ΓΝΩΡΙΖΕ IN THE GREEK WAR OF TROY: A PEREMPTORY COMMAND OR JUST A FILLED PAUSE?*

INTRODUCTION

This article starts from the observation that the singular imperative “know!” truly abounds in the 13th/14th-century War of Troy, with its more than 14,000 πολιτικοί στίχοι the longest of the (preserved) verse romances in Late Medieval Greek (henceforth LMG). Together, the imperative forms (ἐ)γνώριζε/σε, ἤξευρε and πρόσεχε occur no fewer than 140 times – or almost once every hundred verses.

However, these forms do not always have a strong peremptory tone. In this article, I will argue that γνώριζε and the like can function as so-called “Discourse Markers” (henceforth DMs), which explains their high frequency. In modern linguistics, DMs are said to have procedural instead of lexical meaning: rather than attributing to the true semantic content of the utterance, they serve as a means to facilitate the processing of the message.¹ Some DMs, such as English “you know”, have even been compared to “filled pauses”. I believe that this concept of DMs functioning as filled pauses is very valuable when examining the imperatives under investigation. In many cases in my corpus, it does not make much sense to interpret γνώριζε and the like as genuine commands, as their meaning has been semantically bleached, just like DMs. The impression of this deviating semantic behaviour of certain imperative forms will be confirmed by syntactic, discursive, metrical and contextual criteria, by which we can (prototypically) distinguish between examples to which a “full” imperative value can be attributed and forms whose use can be compared to DMs.

In the latter use, the functioning of the singular imperatives of course closely resembles the well-studied traditional formulas, namely repeated (half-)lines usually triggered by a specific frame of reference. The large number of such formulas in the War of Troy in particular and in LMG πολιτικὸς στίχος poetry in general has led scholars to the view that the

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poets have deliberately adopted an oral discourse. By interpreting γνώριζε and the like as DMs operating as filled pauses, I will provide further evidence for this oral style hypothesis, since these items are of course characteristic of spoken language.

This article is structured as follows: in the first section, I clarify the concept of “semantically bleached elements”. In the second section, background information on my corpus is provided. The third section contains my actual analysis. In the last section, my conclusions are formulated and suggestions for further research are made.

1. SEMANTICALLY BLEACHED ELEMENTS

1.1. Discourse Markers

Much confusion exists in the terminology surrounding elements which contribute little to the propositional content of the utterance and are subject to “semantic bleaching”, which can be defined as “the partial effacement of a morpheme’s semantic features, the stripping away of some of its precise content so it can be used in an abstracter, grammatical-hardware-like way.” Rather than being completely useless, the function of these items must be sought on a phatic “meta”-level: they help to process the message by structuring the discourse in one way or another. Well-known English examples are “you see”, “like”, “so”, “moreover” and “anyway”. These examples all have in common that they have procedural rather than lexical meaning. Since they mark relations in a discourse, they are usually labelled “Discourse Markers” (DMs): “Discourse marker is perhaps the most common name suggested for the seemingly empty expressions found in oral discourse, such as actually, oh, right, well, I...

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5 See SCHEFFRIN, Discourse Markers [see note 1] and FRASER, What are Discourse Markers? [see note 1].
mean, and you know”. However, we find several other synonyms, such as “pragmatic marker”, “connective”, “discourse particle”, etc.

DMs have two established functions: a textual and an interpersonal function. In the latter function, DMs clarify the relation between the speaker and the hearer: DMs “help the speaker divide his message into chunks of information and hence they also help the listener in the process of decoding these information units”. Frequently quoted examples are “you know” and “I mean”. The textual function of DMs points to the fact that they can operate as conduits between different segments of a text (scenes, paragraphs, sentences,...): DMs “relate the message to prior discourse” or, somewhat differently, “signal sequential discourse relationships”. As such, DMs are “usually lexical expressions which do not contribute to the propositional content of a sentence but signal different kinds of messages.” “After all” and “furthermore” can be considered textual DMs.

The wide range of meanings of DMs can often be considered a consequence of their origin, i.e. their grammatical development: DMs usually evolve from full lexical elements to elements having procedural instead of lexical meaning: lexical expressions gradually become used as DMs. As is logical, the procedural meaning is normally closely connected with the lexical one. Thus, even when having developed a procedural meaning, the element in question does not necessarily lose its lexical meaning, so that

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7 Cf. BRINTON, Pragmatic Markers [see note 6], p. 29. FISCHER, Approaches to Discourse Particles [see note 6], p. 1: “There are very many studies on discourse particles, and by now it is almost impossible to find one’s way through this jungle of publications.”
8 BRINTON, Pragmatic Markers [see note 6], pp. 38-40; cf. FRASER, What are Discourse Markers? [see note 1].
9 BRINTON, Pragmatic Markers [see note 6], p. 31.
11 FRASER, Approach to Discourse Markers [see note 10], p. 392.
12 FRASER, What are Discourse Markers? [see note 1], p. 936.
13 This development has been described as a process of “grammaticalization” (BRINTON, Pragmatic Markers [see note 6], p. 65) or “pragmatic(al)ization” (K. ADIJER, I think – An English Modal Particle, in S. TORIL - O. J. WESTVIK [eds], Modality in Germanic Languages: Historical and Comparative Perspectives, Berlin and New York, 1997, pp. 1-47); for “you know”, see, e.g., A. METTOUCHI - S. DARBAKY, The Grammaticalization of You Know: From Shared Knowledge to Control over the Co-Speaker, abstract International Conference From Ideational To Interpersonal: Perspectives From Grammaticalization, Leuven (Belgium), 10-12 February 2005, organized by H. CUYKENS, K. DAVIDSE & A.M. SIMON-VANDENBERGEN.
both uses can coexist. As a consequence, it is often difficult to distinguish between the “normal” lexical use and the use as a “pure” DM, as is the case with “continuing” for example: its use as a lexical present participle must be distinguished from its use as a DM, as in “continuing, it would be futile for him to try”, where “continuing” refers to the speaker pursuing his story.

The multifunctionality of the class of DMs is reflected in its syntactic diversity: it includes single-word items such as “so” as well as phrases such as “you see”. To complicate matters further, these phrasal DMs have often been labelled “parenthetical clauses” or “comment clauses”.

However, a widely established feature of DMs is the fact that they are “characteristic of speech rather than of writing”. As such, Schiffrin’s very general definition sounds as follows: a DM is an “element which brackets units of talk”.

1.2. Filled pauses

In this respect, it is interesting to note that some DMs have been related to the concept of “filled pauses”, which are typically found in natural spoken discourse. Especially “you know” has been associated with filled pauses: “You know has been various labelled a ‘verbal filler’ (Brown, G. 1977: 102) [viz. “Listening to Spoken English,” London 1977 – J.S.]” and “pause fillers, or ‘hesitation markers’, range in character from elongated vowels or nasals, to whole sentences [...], with their prototypical cat-

14 See Schiffrin, Discourse Markers [see note 1], p. 328; Fraser, What are Discourse Markers? [see note 1], p. 931.
16 Brinton, Pragmatic Markers [see note 6], pp. 29-30.
18 A. Lyavdansky, Temporal Deictic Adverbs as Discourse Markers in Hebrew, Aramaic and Akkadian, in Journal of Language Relationship, 3 (2010), p. 81. See also Jucker - Ziv, Discourse Markers [see note 3], p. 3: “They are a feature of oral rather than written discourse and are associated with informality”.
19 Schiffrin, Discourse Markers [see note 1], p. 31.
egory members being expressions like *I mean, you know, like, well, oh, uh, and ah*. Bakker reckons “you know” among “vocalization/hesitation phenomena”. As such, DMs have even been compared to “editing markers”: “some have functions that come close to e.g. those of punctuation or paragraphing in written texts” and “parenthetical clauses are usually inserted where there would be a punctuation mark in written language.” DMs are compared to filled pauses, because pauses actually help to structure the discourse instead of conveying lexical meaning: they facilitate the processing of the message by creating time (for both the speaker and the hearer).

