The Greek Verb Revisited

A Fresh Approach for Biblical Exegesis

The Greek Verb Revisited

A Fresh Approach for Biblical Exegesis

Steven E. Runge &
Christopher J. Fresch

Editors

LEXHAM PRESS

The Greek Verb Revisited: A Fresh Approach for Biblical Exegesis
Edited by Steven E. Runge and Christopher J. Fresch

Lexham Press, 1313 Commercial St., Bellingham, WA 98225
LexhamPress.com

Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are the author's own translation.

Print ISBN 9781577996361
Digital ISBN 9781577996378

Lexham Editorial: Abigail Stocker, James Spinti
Cover Design: Josh Warren
Typesetting: ProjectLuz.com

Contents

Application

Linguistic Investigations

CHAPTER 16

Greek Prohibitions

Michael Aubrey
Faithlife Corporation

1. INTRODUCTION

The question of aspect and prohibitions in Ancient Greek has been subject to much debate.[1] In recent decades, there seems to be a real sense for many scholars that the conclusions of the past are dramatically misguided. Daniel Wallace, for example, devotes substantial space to arguing against the idea that the basic or in his

1 My purpose here is not to provide a complete literature survey of the question. There are a number of recent discussions of the question for those who are interested: Douglas S. Huffman, *Verbal Aspect Theory and the Prohibitions in the Greek New Testament*, SBG 16 (New York: Lang, 2014) provides a monograph length discussion. Others such as Fanning and Fantin have also given substantive attention: Buist Fanning, *Verbal Aspect in New Testament Greek*, OTM (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 325–88; Joseph Fantin, *The Greek Imperative Mood: A Cognitive and Communicative Approach*, SBG 12 (New York: Lang, 2010), 91–95. I would highly recommend Fantin's (albeit brief) discussion as the best summary. While Huffman provides the largest and most detailed account of prohibitions, he adopts a rather flawed view of the history of Greek grammar that colors his readings of old grammars and grammatical discussions. In his view, the STOP DOING X/DO NOT START X usages are artifacts of what he calls, "*Aktionsart* Theory." He views this so-called theory as inherently flawed as compared to the modern "Aspect Theory," following Stanley Porter (*Verbal Aspect and the Greek of the New Testament: With Reference to Tense and Mood*, SBG 1 [New York: Lang, 1989]). Like Porter, Huffman's conception of *Aktionsart* is an anachronism. He reads a definition of *Aktionsart* from the late 20th century back into the 19th and early 20th centuries. This methodological failure at the beginning of his work complicates the analysis that follows. Thankfully, however, it does not negate the book's value; it is an extremely useful collection of data.

terms, "unaffected," meaning of the imperfective and perfective prohibitions is STOP DOING X and DO NOT START X, respectively, lamenting,

> Grammarians' hypotheses about the unaffected meaning of a particular morpho-syntactic element (such as genitive case, present tense, etc.) are supposed to be based on a decent sampling of the data and with a proper linguistic grid to run it through. Older works tended to obscure the unaffected meaning because the data on which they based their definitions were insufficient. For example, the idea that the present prohibition means, *in essence*, "stop doing" is in reality a *specific usage* that cannot be applied universally. An abstract notion of the present prohibition first needs to be found, one that is both distinctive to the present prohibition and able to explain most of the data.[2]

And elsewhere in a separate discussion, he notes again,

> For over eighty years, students of the NT assumed a certain view about the semantics of commands and prohibitions. This view is often traced to a brief essay written in 1904 by Henry Jackson. He tells of a friend, Thomas Davidson, who had been struggling with commands and prohibitions in modern [*sic*] Greek:[3]

To a large degree, he is not wrong. For any number of topics, biblical scholars have had a tendency to reduce linguistic structure to a handful of simplistic rules. Another well-known example of this would be the supposed "once and for all aorist."[4] This tendency to

2 Daniel Wallace, *Greek Grammar beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament With Scripture, Subject, and Greek Word Indexes* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 3.

