

SOCIOLINGUISTIC AND FUNCTIONAL VALUE OF THE PARTICLE ΓΕ IN MENANDER¹

1. PROLEGOMENA

1.0. Introduction

The particles so commonly deployed in Ancient Greek are often thought of as one of the elements of the language which accounts for its richness in expression, tone and allusion. Many studies of specific particles and theoretical approaches to the field of particle studies have been published since J.D. Denniston's comprehensive study of their usage in the authors of 5th-c. Attic;² and while particles have been thoroughly considered from both a semantic, syntactic and communicative perspective, one very important aspect has so far been ignored: sociolinguistics.

This brief study of the particle γε in the works of the 4th-c. comedian Menander will analyse the author's usage of it and, taking into account modern research and theories, will attempt to shed some light on the implications of class and social context for particle usage.

1.1. A brief history of particle studies

1.1.1. *Early approaches to particles*

While ancient authors were usually well versed in the appropriate usage of particles in their writings, only few mentions of a theoretical nature have survived. In a short passage in his *Rhetoric*, Aristotle outlines the rules for using co-ordinating particles or conjunctions; his consideration of these σύνδεσμοι is, however, limited to μέν and δέ and of overall limited significance.³ Yet, shortly thereafter he mentions that excessive use of co-ordinating particles impedes easy comprehension in both written and oral presentation –

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² Denniston does take into account later authors as well, but the sheer amount of examples from the 5th c. makes for a clear focus.

³ Cf. Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1407a.

this will prove interesting in evaluating whether particles were more common in colloquial speech or in literary and dramatic writing.⁴

A more detailed description of particles and their function is given in the *τέχνη γραμματική* attributed to the 2nd-c. grammarian Dionysios Thrax. Like Aristotle, this treatise uses the term σύνδεσμος to describe particles, but subdivides them into eight categories, amongst which are to be found συμπλεκτικοί (co-ordinating conjunctions, e.g. μέν, δέ, τέ, καί, etc.), διαζευκτικοί (disjunctive conjunctions, e.g. ἢ, ἥτοι, ἤέ) and παραπληρωματικοί (expletive particles, e.g. δή, τοί, γέ). The grammarian further adds 27 categories of adverbs, a few of which are sometimes considered particles by modern standards, e.g. νῦν and ἄμα. Two aspects of his description are rather appealing: firstly, he attributes a certain linking function to all particles, including those often thought of in modern days as being purely emphatic,⁵ as they are all classified as σύνδεσμοι. Secondly, he states that those expletive particles mentioned are used because of metrical or aesthetic needs.⁶

It is in such a way, too, that many medieval scribes and early modern editors of classical texts have employed particles, especially γε – namely as a tool to fill metrical gaps, as Neil points out.⁷ Antiquity and other early scholarship thus constructs a very ill-defined concept of particles in general, and an even more problematic picture of γε and other expletive or ‘filler’ particles. It would appear that, while having some implicit expressive or structural function, their main purpose was thought to be a cosmetic one. Modern scholarship, as will be shown presently, disagrees in many ways.

1.1.2. Denniston’s *The Greek Particles and later scholarship*

Kühner and Gerth’s *Ausführliche Grammatik des Griechischen* is the first grammatical treatise to attempt a definition of the term ‘particle’; but only through the comprehensive description and accumulation of particle usage in Denniston’s *The Greek Particles* did this aspect of the Greek language re-enter the scholarly field; since then, it has received attention especially from Dutch and French scholars such as Y.Duhoux, C.M.J.Sicking, G.Wakker and others, whose approach is more functionalist (cf. 1.2.2.).

⁴ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1407b – ὅλως δὲ δεῖ εὐανάγνωστον εἶναι τὸ γεγραμμένον καὶ εὐφραστον: ἔστιν δὲ τὸ αὐτό: ὅπερ οἱ πολλοὶ σύνδεσμοι οὐκ ἔχουσιν, οὐδ’ ἂν μὴ ῥάδιον διασιτίξαι, ὥσπερ τὰ Ἑρακλείτου. On the matter of particle frequency, *vide infra*.

⁵ I.e. the category of the above mentioned expletive particles.

⁶ Cf. *τέχνη γραμματική* I 1 96ff. (Uhlig); for another account, cf. Sicking 1986; also Cf. Duhoux 1997, who clearly disproves this assumption.

⁷ Neil 1901, p.201.

Scholarly definitions of what is a particle vary greatly – Denniston’s classical and inexpressive description (rather than definition) of a particle as

*a word expressing a mode of thought, considered either in isolation or in relation to another thought, or a mood of emotion*⁸

is connected, but not identical to that of J.J.Fraenkel, who denies that the particle has any meaning and is hence able

*to discharge motion, to make known intentions, to connect related clauses*⁹

and that of Schwyzer¹⁰. As will be demonstrated in the ensuing segment, this very semantic and affective approach to particles was challenged in the second half of the 20th Ct. by the upcoming functionalist theory, in matters of Greek particles best represented by the ideas of G.Wakker and Y.Duhoux; according to the functionalist approach, particles ought to be seen as a device of interpersonal communication rather than a semantic or syntactic element alone.

1.2. Definitions of the particle

1.2.1. The semantic approach

Dionysios Thrax’s definition of σύνδεσμος states that

<p>σύνδεσμός ἐστὶ λέξις συνδέουσα διάνοιαν μετὰ τάξεως καὶ τὸ τῆς ἐρμηνείας κεκηνὸς δηλοῦσα.¹¹</p>	<p><i>a conjunction [h: particle] is a word which unites meaning and order [of words] and points out the gaps in explanations.</i></p>
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In expressing that particles link sense and argumentation and also point out issues in the interpretation, Dionysios argues that any particle does have a meaning, as well as a connective function, which is logically related to the word’s meaning. By contrast with those modern scholars who still attribute actual semantic values to particles, Dionysios refrains from giving them an emotional or personal component, and remains within the limits of syntactic and semantic rather than emotive functions.

Whichever variant of this theory is preferred, it has a number of advantages and disadvantages: it allows the reader and translator to understand a particle as just another

⁸ Denniston 1954², p. XXXVII

⁹ Fraenkel 1947, pp. 183ff.; also cf. Sicking 1986, p. 139, n. 4

¹⁰ Schwyzer 1950 II, p. 553 - *Wörter meist geringen und geringsten Umfangs von allgemeiner, oft schwer fassbarer Bedeutung, die ein Wort, Satzglied oder einen Satz irgendwie gedanklich, in älterer Zeit besonders affektiv modifizieren*

¹¹ τέχνη γραμματική, I 1 86.2f.

part of speech that can easily be translated in any number of instances, and simply ought to be adapted to the corresponding situation;¹² yet, this simple equation of a particle with one phrase in the target language does not do justice to the polyvalence of many particles, and even a greater host of translations only shows that particles are very hard to fathom in their essence. Furthermore, if the emotional component cited by many advocates of the semantic approach were to apply to the nature of particles, then they ought to be more common in dramatic texts and dialogues in narrative, since here human interaction and thus emotion are at their literary high. As Denniston puts it:

*it cannot be doubted that Greek conversation was full of particles: at moments of excitement and emotional tension the dialogue of tragedy and comedy fairly bristles with them.*¹³

This long-held assumption has, however, been disproved in a number of test cases, notably by Duhoux.¹⁴ Much to the contrary, particles are usually either used more often in narrative and philosophical texts, or just as often as in dramatic works.

1.2.2. *The functionalist approach*

In more recent scholarship, the above-named problems of semantic polyvalence and frequent occurrence in non-emotive contexts have been approached in such a way as to make them more readily understandable and intertwine them with the concept of particles as linking agents. G.Wakker has summarised the problem concisely, stating that particles

*usually fall outside the syntactic structure of the clause in which they occur, [...] their meaning is elusive [and] in a strictly semantic approach it is difficult to account for the diversity of – seemingly unconnected – uses of most particles.*¹⁵

She and others have argued that particles ought to be considered not in a literary and stylistic context alone, but rather from a communicative perspective, taking into account

¹² Cf. *τέχνη γραμματική*, I 1 86f.

¹³ Denniston 1954², pp. LXXII f.

¹⁴ Cf. Duhoux 1997b, p. 283; the percentage of particles in relation to the whole text is <14% for dramatic works, and >16% for prose narrative. Yet, a distinction between dialogical and non-dialogical parts is here not made. For more detail, cf. Duhoux 1997a.

