animate	13	
	3. Past tense (Aorist, Perfect)	21		
Plato	OVERSTEP	Human, intransitive, PP, Source non location (lexically specified, in particular nouns relating to justice, e.g., <i>dikē</i> , or legislation, e.g., <i>nomothesia</i> )	3	5
	STAND	1. PP, other non location, perfect, CV	3	6
		2. Inanimate, perfect	4	



### The 'leave' construction

(2) *hōs* *éphat'*, *oud'* *ára* *patròs* *anēkoústēsen* *Apóllōn*,  
 PTC say:IMPRF.3SG NEG PTC father:GEN.SG.M disobey:3SG.AOR Apollo:NOM

*bê* *dè* *kat'* *Idaiōn* *oréōn* *irēki*  
 go:AOR.3SG PTC down of\_Ida:GEN.PL.N mountain:GEN.PL.N falcon:DAT.SG.M

*eoikōs* *ōkéi* *phassophónōi*,  
 like quick:DAT.SG.M dove-killing:DAT.SG.M

'So he spoke, nor was Apollo disobedient to his father's bidding, but went down from the hills of Ida, like a fleet falcon, the slayer of doves' (Homer, *Iliad* 15.236-37)

#### Contextual cues:

- *Human subject*
- *Source complement*



### The 'leave' construction

(3) *hōs pháto, bê dè suphorbós, epei*  
PTC say:IMPRF.3SG go:AOR.3SG PTC swineherd:NOM.SG.M when

*tòn mûthon ákouse.*  
DEF.ACC.SG.M saying:ACC.SG.M hear:3SG.AOR

'So he spoke, and the swineherd went when he had heard this saying.'

(Homer, *Odyssey* 17.574)

#### Contextual cues:

- *Human subject*
- *Zero complement*



"Source-oriented" (Fillmore 1971)



# Lexical meaning in constructional niches

Table 3. The meanings and their contextual cues of *bainō* in Ancient Greek

	Meaning	Constructional Cues	N of the pattern	Total N
Homer	GO	1. Human, intransitive, Goal element (PP, noun in accusative, adverb or suffix)	114	163
		a. Human, intransitive, Goal element (PP, noun in accusative, adverb or suffix), aorist	88	
		2. Human, intransitive, PP, Path	22	
	SET OUT	1. Human, intransitive, infinitive, declarative, aorist, Indicative	76	80
		a. Human, intransitive, infinitive, declarative, aorist, indicative, 3 <sup>rd</sup> person (3SG or 3PL), Verb-Complement	72	
	MOUNT	Human, intransitive, Goal PP (lexically specified, in particular the nouns <i>naūs</i> 'ship', <i>diphros</i> 'stool', <i>pūrgos</i> 'tower, castle', <i>ōkhea</i> 'chariot', and <i>hārma</i> 'chariot')	26	38
	LEAVE	1. Human, intransitive, Source element (PP or adverb or suffix)	19	37
2. Human, intransitive, zero complement, declarative, aorist, indicative		13		
MAKE GO	Human, transitive	6	6	
Euripides	GO	1. Human, intransitive, Goal element (PP, Noun in accusative, adverb or suffix)	35	62
	DIE	Human, intransitive, zero complement, past tense (aorist, perfect, pluperfect)	5	6
	LEAVE	1. Human, intransitive, Source PP	3	10
		2. Human, intransitive, Zero complement	5	
	COME	1. Human, intransitive, PP/ adverb or suffix, Source	6	38
2. Human, intransitive, PP/ adverb or suffix/ NP, Goal/ Goal animate		13		
3. Past tense (Aorist, Perfect)		21		
Plato	OVERSTEP	Human, intransitive, PP, Source non location (lexically specified, in particular nouns relating to justice, e.g., <i>dikē</i> , or legislation, e.g., <i>nomothesia</i> )	3	5
	STAND	1. PP, other non location, perfect, CV	3	6
		2. Inanimate, perfect	4	