3 Ibid., xiv.

4 Specifically, this is the problematic idea that the aorist refers to events as a single point and the building of theological framework around that idea; see Frank Stagg, "The Abused Aorist," *JBL* 91 (1972): 222–31.

reduce complex grammatical phenomenon to a simple rule is what is at play here.[5]

All of this is a very striking perspective on the broader perception of claims put forward by grammarians. Douglas Huffman takes pains to demonstrate that in the original discussions of the STOP DOING X and DO NOT START X usages, both advocates and critics of the usages clearly acknowledge that the point of contention is not about the basic meaning of imperfective and perfective prohibitions. Instead, the debate is about the possible existence of specific meanings that can be expressed by imperfective and perfective prohibitions.[6] He goes on to comment,

> "Curiously then, despite all the nuancing from both the nay-sayers … and the proponents themselves …, after this post-turn-of-the-century discussion in *The Classical Review* … the *Aktionsart* understanding of the distinction between the two main Greek prohibition constructions quickly becomes the accepted rule in NT Greek studies. By the end of the twentieth century,

5 William Varner in his recent commentary on James provides an interesting illustration of this, stating,

> Recent discussions on the broader subject of verbal aspect have emphasized that the ceasing of an action that is already in progress is not the nature of the action addressed by the use of a negated present tense imperative. While this could be the case, such a kind of action (*Aktionsart*) should be determined only from a close examination of the context in which the command is found. A better approach to this subject is found by recognizing that the present tense of the imperative mood is intended to convey a general rather than a more specific prohibition. (*James*, EEC [Bellingham, WA Lexham Press, 2014], 445)

Now Varner is certainly correct that treating cessation as the single basic meaning of imperfective prohibitions is problematic, but caution is necessary in how far to go in the other direction. Varner appears to want to make the observation about aspect and prohibitions in terms of specificity equally basic. Making an overarching claim about imperfective prohibitions as always being general cannot be sustained either. There is certainly a strong correlation between general commands with the imperfective aspect and specific commands with the perfective aspect, but the data do not support so strong a generalization as Varner presents (see Fanning, *Verbal Aspect*, 325–88).

6 Huffman, *Verbal Aspect Theory*, 14–21.

> scholars … boldly declare the distinction as a universal rule for Greek."[7]

For Huffman, the probable source of the quick acceptance by New Testament scholarship of this observation as universal truth is a result of the influence of James H. Moulton's discussion of it in his *Prolegomena*.[8] That seems likely, though my reading of Moulton leads me to believe that this was not Moulton's intent. While Moulton might be the origin, I believe it more likely that the overgeneralization of specific usages into universal rules here is the result of the same process that Stagg observed from the Greek aorist.

> Careful grammarians make it clear that the "punctiliar" idea belongs to the writer's manner of presentation and not necessarily to the action itself. Some grammars actually misrepresent the matter, holding that at least in the indicative mood the aorist has to do with the action which itself is punctiliar. From this follow the ill-advised arguments of exegetes or theologians that because the aorist is used, the reference has to be a single action or even a "once-and-for-all" action. It is this line of argument that is false and needs to be challenged; the action may be momentary, singular, or "once and for all," but it is not the use of the aorist that makes it such.[9]

In the same vein, I propose that both the STOP DOING X and DO NOT START X meanings are not the meaning of the imperfective and perfective prohibitions, but that they are, nevertheless, usages that naturally arise from a particular set of linguistic conditions. The goal of this study is to determine what those conditions are. Even though an imperfective prohibition does not inherently mean STOP DOING X or a perfective prohibition does not inherently mean DO NOT START X, it does not follow, as we shall see, that there is no relationship between the aspect and the semantic

7 Ibid., 21.

8 James H. Moulton, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek: Prolegomena*, 3rd ed. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1906), 123–26.

9 Stagg, "Abused Aorist," 222.

expression. The defender of the generalization in *The Classical Review* way back in 1905, Walter Headlam, says it well:

> My [original] statement of it [the generalization] was made for the sake of dealing with two passages, in a paper where I had many other things to say and no room to mention even the qualifications that were in my mind; and there are still cases which I am not prepared at present to account for by more than tentative explanations. And the rule itself was somewhat clumsily expressed. It will be more safely stated thus:
>
> When the meaning is *Do not as you are doing*, *Do not continue doing so*, and this meaning is to be conveyed by the verb alone and unassisted, then μή must be followed by the present imperative.
>
> When the meaning is *Beware of doing this in future time*, and this meaning is to be conveyed by the verb alone, then μή must be followed by the aorist subjunctive.
>
> I do not say that μὴ ποίε or μὴ λέγε always mean *Do not thus any longer*; but that to express that meaning by the verb alone you must use μὴ ποίε or μὴ λέγε; though the same meaning may be conveyed by μὴ δράσῃς ἔτι or μὴ εἴτῃς πέρα.[10]

This expression of the generalization is the opposite of what it has become. It is not that the imperfective prohibition means STOP DOING X. Instead, the meaning STOP DOING X requires an imperfective prohibition if the speaker desires to express it with a single verb. That's a significantly less outrageous claim.