¹⁵ Wakker 1997, p. 210.

both the addressee and the contextual situation.¹⁶ Wakker argues that, if one analyses a conversation or text by classing the words it contains as either referential or functional, particles must be classed with the latter, since they contribute nothing to the meaning of the representation of an event or action;¹⁷ instead, they act as ‘road signs’ and help the addressee understand the structure of an utterance, which the speaker has laid out for him. A. Hellwig and others have gone a step further in their interpretation of what functions particles may have, and have compared them to sentence accents or vocal emphasis in modern languages. Hellwig stresses that Greek is ill-suited for any suprasegmental elements of focus or accentuation, since both tonality and duration of each syllable are an elementary part of a word’s make-up and thus cannot be altered naturally.¹⁸ Whilst generally endorsing these concepts, Duhoux cautions that both ‘road signs’ and tonality may be problematic insofar as not every text containing particles has an explicit addressee;¹⁹ this objection may be mitigated, however, by pointing out that even works in non-dialogical form were composed not to be published in a written way alone, but to be publicly read, given that literacy was limited and ‘books’ expensive.²⁰

Whilst the functionalist approach avoids the question of the various meanings of particles by depriving them of meaning in general, it still does not account for the variability in their usage any more than the semantic approach does. In fact, it can be argued that the only concrete difference between the two theories is their focus on the emotive and communicative aspect of the particles respectively. In fact, the question whether particles have an actual meaning is not answered consistently by either approach.

1.2.3. *Focus ΓΕ*

As both theories approach particles in general from different perspectives, it is not surprising that the case of γε is discussed in different ways as well.

The semantic approach most commonly used is that of Denniston, who subdivides the usage of γε into the following categories: emphatic, limitative and focussing.²¹ Denniston

¹⁶ Cf. *ibid.* and Wakker 1994, p. 304, as well as Hellwig 1974, p. 152.

¹⁷ Wakker 1997, p. 211.

¹⁸ Cf. Hellwig 1974, pp. 161ff. It ought to be pointed out, however, that modern tonal languages such as Mandarin and Vietnamese are fully capable producing sentence accents, e.g. by variation of pitch level; also cf. Büring 1997.

¹⁹ Cf. Duhoux 1997b, p. 286.

²⁰ Concerning the rarity and luxury of ‘books’, cf. *Der Neue Pauly* II.812f.

²¹ Denniston uses different terms in a manner that is somewhat confusing; the three terms above shall be adhered to throughout this paper. Cf. Denniston 1954², pp. 114f.

goes on to note the various occurrences of γε in different contexts, such as in answers, questions, and in combination with other particles.²² He further emphasises its frequent occurrence in lively dialogue and stresses that it is ‘but rarely to be met within historians and orators’.²³ In the light of the future development of the field it is interesting to observe Denniston’s statement that inflexion of the voice and sentence accent are often the best way to render γε in English.²⁴

This, as it would appear, is the point where the functionalist theory sets in. Wakker groups γε with περ, οὐν and δέ amongst the presentational particles, thus being devoid of semantic meaning but establishing ‘functional relationships between discourse units’.²⁵ As pointed out above, the functionalists take Denniston’s thought a step further and attribute sentence accent and the like to the use of particles; two issues, however, ought to be pointed out here: firstly, due to its being ‘one of the subtlest and most elusive particles’,²⁶ very little work has been done on γε *per se* – it is usually only mentioned in commentaries or in the context of broader studies of particles. Secondly, it ought to be noted that, whilst particles in general are actually more likely to occur in non-dialogue scenes, γε is one of the select few to be more common or equally common in dialogue.²⁷ Duhoux further argues that particles are not necessarily a sign of elevated style, nor are they statistically more common in verse.²⁸

1.3. Questions, assumptions, hypotheses

As initially stated, it is the goal of this study to analyse particles in a sociolinguistic and stylistic context. Therefore, a quantitative basis for analysis must be founded, answering the following questions:

- a) *Is there a quantifiable difference in the usage of γε by slaves and free individuals, i.e. is there a class difference?*
- b) *Is there a quantifiable difference in the usage of γε by men and women, i.e. is there a gender difference?*

²² e.g. δέ γε, μέν γε and γοῦν; cf. Denniston 1954², pp. 150ff. Here also note Kühner/Gerth 1904, p. 171, and Neil 1901, pp. 185f., on the general position of γε.

²³ Denniston 1954², p. 116.

²⁴ *ibid.*, p. 115.

²⁵ Wakker 1997, p. 211.

²⁶ Denniston 1954², p.115.

²⁷ Cf. Duhoux 1997a.

²⁸ Cf. Duhoux 1997b.

- c) *Does γε occur more frequently in dialogue or narrative?*
- d) *In what combinations does γε occur most frequently?*
- e) *Are there any situations in which γε occurs particularly often?*

In line with the theories above, certain hypotheses can be formed; according to the semantic approach, γε would be expected to emphasise an utterance and to give it a personal component and thus occur more often in dialogue. Taking account of the functionalist approach, γε would be expected to link utterances or sections in one way or another, and may also serve as a supplementary sentence accent;²⁹ the question whether it will occur more commonly in dialogue or narrative is left open.

The closing statement of this section concerns the choice of author. Most studies in recent years have considered 5th-c. authors exclusively, most frequently Plato and the great playwrights.³⁰ The choice of Menander is based on studies by Dickey and Duhoux,³¹ who state that in his careful and sparing usage of particles, Menander is most likely closer to spoken Attic usage than the 5th-c. authors; furthermore, as opposed to tragic and paratragic characters found in said authors, Menander's characters can be sorted into social groups more easily.

²⁹ As there is no record of classical Greek being spoken, all statements containing sentence accents are necessarily speculation; yet, whether such an accent existed or not, it is plausible that particles may further enhance it.

³⁰ The corpus analysed by Duhoux 1997a consists of Plato's *Meno*, *Apologia* and *Protagoras*, Xenophon's *Symposium*, Aristophanes' *Thesmophoriazusae* and Sophocles' *Oedipus Coloneus*; Euripides and Aeschylus are considered by others, e.g. Wakker 1997.

³¹ Cf. Duhoux 1997a, pp. 44ff. and Dickey 1995.

2. ANALYSIS

2.1. Corpus of works considered

2.1.1. Works considered

As far as modern scholarship is concerned, twenty-nine plays of Menander are extant, nine of which are only uncertainly attributed to him.³² The state in which Menander's plays survive varies greatly – the *Dyskolos* is the only complete comedy, *Aspis*, *Perikeiromene*, *Epitrepontes* and *Samia* have survived in half or less of their original volume; most of the other plays exist only in minor fragments. The majority of the Menandrian corpus is further obscured not only by the lack of substantial parts of the respective plays, but by the physical state of the papyri and manuscripts, most of which are severely damaged and thus not useful for the present purpose.

In this study all of Menander's works have been considered and none has been excluded *a priori*; yet, given the state of the texts, not all them could be included sensibly. 16 of the plays show useful occurrences of $\gamma\epsilon$, the other four either do not contain the word or present it in a passage that had to be excluded.

2.1.2. Works excluded

For the sake of a coherent corpus, in which colloquial style and thus non-artistic employment of particles etc. may be expected to occur coherently, only plays certainly attributed to Menander have been considered. All occurrences of $\gamma\epsilon$ marked as conjectures in Arnott's edition³³ have been excluded since it is doubtful that they were part of the original plays' wording. Passages in which $\gamma\epsilon$ occurred in a broken line, or whose speaker could not be determined have been disregarded in like manner, as no useful information could be gleaned from them.³⁴

The particle did not occur in the *Encheiridion*; in the *Theophoroumene* all occurrences are in broken lines or in passages whose speaker is unknown – the same is true for the *Koneiazomenai* and the *Synaristosai*; in addition to these exclusions, a few passages in the

³² A number of smaller fragments containing unidentified plays exist as well; Menander is further quoted in Byzantine sources, such as the authors Photius and Maximus Planudes and the lexicon *Suda*. Arnott 1975, p. 3, however, points out that Menander is said to have been the author of more than a hundred plays and used to be well liked in antiquity; a number of his plays were even adapted by Plautus and Terence.

³³ Arnott, W.G., *Menander*, in three volumes, Harvard University Press 1979-2000; the fragments contained in PCG VI.2 have been considered as well, but did not yield any processable information.

³⁴ Cf. e.g. *Epitrepontes* 596, *Misoumenos* 723.

other plays had to be discarded for similar reasons.³⁵ In total, the particle γε and its derivatives γοῦν, εὔγε, ἔγωγε (in all cases) occur 197 times in the plays of Menander; after excluding 36 unusable instances, there remains a total incidence of 162 forms of γε over 4841 lines.

2.2. Data

2.2.1. Occurrences³⁶

The particle in its free form takes absolute precedence over all other manifestations, occurring 119 out of 162 times. The other instances manifest themselves as follows: ἔγωγε 27 times, εὔ γε 10 times, γοῦν 6 times. This outcome is in no way surprising, since Y.Duhoux has shown that γοῦν especially is a very rare particle.³⁷ The common combination with the first person pronoun and the use as an interjection must be suspected to result from the underlying function of γε – whether it be an emphatic/focussing or linking function or both must remain undecided for the moment.