### The 'mount/climb' construction

(4) ..., *toì*        *mèn* *pálin* *aûtis*    *ébainon*    *nēòs*        *épi*  
DEM.DAT.M   PTC   back   again   go:IMPRF.3PL   ship:GEN.SG.F   on

*glaphurês:*        *emè*        *d'*        *ékrupsan*        *theoì*        *autoì*  
hollow:GEN.SG.F   1SG.ACC   PTC   hide:AOR.3PL   god:NOM.PL.M   DEM.NOM.PL.M

'they went back again on board their hollow ship and the gods themselves hid me'  
(Homer, *Odyssey* 14.356-57)

- In the context of lexically specified complements:
  - *naûs* 'ship'
  - *díphros* 'stool'
  - *pûrgos* 'tower, castle'
  - *ókhea* 'chariot'
  - *háрма* 'chariot'

# Lexical meaning in constructional niches

Table 3. The meanings and their contextual cues of *bainō* in Ancient Greek

	Meaning	Constructional Cues	N of the pattern	Total N
Homer	GO	1. Human, intransitive, Goal element (PP, noun in accusative, adverb or suffix)	114	163
		a. Human, intransitive, Goal element (PP, noun in accusative, adverb or suffix), aorist	88	
		2. Human, intransitive, PP, Path	22	
	SET OUT	1. Human, intransitive, infinitive, declarative, aorist, Indicative	76	80
		a. Human, intransitive, infinitive, declarative, aorist, indicative, 3 <sup>rd</sup> person (3SG or 3PL), Verb-Complement	72	
	MOUNT	Human, intransitive, Goal PP (lexically specified, in particular the nouns <i>naūs</i> 'ship', <i>diphros</i> 'stool', <i>pūrgos</i> 'tower, castle', <i>ōkhea</i> 'chariot', and <i>hārma</i> 'chariot')	26	38
	LEAVE	1. Human, intransitive, Source element (PP or adverb or suffix)	19	37
		2. Human, intransitive, zero complement, declarative, aorist, indicative	13	
MAKE GO	Human, transitive	6	6	
Euripides	GO	1. Human, intransitive, Goal element (PP, Noun in accusative, adverb or suffix)	35	62
	DIE	Human, intransitive, zero complement, past tense (aorist, perfect, pluperfect)	5	6
	LEAVE	1. Human, intransitive, Source PP	3	10
		2. Human, intransitive, Zero complement	5	
	COME	1. Human, intransitive, PP/ adverb or suffix, Source	6	38
		2. Human, intransitive, PP/ adverb or suffix/ NP, Goal/ Goal animate	13	
3. Past tense (Aorist, Perfect)		21		
Plato	OVERSTEP	Human, intransitive, PP, Source non location (lexically specified, in particular nouns relating to justice, e.g., <i>dikē</i> , or legislation, e.g., <i>nomothesia</i> )	3	5
	STAND	1. PP, other non location, perfect, CV	3	6
		2. Inanimate, perfect	4	





### The inchoative ‘start/ set out’ construction

(5) *bê*                      *d’ iénai*    *pròs*    *dôma,*                      *phílon*  
 go:3SG.AOR    PTC    go:INF    towards    house:ACC.SG.N    beloved:NOM.SG.M

*tetiēménos*    *êtor,*  
 sorrowing:PTCP.PRF.M/P.NOM.SG.M    heart:NOM.SG.N

‘but went his way to the house, his heart heavy within him.’ (Homer, *Odyssey* 2.297)

#### Contextual cues:

- a) (Perfective) aorist
- b) Mostly 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular
- c) Unaugmented
- d) Followed by the present infinitive of another (motion) verb, primarily *iénai* ‘go’
- e) Fixed order (*baínō* + infinitive)
- f) When the infinitive starts with a vowel, the construction includes a euphonic particle (*d’* or *r’*)
- g) Sentence-initial position





### The inchoative 'start/ set out' construction

(5) *bê* *d'* *iénai* *pròs* *dôma,* *phílon*  
go:3SG.AOR PTC go:INF towards house:ACC.SG.N beloved:NOM.SG.M