Following a brief discussion of some theoretical perquisites, my analysis comes in two sections. The first examines imperfective and perfective prohibitions in terms of the types of predicates they appear with. The second section then focuses on how negation interacts with the propositions contained in prohibitions for each aspect. I show that, in particular, negation scope can have significant influence over the propositional content of prohibitions in both aspects. The questions at hand are: What motivates the STOP DOING X and DO NOT START X expressions? Can we distinguish a relationship

10 Walter Headlam, "Greek Prohibitions," *ClR* 19 (1905), 30–36.

between these two meanings and other observations about commands/prohibitions? What patterns do prohibitions demonstrate in relation to predicate types? And finally, what patterns do prohibitions demonstrate in terms of negation scope?

The data for these two sections come from a variety of sources, including the SBL Greek New Testament, Holmes's edition of the Apostolic Fathers, Rahlfs's and Hanhart's edition of the Septuagint, the Niese edition of Josephus, Borgen et al.'s text of Philo, the Old Testament Pseudepigrapha edited by Heiser and Penner, the New Testament Apocrypha collected and edited by Brannan, and where necessary, the Perseus Project's larger corpus of Greek texts.[11]

1.1 Theoretical Prerequisites: Grammatical Categories and Semantic Scope

The approach to language structure that I follow below is grounded in a set of cognitive concepts built into the basic nature of all human categorization. I take the stance that to talk about *true* language universals is to talk about communication and cognition. For my purposes here, the central claim is that the language universal categories of PREDICATE and ARGUMENT share an iconic relationship with the language specific lexical categories of verb and noun.[12] The categories PREDICATE and ARGUMENT are universal categories

11 Peder Borgen, Kåre Fuglseth, and Roald Skarsten. *The Works of Philo: Greek Text With Morphology* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2005); Rick Brannan, *Greek Apocryphal Gospels, Fragments and Agrapha: Texts and Transcriptions* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2013); Gregory R. Crane, ed., *Perseus Digital Library* (Tufts University), http://www.perseus.tufts.edu; Michael W. Holmes, ed., *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations*, 3rd. ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007); Michael W. Holmes, ed., *The Greek New Testament: SBL Edition* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010); Benedikt Niese, ed., *Flavii Iosephi Opera Recognovit*, 7 vols. (Berlin: Weidmannos, 1888–1895); Ken Penner and Michael Heiser, eds., *Old Testament Greek Pseudepigrapha with Morphology* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2008); Alfred Rahlfs and John Hanhart, *Septuaginta: Editio altera* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2006).

12 I say this fully aware that not all languages conclusively have both of these two categories. Not all languages necessarily have the categories noun and verb, but all languages still make some sort of distinction between predicate and argument, even if it is not a distinction grounded in a lexical classification or a parts-of-speech system.

because they derive from the fundamental cognitive-communicative concepts of predication and reference. Without an ability to assert, affirm, or deny propositions, there is no language or communication. Likewise, without an ability to refer to people, places, or things symbolically, we cannot make propositions about objects in the world. These two concepts, PREDICATE and ARGUMENT, are emergent from the embodied reality of human experience of participants and actions/events.[13]

The concepts of predication and reference form the groundwork for semantic and syntactic structure.[14] Language structure, then, has as its foundation the following semantic oppositions presented in Table 1.[15]

Table 1. Universal Oppositions Underlying Clause Structure

Predicate +Arguments	Nonarguments

13 I take the position, following Cognitive Linguistics, that our experience of embodiment and interactions with each other and with objects in the world motivate both the semantic and syntactic structure of language (Robert Langacker, *Foundations of Cognitive Grammar* [Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1987]; George Lakoff, *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things: What Categories Reveal about the Mind* [Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1987]; George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and Its Challenge to Western Thought* [New York: Basic Books, 1999]; John Taylor, *Linguistic Categorization*, 3rd ed., OTL [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003]).

14 The particular framework I am working within here is Role and Reference Grammar (RRG). While RRG does not place itself within the same range of frameworks subsumed within Cognitive Linguistics in the same way that Cognitive Grammar or Construction Grammar are, the framework still builds on the same research that grounds those frameworks (Robert D. Van Valin and Randy J. LaPolla, *Syntax Syntax: Structure, Meaning, and Function*, CTL [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997], 28). Role and Reference Grammar is, in a rather real sense, a cousin of Construction Grammar, one that bridges the gap between European and West Coast Functionalism. For the term West Coast Functionalism, see Christopher S. Butler, María de los Ángeles Gómez-González, and Susana M. Doval-Suárez, *Dynamics of Language Use: Functional and Constrastive Perspectives*, P&B NS 140 (Amsterdam: Benjamins, 2003), 2–5.