Nevertheless, this comparison cannot become a safe-conduct to treat DMs as being mutually exchangeable. Nuances between the different DMs are definitely to be distinguished, for it has been assumed that some core meaning of the DM always remains: “the VF [verbal filler] categories are inherently different”. Depending on the context “I mean” will thus for instance be preferred to “you know”. However, making the necessary (and sometimes very subtle and delicate) differentiations goes beyond the scope of this article in which I only want to illustrate that the general functioning of DMs/filled pauses can be identified in the LMG *War of Troy*. As a matter of fact, the study of DMs in such so-called “dead” texts is still in its infancy. This should not come as a surprise given the fact that these items

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24 B. ERMAN, Pragmatic Markers Revisited with a Focus on You Know in Adult and Adolescent Talk, in *Journal of Pragmatics* 33.9 (2001), p. 1344 [1337-1359].

25 ERMAN, Pragmatic Markers Revisited [see note 24], p. 1339.

26 SCHNEIDER, Reduced Parentheticals [see note 17], p. 40.

27 STENSTROM, Pauses in Monologue and Dialogue [see note 20], p. 243.

28 *Ibidem*, p. 250; cf. DEHE - WICHMANN, Multifunctionality [see note 17], p. 32.

29 Recently, however, LYAVDANSKY, Temporal Deictic Adverbs [see note 18], has analyzed several temporal adverbs as DMs in Hebrew, Aramaic and Acadian. Moreover, Brinton has written a monograph on DMs – previously labeled “mystery particles” – in Old and Middle English texts which are influenced by oral discourse, viz. *Pragmatic Markers* [see note 6]. In Ancient Greek and Latin too, a number of studies have recently been conducted, e.g. A. BONIFAZI, Memory and Visualization in Homeric Discourse Markers, in E. A. MACKAY (ed.), *Orality, Literacy, Memory in the Ancient Greek and Roman World*, Leiden, 2008, pp. 35-64; S. J. BAKKER – G. WACKER (eds), *Discourse Cohesion in Ancient Greek*, Leiden - Boston, 2009; and the work of C. KROON *Discourse Particles in Latin*, Amsterdam, 1995. As for Medieval Greek, we can mention the articles by J. M. Egea, Les Particules en grec medieval, in N. M. PANAYOTAKIS (ed.), *Origini della letteratura neogreca* I, Venezia, 1993, pp. 109-117; S. WAHLGREN, *Particles in Byzantine Historical Texts*, in A. PILTZ et al. (eds), *For Particular Reasons. Studies in Honour of Jerker Blomqvist*, Lund, 2003, pp. 333-340;
are of course “predominantly a feature of oral rather than of written discourse”.30

Nevertheless, in what follows, I will argue that γνώριζε and other singular imperatives of “knowing” not necessarily have a strong lexical imperative value in the LMG War of Troy, but that they often seem to operate as DMs functioning as filled pauses (cf. 3). First, however, it is necessary to briefly describe my corpus (cf. 2).

2. Corpus: War of Troy

After giving some general information on the genre to which the War of Troy belongs and on the place and date of its composition (2.1.), I will summarize the most relevant characteristics of its metre, the πολιτικὸς στίχος (2.2.), and go more deeply into its assumed oral background (2.3.).

2.1. Genre, place and date

The Greek War of Troy constitutes the longest (preserved) text of the LMG πολιτικὸς στίχος romances: it consists of 14,401 verses in the edition which I have used.31 This text has somewhat been neglected but is actually representative of the genre of the LMG verse romances: “There is also another text which […] despite clearly belonging with the group, has been almost entirely ignored in discussions of these romances. This is the War of Troy […] it shares the romances’ characteristic features: it is anonymous, in

C. A. Thoma, Distribution and Function of Clitic Object Pronouns in Popular 16th-18th Century Greek Narratives. A Synchronic and Diachronic Perspective, in J. Rehbein - C. Hohenstein - L. Pietsch (eds), Connectivity in Grammar and Discourse, Amsterdam, 2007, pp. 143-144; K. Loudova, Discourse Markers in Early Byzantine Narrative Prose, in Studies in Greek Linguistics, 29 (2009) (Proceedings of the 29th Annual Meeting of the Department of Linguistics, School of Philology, Faculty of Philosophy, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 10-11 May 2008, Thessaloniki), pp. 296-312; and J. Soltic, Late Medieval Greek πάλιν: A Discourse Marker Signaling Topic Switch, in GRBS, 53.2 (2013), pp. 390-419. However, Wahlgren, Particles in Byzantine Historical Texts, p. 333: “There is still much work to be done on Greek particles. Most Greek later than the early imperial period remains practically uncharted […] There are only very few studies dealing with particles in Byzantine texts”.

30 Brinton, Pragmatic Markers in English [see note 6], p. 33.
31 M. Papathomopoulos - E. Jeffreys, Ο Πόλεμος τῆς Τροϊάς [The War of Troy]: Κριτική έκδοση με εισαγωγή καὶ πίνακες, Athina, 1996; This edition can be found integrally on the online Thesaurus Linguae Graecae, on which it is found under its Latin name Bellum Troianum. Therefore, I will use the abbreviation “BT” when giving examples.
the fifteen-syllable line, with repeated phrases and a fluid textual tradition, and uses a form of the vernacular”.32

While the place of composition of the War of Troy has been firmly established (Frankish Greece: the Peloponnesse33), its date has given rise to a controversy: “The War of Troy has never been slotted satisfactorily into a date”.34 Very recently, Elizabeth Jeffreys has come up with a very concrete proposal concerning the origin of the War of Troy. She states that a Greek version of the War of Troy might already have existed at the end of the 13th century: “It seems to me that a case can be made that the War of Troy was more likely to have been translated from the Roman de Troie in the Morea sometime before 1281 at the prompting of Leonardo de Veroli, chancellor of the principality of Achaia”.35 As for its content, the Greek War of Troy is based on Benoit de Sainte Maure’s Roman de Troie, which tells the famous story of the siege of Troy.

2.2. Πολιτικὸς στίχος

As all so-called “vernacular” verse romances, the War of Troy is composed in the metre of the πολιτικὸς στίχος. The πολιτικὸς στίχος takes into account the truly spoken word stress instead of the since long disappeared distinction between short and long vowels. Therefore, “the political verse is a metre of the ear and not of the eye”.36 Briefly, each πολιτικὸς στίχος contains fifteen syllables, hence also “decapentasyllable” verse. It has an iambic rhythm in principle, though a stress on the first and/or ninth syllables may occasionally occur.37 The ninth syllable constitutes the first syllable after the fixed break or “strong caesura”,38 which will be from now

35 E. JEFFREYS, Byzantine Romances [see note 32], p. 226.
36 PAPATHOMOPOULOS - JEFFREYS, Ο Πόλεμος τῆς Τροϊάδος [see note 31], p. IXXXVII.
on marked by the sign #. Thus, each verse consists of two standard half-lines of respectively eight and seven syllables, for example:

1. BT 827 πάντων τὴν νίκην εἶχετε, # ὡς ἔδειξε τὸ πρᾶγμα:
   “you gained the victory over all, as the case showed” 39

Interestingly, elision (the omission of a vowel) is avoided between the eighth and the ninth syllable, whereas it is allowed elsewhere. 40 In other words, a hiatus may occur between the vowels of the eighth (ε) and the ninth (ω) syllable. While the presence of elision seems to exclude the possibility of a breathing boundary, hiatus is a signal of discontinuous speech and thus of a breathing boundary. Eideneier even relates the length of the half-lines to our average breathing capacity: “Wenn wir von einem menschlichen Atmenvolumen für den Vortrag von Versen zwischen 12 und 17 Silben ausgehen [...] ist eine solche Mittelzäsur eine zusätzliche Möglichkeit zur Sinn-gliederung und Pausenmarkierung”. 41 Moreover, enjambment is not only rare between two successive verses, it also hardly occurs between the two standard half verses. As a consequence, each verse usually consists of two autonomous units which constitute both a sense-unit and a grammatical unit: “each half-line comprises a self-contained unit, in terms of syntax and sense [...] As a general rule, a line of political verse consists of two units”. 42 Consequently, it seems reasonable to equate not only verse-end but also the fixed caesura with a breathing boundary or even with a breathing pause. This assumption is supported by the presumable origin of the πολιτικὸς στίχος: a combination of two metres, namely an octosyllable and a heptasyllable. 43