*tetiēménos* *êtor,*  
sorrowing:PTCP.PRF.M/P.NOM.SG.M heart:NOM.SG.N

'but went his way to the house, his heart heavy within him.' (Homer, *Odyssey* 2.297)

#### Contextual cues:

- a) (Perfective) aorist
- b) Mostly 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular
- c) Unaugmented
- d) Followed by the present infinitive of another (motion) verb, primarily *iénai* 'go'
- e) Fixed order (*baínō* + *infinitive*)
- f) When the infinitive starts with a vowel, the construction includes a euphonic particle (*d'* or *r'*)
- g) Sentence-initial position



### The inchoative 'start/ set out' construction

(5) *bê* *d'* *iénai* *pròs* *dôma,* *phílon*  
go:3SG.AOR PTC go:INF towards house:ACC.SG.N beloved:NOM.SG.M

*tetiēménos* *êtor,*  
sorrowing:PTCP.PRF.M/P.NOM.SG.M heart:NOM.SG.N

'but went his way to the house, his heart heavy within him.' (Homer, *Odyssey* 2.297)

#### Contextual cues:

- a) (Perfective) aorist
- b) Mostly 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular
- c) Unaugmented
- d) Followed by the present infinitive of another (motion) verb, primarily *iénai* 'go'
- e) Fixed order (*baínō* + *infinitive*)
- f) When the infinitive starts with a vowel, the construction includes a euphonic particle (*d'* or *r'*)
- g) Sentence-initial position



# Lexical meaning in constructional niches

Table 3. The meanings and their contextual cues of *bainō* in Ancient Greek

	Meaning	Constructional Cues	N of the pattern	Total N
Homer	GO	1. Human, intransitive, Goal element (PP, noun in accusative, adverb or suffix)	114	163
		a. Human, intransitive, Goal element (PP, noun in accusative, adverb or suffix), aorist	88	
		2. Human, intransitive, PP, Path	22	
	SET OUT	1. Human, intransitive, infinitive, declarative, aorist, Indicative	76	80
		a. Human, intransitive, infinitive, declarative, aorist, indicative, 3 <sup>rd</sup> person (3SG or 3PL), Verb-Complement	72	
	MOUNT	Human, intransitive, Goal PP (lexically specified, in particular the nouns <i>naūs</i> 'ship', <i>diphros</i> 'stool', <i>pūrgos</i> 'tower, castle', <i>ōkhea</i> 'chariot', and <i>hārma</i> 'chariot')	26	38
	LEAVE	1. Human, intransitive, Source element (PP or adverb or suffix)	19	37
2. Human, intransitive, zero complement, declarative, aorist, indicative		13		
MAKE GO	Human, transitive	6	6	
Euripides	GO	1. Human, intransitive, Goal element (PP, Noun in accusative, adverb or suffix)	35	62
	DIE	Human, intransitive, zero complement, past tense (aorist, perfect, pluperfect)	5	6
	LEAVE	1. Human, intransitive, Source PP	3	10
		2. Human, intransitive, Zero complement	5	
	COME	1. Human, intransitive, PP/ adverb or suffix, Source	6	38
2. Human, intransitive, PP/ adverb or suffix/ NP, Goal/ Goal animate		13		
3. Past tense (Aorist, Perfect)		21		
Plato	OVERSTEP	Human, intransitive, PP, Source non location (lexically specified, in particular nouns relating to justice, e.g., <i>dikē</i> , or legislation, e.g., <i>nomothesia</i> )	3	5
	STAND	1. PP, other non location, perfect, CV	3	6
		2. Inanimate, perfect	4	



### The 'make go' construction

- (6) *tèn*                      *dè néon*                      *klisíēthen éban*                      *kérukes*  
DEM.ACC.SG.F   PTC   young:ACC.SG.F   tent:ABL   go:3PL.AOR   heralds:NOM.PL.M
- ágontes*                      *koúrēn*                      *Brisēos*  
lead:PTCP:PRS.NOM.PL.M   daughter:ACC.SG.F   Briseus:GEN
- 'but the heralds have just taken from my tent the daughter of Briseus'  
(Homer, *Iliad* 1.391)