15 Van Valin and LaPolla, *Syntax*, 25.

This diagram involves an ambiguity, however. The term argument can refer to either a semantic or syntactic entity. The distinction is relatively small, but important because of the question of precedence. Table 1 deals with semantic arguments. It is the semantic distinctions above that motivate the syntactic categories shown in Table 2.[16]

Table 2. Semantic Units and Syntactic Units of the Layered Structure of the Clause

Underlying semantic element(s)	Syntactic unit
Predicate	Nucleus
Argument in semantic representation of predicate	Core argument
Nonarguments	Periphery
Predicate + Arguments	Core
Predicate + Arguments + Nonarguments	Clause (= Core + Periphery)

The units in the right column represent the syntactic layers and components of the clause. The syntactic nucleus is motivated by the semantic predicate. Syntactic arguments are motivated by semantic arguments. Syntactic peripheries are motivated by nonargument entities. These may be defined as temporal and spatial entities (e.g., in the house, tomorrow, etc.), cognitively motivated by our embodied experience in the world as both spatial and temporal. The core of a clause is motivated by the predication, composed of a predicate and its arguments, and the clause, by the proposition, composed of a predicate and its arguments together with nonarguments. All of these build into a layered structure, as shown below in Figure 1 below.[17]

16 Robert D. Van Valin, Jr., *Exploring the Syntax-Semantics Interface* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 5.

17 This is a simplified presentation of syntactic structure, but it provides the relevant details for our purposes and concisely brings together both the syntactic and semantic elements from table 2 above. For a more complete discussion of syntax and semantics in RRG, see Van Valin, *Exploring the Syntax Semantics Interface*.

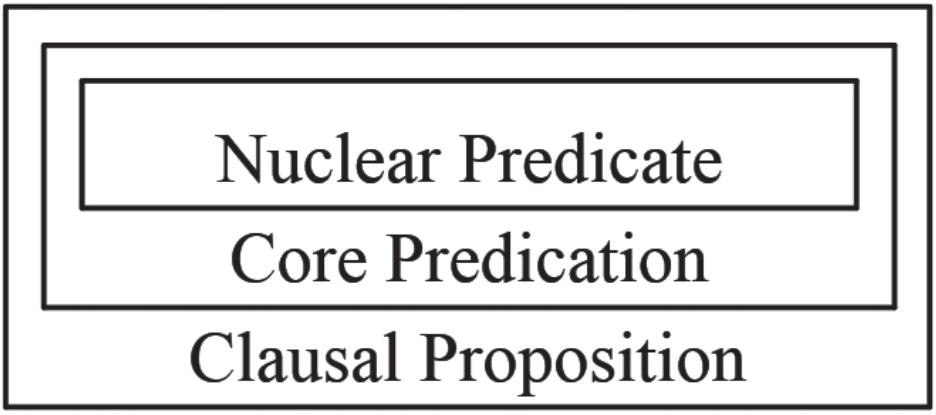

Figure 1. Layered Structure of the Clause

Each of these layers is significant for understanding how the syntactic structure of the clause relates to the grammatical categories like tense, aspect, modality, negation, and others, most of which are highly relevant for how we understand and interpret imperatives. Each of the three layers in figure 1 collocates with particular grammatical categories in terms of their semantic scope. The semantic scope of grammatical category refers to the portion of the syntactic structure to which it applies. Some grammatical categories only affect the semantics of the nuclear predicate alone. Other grammatical categories affect the semantics of the core predicate. Still others affect the meaning of the entire clause and its proposition. Some of these grammatical categories—those relevant to the discussion here are marked in bold—and the extent of their scope are presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Grammatical Categories and the Layered Structure of the Clause[18]

Semantic-Syntactic Unit	Grammatical category
Nuclear Predicate	**Aspect**
	Negation

18 For discussion of the scope of the nonbold categories, see Van Valin, *Exploring the Syntax-Semantics Interface*, 8–30.

Core Predication	**Deontic modality**
	Event Quantification
	Negation
Clausal Proposition	**Epistemic modality**
	Negation
	Tense
	Evidentiality
	Illocutionary Force

Each of these categories shares a scope relationship with the larger clause. Note that aspect only appears in the nuclear predicate and illocutionary force only over the clausal proposition, but there are two types of modality—each with its own scope. Further, negation can have scope over any of the three layers of the clause. Aspect has the narrowest domain of scope, limited to the nuclear predicate. What does this mean? Consider example 1.