Before considering the occurrences of γε in various contexts more closely, it is worth pointing out the problems of statistical analyses of this kind. The prevalence of γε will here be considered by means of ‘occurrence per 100 lines’, thus creating an equal frame of reference for all contexts; yet, this method disregards the possible clustering of manifestations in certain passages and their lacking in others. Furthermore, it necessarily does not take into account the amount of lines lost and those not considered here, and can therefore only do partial justice to the whole corpus. Whilst the latter cannot be helped, the former problem will be addressed in 3.2. and 3.3., where the data collected and statistically analysed here will be interpreted from a less statistical and more literary point of view.

2.2.2. The gender dichotomy³⁸

In order to determine whether the usage of γε may be influenced by the speaker’s gender, the relative frequency of γε in male and female lines has been established: women have a total of 460 lines in all the plays considered (less than 10% of the grand total), while men

³⁵ Cf. Appendix I – Excluded occurrences.

³⁶ Cf. Appendix II – Relevant occurrences.

³⁷ Cf. Duhoux 1997a, pp. 16f. – γοῦν occurs 69 times in a corpus of 622.568 lines, equivalent to a frequency of one in ten thousand words.

³⁸ Cf. Appendix III – Line distribution.

account for 4174 lines.³⁹ Yet, with 24 occurrences of $\gamma\epsilon$ and an index⁴⁰ of 5.2 women appear to be using the particle with more relative frequency than their fellow male characters, who provide a total of 138 occurrences and an index of ca. 3.3.⁴¹

Whilst the data could be used to argue that $\gamma\epsilon$ is a feature more prominent in female speech, in which almost twice as many occurrences as in male speech are found, such an argument should be made with great caution. Given that so little is left of the majority of Menander's plays, the data gleaned from it is necessarily incomplete, especially when it comes to characters who speak less frequently than others.⁴² Furthermore, the influence of context must not be underestimated; it could be argued that women mostly appear in situations where $\gamma\epsilon$ is more likely to be used because of other contextual factors. Only a thorough consideration of the situations in which women appear and use $\gamma\epsilon$ will show whether the frequency with which they use this particle is associated with their gender *per se*, or whether it is more directly related to other features of the plot. Further attention must be paid to the possibility of a 'female role' as opposed to individual female characters and their employment of the particle. The above numbers must then be considered not on their own, but in context, as will be done in 3.2.

2.2.3 *The class dichotomy*

The word 'class' is here taken to signify only the most rudimentary distinction between free men and slaves, as these extremes seem to represent hypothetical sociolinguistic differences best. Further differentiations are certainly possible – rich and poor amongst the free men could have been separated and analysed as different groups; but in most cases, such a separation would have to rely on speculation, since little is known for sure about the characters in the less well-preserved plays. Furthermore, any too complex differentiation

³⁹ The 207 other lines are taken up by prologues of god(desse)s or anthropomorphised concepts, such as Pan in the prologue to the *Dyskolos* or Ἄγνοια ('Misconception') in the *Perikeiromene*, which do not fall properly in any category.

⁴⁰ I.e. frequency of $\gamma\epsilon$.

⁴¹ In addition to comparing statistical occurrences, the datasets have been analysed by means of the χ^2 -test, which evaluates the independence of two variables. In the case of male vs female lines, the so-called Null-Hypothesis could be phrased as follows: 'The distribution of $\gamma\epsilon$ is independent of the distribution of female lines'; the p-value for the above dataset, i.e. the probability of obtaining a dataset at least as striking as this one in a similar experiment conducted in a world where the Null-Hypothesis is true, lies at p=0.03417. This means that an outcome comparable to the above would be expected in ca. 3.5% of such experiments, which speaks mildly in favour of a non-random scenario. Generally, a result is considered significant evidence against the Null-Hypothesis when the p-value is lower than 5%; cf. Rice 1995.

⁴² In all the plays considered, 25 women occur, sharing said 460 lines – the representative value of these lines is thus relatively small.

would run the risk of making the sets of data considered too small for meaningful analysis. An additional problem lies with categorisation itself – cooks, shepherds, *ἐταῖροι* and others may in theory belong to either group; in these cases, the context alone enables the reader to judge whether a character is a slave or a free individual.⁴³

The various slaves appearing in the plays of Menander use *γε* 41 times over a span of 1472 lines, thus yielding an index of ca. 2.8, whilst the free characters have an index of 3.8.⁴⁴ These values are much closer together than those in the previous case considered, but are subject to the same limitations of statistics. The question is once again whether free men use the word more often or whether the situations they are portrayed in create particularly ample opportunities to use this particle; as with the male-female dichotomy, this may well be a question of role vs character usage.

2.2.3. *The narrative-dialogue dichotomy*

Telling apart narrative and dialogue is often less straightforward than it may seem. It is tempting to regard any longer monologue in plays as a narrative, but at least in the case of Menander this would be an unfortunate choice.⁴⁵ Not only are a number of longer monologues in Menander accounts of actual *oratio recta*;⁴⁶ some of the longer passages are ‘simple’ replies to an interlocutor.⁴⁷ Here, any passage not addressed to another character or reporting speech obliquely has been taken as a narrative passage – except for asides, since they are too short to be taken as narratives.

When so defined, narrative parts take up 1505 lines, with 32 occurrences of *γε*, thus producing an index of 2.1; the corresponding index for dialogue lies at 3.9.⁴⁸ This chasm is somewhat bigger than those above, and would suggest that *γε* may indeed be more of a dialogue feature. This hypothesis is corroborated further by the fact that out of the 162

⁴³ As an example, take the cook Sikon in the *Dyskolos* and consider the manner in which he talks to the slave (*Dyskolos* 421ff.):

μηδὲν ἐπικωλύετω
θύειν γ' ἐπὰν ἔλθωσιν. ἀλλ' ἀγαθῆι τύχηι.
καὶ τὰς ὀφρῦς ἄνες ποτ', ὦ τρισάθλιε·
ἐγὼ σε χορτάσω κατὰ τρόπον τήμερον.

Make sure that nothing goes wrong with
the sacrifice at least once they have arrived – good
luck. And stop frowning, you wretch!
I'll throw you a feast today.

For general information, cf. Der Neue Pauly VI.619, lemma Koch, and Dalby 2003, p. 102.II: in both instances, cookery is described as a highly regarded and often well-paid, free profession.

⁴⁴ The χ^2 -test for this data set gives $p=0.07236$; the likelihood of non-random occurrence is thus slightly smaller than in the case of the gender-dichotomy, but still worth exploring further.

⁴⁵ On this topic, cf. Nünlist 2002.

⁴⁶ Cf. e.g. *Epitrepontes* 878-907, where Onesimos recounts a conversation and comments on it.

⁴⁷ Cf. e.g. *Dyskolos* 486-499, where Sikon reproaches Getas for his lack of tactfulness.

⁴⁸ The corresponding p -value lies at $p=0.00177$; the result is thus significant at the 1% level.

occurrences of γε, 107 occur within the first line or sentence of an utterance.⁴⁹ Even more strikingly, γε occurs in formulae that may have been used in everyday speech, such as νῆ καὶ σύ γε (reply to ‘χαῖρε’), εὖ γε or πάνυ γε (both as affirmative replies or interjections).⁵⁰

2.3. Analysis

2.3.1. Intermediate results

The questions posed in 1.3. have all been answered above. It turns out that γε is most frequent on its own, but has a small number of variants, whose relevance will be considered in the following section. The particle is statistically speaking more frequent in female than in male speech, and occurs more often in the mouths of free men than slaves; it is, furthermore, more common in dialogue than in narrative, and in dialogue it appears to prefer a position close to the beginning of the statement.

It has also been pointed out that the numeric results presented above cannot speak for themselves, but must be considered in a broader context, taking into account not only the factors presented above, but those of context as well. In the next section, the above results must therefore be interpreted with special regard to the situation, character roles and expressions of emotional state. With these aspects in mind, it should be possible not only to gain a deeper understanding of the sociolinguistic distribution of γε, but also of when and why it was used.

2.3.2. Guidelines for interpretation

It is at this point that the theories previously mentioned come into play. As well as determining whether there is a social component to the usage of γε, this study sets out to explore whether the semantic or the functionalist approach to particle studies offers more plausible explanations for the various occurrences of γε. Hence, the following questions must be answered:

- a) *Does the prevalence of γε in dialogue, and there within the first ten words, corroborate the functionalist ‘road sign’ argument? How then must the other occurrences be explained?*

⁴⁹ These 107 instances of γε in the first lines of 2032 speech acts stand in relation to 55 in-text occurrences over far more than 3000 lines (since many speech acts only take up a hemistich or less); the index thus lies at 5.2 and thus far above the in-text approximation of ca. 1.8.