2.3. Oral style

As is also the case for other πολιτικὸς στίχος poems from this period, the War of Troy has been associated with an oral tradition. Whether or not the romances were orally recited (they were definitely not orally composed), it is widely acknowledged that an oral tradition has exercised an indisputable

39 Translations are my own.
42 R. BEATON, Folk Poetry of Modern Greece, Cambridge, 1980, p. 44. However, we need to have a more explicit account of “the types of syntactical structure that may be interrupted at the midline caesura and at the end of a line” – P. MACKRIDGE, Orality in Medieval and Modern Greek Poetry: Introduction, in BMGS, 14 (1990), p. 202.
43 See LAUXTERMANN, The Spring of Rhythm [see note 37], p. 18.
influence on their discourse and thus on their language: there exists “a tacit acceptance that the stylistic features and peculiarities of this group of late Byzantine verse texts are best explained against a background of orally composed and orally disseminated poetry”.\textsuperscript{44} The poets are thus assumed to have deliberately adopted an oral style: although probably writing in an isolated room, the poets want to give the impression that they are moulding their verses on the spot. This view has mainly been based on the large number of formulas found in this type of texts.\textsuperscript{45} This observation also holds for the \textit{War of Troy}: “one may conclude from examination of the formulas in the \textit{War of Troy} that its poet was writing under the influence of an oral poetic tradition”.\textsuperscript{46} Revealingly, these formulas generally do not have a precise equivalent in the French (cf. 2.1.): “the frequent use of a formula in the Greek is not prompted by the nature of the French text”.\textsuperscript{47} For instance, the formula (καὶ) τότε νὰ εἶδες πόλεμον occupies the first half-line in the \textit{War of Troy} no fewer than eleven times:\textsuperscript{48}

2. BT 936 Καὶ τότε νὰ εἶδες πόλεμον καὶ τακτικὸν καὶ μέγαν
   “and then you could have seen a war, both tactical and great”

3. BT 1042 Καὶ τότε νὰ εἶδες πόλεμον τὸν ἐποίκον οἱ Τρῶες
   “and then you could have seen a war which the Trojans waged”

In sum, the oral style hypothesis has principally been suggested from a rather literary perspective (formulas as the oral style markers \textit{par excellence}). However, it is possible to identify more subtle, linguistic, clues which point to an oral style.\textsuperscript{49} The presence of DMs, which are typical of spoken language, constitutes one of them. Thus, by discerning a DM-like use of γνώριζε and the like (cf. 3), I will at the same time provide further evidence of this oral style hypothesis.


\textsuperscript{47} E. Jeffreys - M. Jeffreys, \textit{Traditional Style} [see note 46], p. 126.

\textsuperscript{48} Cf. Papathomopoulos - Jeffreys, \textit{Ὁ Πόλεμος τῆς Τρωάδος} [see note 31], p. lxxi.

3. Analysis

In what follows, I will present my analysis of the singular imperatives of "knowing". First, I will make the preliminary remark that we should conceive their uses in terms of a continuum (3.1.), but that prototypical DM-like imperatives can be distinguished on the basis of syntactic (3.2. & 3.3.), discursive (3.4.), metrical (3.5.) and contextual (3.6.) clues.

3.1. Continuum lexical VS procedural

When reading the lengthy War of Troy, it strikes the eye that the singular imperative "know!" truly abounds. I have found 140 instances of the imperatives γνῶριξε (24), ἐγνῶριξε (41), γνῶρισε (2), ἥξευρε (65) and πρόσεχε (8) in a total of 14,401 verses. Thus, almost 1% (0.97%) of the verses contains such a form. However, I am convinced that not all these instances should be interpreted as genuine imperatives expressing a commanding tone. In my view, we should distinguish between two different uses of these forms: the “normal” lexical one, in which its semantic value as an order is fully preserved, and one in which the forms are still imperatives from a morphological perspective but in which it does not seem appropriate to take them literally: the imperious “know!” or “you should know that!” hardly makes sense. In the latter function, these forms seem to operate as DMs, more precisely: as DMs functioning as filled pauses, not unlike “you know” in English (cf. 1.2.).

It should be noted that it is very difficult to pronounce upon the exact value of items in “dead” texts, because we are not able to rely on the judgments of contemporary speakers. Moreover, a very sharp line cannot be drawn between the two uses, for the DM use finds its origins in the lexical use and it is thus assumed that some core meaning remains. Rather than constituting two strictly separated categories, the two uses are part of a continuum, as a result of which some examples will be more prototypical than others. Nevertheless, I have identified various objective clues which may help to decide whether a certain example is closer to the imperative end or to the DM end of the scale. In what follows, I will list a number of

50 To give an overall impression, γνῶριξε (24 in BT) occurs only 134 times on the TLG; ἐγνῶριξε (41 in BT) even only 124 times.
51 Nonetheless, I believe that if we could ask LMG speakers whether they conceive all imperatives as real commands, their answer would be “no”.
52 Cf. DEHÉ - WICHMANN, Multifunctionality [see note 17], p. 32; cf. 1.1.
53 E.g., AIJMER, I think [see note 13], pp. 6-10; DEHÉ - WICHMANN, Multifunctionality [see note 17], p. 39.
criteria which enable us to distinguish between the genuine imperious use of ἀναγκασθείησθαν and the like and a use which clearly deviates from this "normal" use. This second use favours an interpretation in terms of a DM functioning as a filled pause. The first two criteria are of a syntactic nature (3.2. & 3.3.), the third criterion is discourse-related (3.3), the fourth one has to do with the metrical position of the forms (3.5.) and the last one can be considered a contextual argument (3.6.).

3.2. Arguments: presence VS absence

To begin with, if the form in question possesses an argument, such as a direct object, the element under scrutiny is without doubt a truly verbal and thus genuinely imperative form, by which I mean it has the value of a real command. Of the 140 singular imperatives of a verb of “knowing” (in bold from now on), 20 have arguments (either a simple constituent as in the first example or a completive clause as in the second one), for example:

4. BT 353-354
Εὔκαιρα <νά> ἐκπαιδεύει μὴ ἐμέναν•
"Your efforts would be in vain, accept that from me,"
oi θεοὶ γὰρ ἔβαλαν # ὅλην τὴν φύλαξίν τούς
"for the gods have installed maximum protection"

5. BT 6691-6692
Ἕκαστον ὅτι Ἑκτοράς, # ἔδω σιμπέσα μὲ τοὺς ἕξω,
"Realise that Hektor, if he mixes up with those from outside,"
ἔχωσε τον, οὐδέποτε # στρέφεται νῦ τὸν ἰδῆς•
"you’ll have lost him, he’ll never return so that you can see him (again)"

The presence of arguments clearly excludes an interpretation in terms of a DM. In other words: imperatives with DM characteristics always lack arguments. However, we will see that the opposite is not necessarily true: a form without arguments is not always semantically reduced. Thus, the absence of arguments is a necessary but not a sufficient criterion to distinguish the procedural use from the lexical one.

3.3. Position: utterance-initial VS parenthetical (& arbitrary)

The precise position of the imperative form is another aspect to which we should pay attention. It has been acknowledged that genuine imperatives typically open the utterance, belonging to the class of so-called

54 In linguistics, an argument is an expression that helps to complete the meaning of a verb.
“preferential” words, i.e. words which prefer to begin the utterance, being of an emphatic nature, for instance:

6. BT 3252 «Προσέξει πῶς νὰ πολεμής, # πῶς εἶς αὐτοὺς νὰ ἐμπαίνης»
   “Pay attention to how you will wage war, how you will approach them”

Of the 120 “bare” forms (i.e. the forms which do not possess arguments), seven open the utterance, possibly preceded by a vocative (cf. 3.4.). All these examples clearly belong to the lexical end of the scale, for instance:

7. BT 1428-1429
   Ἐκεῖνοι ἀπεκρίθησαν: # «Γνώριζε, στρατιῶτα, ἡμεῖς ποτὲ τὸν Πρίαμον # οὐκ οἶδαμεν τίς ἔννοιαν εἴναι τῶν κατακτῶν τὰς πόλεις»
   “They answered: “Know, soldier, they do not know who Priam is”

8. BT 5811
   «Κυρία μου, ἐγνώριζε, # χαρὰν τυχαίνει νὰ ἔχῃ ἡμείς ἡμεῖς ποτὲ τὸν Πρίαμον # οὐκ οἴδαμεν τίς ἔννοιαν εἴναι τῶν κατακτῶν τὰς πόλεις»
   “My lady, realize, he will have joy, he who loves you or has once loved you.”