- Marginal pattern (exclusively in *Iliad*)
- Transitive verb with an accusative-marked NP as the object.
  - The causal component in the meaning can be attributed to the transitive construction (cf. Goldberg 1995: 118)
  - Additional contextual cues:
    - the semantics of the accusative object
    - neighboring spatial modifiers



### The 'make go' construction

(6) *tèn*                      *dè*   *néon*      *klisiēthen*   *éban*                      *kérukes*  
DEM.ACC.SG.F   PTC   young:ACC.SG.F   tent:ABL   go:3PL.AOR   heralds:NOM.PL.M

*ágontes*                      *koúrēn*                      *Brisēos*  
lead:PTCP:PRS.NOM.PL.M   daughter:ACC.SG.F   Briseus:GEN  
'but the heralds have just taken from my tent the daughter of Briseus'  
(Homer, *Iliad* 1.391)

- Marginal pattern (exclusively in *Iliad*)
- Transitive verb with an accusative-marked NP as the object.
  - The causal component in the meaning can be attributed to the transitive construction (cf. Goldberg 1995: 118)
  - Additional contextual cues:
    - the semantics of the accusative object
    - neighboring spatial modifiers



### The 'make go' construction

(6) *tèn*                      *dè néon*                      *klisíēthen*    *éban*                      *kérukes*  
 DEM.ACC.SG.F    PTC    young:ACC.SG.F    tent:ABL    go:3PL.AOR    heralds:NOM.PL.M

*ágontes*                      *koúrēn*                      *Briséos*  
 lead:PTCP:PRS.NOM.PL.M    daughter:ACC.SG.F    Briseus:GEN

'but the heralds have just taken from my tent the daughter of Briseus'

(Homer, *Iliad* 1.391)

- Marginal pattern (exclusively in *Iliad*)
- Transitive verb with an accusative-marked NP as the object.
  - The causal component in the meaning can be attributed to the transitive construction (cf. Goldberg 1995: 118)
  - Additional contextual cues:
    - the semantics of the accusative object
    - neighboring spatial modifiers

# Lexical meaning in constructional niches

Table 3. The meanings and their contextual cues of *bainō* in Ancient Greek

	Meaning	Constructional Cues	N of the pattern	Total N
Homer	GO	1. Human, intransitive, Goal element (PP, noun in accusative, adverb or suffix)	114	163
		a. Human, intransitive, Goal element (PP, noun in accusative, adverb or suffix), aorist	88	
		2. Human, intransitive, PP, Path	22	
	SET OUT	1. Human, intransitive, infinitive, declarative, aorist, Indicative	76	80
		a. Human, intransitive, infinitive, declarative, aorist, indicative, 3 <sup>rd</sup> person (3SG or 3PL), Verb-Complement	72	
	MOUNT	Human, intransitive, Goal PP (lexically specified, in particular the nouns <i>naūs</i> 'ship', <i>diphros</i> 'stool', <i>pūrgos</i> 'tower, castle', <i>ōkhea</i> 'chariot', and <i>hārma</i> 'chariot')	26	38
	LEAVE	1. Human, intransitive, Source element (PP or adverb or suffix)	19	37
		2. Human, intransitive, zero complement, declarative, aorist, indicative	13	
	MAKE GO	Human, transitive	6	6
Euripides	GO	1. Human, intransitive, Goal element (PP, Noun in accusative, adverb or suffix)	35	62
	DIE	Human, intransitive, zero complement, past tense (aorist, perfect, pluperfect)	5	6
	LEAVE	1. Human, intransitive, Source PP	3	10
		2. Human, intransitive, Zero complement	5	
	COME	1. Human, intransitive, PP/ adverb or suffix, Source	6	38
		2. Human, intransitive, PP/ adverb or suffix/ NP, Goal/ Goal animate	13	
3. Past tense (Aorist, Perfect)		21		
Plato	OVERSTEP	Human, intransitive, PP, Source non location (lexically specified, in particular nouns relating to justice, e.g., <i>dikē</i> , or legislation, e.g., <i>nomothesia</i> )	3	5
	STAND	1. PP, other non location, perfect, CV	3	6
		2. Inanimate, perfect	4	