⁵⁰ E.g. *Georgos* 41:

ΔΑ. ὦ χαῖρε πολλά, Μυρρίνη.

ΜΥ. νῆ καὶ σύ γε.

Daos: A great hello to you, Myrrhine!

Myrrhine: And to you, too.

- b) Does the statistical frequency of $\gamma\epsilon$ in women's speech mean that Menander associated the usage of the particle with women rather than men? Is the same true *mutatis mutandis* for free men and slaves? Or is the incidence of $\gamma\epsilon$ provoked rather by situations than by characters?
- c) To what extent can $\gamma\epsilon$ be said to be used as an emphatic marker? Is the particle better described in terms of meaning or function?
- d) To what extent is $\gamma\epsilon$ part of quotidian conversation?

3. INTERPRETATION

3.1. Background to Menander and New Comedy

In order not to consider Menander detached from its literary context, it is worth taking into account his background within Athenian New Comedy of the mid- and late 4th c., which introduces a number of important changes in comparison to its predecessor.⁵¹

As before, the action is set in Athens, and Athenian citizens form the majority of agents in the drama; yet the whole premise of comedy has changed insofar as situations tend to be far more realistic⁵² and based upon stock themes such as the rape of a virgin and ensuing legal issues, or the re-appearance of characters thought dead.⁵³ As any reader of Menander will quickly notice, his language differs strongly from that of Aristophanes and is almost completely free of vulgarity and scatological humour. F.H.Sandbach adduces socio-political changes as the basis of this difference: with the demise of the $\lambda\epsilon\iota\tau\omicron\upsilon\rho\gamma\acute{\iota}\alpha$ in the mid-4th c. and the abolition of the Theoric fund to allow admission of poorer (and thus often less educated) spectators, the general audience of the theatrical performance would have higher standards and expect a different kind of humour and language from that of Old Comedy.⁵⁴

Menander's style, then, is not vulgar like that of Aristophanes, but rather influenced by contemporary conversational Attic – this supposition has been corroborated by E. Dickey's research on forms of address in Menander, and has been the generally held opinion since

⁵¹ For greater detail and a more thorough analysis, cf. Hunter 1985, Arnott 1975 and Sandbach 1977.

⁵² Cf. Sandbach 1977, p. 84.

⁵³ Cf. the *Samia* for the pre-marital seduction of a girl by the protagonist and the *Aspis* for appearance of a character thought dead.

⁵⁴ Sandbach 1977, p. 69; also cp. Plutarch, *Comparationis Aristophanis et Menandri compendium* 853 a-b.

the days of Plutarch, who praises Menander's use of quotidian conversational Attic.⁵⁵ Plutarch also points out that, as contrasted with his famous predecessor Aristophanes, Menander's style allows for both the characterisation of a single character by means of his style as well as a general linguistic homogeneity of his complete oeuvre.⁵⁶ Sandbach comes to the same conclusion, and uses the language of Sikon in the *Epitrepontes* as an example: whilst generally conventional in his language, the cook uses a number of particularly uncommon words, metaphors and poetic expressions that make him stand out as an individual without infringing on the linguistic homogeneity of the play.⁵⁷

In like manner, the speech of women offers a number of features that are more rarely used in male speech. D.Bain has analysed this aspect of Menander's comedies very thoroughly, coming to the conclusion that interjections, invocations of the gods and other elements are more common in their speech.⁵⁸ He cautions, however, that the amount of material that can be analysed is rather limited and thus may not be a truthful representation of female language in Menander, let alone contemporary Greek in general; he adds furthermore that New Comedy was written by male authors exclusively, and may thus contain a version not of female speech proper but of female speech as envisioned by men.

It is with this information in mind, then, that the usage of $\gamma\epsilon$ in Menander must be approached, especially with regard to female speech.

3.2. $\Gamma\epsilon$ in female speech

The data presented above suggests that $\gamma\epsilon$ is more common in female than in male speech. It has also been pointed out, however, that this may be not the result of a female characteristic, but rather an effect of situations female characters occur in.⁵⁹ As such, then, an attempt must be made at categorising these situations in order to find out which of these options is more likely.

The classification suggested in the following has evolved from a close reading of the passages concerned and is based on situation and context on the one hand, and on the

⁵⁵ Cf. Dickey 1995, pp. 259, 269.

⁵⁶ Cf. Plutarch, op.cit., 853 d-e.

⁵⁷ Cf. Sandbach 1970, p. 119.

⁵⁸ Cf. Bain, 1984, pp. 32ff.

⁵⁹ Cf. Cameron 2007, pp. 52, 147. Cameron describes female speech and behaviour in a modern context as partly defined by self-identification in a particular group and situation in which certain linguistic idiosyncrasies may originate.

speech act itself on the other hand. With the exception of a few ambiguous cases all examples of female speech can be sorted into the following categories: emotional situations, answers, formulaic usage.⁶⁰

3.2.1. *ΓΕ in emotional situations*

Basing linguistic categorisation upon such an individual and problematic indicator as emotion is generally inadvisable. Yet the present situation not only requires such a step, but also proffers certain criteria by which this classification may be justified. Often a protective invocation of the gods⁶¹ will accompany such occurrences of γε, as well as interjections such as ‘ὦ δυστυχής’ or forms of ‘τάλας’ (e.g. *Dyskolos* 574ff.). Emotional situations do not necessarily cause occurrences of γε – there are far too many of them according to the above criteria,⁶² but the particle shows a certain propensity for such situations.

A prime example of the usage of γε in a particularly emotional situation is that of Chrysis in the *Samia*. At the end of a tense discussion with her master, Demeas, the girl is set on the street to work as a common *ἑτάιρα*. Her reaction, perceived by no other character, is in tone with this troubling news (*Samia* 398):

1) *τάλαιν' ἔγωγε τῆς ἐμῆς τύχης.* *Oh dear me, how am I suffering from my fate!*

The focus clearly lies on the lament over *her* fate, and stands out among a number of comparable exclamations in which the particle does not feature.⁶³

A similar but slightly different situation is presented in the *Dyskolos*, where Simiche is in despair over a lost bucket, prompting exclamations such as ‘Thrice unfortunate am I!’ and ‘What shall become of me?’. As her master approaches, she says the following (*Dyskolos* 586f.):

⁶⁰ Cf. Appendix IV – ΓΕ in female speech.

⁶¹ E.g. *Dyskolos* 201:

ναὶ πρὸς θεῶν, ἀ[νύσσας γ']

Yes, by the gods – and make haste!

⁶² Overall the plays considered, 198 divine invocations and 46 forms of *τάλας*; many more comparable forms like *πονηρός* and *ἄθλιος* occur.

⁶³ Cf. Gomme/Sandbach 1973, p. 588.

Answers in this context ought not to be interpreted as reactions to questions alone, but also to general speech acts. Thus, on the one hand there is Habrotonon once more, who answers a question of Charisios very succinctly (*Epitrepontes* 956f.):

- | | | |
|-------|----------------------|--|
| 4) ΧΑ | Παμφίλης τὸ παιδίον; | Ch.: <i>The child is Pamphile's?</i> |
| | ἀλλ' ἦν ἐμόν. | <i>But [I thought] it was mine!</i> |
| ΑΒ | καὶ σὸν γ' ὁμοίως. | Ha.: <i>Yes, it is yours just as much!</i> |

The focus on the possessive pronoun here allows for both an implicit connection to the preceding sentence and a re-affirmation of Charisios' parenthood.

The matter is somewhat more complicated in the case of Myrrhine in the *Georgos*: both instances show her answering either a question or suggestion of Philinna, the first actually picking up an ἔγωγε in the speech of Philinna, who suggests having a very frank talk with the Young Man herself. This is Myrrhine's reply (*Georgos* 28):

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| 5) μὴ σύ γε, Φίλινα· χαίρετω. | <i>No, you won't, Philinna - let him go on.</i> |
|-------------------------------|---|

This usage suggests that not Philinna, but Myrrhine herself ought to do something about the matter at hand. Yet, only a few lines later, she insists on avoiding the Young Man's slave, explaining her wish to do so upon Philinna's request as follows (*Georgos* 34):⁶⁵

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 6) καλὸν γ' ἄν εἴη, νῆ Δία. | <i>It would be best, by Zeus.</i> |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|

A pure focus function is problematic in this case; rather this instance must be seen as an expletive addition to Myrrhine's giving the 'reason' for her desire to avoid the slave, and demonstrating the particle's connective abilities.