9. BT 5917
   «Θυγάτηρ μου, ἐγνώριζε, # τοῦτο ἐστὶ τὸ μέλλον»
   “My daughter, know, this is fate”

These examples can be easily rephrased by a completive clause introduced by the subordinator “that” in English, so that the imperative form actually does have an argument (direct object) (cf. 3.2.). For instance, the last example can be reformulated as: “My daughter, know that this is fate”.

Rather than opening the utterance, DM-like imperatives tend to be used “parenthetically”, by which I mean they interrupt the linear syntax of an utterance. Significantly, phrasal DMs such as “I mean”, “I guess”, “you see” and “you know” have often been labelled “parenthetical clauses”. This parenthetical position is typically reflected in editorial interventions: these forms are put between commas, for instance:


E.g., Schneider, Reduced Parentheticals [see note 17]; cf. 1.1. Rouchota even speaks of “parenthetical discourse markers” — V. Rouchota, Procedural Meaning and Parenthetical Discourse Markers, in Jucker - Ziv (eds.), Discourse Markers [see note 3], pp. 97-126; cf. Allmer, I think [see note 13], p. 7: “Only non-factive predicates in the first person can, for example, be used parenthetically […]. According to F. Plank, Modalitätsausdruck zwischen Autonomie und Auxiliarität, in I. Rosencren (ed.), Sprache und Pragmatik. Lund Symposium 1980, Lund, 1981, pp. 57-71, the process [of “parentheticalization”] is an example of syntactic-pragmatic reduction […]. The functional precondition for the change is that the verb does not belong to the main part of the message, but expresses in a general way the speaker’s attitude to the utterance […].”
10. BT 1320-1322

"His sons were with him, except for Hektor," who was far away abroad, he was collecting the needs of Hektor, he was collecting the needs which the city had, know, concerning nourishment"

Revealingly, an easy reformulation by means of a “that”-clause is impossible here. In this respect, the following statement by Aijmer might be relevant: “In the recent analysis of I think by Thompson-Mulac (1991), the frequency of I think without that is evidence for ‘grammaticalization’.”

Moreover, the parenthetical DM-like forms seem to be inserted quite arbitrarily in the utterance. From a syntactic perspective, no generalizations can be made: the parenthetical imperatives separate both clauses and (parts of) constituents. As such, I have found examples in which the material immediately preceding the parenthetical imperative can respectively consist of one constituent, more than one constituent, a part of a constituent, a complete clause or a seemingly complete clause in which one constituent is added after the parenthetical.

BT 1372

"With joy, know, he will take her"

11. BT 4187-4188

"Rather than that this war will come to an end,” in death we all, know, will end up.”


58 Aijmer, I think [see note 13], p. 8; cf. Dehé - Wichmann, Multifunctionality [see note 17], p. 8: “Based on frequency calculations, Thompson and Mulac argue that I think […], without the complementiser that, is a grammaticised form […], reanalysed by the speaker as an epistemic phrase”.

59 Because of this syntactic diversity, it is very difficult to derive the pragmatic status of the material surrounding the imperatives and to pronounce upon its activation status (given or new or accessible? cf. W. L. Chafe, Discourse, Consciousness and Time: The Flow and Displacement of Conscious Experience in Speaking and Writing, Chicago [Ill.], 1994) and its noteworthyness. Again, it seems that no generalizations can be made: sometimes the most informative – and thus usually new, inactive – information follows the imperative form, sometimes it precedes it; cf. C. Lee, Contrastive Topic and/or Contrastive Focus, in Japanese/Korean Linguistics, 12 (2003), p. 10: “it can be observed that DM say can freely occur in a variety of syntactic positions in relation to different types of phrases, such as VPs, PPs, NPs, and APs, etc.”
12. BT 13625-13626
Εἰς τὴν Ζήλικον ἠλθαμέν, κακὰ μᾶς ἀππλικεῦσε
“We reached Zelikos, it treated us badly,”
τὸ μελλόμενον, ἠξέυρε, # τῆς ἀσυστάτου Τύχης.
“the future, know, of unstable Fate.”

13. BT 12785
ὁλοὶ ἀγρυπνοῦν, ἐγνώριζε, # τινὰς οὐδὲν κοιμᾶται.
“all are awake, know, no-one sleeps.”

14. BT 11313
Νὰ τοὺς μηνύσω, ἐγνώριζε, # τὴν ἀὔριον ἑσπέραν
“I will inform them, know, tomorrow evening”

The fact that no specific distributional pattern can be detected tentatively suggests that the parenthetical imperatives have – at least partly – lost their propositional meaning as a command and are instead operating as “mere” filled pauses.

3.4. Discourse: interactive VS narrative

Although parenthetical position is a very strong criterion to identify DM-like forms, we cannot automatically assign DM-status to parenthetically used imperatives. Of the 113 parenthetically used bare imperatives, seven show discursive features which are typical of genuine imperatives. It is well-known that commands naturally occur in a context in which others are addressed: they occur in what can be called an “interactive” discourse.

As such, the co-occurrence of γνώριζε and another singular imperative (underlined) points to a lexical use, as in the following examples:

15. BT 569-574
καὶ ταῦτα δράμε, σπούδαξε, # νὰ φθάσῃς εἰς τὸν ὄφιν.
“And run those [4 stadia], hurry, so that you reach the serpent.”
Πόλεμον μέγαν, ἠξέυρε, # μετ’ αὐτὸν θέλεις ποίσει.
“A big fight, know, you will have it.”
Ἀλλὰ τίποτε, ἠξέυρε, # δύναμιν πρὸς ἑσέναν
“But know, power over you”
οὐκ ἔχει ὁ ὄφις, ἠξέυρε, # πληροφορήθητι το.
“the serpent doesn’t have, be aware of that.”
Πάλιν δὲ τοῦτο ἠξόριζε, # καὶ θέλω νὰ τὸ ἡξεύρης•
“Know also this, and I want you to be conscious of it:
τὰ δόντια του ὀλα ἐξέβαλε καὶ εἰς τὴν γῆν τὰ σπείρε•
pull out all his teeth and sow them in the earth”

Medea is advising Jason how to get hold of the Golden Fleece. Notice that giving advice is a typical situation for the use of imperatives, in particular for those of “knowing”. Furthermore, the act of “knowing” is clearly emphasized (θέλω νὰ τὸ ἡξεύρης / “you’ll know it”) in this example, which confirms the hypothesis that the surrounding imperatives are used in a rather lexical sense.
16. BT 603-604
\[\text{δί' αυτό σὲ λέγω, πρόσεχε, # τούτο—ἐὰν μὲ πιστεύσῃς—}\
\text{“that’s why I tell you, pay attention, that – if you thrust me –”}
\[\text{νὰ τὸ ἐπαφήκῃς, γνώριζε, # τὸν πόδα σου μὴ βάλης•}\
\text{“leave it, know, don’t set foot there”}

Here, king Aeëtes (father of Medea) is giving instructions to Jason. The phrase \[\text{δι’ αὐτὸ σὲ λέγω},\] which precedes the imperative \[\text{πρόσεχε},\] can be considered another typical interactive element.