### The 'go' and 'come' constructions

(7)	<i>pôs</i>	<i>pronôpios</i>	<i>phainēi</i>	<i>pròs</i>	<i>oíkōis</i>
	ADV	before.the door:NOM.SG.M	appear:2SG.M/P	PROX	house: DAT.PL.M
	<i>toîs</i>	<i>emoîs,</i>	<i>éksō</i>	<i>bebós;</i>	
	ART.DAT.PL.M	POSS.1PL.DAT	out	go:PTCP.PRF.NOM.SG.M	

'How do you appear in front of my house? How did you manage to **go** out?'  
 (Euripides, *Bacchae* 645-646)

- *Bainō* acquires truly deictic uses that cover both 'go' and 'come' meanings



### The 'go' and 'come' constructions

(8)

<i>Antigónē</i>	<i>tâide</i>	<i>tâide</i>	<i>bâthí</i>	<i>moi,</i>	<i>tâide</i>
Antigone:NOM	DEM.ACC.PL.N	DEM.ACC.PL.N	go:2SG.IMP.AOR	1SG.DAT	DEM.ACC.PL.N
<i>tâide</i>	<i>póda</i>	<i>titheís,</i>	<i>hóst'</i>	<i>óneiron</i>	<i>iskhún.</i>
DEM.ACC.PL.N	foot:ACC.SG.M	place:2SG	as	dream:ACC.SG.N	strength:ACC.DG.F

'This way, this way, **come** to me Antigone, place your steps here, like a dream in your strength.' (Euripides, *Phoenissae* 1720-1722)

- *Báinō* acquires truly deictic uses that cover both 'go' and '**come**' meanings



### The 'go' and 'come' constructions

(9)	<i>pôs</i>	<i>pronôpios</i>	<i>phainēi</i>	<i>pròs</i>	<i>oíkōis</i>
	ADV	before.the door:NOM.SG.M	appear:2SG.M/P	PROX	house: DAT.PL.M
	<i>toîs</i>	<i>emoîs,</i>	<i>éksō</i>	<i>bebós;</i>	
	ART.DAT.PL.M	POSS.1PL.DAT	out	go:PTCP.PRF.NOM.SG.M	

'How do you appear in front of my house? How did you manage to **go** out?'  
 (Euripides, *Bacchae* 645-646)

- Distinguishing 'come' and 'go':

- The semantics of the complement:



**Éksō forces a 'go' interpretation**





### The 'go' and 'come' constructions

(8) *Antigónē*      *tâide*                      *tâide*                      *bâthí*                      *moi,*                      *tâide*  
 Antigone:NOM    DEM.ACC.PL.N    DEM.ACC.PL.N    go:2SG.IMP.AOR    1SG.DAT    DEM.ACC.PL.N

*tâide*                      *póda*                      *tithéis,*                      *hóst'*    *óneiron*                      *iskhún.*  
 DEM.ACC.PL.N    foot:ACC.SG.M    place:2SG    as    dream:ACC.SG.N    strength:ACC.DG.F

'This way, this way, **come** to me Antigone, place your steps here, like a dream in your strength.' (Euripides, *Phoenissae* 1720-1722)

- Distinguishing 'come' and 'go':
  - The explicit mention of the speaker
  - Perfective aspect
  - Appears mostly in chorus passages ( $N=23$  (out of 38))



### The 'go' and 'come' constructions

(8)	<i>Antigónē</i>	<i>tâide</i>	<i>tâide</i>	<i>bâthí</i>	<i>moi,</i>	<i>tâide</i>
	Antigone:NOM	DEM.ACC.PL.N	DEM.ACC.PL.N	go:2SG.IMP.AOR	1SG.DAT	DEM.ACC.PL.N
	<i>tâide</i>	<i>póda</i>	<i>tithéis,</i>	<i>hóst'</i>	<i>óneiron</i>	<i>iskhún.</i>
	DEM.ACC.PL.N	foot:ACC.SG.M	place:2SG	as	dream:ACC.SG.N	strength:ACC.DG.F