3.2.3. ΓΕ in formulae

There are three cases of formulaic usage of γε to be found in female speech: two of these are in the form of νῆ καὶ σύ γε as an answer to a greeting from another character (*Georgos* 42, *Leukadia* 4), the other, πάνυ γε, occurs in mid-speech and must be regarded as an

⁶⁵ There is some uncertainty as to who this line ought to be attributed to – cf. Gomme/Sandbach 1973, pp. 111f.

interjection close to ‘Of course!’ in meaning.⁶⁶ There is little more to be said about these formulae, since they occur in male speech as well (e.g. Demeas in *Samia* 129).

3.2.4. Limitations and results

Not all occurrences of γε in female lines fall into these categories perfectly neatly. When Habrotonon tells Onesimos of her plan in the *Epitrepontes*, she says the following (*Epitrepontes* 520ff.):

7)	ἐὰν οἰκεῖον ἦι κύτῳι τὸ πρᾶγμα δ', εὐθύς ἤξει φερόμενος ἐπὶ τὸν ἔλεγχον καὶ μεθύων γε νῦν ἐρεῖ πρότερος ἅπαντα καὶ προπετῶς· ἂ δ' ἂν λέγηι προσομολογήσω τοῦ διαμαρτεῖν μηδὲ ἐν προτέρα λέγουσα.	If he's familiar with this matter, he'll come right out and argue. The wine will make him blurt it all out, and before me! Whatever he'll say, I'll agree to avoid mistakes by speaking first.
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There is no sign of particular emotionality, nor does the context require such; the particle here focuses on the premise of Habrotonon's plan, i.e. the mild intoxication of her master. There are a few other examples of such occurrences, none of which is alarmingly different from the above or other instances where γε occurs.

As has been shown above, almost all instances of the particle fall very well within the domain of the focus function. It cannot be denied that differing interpretations are equally plausible.⁶⁷ In an attempt to find a main function of γε, however, this particular one seems most apt, as further occurrences below will show.

Concerning γε as a marker of female speech, the following facts must be considered: out of 24 occurrences, three are formulaic, five are in answers, and five occur in situations that cannot be properly categorised; in the remaining instances the particle occurs in situations that have been categorised as emotional. Thus eight occurrences can be discounted on the basis that the situations they occur in are not gender-specific or gender-correlated. The majority of the remaining instances occur in lines of Habrotonon – and this is, as far as statistics are concerned, not surprising since she has the greatest number of lines of any

⁶⁶ *Perikeiromene* 321:

πάνυ] γε. μὴ ὄρας σύ γε.

But of course [it was you]! Oh that you'd be blind!

⁶⁷ Passages 3, 4 and 5 could well be interpreted as showing a delimiting usage of γε, passage 6 could well be emphatic.

female character.⁶⁸ An explanation of $\gamma\epsilon$ as an individual feature is thus rather unlikely, since even in Habrotonon's lines $\gamma\epsilon$ occurs in various contexts. Furthermore, eliminating non-emotional contexts alters the statistics given above in such a way that the usage index approaches that of male characters, discounting emotional situations.⁶⁹

It seems rather conclusive then to attribute the statistically higher prevalence of $\gamma\epsilon$ in female speech not to a particularly feminine style of speaking, but rather to the emotional situations women are portrayed in and, to a certain extent, to chance or conversational structure. This will be further corroborated as other categories are analysed, but even on its own conforms to general expectations – a particle as a gender-specific feature would be rather surprising.⁷⁰

3.3. $\Gamma\epsilon$ in the speeches of slaves

The statistical data presented above, as in the case of female speech, would suggest that the particle $\gamma\epsilon$ is more common in the speech of slaves, albeit to a lesser extent than in the female case. Yet, as seen above, there is no necessary correlation between the statistical outcome of this analysis and the most appropriate interpretation of the usage of $\gamma\epsilon$.

Once more it seems best to attempt a categorisation of the various instances of $\gamma\epsilon$ in order to judge whether its occurrence ought to be ascribed to conversational circumstances or to character roles. Since a number of female roles happen to be slaves at the same time, they will not be considered again here.

3.3.1. $\Gamma\epsilon$ in emotional situations

The question of what elements can help to identify an emotional situation has been dealt with above, and the same criteria shall be employed here. The number of emotionally peculiar situations in the speeches of male slaves is relatively small, consisting of only seven instances. The most interesting and expressive occurrence is in the *Aspis*, where Daos enters the stage and starts a paratragic lament (*Aspis* 399f.):⁷¹

⁶⁸ Cf. Ignazio González 1981, p. 177.

⁶⁹ When subtracting emotional occurrences, the female index lies at 3.3, whilst the male index comes to 2.7.

⁷⁰ Adams 1984, p. 54 found that interjections in Latin comedy do show a certain gender bias. Yet the nature of interjections is different from that of discourse particles, especially if the latter are regarded from a functionalist, pragmatic perspective.

⁷¹ This passage is followed by quotations from Euripides' *Sthenobolia*, Chaeremon's *Achilles* and Aeschylus' *Niobe*.

- 8) ὦ δαίμονες, φοβερόν γε, νῆ τὸν Ἥλιον,
τὸ συμβεβηκός· *Oh good god, terrible indeed is the misfortune
that has happened, by Helios!*

The context more or less demands that this instance of γε be seen in a comic light: both Daos' overly dramatic quotations from tragedy as well as Smikrines' sarcastic remarks preceding the above hint at this fact. Thus γε here occurs in a pseudo-emotional context and is very likely to act as one of the conspicuous signs of just these situational parameters. Another instance of γε occurs in the *Dyskolos*, following a short damnation of Knemon by Daos, who is here voicing his concerns (*Dyskolos* 218ff.):

- 9) τουτί τὸ κακὸν τί ποτ' ἐστίν; ὡς οὔ μοι πάνυ
τὸ πρᾶγμα' ἀρέσκει. ... *What's with all this humbug now? I don't like
this situation at all! ...*
ἀλλά σ', ὦ Κνήμων, κακὸν *As for you, Knemon, may all the gods cruelly
ruin you for your misdeeds! ...*
κακῶς ἅπαντες ἀπολέσειαν οἱ θεοί. *Yet on another note, I ought to make haste and
tell her brother about this, so that [together] we
can take care of the girl!*
... οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ <τ>ἀδελφῶι γε δεῖ
αὐτῆς φράσαι με τὴν ταχίστην ταῦθ', ἵνα
ἐν ἐπιμελείαι τῆς κόρης γενώμεθα.

This instance does not strictly speaking conform to the above criteria for an emotional situation, but its wording suggests just that. The focus here lies not on the damnation, which speaks for itself, but rather on notifying the brother, whose help is necessary for taking care of the girl, and its result.⁷²

Other instances of this kind,⁷³ limited as they are, have little more to offer in terms of enriching the understanding of γε in this context. Rather, the category of occurrences that is more common with slaves ought to be more thoroughly considered.

3.3.2. ΓΕ in answers

Amongst male slaves, γε occurs in answers twice as often as in emotional contexts, i.e. 14 times. This would appear to underline the prominently conversational function of this particle in the speeches of slaves, and fits well in the overall statistics presented above, which show γε to occur most frequently at the very beginning of speech acts. Furthermore,

⁷² Gomme/Sandbach 1973, p. 172 further imply that γε may here serve to underline the uncommonness of the situation, as it would be a father's duty to take care of such matters under normal circumstances.

⁷³ Cf. Appendix V – ΓΕ in slave speech.

it reaffirms the notion of situation-based occurrences of γε: while female situations are more commonly ‘emotional’, those of slaves are more ‘conversational’.

One of the most interesting instances of γε in answers occurs in the *Sikyonioides*, where to Stratophanes’ worried question Pyrrhios gives a shocking answer (*Sikyonioides* 125f.):

10) ΣΤ:	ἢ τι συμβέβηκεν ἡμῖν, Πυρρία, νεώτερον;	ST.:	<i>Pyrrhios, has something happened -</i>
	ΠΥ: ἢ γε σὴ μήτηρ τέθνηκε· πέρυσιν.		<i>are there any news for us?</i>
ΣΤ:	οἶμοι.	ΠΥ.:	<i>Yes - your mother has died. Last year.</i>
		ST.:	<i>Oh.</i>

Pyrrhios’ answer and Stratophanes’ reaction hint at a comic setting once more. This may be the only reasonable explanation why the focus lies on the noun phrase rather than the verb – his mother had not been mentioned before. This occurrence raises the question whether the particle in some answers may be purely reactive, comparable to English ‘well...’ and adding nothing to the meaning of the sentence.