Nevertheless, the seven parenthetical cases seem closer to a DM use than the non-parenthetical imperatives; note that they can for instance not be replaced easily by a completive “that”-clause (cf. 3.3.). Of course, the genuine non-parenthetical imperatives also often occur alongside other imperatives:

17. BT 333-334
\[\text{«Στρατιῶτα», λέγει, # «πρόσεχε, κακὸν μὴ τὸ κρατήσῃς}\
\text{“Soldier”, she says, “pay attention, don’t take it the wrong way”}
\[\text{διατὶ θέλω ὅτι ἐγνώριμη # νὰ γένωμαι εἰς ἑσένα.}\
\text{“because I want to become known by you”}

As this last example reveals, vocatives (in italics) also constitute a strong sign of genuine imperatives: you first address someone and then give him/her an order (cf. BT 5811 & 5917 supra):

18. BT 6581-6582
\[\text{«Αὐθέντη», λέγει, «ἐγνώριζε, \# ἔπειτα νὰ σὲ ἔχω δειξέι}\
\text{“Master”, she says, “know, I will want to show you}
\[\text{τὸ μέγα θαῦμα ὅπου πονῶ, ὅπου ἔδω αὐτὴν τὴν νύκτα}\
\text{“the great wonder which I suffer, which I saw this night”}

19. BT 8856
\[\text{«Κακὰ λέγεις, Μενέλαε, # ἐγνώριζε ἀπ’ ἐμέναν}\
\text{“You say stupid things, Menelaos, believe me”}

The vocatives can of course also follow the given order (cf. BT 1428-1429 supra):

20. BT 1496
\[\text{«Τοῦτον τὸν λόγον γνώριζε, \# δέσποτα, βασιλέα}\
\text{“Remember these words, master, king”}

21. BT 7862-7863
\[\text{«Ταῦτα», τοῦ λέγει ἡ Κουβά, # ἡξευρέ, αὐτοκράτωρ,}\
\text{“These things”, Hecuba says him, “know (them), ruler,}
\[\text{ὅτι πολλὰ τὸ γένος μας \# πάντοτε χαμηλώνει}\
\text{“that our lineage is always much lower”}

On the other hand, forms with a DM-like use not only occur in interactive discourse, but are also found in purely descriptive passages. The 106
DM-like parenthetical imperatives are used both in personage-text (characters addressing each other) and in “meta”-text (storyteller addressing us, his readers/listeners). While direct speech of the characters can contain both interactive and narrative passages, the text of the storyteller is basically purely narrative.\(^\text{60}\) Interestingly, 46 of the 47 imperatives occurring in meta-text concern instances of bare parenthetical forms.\(^\text{61}\) In the following passage, for instance, we find an ἐκφράσις of a garment which the girl Briseïs is wearing:

22. BT 5723-5724
"Ἔσωθεν ἦτον, ἡξευρε, μὲ γούναν ἐνδυμένον, "Inside it [the garment] was, know, lined with fur,”
oίνι ὁ κόσμος πούπετε # οὐκ εἰδέ να φορέσῃ “of a kind which the world has never seen someone wearing”

The following verses too seem purely narrative:

23. BT 13279
Οὕτως τὸ εἶπαν, ἡξευρε, Ναυπλίου τοῦ πατρός του. “So they said it, know, to Nauplios, his father.”

24. BT 1298-1299
Εἶχεν ἡ πόρτα ἡ κάθε μία # φύλαξιν, ὡς ἀνέγνωσ "Each door had one guard, as I read.”
πλέον τῶν χιλίων, ἐγνώριζε, καλῶν καβαλλαρίων. “of more than 10.000, know, decent horsemen.”

25. BT 10312-10313
ὁ Ἀγαμέμνων ὀπίσθεν # τριάκοντα χιλιάδες "Agamemnon (was) behind with 30,000”
ὁποὺ τὸν κάμπον, ἡξευρε, πλέον οὐδὲν τὸν ἀφήνουν. “who from now on, know, do not leave the field.”

26. BT 12772-12773
Ὁ Ἀιας πάλιν, ἡξευρε, # τόσα ἦτον χολιασμένος, “Ajax, in his turn, know, was so furious,”
ὅτι δὲ ὦλιγον ἔχανε # τὸν νοῦν τοῦ ἐκ τὴν μανίαν. “that he almost lost his mind in his frenzy.”

\(^{60}\) However, it should be noted that in this kind of poetry the author creates a fictional bond of orality with his (imaginary) public. T. SHAWCROSS, *The Chronicle of Morea: Historiography in Crusader Greece (Oxford Studies in Byzantium)*, Oxford - New York, 2009, pp. 157-161, relates the abundance of references to second persons to this “live oral composition” the author attempts to evoke; cf. T. SHAWCROSS, “Listen, all of you, both Franks and Romans”: *The Narrator in the Chronicle of Morea*, in R. MACRIDES (ed.), *History as Literature in Byzantium*, Farnham, 2010, pp. 93-111.

\(^{61}\) The sole exception is BT 9252.
3.5. *Metrical position: “free” VS precaesural*

Interestingly, we observe that the parenthetical DM-like imperatives have a marked preference for a certain metrical position, namely the position immediately before the fixed caesura. In other words: the form prefers to close the first half-line. Of the 106 instances, no fewer than 99 forms occupy the precaesural position. One may raise that we should simply attribute this fact to the metrical value of the forms. Partly, this is of course true: all forms (γνῶριζε, ἐγνώριζε, ἡξεύρε and πρόσεχε) have the metrical pattern “(no stress-)stress-no stress-no stress” and thus nicely fit in the end of the first half-line of the πολιτικὸς στίχος (syllable positions 6-7-8).

Nevertheless, this metrical pattern is by no means confined to this position. Theoretically, the pattern “stress-no stress-no stress” can appear in the following syllable positions: 1-2-3; 4-5-6; 6-7-8 and 9-10-11, as has been proven by the non-parenthetical forms above. The fact that these genuine imperatives have a wider distribution pattern suggests that the inclination of the parenthetical DM-like imperatives towards precaesural position cannot be completely explained by metrical constraints.

Moreover, the form ἡξεύρε can also function as an *indicative* instead of as an imperative, which happens 41 times in the *War of Troy*. In this mood, although showing the same metrical pattern, ἡξεύρε cannot be said to have a marked preference for a certain metrical position: it occurs 6 times in verse-initial position; 15 times in precaesural one; 7 times in postcaesural one and 13 times inside the half-line (either the first or the second one); I give an example of each position:

62 Strangely, the form ἐγνώριζε is sometimes used in elision, while γνώριζε constitutes the perfect alternative. However, the manuscripts sometimes offer the reading without he prothetic epsilon.

Elision: BT 781 νά ἐλθοῦν μετ’ ἔμου, ἐγνώριζε, # εἰς τὴν ἐκδίκησίν σου
“they will come with me, know, for your revenge”

Hiatus: BT 7831 Ὄμοιόν του, ἐγνώριζε, # γαμβρὸν οὐ μὴ νά εὐρής
“His equal, know, you will not find as a brother-in-law”

63 The syllable positions 2-3-4 and 10-11-12 would in principle also be possible, yet it is unlikely that one-syllable word will precede the imperative to occupy respectively syllable 1 and 9.

64 Furthermore, the poet sometimes seems allowed to change the accent in this kind of poetry, in order to fit a word into the metre (e.g. P. PAPPAS, Variation and Morphosyntactic Change in Greek. From Clitics to Affixes, Basingstoke, 2004, pp. 78-79). As such, the indicative form ἡξεύρε (instead of ἡξεύρε) is found twice in verse-final position, for instance:

BT 3648 Τῶν ἀρμάτων τὸ κάμωμα # τινὰς οὐδὲν ἡξεύρε (cf. BT 13677).
“No one recognized the military equipment”
27. BT 14295
*Ἤξευρε γὰρ τὸν θάνατον τῶν ἀδελφῶν τὸν δύο*  
“She was aware of the death of the two brothers”

28. BT 1670
*πολλὰς μαντείας ἤξευρε καὶ τὰς ἑπτὰ τῶν τέχνων*  
“he knew many prophecies as well as the seven skills”

29. BT 3308
*Τουγκλάς πεντεκαιδέκατος, ἤξευρε τὸ ζατρίκιν*  
“the fifteenth [bastard son] was Tougklas, he knew the game of chess”

30. BT 5655
*καλὰ ἤξευρε τὸ θάρρος του ποῦ καὶ εἰς τίναν τὸ ἔχει*  
“he knew very well in whom he had faith”

31. BT 6337
*Ποτὲ ὁ Δαυῒδ πλεώτερα οὐκ ἤξευρε νὰ κρούῃ*  
“David was no longer able to give hard knocks”

The same applies to the indicative ἐγνώρισε, which has exactly the same metrical value as ἐγνώριζε: of the 11 times ἐγνώρισε occurs in my corpus, it opens the verse 3 times; it occurs 3 times immediately before the caesura; it is found 4 times immediately after the caesura and it appears once inside a half-line.