'This way, this way, **come** to me Antigone, place your steps here, like a dream in your strength.' (Euripides, *Phoenissae* 1720-1722)

- Distinguishing 'come' and 'go':
  - The explicit mention of the speaker
  - Perfective aspect
  - Appears mostly in chorus passages ( $N=23$  (out of 38))



### The 'go' and 'come' constructions

(8)

<i>Antigónē</i>	<i>tâide</i>	<i>tâide</i>	<i>bâthí</i>	<i>moi,</i>	<i>tâide</i>
Antigone:NOM	DEM.ACC.PL.N	DEM.ACC.PL.N	go:2SG.IMP.AOR	1SG.DAT	DEM.ACC.PL.N
<i>tâide</i>	<i>póda</i>	<i>tithéis,</i>	<i>hóst'</i>	<i>óneiron</i>	<i>iskhún.</i>
DEM.ACC.PL.N	foot:ACC.SG.M	place:2SG	as	dream:ACC.SG.N	strength:ACC.DG.F

'This way, this way, **come** to me Antigone, place your steps here, like a dream in your strength.' (Euripides, *Phoenissae* 1720-1722)

- Distinguishing 'come' and 'go':
  - The explicit mention of the speaker
  - Perfective aspect
  - Appears mostly in chorus passages ( $N=23$  (out of 38))

# Lexical meaning in constructional niches

Table 3. The meanings and their contextual cues of *bainō* in Ancient Greek

	Meaning	Constructional Cues	N of the pattern	Total N
Homer	GO	1. Human, intransitive, Goal element (PP, noun in accusative, adverb or suffix)	114	163
		a. Human, intransitive, Goal element (PP, noun in accusative, adverb or suffix), aorist	88	
		2. Human, intransitive, PP, Path	22	
	SET OUT	1. Human, intransitive, infinitive, declarative, aorist, Indicative	76	80
		a. Human, intransitive, infinitive, declarative, aorist, indicative, 3 <sup>rd</sup> person (3SG or 3PL), Verb-Complement	72	
	MOUNT	Human, intransitive, Goal PP (lexically specified, in particular the nouns <i>naūs</i> 'ship', <i>diphros</i> 'stool', <i>pūrgos</i> 'tower, castle', <i>ōkhea</i> 'chariot', and <i>hārma</i> 'chariot')	26	38
	LEAVE	1. Human, intransitive, Source element (PP or adverb or suffix)	19	37
2. Human, intransitive, zero complement, declarative, aorist, indicative		13		
MAKE GO	Human, transitive	6	6	
Euripides	GO	1. Human, intransitive, Goal element (PP, Noun in accusative, adverb or suffix)	35	62
	DIE	Human, intransitive, zero complement, past tense (aorist, perfect, pluperfect)	5	6
	LEAVE	1. Human, intransitive, Source PP	3	10
		2. Human, intransitive, Zero complement	5	
COME	1. Human, intransitive, PP/ adverb or suffix, Source	6	38	
	2. Human, intransitive, PP/ adverb or suffix/ NP, Goal/ Goal animate	13		
	3. Past tense (Aorist, Perfect)	21		
Plato	OVERSTEP	Human, intransitive, PP, Source non location (lexically specified, in particular nouns relating to justice, e.g., <i>dikē</i> , or legislation, e.g., <i>nomothesia</i> )	3	5
	STAND	1. PP, other non location, perfect, CV	3	6
		2. Inanimate, perfect	4	



### The 'overstep' construction

(9)	<i>doûnai</i>	<i>tà</i>	<i>paradeígmata</i>	<i>toîsi</i>	<i>dikastaîs</i>	
	give:INF.AOR	ART.ACC.PL.N	examples:ACC.PL.N	ART.DAT.PL.M	judge:DAT.PL.M	
	<i>toû</i>	<i>mépotē</i>	<i>baínein</i>	<i>éksō</i>	<i>tês</i>	<i>dikês</i>
	ART.GEN.SG	ever	go:INF	out	ART.GEN.SG.F	trial:GEN.SG.F