A less problematic occurrence is found in the *Misoumenos*, where Thrasonides reveals to Getas certain aspects of his relationship; the latter has to insist on being told everything (*Misoumenos* 40ff.):

11) ΓΕ:	εἶτα τι;	ΓΕ.:	<i>And then what?</i>
	γυνή σ’ ὑβρίζει;		<i>Did a woman abuse you?</i>
ΘΡ:	καὶ λέγειν αἰσχύνομαι·	ΤΗ:	<i>I’m ashamed to even say it ...</i>
	ὄφιν, λέαιναν -		<i>Snake, man-eating monster -</i>
ΓΕ:	ἀλλ’ ἔμοιγ’ ὅμως φράσον.	ΓΕ.:	<i>Yes, but to me do confess!</i>

The particle here works in combination with the disjunctives ἀλλά and ὅμως, which negate Thrasonides’ objection, putting the focus of attention on Getas and his request. Similar mechanisms occur in other examples as well.⁷⁴

A last example of answers will show that they can be rather straight forward as well, and furthermore underlines that in many cases, the particle also has a connective function. In

⁷⁴ E.g. *Perikeiromene* 336f.:

ΜΟ:	φλυαρεῖς πρὸς με.	ΜΟ.:	<i>You’re just making that up for me!</i>
ΔΑ:	μὰ τὸν Ἀσκληπιόν,	ΔΑ.:	<i>No, I’m certainly not, by</i>
	οὐκ ἔγωγ’, ἐὰν ἀκούσης.		<i>Asklepios, if only you’ll listen!</i>

As in the above case, γε focuses on Daos, underlining his innocence in combination with the divine invocation and the negative particle.

the *Sikyonioid* once more, Dromon answers Kichesias' poignant and certainly comic question much to the latter's satisfaction (*Sikyonioid* 371ff.):

12) KI:	καλῶς δὲ σώζεται, Δρόμων,	KI.:	Did you save her in good time, Dromon,
	ἢ σώζετ', αὐτὸ τοῦτο;		Or did you just about save her?
ΔP:	παρθένος γ' ἔτι,	DR.:	She's still very much a virgin,
	ἄπειρος ἀνδρός.		Untouched by men.

As in many other cases above, γε fulfils a focus function in this case, stressing the innocence of Philoumene and thus his own success. Yet, in addition to this, the particle is bound to have an underlying connective layer, on which basis the focus works. Here γε makes it quite explicit that there is a pragmatic connection between question and answer, thus bridging over the non-sequitur that the answer may be misconstrued as if it had no linking particle.

3.3.3. *ΓΕ in formulae*

As in the case of female speech, γε occurs in formulae here as well. Twice it appears as ἔγωγε in a one-word answer, in both cases replying to a polar question (cf. *Aspis* 83, *Dyskolos* 890). The function of the particle is clearly to say 'I do/did!' or simply 'Yes', and it is interesting to note that this compound is the most common way of saying 'Yes'.⁷⁵ It furthermore corroborates the connective function of the particle, since it is a moot point whether focussing devices can be expected to apply in one-word sentences.

The two other cases show occurrences of εὖ γε, and express a notion along the lines of 'very well then' or 'indeed', again creating a connection to the previous speech act.

3.3.4. *Limitations and results*

Unsurprisingly, there are some instances of γε in the speeches of slaves, too, which cannot be categorised as simply as others and seem to employ γε without the need for further situational context.

One such instance is Sosias' monologue in the *Perikeiromene*, where he describes the orders given to him by his master and voices his discontent (*Perikeiromene* 356ff.):

⁷⁵ Cf. Neil 1901, p. 189; his assertion that γε in answers unambiguously means 'Yes' is problematic, since the particle can also emphasise negations.

- 13) ἀκαρέξ δέω δὲ φάσκειν καταλαβεῖν *I'd almost like to tell him that I found her lover*
 τὸν μοιχὸν ἔνδον, ἴν' ἀναπηδήσας τρέχηι, *inside, thus getting him to jump up and hurry*
 εἰ μὴ γε παντάπασιν αὐτὸν ἠλέουν. *here - if I didn't pity him so completely!*

The focus here clearly lies on the conditional, upon which the whole expression is based.⁷⁶ This occurrence once more demonstrates that, while frequent in particular contexts, γε also is a part of regular conversation and acts as a versatile focus particle.

As in the case of female speech, there is no recognisable pattern that would suggest a sociolinguistic reason for the seeming predominance of γε in the speech of slaves; rather it has been shown that the majority of cases can be categorised in one of three groups. At the same time, it has been shown in both groups that the particle occurs as a 'radical' as well, that is without further obvious conditioning. This would seem to suggest that its usage was not restricted to certain situations, but occurred naturally in a multitude of contexts and conversational scenarios.

3.4. GE at the beginning of speech acts

The two sections above have attempted to answer whether the statistical prevalence of γε in slaves' and women's lines is related to their way of expressing themselves, or whether it is situation-based coincidence that their average usage should be above that of free men. Relating the results of both arguments, it is clear that a situational impetus seems the most likely reason for their frequent occurrence.

An interpretation based on such situational or conversational backgrounds, however, is not sensible in the case of the dichotomy between dialogue and narrative. The statistical values presented above have shown both that usage in dialogue, more specifically in speech-act-initial position, is most common and that an intentional or at least non-coincidental distribution is most plausible. A few of these occurrences have been presented above, and often a connective function has been pointed out, mostly as a secondary but elementary aspect of the particle.

In the following, both instances of γε in a primarily connective context and occurrences where no such context is present shall be considered. For the sake of a holistic picture, the examples shall be chosen mainly from amongst free men's lines. Furthermore, formulaic occurrences which by their nature have a connective character shall be neglected.

⁷⁶ This requires considering 'εἰ μὴ' as a unit, which is emphasised by γε; yet it is equally plausible to suggest that it is μὴ which is stressed.

3.4.1. *Connective ΓΕ in speech-act-initial position*

Observing the words that γε attaches to most frequently, it is hard to find it in situations where the emphasis on an adjective, an anaphoric pronoun or a conjunction would not take precedence over the purely connective function it may have in other instances, or where it serves more than a formulaic purpose. One example where this is the case occurs in the *Dyskolos*. Daos expresses his fear of Knemon to Gorgias, whose reply confirms Knemon's unpleasant character (*Dyskolos* 247ff.):⁷⁷

14) ΔΑ:	ὦ τᾶν, τὸν γέροντα, Γοργία, δέδοικ'· ἐ]άν γάρ τῇ θύρῃ προσιόντα με λάβῃ, κρ]εμᾶι παραχρῆμα.	DA.: <i>Oh Sir, I'm afraid of the old chap, Gorgias. If he were to catch me even coming close to his door, he'd hang me up on the spot.</i>
ΓΟ:	δυσχρήστως γέ πως ἔχει ζυ]γομαχῶν·	GO.: <i>He is a complicated character, indeed, continuously complaining somehow.</i>

The particle here is used to supplement Daos' observation with a different perspective: γε thus links two statements with the same topic but different foci, and furthermore signifies that Gorgias is not denying Daos' sentiments, but simply adding to them.

Instances where the particle occurs in conjunction with anaphoric pronouns like οὗτος are abundant. One case in the *Samia* will exemplify this; in this instance, Moschion praises the words of Demeas in saying (*Samia* 156f.):

15) ταῦτα γ' εὖ // λέγεις.	<i>Yes, right you are about that.</i>
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Here, the particle co-operates with the pronoun in creating a connection; it is unlikely to act focally, since focussing the verb would be more sensible.

There are, however instances in which it is more difficult to explain the function of γε unambiguously. Particular difficulties may occur in cases where γε does not only denote focus, but also degree, e.g. with adjectives of size, time or other measures.⁷⁸ In the *Epitrepontes*, Daos begins to tell of his dealings with Syros upon the request of Smikrines (*Epitrepontes* 239ff.):

⁷⁷ Cf. also *Sikyonioi* 350, another example of 'radical' γε, preceded only by a potentially funny name, whose authenticity Theron cannot believe.

⁷⁸ Cf. Denniston 1954², p. 120.

- 16) ΣΜ: ... σὺ πρότερος ὁ σιωπῶν λέγε. SM.: ...You, the quiet one, you speak up first.
 ΔΑ: μικρόν γ' ἄνωθεν, οὐ τὰ πρὸς τοῦτον μόνον DA.: I'll talk about a matter from a little while
 παραχθένθ', ἵν' ἦι σοι καὶ σαφῆ τὰ πράγματα. back, not only about the business with
 him alone, so that the whole affair is clear
 to you.

A focus on the short time span is contextually not warranted. Rather, since the sentence is an ellipsis, γε may not only refer to the last speech act, but may even pragmatically take up its main verb.⁷⁹ This feature would further explain the common occurrence of γε in formulae, where it would in like manner pick up the predicate of the last sentence.⁸⁰

The cases mentioned above show how γε can be employed to connect two speech acts not only in terms of content, but also on a pragmatic level. It must be pointed out, however, that other interpretations are possible.