Assuming that we can equate the fixed caesura with a breathing boundary/pause (cf. supra: 2.2.), we could relate this observation to the fact that the parenthetical DM-like forms prefer to occur next to a breathing boundary/pause. In this regard, the following statement of Dehé & Wichmann, who use the term “comment clauses” instead of “DMs”, is very interesting: “It has also been previously indicated that comment clauses may be part of a transitional, hesitant phase” and that they often “co-occur with silent or filled pauses”.65 In her analysis of pauses in the London-Lund Corpus of Spoken English, Stenström too notices that verbal fillers and silent pauses often cluster together.66

65 DEHÉ - WICHMANN, Multifunctionality [see note 17], p. 3, p. 14.
66 STENSTRÖM, Pauses in Monologue and Dialogue [see note 20]; Some modern linguists have claimed that DMs are bracketed off by pauses: “Bolinger (1989) [viz. D. BOLINGER, Intonation and Its Uses: Melody in Grammar and Discourse, Stanford, 1989] adds to this observation that parentheticals are often marked off by pauses, […] and thus form their own tone group” (A. WICHMANN, Spoken Parentheticals, in K. ADMER (ed.), A Wealth of English (Studies in Honour of Göran Kjellmer), Göteborg, 2001, p. 180); cf. L. ASTRUC, The Form and Function of Extra-Sentential Elements, in Cambridge Occasional Papers in Linguistics 2 (2005), p. 100: “It is commonly assumed that their prosodic independence follows from their syntactic independence”. This view, however, should be attenuated: “the prediction made by prosodic theory that parentheticals form separate intonation domains is too strong in the light of actual spoken language data” (N. DEHÉ, The Relation between Syntactic and Prosodic
Applied to my corpus, we could then tentatively state that the imperative and the caesura actually constitute one long (partly filled) pause. Interestingly, of the 7 exceptions which are not found in precaesural position, 6 occur immediately after the caesura and thus also “circle around” the breathing boundary/pause, for instance:

32. BT 13366-13368
Κάσσανδρος <οὖν> ο ἀδελφὸς # ἔκεινης τῆς Αἰγιάλης
“Kassandros, the brother of that girl Aigali”
ὁ δὲ προσπάθησε, # καθὼς τὸ λέγει ο λόγος•
“he behaved as a soldier, as the story tells it:”
<ἐξ> δὲ λεγεῖ τὴν ἐξίαιν, # η ἕξιερε, τοῦ πολέμου.
“he took from all the dignity, know, of the war.”

In sum, one cannot escape the impression that the poet – rather than attempting to convey any imperative meaning – seemingly runs out of breath and consciously makes an appeal to these “stock” imperatives in order to fill a beat in the flow of sound and thus apparently to win time. Interestingly, Aijmer, who focuses on the parenthetical DM *I think*, makes a similar observation: “*I think* is inserted where it is natural for the speaker to stop to plan”. An obvious example is the following:

Parenthesis, in N. DEHÉ - Y. KAVALOVA (eds), Parentheticals, Amsterdam - Philadelphia, 2007, p. 261; cf. E. SCHWYZER, Die Parenthese im engern und im weiten Sinne, in Abhandlungen der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch-historische Klasse, 6 (1939), p. 31: “in der gesprochenen Sprache ist die Parenthese an der vorausgehenden und auf sie folgenden Pause kenntlich, wenn auch nicht durchaus eindeutig”; cf. Y. ZIV, Parentheticals and Functional Grammar, in A. M. BOLKESTEIN et al. (eds), Syntax and Pragmatics in Functional Grammar, Dordrecht, 1985, p. 181: “Phonologically, it has been claimed that parentheticals constitute a separate tone unit from the sentence in which they occur. However, this need not to be the case”.

67 Keeping the syntactically diversity of the elements split up by our parenthetical imperatives at the back of our mind (cf. 3.3.), it might be interesting to note that STENSTROM, Pauses in Monologue and Dialogue [see note 20], pp. 232-240, discusses pauses between sentences, clauses, clause elements and words in phrases.

68 The sole exception of a parenthetical imperative occurring inside a half-line is BT 5766:

έκεινων, γνώριζε, ἄγαπα, # τὰ δ’ ἀλλα πάντα ἀφήνει.
“him, know, she loves, and she forgets all the other things.”

69 AJUMER, *I think* [see note 13], p. 24; cf. SCHEPPERS, The Colon Hypothesis [see note 22], p. 8 and p. 199: “It has been observed – already by Fraenkel – that in many cases these short parenthetical expressions occur on the boundary between ‘natural’ cola”; cf. R. J. WATTS, Taking the Pitcher to ‘well’: Native Speakers’ Perception of their Use of Discourse Markers in Conversation, in Journal of Pragmatics, 13/2 (1989), p. 210: “they [DMs] tend to be placed at the beginning or end of a tone unit in order to mark off, or bracket off, one bit of information from another”.

96914.indb   347
26/11/14   14:22
Ἀφὸν δὲ τὰ βυθίζουσι τὰ κύματα, υψώνει μέχρι καὶ εἰς τὰ σύγνοφα τὸ υδάτα ἀνεβαίνει.
μέχρι καὶ εἰς τὰ σύγνοφα τὸ υδάτα ἀνεβαίνει.
“as far as the clouds, it goes up.”
γοργότερον τὰ φέρνουσι τὰ ύδατα ἐκεῖνα
“those waters carry them faster”
παρὰ τὸ βέλος, ἡξευρέ, # τοῦ τόξου ἢ τῆς τσάγγρας
“than the arrow, know, of the bow or the cross-bow [?]”

It is as if the poet wants to give himself a breathing space: “ἡξευρέ” leads up to a pause and is – in “collaboration” with the fixed caesura – part of a hesitant phase.

3.5.1. Comparison with formulas

This DM-like use of the imperatives may be reminiscent of (the functioning of) formulas. Formulas are traditionally defined as repeated (half-)lines usually triggered by a specific frame of reference and expressing a certain idea. For instance, the beginning of a new day is very often signalled by the verse Ἡ νύξ ἐκείνη ἐδιέβηκε, κατέλαβεν ἡ ἡμέρα, for example:

34. BT 5026

Ἡ νύξ ἐκείνη ἐδιέβηκε, κατέλαβεν ἡ ἡμέρα
“That night passed, the day dawned”

As a consequence of their frequent use, formulas may also become semantically bleached. Again, a continuum might constitute a more suitable way to present them. The second half-line μικροὶ τε καὶ μεγάλοι for instance no longer means “the small and the big ones”, but expresses the basic idea of “all” or “every”:70

35. BT 5911

Οἱ Τρῶες πατέρα σὲ εἴχασιν, μικροὶ τε καὶ μεγάλοι
“The Trojans considered you a father, the small and the big ones”

As mentioned above (cf. 2.3.), the frequent occurrence of such “stock phrases” in πολιτικὸς στίχος poetry has led to the formulation of the oral style hypothesis.71

70 Cf. E. Jeffreys - M. Jeffreys, Traditional Style [see note 46], p. 129.
71 M. Jeffreys, Formulas [see note 45]. The issue of formulas in πολιτικὸς στίχος poetry has been elaborated in detail, especially the Jeffreys have done pioneering work – cf. M. Jeffreys, Formulas [see note 46] and IDEM, Early Modern Greek Verse: Parallels and Frameworks, in Modern Greek Studies (Australia and New Zealand) 1 (1993), pp. 49-78 for further references.
Although formulas can be considered ready-made building blocks which help the poet to structure the discourse by gaining time and thus can to a certain extent be compared to filled pauses as well, the DM-like imperatives work in a slightly different way. First, our imperatives are much shorter than traditional formulas, which occupy either a half-line or a complete line and thus a defined metrical unit: “A formula in the Greek tradition is never more nor less than a half-line”. More concretely: “the formula must fill either the first or the second half of the political line, the popular meter of early Demotic Greek poetry. It must be either eight or seven syllables long respectively”. Consequently, Beaton speaks of “two formula systems, each the length of a half-line”. The same seems to apply to the traditional formulas in the War of Troy. Papathomopoulos & E. Jeffreys give in their edition an overview of popular formulas: not one example is shorter than seven syllables (= the second half-line of the \( \piολιτικὸς \ στίχος \)). They even explicitly state: “Formulas’ will be used here to indicate a phrase filling a complete half-line”. However, length is not an ideal criterion to distinguish DM-like imperatives from formulas, as this definition of formulas might have been adopted because it is a workable one (it is simply impossible to employ a definition of formulas including individual words).