'and gave the judges examples, so as to prevent their ever overstepping the bounds of justice' (Plato, *Laws* 9.876e)

### Metaphorical meaning:

- With prepositional complements headed by *ektós* and *éksō* 'outside of'
- The complement filler is further specified to belong to a semantically definable class, that of nouns relating to legislation and justice



### The 'overstep' construction

(9)	<i>doûnai</i>	<i>tà</i>	<i>paradeígmata</i>	<i>toîsi</i>	<i>dikastaîs</i>	
	give:INF.AOR	ART.ACC.PL.N	examples:ACC.PL.N	ART.DAT.PL.M	judge:DAT.PL.M	
	<i>toû</i>	<i>mépotē</i>	<i>baínein</i>	<i>éksō</i>	<i>tês</i>	<i>dikês</i>
	ART.GEN.SG	ever	go:INF	out	ART.GEN.SG.F	trial:GEN.SG.F

'and gave the judges examples, so as to prevent their ever overstepping the bounds of justice' (Plato, *Laws* 9.876e)

### Metaphorical meaning:

- With prepositional complements headed by *ektós* and *éksō* 'outside of'
- The complement filler is further specified to belong to a semantically definable class, that of nouns relating to legislation and justice

# Lexical meaning in constructional niches

Table 3. The meanings and their contextual cues of *bainō* in Ancient Greek

	Meaning	Constructional Cues	N of the pattern	Total N	
Homer	GO	1. Human, intransitive, Goal element (PP, noun in accusative, adverb or suffix)	114	163	
		a. Human, intransitive, Goal element (PP, noun in accusative, adverb or suffix), aorist	88		
		2. Human, intransitive, PP, Path	22		
	SET OUT	1. Human, intransitive, infinitive, declarative, aorist, Indicative	76	80	
		a. Human, intransitive, infinitive, declarative, aorist, indicative, 3 <sup>rd</sup> person (3SG or 3PL), Verb-Complement	72		
	MOUNT	Human, intransitive, Goal PP (lexically specified, in particular the nouns <i>naūs</i> 'ship', <i>diphros</i> 'stool', <i>pūrgos</i> 'tower, castle', <i>ōkhea</i> 'chariot', and <i>hārma</i> 'chariot')		26	38
	LEAVE	1. Human, intransitive, Source element (PP or adverb or suffix)	19	37	
2. Human, intransitive, zero complement, declarative, aorist, indicative		13			
MAKE GO	Human, transitive		6	6	
Euripides	GO	1. Human, intransitive, Goal element (PP, Noun in accusative, adverb or suffix)	35	62	
	DIE	Human, intransitive, zero complement, past tense (aorist, perfect, pluperfect)		5	6
	LEAVE	1. Human, intransitive, Source PP	3	10	
		2. Human, intransitive, Zero complement	5		
	COME	1. Human, intransitive, PP/ adverb or suffix, Source	6	38	
2. Human, intransitive, PP/ adverb or suffix/ NP, Goal/ Goal animate		13			
3. Past tense (Aorist, Perfect)		21			
Plato	OVERSTEP	Human, intransitive, PP, Source non location (lexically specified, in particular nouns relating to justice, e.g., <i>dikē</i> , or legislation, e.g., <i>nomothesia</i> )	3	5	
	STAND	1. PP, other non location, perfect, CV	3	6	
2. Inanimate, perfect		4			



- The generality of meaning and the multiplicity of possible interpretations in the context of ancient languages, where native intuition is not relevant, highlights the need for descriptive adequacy.
- **Tagging:**
  - Has included all major categories relevant to verbs.
  - Can provide reliable indications for a particular meaning.
- The variability of these features and their convergence in particular senses point to the appropriateness of a constructional framework for these data.