Some of the instances mentioned in the next section will show that the particle does not have a linking function in all cases of its employment in speech-act-initial position.

3.4.2. Non-connective ΓΕ in speech-act-initial position

The prime occasion for γε to occur speech-act-initially in a non-connective function is in cases of monologues or short soliloquies. In these cases, a conversational connection would not be expected, and only potential contentual relations are possible. One such example occurs in the *Dyskolos*, where Sostratos volunteers to fetch water from a shrine for a girl, commenting upon her to himself as follows (*Dyskolos* 201f.):

- 17) ἔλευθερίως γέ πως // ἄγροικός ἐστίν. She is boorish alright, but somehow with a free
 spirit.

The particle cannot refer to the girl's preceding command to hurry up, either pragmatically or semantically. Rather γε focuses on an expression opposed to the predicate of the main clause.⁸¹ Such instances of the particle are by no means rare, but are also not the only ones to feature initial γε in a non-connective context.

⁷⁹ Among the 162 occurrences of γε, 46 ellipses are found; this number certainly speaks in favour of pragmatic connectivity.

⁸⁰ This notion is corroborated by Gomme/Sandbach 1973, p. 307; also cf. e.g. *Dyskolos* 510, 592, *Samia* 389, etc.

⁸¹ Cf. Denniston 1954², p.119, who calls this function of γε determinative.

In yet another passage from the *Dyskolos*, Sostratos' reaction to an interruption by Daos runs as follows (*Dyskolos* 300f.):

18) ΔΑ:	εὖ γε, δέσποθ', οὕτω πολλά [σοι ἀγαθὰ γένοιτο.	ΔΑ.:	Well done, Sir! May great fortune come your way!
ΣΩ:	καὶ σύ γ', ὁ λαλῶν πρ[όσεχε δῆ.	ΣΩ.:	You better pay attention, too, you chatterbox!

The occurrence of γε in Daos' part is clearly formulaic. Sostratos here turns the focus on Daos and demands his attention; the particle is thus used reactively. Many more such examples can be found, showing γε either in a basic function or, as in the case just mentioned, in a reactive, but not connective context.⁸²

The particle has been shown to be used in conversation both in its typical focal function as well as a connective or reactive element. Many of the above occurrences can be explained in different ways and adhering to Denniston's concept of classification. Yet a more functionalist approach has been shown to work consistently in the cases presented above, and will make it possible to draw a more unified and consistent conclusion in the next section.

⁸² Cf. e.g. *Dyskolos* 835, *Karchedonios* 39, etc.

4. CONCLUSION

Closer consideration of the passages in question has shown that contrary to the evidence provided by statistics, there is no good reason to assume a gender- or class-related dichotomy in the usage of the particle $\gamma\epsilon$.⁸³ Rather, the higher precedence of the particle in female and slave speech must be correlated with the ‘emotional’ and conversational situations in which they occur most frequently. Only further, more literary-minded research will show whether this preference is a real trend or just an impression gained from consideration of this particle.

The statistical analysis of $\gamma\epsilon$ in its conversational environment, however, has been confirmed by the above interpretation. Owing to its nature as a focus particle, $\gamma\epsilon$ is particularly prone to occur in dialogue, especially in the context of answers or reactions, even to the extent of having become part of a formula in the context of reciprocated greetings, answers to polar questions and praise. In addition to or due to its focal function, it frequently introduces a pragmatic connection to a previous utterance and thus often occurs in elliptical constructions.

As the examples above have shown, the particle can be stringently considered in terms of function rather than meaning. It provides particular focus in utterances where such is needed, and thus structures and links related elements of speech. Of course, this observation is strictly limited to the works of Menander, and does not exclude the possibility that a semantic approach may be just as plausible or more appropriate in other instances. Yet it has the advantage of attributing to $\gamma\epsilon$ only one function which befits its character as a primarily conversational particle while being equally as sensible in a narrative context. The ‘road sign’ likeness, however, ought to be rejected in this case, and possibly in general, as it unduly over-emphasises the secondary connective character of $\gamma\epsilon$. Given the *communis opinio* concerning Menander’s style, as strongly influenced by contemporary conversational Attic, and the prevalent occurrence of the particle in dialogue situations, it seems likely that $\gamma\epsilon$ should be a relevant and commonly used part of quotidian speech. Its unbiased use by all social strata and genders and the employment both in dialogue and narrative confirms this. Yet only a more thorough study of the particle’s employment in a greater and more diverse corpus of texts could possibly yield a definitive answer.

⁸³ This conclusion is further corroborated by Adams 1984, p. 56 for the case of Latin comedy, which in genre and form is closely related to Greek New Comedy.

The degree of research and interest in the particle $\gamma\epsilon$ is deplorably low in comparison to a number of other particles⁸⁴ and much work needs to be done, especially in collaboration with modern pragmatics and context-dependent linguistics, both to further the understanding of this particle and to provide a clearer picture of actual conversational Attic.

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⁸⁴ The particles $\mu\acute{\eta}\nu$, $\pi\epsilon\rho$, $\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu$ and $\delta\acute{\epsilon}$ have attracted greater attention: e.g. cf. Bakker 1988, Wakker 1997 as well as others in the same volume.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix I – Excluded occurrences^a

Play	Line	Reason
Dyskolos	649	SU
Encheiridion	none	NO
Epitrepontes	fr.6	SU
	160	SU
	596	BL
	623	BL
	635	BL
Georgos	fr.9b,5	BL
	123	BL
Heros	90	BL
Kitharistes	76	SU
Kolax	B51	SU
	B70	SU
	D200(96)	SU
Koneiazomenai	5	SU
Misoumenos	19	BL
	482	BL
	536	SU
	543	SU
	547	SU
	595	BL
	723	CO
	739	BL
Perikeiromene	748	CO
Perinthia	fr.3,4	CO
Phasma	85	SU

Samia	93	BL
Sikyonioi	fr.13	SU
	15	SU
	119	CO
	174	BL
	403	BL
Synaristosai	fr.5,1	SU
Theophoroumene	23	SU
	29	SU
	30	SU

^a The following abbreviations will be used: SU – speaker uncertain; NO – no occurrence; BL – broken line; CO – conjecture

Appendix II – Relevant occurrences^b

Appendix II – Relevant occurrences ^b						Play	Line	G.	C.	T.	1st. ?
							468	♂	free	dial.	yes
							475	♂	slave	nar.	yes
							510	♂	free	dial.	yes
							514	♂	free	nar.	yes
							557	♂	free	dial.	yes
							586	♀	slave	nar.	no
							592	♂	slave	dial.	yes
							629	♂	free	dial.	yes
							676	♂	free	nar.	no
							681	♂	free	nar.	no
							741	♂	free	dial.	no
							761	♂	free	dial.	yes
							762	♂	free	dial.	yes
							774	♂	free	dial.	yes
							775	♂	free	dial.	yes
							788	♂	free	dial.	yes
							835	♂	free	dial.	yes
							882	♀	slave	dial.	yes
							890	♂	slave	dial.	yes
							944	♂	free	dial.	no
						Epi.	128	♂	free	nar.	no
							129	♂	free	nar.	no
							168	♀	free	dial.	yes
							236	♂	free	dial.	yes
							240	♂	free	dial.	yes
							270	♂	free	dial.	Yes
							280	♂	free	nar.	no
							358	♂	free	dial.	yes
							361	♂	free	dial.	yes
							367	♂	slave	dial.	yes
							438	♀	slave	nar.	no
							439	♀	slave	nar.	no
Play	Line	G.	C.	T.	1st. ?						
Asp.	83	♂	slave	dial.	yes						
	162	♂	free	nar.	no						
	382	♂	free	dial.	no						
	393	♂	free	nar.	no						
	399	♂	slave	nar.	yes						
DEx.	97	♂	free	nar.	no						
	99	♂	free	nar.	no						
	106	♂	free	dial.	no						
Dys.	69	♂	free	dial.	yes						
	168	♂	free	nar.	yes						
	180	♂	free	nar.	no						
	183	♂	free	nar.	no						
	201	♀	free	dial.	yes						
	201	♂	free	nar.	yes						
	226	♂	slave	nar.	no						
	249	♂	free	dial.	yes						
	293	♂	free	dial.	yes						
	300	♂	slave	dial.	yes						
	301	♂	free	dial.	yes						
	345	♂	free	dial.	yes						
	360	♂	free	dial.	yes						
	414	♂	free	dial.	yes						
	422	♂	free	dial.	no						
	426	♂	slave	dial.	no						
	434	♂	slave	dial.	yes						
	442	♂	free	nar.	no						

^b The following abbreviations will be used: G. - gender; C. - class; T. - type of speech; 1st.? - occurrence in first line of speech act; dial. - dialogue; nar. - narrative