More importantly, formulas cannot be used in the same apparently arbitrary way as the items under scrutiny appear (cf. 3.3.). In my view, this difference results from (the nature of) the trigger: the catalyst of DM-like imperatives lies outside the text, on a phatic meta-level, whereas formulas are provoked by specific ideas, concepts and referents within the story: “the repetitions are not accidents of style, but used in a formulaic frame of reference”. As such, the phrase \( \piηδῇ, \ καβαλλικεύει \), which

72 Beaton, Folk Poetry [see note 42], p. 44.
73 M. Jeffreys, Formulas [see note 45], p. 175.
74 Beaton, Folk Poetry [see note 42], p. 52.
75 Papathomopoulos - Jeffreys, Ο Πόλεμος τῆς Τρωάδος [see note 31], pp. lxxxi-lxxxvi.
76 Ibidem, p. lxxxi.
77 M. Jeffreys, Early Modern Greek Verse [see note 71], p. 58; cf. Shawcross, The Chronicle of Morea [see note 60], p. 119, footnote 21: “Parry and Lord noted the essential function of the formula (repeated phrases and phrase-patterns for different characters and their actions, typically covering a hemistich)”; cf. G. S. Kirk, The Iliad: A Commentary, vol. I, Cambridge, 1985, p. 24, speaks of “a systematic corpus of phrases for different characters, objects and functions”. A prototypical Homeric example is a personal name followed by its formulaic epithet. As for \( \piολιτικὸς \ στίχος \) poetry, it has been observed that formulas are especially used when a transition takes place between different types of speech (e.g., introduction direct speech): “It is noteworthy that, of the repertoire of formulaic phrases used by H, a large proportion is connected with the representation of speech acts […] More usually, however, direct discourse is introduced in H and B by a fixed schema, the inquit-formula.” Shawcross, The Chronicle of Morea [see note 60], pp. 131-139; cf. Lendari, Livistro and
completes the second half-line, can only be used when a character moves, for instance:

36. BT 4532

πολλὰ ἐντράπη, δυνατά, ητή, καβαλλικεύει

“he was greatly ashamed, and powerfully he leapt and mounted (his horse)”

Another example is πολλὰ εἰς ὀλίγην ὥραν:

37. BT 3137

τριακοσίους ἐσκότωσε # πολλὰ εἰς ὀλίγην ὥραν

“he killed 300 men in a very short time”

About this formulaic second half-line, the Jeffreyss state the following: “If one looks beyond these verbal triggers to the contexts in which the phrase is found, it is immediately clear that circumstances proved a more certain clue to its use than words. Each of these 19 phrases occurs at a moment of high military achievement [...] It brings with it an automatic context – the climax of a battle”.

In conclusion, the DM-like imperatives are of a different nature than formulas, the oral style markers par excellence. Nevertheless, these items too only make sense if we adopt an oral discourse and thus provide further evidence of the view that the poets have moulded their language after an oral discourse, even when composing in an ivory tower.

3.6. Context: singular VS plural

The context constitutes the last argument which favours an interpretation of the (majority of) parenthetical imperatives as DMs. I have noticed that the singular forms are sometimes used when addressing a plural public, while the plural forms (ἐγνώριζετε, προσέχετε and ἦξευρετε) do exist and do occur in the War of Troy. Acquiring a “fairly fixed form” is a typical step in the development of a DM, which can be described as a process of “grammaticalization” or “pragmatic(alization)."
As mentioned above, the parenthetical DM-like forms are used both in meta-text and in direct speech of personages. In the latter context, I have found 15 examples of a parenthetical singular imperative used to address a public consisting of more than one person.\textsuperscript{82} I give some representative examples, in which I have put the elements which refer to the 2\textsuperscript{nd} person plural (vocatives, verbal forms, pronouns) in italics:

38. BT 10270-10280

«Ἄρχοντες», λέγει, «ἐδὰ καλὰ # ὑπαγαίνει τὸ πρᾶγμα.
“Leaders”, he says, “now the business is going well.”

Ἐδὰ θέλω νὰ κάμετε # τοῦτο τὸ θέλω εἶπε.
“Now I will want you to do what I’ll say.”

Ἄς υπάγουν μεσάζιοι εἰς τὸν Δικαιοδίαν.
“Messengers should go to Lycomedia”

τὸν βασιλέα τὸν φρόνιμον, πατέρα Δηϊδάμας.
“to the wise king, father of Deïdama.”

Ἐκεῖνος κάμνει ἀνατροφὴν ἀπὸ ἑνὸν παλληκάριν,
“He takes care of the education of a youth,”

ὔον τῆς θυγατέρας του, σπέρμα τοῦ Αχιλλέως.
“a son of his daughter, seed of Achilles.”

Ὅμοιος, καθόμοιος, λέγω σας, # εἰς συντυχία,
“An equal, a peer, I tell you, in face, in beauty”

εἰς συντυχία, εἰς διακίνημα, εἰς φρόνησιν,
“in conversation, in movement, in wisdom, in attitude”

τίποτε οὐκ ἀφαλίζει τὸν,
“nothing makes him lose his strength, he is completely like Achilles.”

39. BT 12422-12442

«Ἄρχοντες», λέγει, «ἄσχημον # βουλήν, μοχθηροτάτην,
“Leaders”, she says, “a horrid decision, a malicious one,”

ἐπήρετε διὰ θάνατον # νὰ μὲ ἔχετε φονεύσει.
“you took concerning the death to which you will condemn me,”

ἐκδίκησις οὐκ ἔγινε εἰς τὸν ἄπαντα κόσμον
“revenge hasn’t happened in the whole world”

τὸσσα κακίστη, λέγω σας, # καὶ νὰ τὴν ἀφηγοῦνται.
“(which is) so evil, I tell you, and they will proclaim it.”

Ὅλοι μεγάλοι βασιλέοι εἴσθε, # μεγάλοι ἀνθρώποι,
“You are all great kings, great men,”

καὶ ἔπαιτε θάνατον ἐμοί, # τὸν σ<σ>νητὸν ἐτούτον;

\textsuperscript{82} Meta-text cannot be used for this purpose, since the poet sometimes addresses the public as a singular and sometimes as a plural; compare for instance:

Singular: BT 1190 Ἀκουστέον τὰ ὄνομα # ὑλῶν καὶ θυγατέρων.
“Hear the names of the sons and daughters”

Plural: BT 1194 ἔμπροσθεν νὰ ἀκούσετε # τὰ ἀνδραγαθήματα τού.
“below you will hear his miraculous deeds”
“but you sentenced me to death, that hateful thing?”

Θανάτου κίνδυνον ποτὲ οὐκ ἔξεδούλευσά τον·
“They danger of the death, I’ve never ministered to it,”

τίποτε οὐκ ἔκαμα ποτὲ τὸν καιρὸν τής ζωῆς μου,
“I’ve never done anything in the days of my life,”

διὰ νὰ μὲ δόσουν θάνατον ἢ ἡχῆσην καμίαν.
“to give people reason to give me death or another distress.”

Τόσα εἶμι ἀπὸ εὐστόλιστων, εὐγενικὴν γενέαν,
“I am from a decent, aristocratic lineage”

κόρη παρθένος, ἀγαθῆ, δίχωτα πονηρίας
“a virgin girl, a noble one, without wickedness”

ἀν σᾶς ἔφανη, ἐλάχαινε # νὰ ἔλειπε ἀπ’ ἐμένα.
“if it seemed good to you, it would happen that this (sentence) passes from me.”