- Upgraded role of **lexical constructions** representing the individual senses of the verb  
(cf. Croft 2003; Nemoto 2005; Boas 2005, 2008)
  
- **When in transitive contexts:**
  - Not enough to say that the interpretation comes from the interaction of the transitive construction with verbal semantics
  - The meaning depends on specific lexical complements and contextual cues
  - All this information needs to be incorporated in enriched lexical entries (“mini” constructions; Boas 2013:191)
  
- **Some of its intransitive uses** correlate with:
  - Particular inflectional forms (cf. Newman & Rice’s inflectional island)
  - Particular types of complements that need to be syntactically and lexically specified.



- Along with Boas (2005, 2013), we do not dispute the existence of general, schematic constructions such as the intransitive motion, the ditransitive, or the resultative.
- But we entertain the possibility that lexical constructions may exist redundantly and independently of the “over-generating” of schematic patterns.
- As per Croft (2012: 382), “if linguists make different abstractions from verb + argument structure construction combinations in verb-specific constructions, speakers might do so as well”.

# References (selection)



- Atkins, B. T. S. 1987. Semantic ID tags: corpus evidence for dictionary senses. *Proceedings of the Third Annual Conference of the UW Centre for the New Oxford English Dictionary*, 17–36.
- Croft, William. 2012. *Verbs: Aspect and Causal Structure*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Cuyckens, H., R. Dirven & J. Taylor (eds.). 2003. *Cognitive approaches to lexical semantics*. Berlin & New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Fillmore, Ch., P. Kay & M.C. O'Connor. 1988. Regularity and idiomatcity in grammatical constructions: The case of *let alone*. *Language* 64, 501-38.
- Fried, M. & J.-O. Östman (eds.). 2004. *Construction grammar in a cross-language perspective*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- Georgakopoulos, T. (to appear; 2018). A frame-based approach to the source-goal asymmetry: Synchronic and diachronic evidence from Ancient Greek. *Constructions and Frames* 10(1), 61-98.
- Goldberg, A. 1995. *Constructions: A construction grammar approach to argument structure*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Gries, Th. S. 2006. Corpus-based methods and cognitive semantics: the many meanings of to run. In Stefan Th. Gries & Anatol Stefanowitsch (eds.), *Corpora in cognitive linguistics: corpus-based approaches to syntax and lexis*, 57-99. Berlin & New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Jansegers, M & S. Th. Gries. 2017. Towards a dynamic behavioral profile: A diachronic study of polysemous sentir in Spanish. *Corpus Linguistics and Linguistic Theory*. [online first] DOI 10.1515/cllt-2016-0080
- Kay, P. & Ch. Fillmore. 1999. *Grammatical constructions and linguistic generalizations: The What's X doing Y? construction*. *Language* 75, 1-33.

# References (selection)



- Napoli, M. 2006. *Aspect and actionality in Homeric Greek: A contrastive analysis*. Milan: Franco Angeli.
- Nemoto, N. 2005. Verbal Polysemy and Frame Semantics in Construction Grammar. In: M. Fried & H. C. Boas (eds.), *Grammatical Constructions: Back to the Roots*, 118–36. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Nikitina, T. 2013. Lexical splits in the encoding of motion events from Archaic to Classical Greek. In: J. Goschler & A. Stefanowitsch (eds.), *Variation and change in the encoding of motion events*, 185-202. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- Nikitina, T. & B. Maslov. 2013. Redefining constructio praegnans: On the variation between allative and locative expressions in Ancient Greek. *Journal of Greek Linguistics* 13, 105-42.
- Sankoff, David 1988. Sociolinguistics and syntactic variation. In F.J. Newmeyer (ed.), *Linguistics: the Cambridge survey*, 140-61. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Skopeteas, S.. *Lokale Konstruktionen im Griechischen: Sprachwandel in funktionaler Sicht*. Doctoral diss., University of Erfurt. 2002
- Skopeteas, S. 2008. Encoding spatial relations: Language typology and diachronic change in Greek. *Language Typology and Universals* 61, 54-66.
- Talmy, L. 2007. Lexical typologies. In: T. Shopen (ed.), *Language typology and syntactic description. Vol. III: Grammatical categories and the lexicon*, 66-168. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Verkerk, A. 2014. *The evolutionary dynamics of motion event encoding*. Doctoral diss., Radboud University Nijmegen.



Thank you!