Play	Line	G.	C.	T.	1st. ?	Play	Line	G.	C.	T.	1st. ?
	472	♂	slave	dial.	yes		620	♂	slave	nar.	no
	483	♀	slave	dial.	yes		650	♀	slave	dial.	yes
	520	♂	slave	dial.	yes		669	♂	free	dial.	no
	522	♀	slave	dial.	no		699	♂	slave	dial.	yes
	528	♂	slave	dial.	yes		975	♂	slave	dial.	no
	543	♀	slave	dial.	yes	Peri.	288	♂	slave	dial.	yes
	872	♀	slave	dial.	yes		289	♂	slave	dial.	yes
	905	♂	slave	nar.	no		321	♀	free	dial.	no
	919	♂	free	nar.	no		321	♀	free	dial.	no
	957	♀	slave	dial.	yes		334	♂	slave	dial.	yes
	1080	♂	free	dial.	yes		337	♂	slave	dial.	yes
	1117	♂	slave	dial.	yes		339	♂	slave	dial.	no
	1120	♂	slave	dial.	no		343	♂	slave	dial.	no
Geo.	25	♀	free	dial.	yes		350	♂	free	dial.	yes
	28	♀	free	dial.	yes		352	♂	slave	nar.	Yes
	34	♀	free	dial.	yes		358	♂	slave	nar.	no
	41	♀	free	dial.	yes		478	♂	slave	dial.	yes
	53	♀	free	dial.	yes		521	♂	free	dial.	yes
Her.	28	♂	slave	dial.	no		810	♀	free	dial.	yes
	69	♂	free	dial.	yes		985	♂	free	nar.	no
	72	♂	free	dial.	no		1001	♂	free	dial.	yes
Kar.	32	♂	free	dial.	yes	Per.	8	♂	slave	nar.	no
	39	♂	free	dial.	yes		11	♂	free	dial.	no
Kit.	45	♂	free	dial.	yes	Pha.	18	♂	free	dial.	yes
	61	♂	free	dial.	no	Sam.	39	♂	free	nar.	no
Kol.	fr.2,3	♂	free	dial.	no		63	♂	free	dial.	yes
	fr.2,5	♂	free	dial.	yes		84	♀	free	dial.	no
Leu.	4	♀	free	dial.	yes		115	♂	free	dial.	yes
Mis.	42	♂	slave	dial.	yes		117	♂	free	dial.	yes
	88	♂	free	dial.	yes		129	♂	free	dial.	yes
	91	♂	slave	dial.	no		133	♂	free	dial.	no
	98	♂	slave	dial.	yes		156	♂	free	dial.	yes

Play	Line	G.	C.	T.	1st. ?	Play	Line	G.	C.	T.	1st. ?
	170	♂	free	dial.	yes		245	♂	free	dial.	yes
	256	♀	free	dial.	yes		347	♂	free	dial.	yes
	286	♂	free	dial.	yes		350	♂	free	dial.	yes
	292	♂	slave	dial.	yes		365	♂	free	dial.	yes
	294	♂	free	dial.	yes		372	♂	slave	dial.	yes
	316	♂	free	dial.	yes		373	♂	free	dial.	yes
	324	♂	free	dial.	yes		381	♂	free	dial.	yes
	364	♂	free	nar.	no		384	♂	free	dial.	no
	389	♂	free	dial.	yes						
	398	♀	free	nar.	yes						
	461	♂	free	dial.	yes						
	476	♂	free	dial.	Yes						
	574	♂	free	dial.	yes						
	589	♂	free	dial.	yes						
	598	♂	free	dial.	no						
	626	♂	free	nar.	no						
	680	♂	slave	dial.	yes						
	696	♂	free	dial.	no						
	700	♂	free	dial.	no						
	715	♂	free	dial.	yes						
	716	♂	free	dial.	yes						
	728	♂	free	dial.	no						
Sik.	111	♂	free	dial.	yes						
	115	♂	free	dial.	yes						
	117	♂	free	dial.	yes						
	126	♂	slave	dial.	yes						
	140	♂	slave	dial.	no						
	155	♂	free	dial.	no						
	156	♂	free	dial.	yes						
	175	♂	free	dial.	yes						
	239	♂	free	dial.	yes						
	241	♂	free	dial.	no						

Appendix III – Line distribution

Play	Slave	Free	Other	Male	Female	Narr.	Dial.
Aspis	221	286	64	507	0	152	419
Georgos	46	61	0	80	27	47	60
Dis Exapaton	0	64	0	64	0	24	40
Dyskolos	233	707	49	892	48	326	663
Epitrepontes	415	268	0	558	125	206	477
Heros	52	19	0	67	4	0	71
Karchedonios	11	10	0	21	0	0	21
Kitharistes	0	69	0	69	0	13	56
Kolax	0	5	0	5	0	0	5
Leukadia	0	16	0	0	16	6	10
Misoumenos	167	364	0	425	106	201	330
Perikeiromene	147	261	52	340	68	106	354
Perinthia	16	7	0	23	0	0	23
Samia	62	691	0	728	25	271	482
Sikyonioi	47	314	25	320	41	108	278
Phasma	55	20	17	75	0	45	47
TOTAL	1472	3162	207	4174	460	1505	3336

Appendix IV – ΓΕ in female speech^c

Play	Line	Speaker	Class	1 st ?	Co.
Dys.	201	Girl	free	yes	E
	586	Simiche	slave	no	E
	882	Simiche	slave	yes	U
Epi.	168	Habrotonon	free	yes	A
	438	Habrotonon	slave	no	E
	439	Habrotonon	slave	no	E
	483	Habrotonon	slave	yes	U
	522	Habrotonon	slave	no	U
Geo.	543	Habrotonon	slave	yes	E
	872	Habrotonon	slave	yes	A
	957	Habrotonon	slave	yes	A
Geo.	25	Philinna	free	yes	E
	28	Myrrine	free	yes	A
	34	Myrrine	free	yes	A
	41	Myrrine	free	yes	F
Leu.	53	Philinna	free	yes	E
	4	Girl	free	yes	F
	650	Krateia	slave	yes	E
Peri.	321	Mother	free	no	E
	321	Mother	free	no	F
	810	Glykera	free	yes	E

^c The following abbreviations are used:

A – answer; E – emotional situation; F – formula;
U – unclear

Sam.	84	Chrysis	free	no	U
	256	nurse	free	yes	U
	398	Chrysis	free	yes	E

Mis.	42	Getas	♂	yes	A
Mis.	91	Getas	♂	no	A
Mis.	98	Getas	♂	yes	A
Mis.	620	Getas	♂	no	E
Mis.	650	Krateia	♀	yes	E
Mis.	699	Getas	♂	yes	A

Appendix V – FE in slave speech

Play	Line	Speaker	Gen.	1 st ?	Co.
Asp.	83	Daos	♂	yes	F
Asp.	399	Daos	♂	yes	E
Dys.	226	Daos	♂	no	E
Dys.	300	Daos	♂	yes	F
Dys.	426	Getas	♂	no	U
Dys.	434	Getas	♂	yes	E
Dys.	475	Getas	♂	yes	A
Dys.	586	Simiche	♀	no	E
Dys.	592	Getas	♂	yes	A
Dys.	882	Simiche	♀	yes	U
Dys.	890	Getas	♂	yes	F
Epi.	168	Habrotonon	♀	yes	A
Epi.	367	Syros	♂	yes	A
Epi.	438	Habrotonon	♀	no	E
Epi.	439	Habrotonon	♀	no	E
Epi.	472	Onesimos	♂	yes	A
Epi.	483	Habrotonon	♀	yes	U
Epi.	520	Onesimos	♂	yes	A
Epi.	522	Habrotonon	♀	no	U
Epi.	528	Onesimos	♂	yes	F
Epi.	543	Habrotonon	♀	yes	E
Epi.	872	Habrotonon	♀	yes	A
Epi.	905	Onesimos	♂	no	E
Epi.	957	Habrotonon	♀	yes	A
Epi.	1117	Onesimos	♂	yes	U
Epi.	1120	Onesimos	♂	no	U
Her.	28	Daos	♂	no	U

Peri.	288	Daos	♂	yes	U
Peri.	334	Daos	♂	yes	A
Peri.	337	Daos	♂	yes	E
Peri.	339	Daos	♂	no	E
Peri.	343	Daos	♂	no	A
Peri.	352	Daos	♂	yes	E
Peri.	358	Sosias	♂	no	U
Peri.	478	Sosias	♂	yes	E
Per.	8	Daos	♂	no	E
Sam.	292	Parmenon	♂	yes	A
Sam.	680	Parmenon	♂	yes	U
Sik.	126	Pyrrhias	♂	yes	A
Sik.	140	Pyrrhias	♂	no	U
Sik.	372	Dromon	♂	yes	A

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