Τὸν Πρίαμον τὸν βασιλέα # ἔσφάξετε ἀδίκως,
“You slaughtered king Priam in an unjust way,”

υἱοὺς καὶ ἀνεψίους του, συγγενεῖς ἐδικούς του.
“his sons and nephews, his own relatives.”

Τόσους ἐκατεκόψετε, # ἔσφάξετε διάπαξ,
“You killed so many, you caused such a complete bloodbath”

ότι ἕνα μῆνα ἀργήσετε # διὰ νὰ καθαρισθῆτε
“That it took you a one month to clean yourselves”

ἀπὸ τὸ αἷμα τὸ πολὺ # τὸ ἐχύσετε ὡσεὶ ὕδωρ.
“of the much blood you had poured like water.”

Καὶ ἀκόμη οὐκ ἐκορέσθητε # ἀπὸ τοὺς τόσους φόνους,
“And still you are not satiated by the many murders,”

ἀλλ’ ἐκ τὸν ἐμὸν θάνατον # θέλετε κορεσθῆναι;
“but will you become satiated by my death?”

<Διὼ> τοῦτο <οὐ> θέλο, ἐγνώριζε, # χωρὶς ἀντιλογίας
“I don’t want, know, without objection”

νὰ ζῆσω πλέον ἐξόπισθεν # εἰς τέτοιαν πονοθλῖψιν
“to live any more behind such painful grief”

This phenomenon again points to the fact that the original semantic value of these forms has been weakened.

4. Conclusion

The starting point of this article has been the observation that singular imperatives of verbs of “knowing” – (ἐ)γνώριζε/σε, ἥξευρε and πρόσεχε – truly abound in the War of Troy, the longest of the extant LMG “vernacular” πολιτικὸς στίχος romances. This high frequency can be explained by considering the majority of instances not as true commands, but as semantically bleached elements. In this latter use, the imperatives can be compared to modern spoken DMs, to which – unsurprisingly – not much attention has been paid in a “dead” language such as LMG.
I have identified a number of objective criteria by which we can (prototypically) distinguish between examples to which a peremptory tone can be attributed and DM-like forms in the War of Troy. First, from a syntactic perspective, DM-like imperatives do not possess arguments and appear in a parenthetical position, while genuine imperatives normally have a direct object and tend to open the utterance in an emphatic way. Secondly, DM-like imperatives not only occur in an interactive context, but are also found in a purely narrative discourse. Moreover, I have also come across some instances in which the singular imperative addresses a plural public, which points to a grammaticalization/pragmatic(al)ization process typical of DMs. Finally, DM-like imperatives have a distinct preference for occurring immediately before the fixed caesura, which we can justifiably equate with a breathing boundary/pause. A number of modern spoken DMs, such as English “you know”, have been related to the concept of “filled pauses”, which help to process the discourse by creating time (both for speaker and hearer). Therefore, we can tentatively conclude that the DM-like imperatives tend to be part of one long (partly filled) pause.83

In this respect, the items under scrutiny may remind us of traditional formulas, ready-made building blocks of either a half-line or a complete line constituting an aid for the (oral) poet. It is mainly the high frequency of such formulas in πολιτικὸς στίχος poetry which has led scholars to suggest that the poets have deliberately adopted an oral discourse. Since DMs/filled pauses are of course characteristic of spoken language, this investigation has provided further evidence for the oral style hypothesis.

Furthermore, it seems that the poet of the War of Troy does not limit himself to γνώριζε and the like when he wants to give himself a breathing space. Of the 128 verses in which the phrase λέγω σας (“I say you”) occurs, it is found 105 times without arguments in a parenthetical position, of which no less than 96 instances “circle around” the caesura (with a large majority occurring in precaesural position, viz. 80 instances), for instance:

40. BT 2064

Ἡ Ἑλένη πάλιν, λέγω σας, # ἡ τούτων αὐταδέλφη

“Helen in turn, I tell you, the sister of these men”

The preference for precaesural parenthetical position is even more distinct in the case of φημί (“I say”). This word, found 18 times in the War

83 It should be noted that the concept of “filled pauses” is not to be understood as a safe-conduct to treat DMs as being mutually exchangeable. Nuances between the different DMs should definitely be distinguished (cf. 1.2.).
of Troy, is only used parenthetically and with the exception of one example it always appears immediately before the caesura: 84

41. BT 5646

διὰ τὸν πόλεμον, φημί, # τὸν ἐστησαν οἱ δύο.
“because of the war, I say, which the two started.”

However, the use and functions of these phrases need further investigation. 85

In general, further research on LMG and Modern Greek DMs is highly required. Greek DMs evolving from a verbal – even imperatival – source definitely deserve more attention, as most research – both in Ancient and in Modern Greek – has focused on adverbs and particles. 86 It would be interesting to examine whether this use of the imperative of “knowing” survives in later Greek: do other verbs/imperatives sometimes acquire a DM-like status in the development of the Greek language? Standard Modern Greek ξέρεις (“you know”) and μαθέ (‘learn!’) might constitute plausible candidates. 87

84 The exception is BT 11989.

85 Cf. Lee, Contrastive Topic and/or Contrastive Focus [see note 59] for an overview of the English DM “say”.

86 As a matter of fact, studies on Modern Greek DMs are in general very scarce. I am aware of the following three studies: A. Georgakopoulou - D. Goutsos, Conjunctions versus Discourse Markers in Greek: The Interaction of Frequency, Position and Functions in Context, in Linguistics 36.5 (1998), pp. 887-917; A. Archakis, On Discourse Markers: Evidence from Modern Greek, in Journal of Pragmatics, 33 (2001), pp. 1235-1261, and M. Christodoulidou, Lexical Markers within the University Lecture, in Novitas-ROYAL (Research on Youth and Language), 5.1 (2011), pp. 143-160. The first and the last one mainly deal with “λοιπόν” (“well”; “so”), while Archakis discusses “δηλαδή” (“that is to say”), “μ’άλλα λόγια” (“in other words”), “Θέλω να πω” (“wish to say”), “ή μάλλον” (“or rather”).

87 This suggestion is supported by the fact that μαθέ(ς) is actually considered an adverb in Modern Greek dictionaries; cf. G. Babinotis, Lexiko tis neas ellinikis glossas, Athina, 1998, p. 1041: “μαθέ: επίρρ. (λαϊκ.) 1. βεβαίως: δεν θέλει να μας πει πού πήγε, γιατί φοβάται || να ~ (εαν απόκριση βεβαιότατα) 2. δηλαδή, όπως είναι εμφανές: έξαλλο να μας κάνει τον παράδειγμα. Επίσης μαθέ(ς) [μεσν.]”; cf. J. T. Pring, The Oxford Dictionary of Modern Greek (Greek-English), Oxford, 19752, p. 115: separate lemma = “μαθέ(ς): adv. certainly, apparently; by any chance?”.

As for Ancient Greek, the imperative εἶπε (“tell!”) seems qualified, for it has received a fixed form early on, which can be used to address a plural public (cf. grammaticalisation/pragmaticalisation); cf. Online Liddell-Scott Jones about the lemma “εἶπον”: “VII imper. εἶπε sts. used in addressing several persons, Ar.Ach.328, Av.366, D.4.10.”.
Dans cet article, nous analysons l’usage de l’impératif fréquent « sache! » dans le roman grec médiéval La Guerre de Troie (13e-14e siècles). Nous montrons que « (ἐ)γνώριζε/σε », « ἤξευρε » et « πρόσεχε » n’ont pas toujours une valeur impérative: assez souvent, ces formes manquent de sens lexical et fonctionnent plutôt au niveau pragmatique; elles facilitent la progression du message au lieu de contribuer vraiment au contenu sémantique. Par conséquent, on peut les comparer avec le phénomène moderne de Discourse Markers. Je fais appel aux critères syntaxiques, discursifs, métriques et contextuels pour distinguer l’emploi « normal » de l’impératif de son usage comme Discourse Marker. En cette dernière qualité, les impératifs peuvent même être associés avec le concept de filled pauses, ce qui est une suggestion intéressante, car les romans grecs médiévaux sont supposés d’avoir adopté un discours oral.