1. a. I <u>was pouring</u> some water (progressive)
   b. I <u>poured</u> some water (perfective).

This example presents a distinction between the English past progressive and past perfective aspects. The former is unbounded or uncontained in its internal temporal structure. The latter is bounded/contained in its internal temporal structure. Note that in both cases, the aspect only affects the predicator/verb. Neither the semantics of the progressive nor the perfective has any effect on the participants: the agent argument, "I," and the patient argument, "some water."

Modality, depending on its type, may have scope over the core predication (the verb and one or more arguments) or over the entire clausal proposition. Deontic modality is limited to the core predication and refers to the ability or obligation of a participant, while epistemic modality has scope over the whole clausal proposition, referring to a proposition's existential status (e.g., probability, possibility, or necessity). We find both in example 2 below, with the scope of the modality marked in bold text and the grammatical morpheme of the modality underlined.

2. a. **John <u>should</u> play** the piano for Anne (deontic).
   b. **John <u>might</u> play the piano for Anne** (epistemic).

Observe, in example (2a), the obligation expressed by the auxiliary "should" only affects the subject "John" in terms of the obligation placed upon him to carry out the action. The auxiliary has no influence over Anne or the piano. That they are not within its scope demonstrates that deontic modality cannot have scope over the entire clause. On the other hand, for sentence in example (2b) the auxiliary "might" has an effect over the entire clause. The auxiliary can be read in relation to Anne, John, the piano, or even the action of playing itself (vs. some other verb, like "breaking," for example).

Since negation is even more complicated, I want to first look briefly at illocutionary force. This category includes clause types like questions, declaratives, commands, admonitions, and prohibitions. All these subsume the entire clause in their scope. If the clause is a command or a question, as in the example 3 sentences below, then the entire clause is a command or question, not merely a portion of it.

3. a. Give Mary her new bicycle (command).
   b. Did you give Mary her new bicycle? (question)

For our purposes, we are interested in those types of illocutionary force that also interface with the Greek imperative mood, particularly with commands and prohibitions.[19]

Finally, negation can, for a given clause, have scope over any one of these three layers. While most people think of negation simply in terms of negating a clause, when we look closely at particular instantiations and examples, we quickly find this is not the case. Consider the three sentences in example 4 below. Each is provided with the negated sentence and a context for clarifying the speaker's intended meaning.

4. a. **John did not eat lunch.** He is starving now (clausal proposition)

19 Other possible types of illocutionary force that may appear with the imperative mood are: requests and admonitions—many of Wallace's various specific usages of the imperative are types of illocutionary force (*Greek Grammar*, 485–93).

b. John did **not** eat **lunch.** He ate earlier and wasn't hungry at noon (core predication).
c. John **was unable to eat** lunch. He was fed lunch through an IV (nuclear predicate).

Each one of these three sentences has a negator that affects a different part of the clause. In sentence (4a), the entire clause is negated: the proposition "John ate lunch" is false in every respect. The scope or effect of the negator is narrower in sentence (4b) the object of the verb is the negated element, but not the clause and not the verb: John did eat, but it was not lunch.[20] Finally, in sentence (4c) only the nuclear predicate is negated. In English, nuclear negation is only done with derivational affixes (e.g. de- or un-).[21] Sentence (4c) conveys that John did receive lunch, but that he did not perform the action of the verb. The negation does not have scope over *John* and does not have scope over *lunch*, but is constrained to the verb phrase *able to eat*. Note that in all three sentences, at least for English, scope is only made explicit via situational or linguistic context.

1.2 Imperatives and Propositional Semantics[22]

For propositional semantics, I adopt Role and Reference Grammar's version of Vendler's classification of verbs. RRG modifies the model in light of the work of David Dowty and Carlotta Smith.[23] I follow the

20 Note in English the position of the negator is not affected by scope. This is not true of all languages.

21 English cannot use the *not* negator for nuclear negation. For that reason, I have had to change the verb to "able" rather than "eat." Other languages do not necessarily have this restriction.

22 The summary below is adapted from Michael G. Aubrey, "The Greek Perfect and the Categorization of Tense and Aspect: Toward a Descriptive Apparatus for Operators in Role and Reference Grammar" (MA Thesis, Trinity Western University, 2014), 12–15.

23 David Dowty, *Word Meaning and Montague Grammar: The Semantics of Verbs and Times in Generative Semantics and in Montague's PTQ*, SLL 7 (Dordrecht: Reidel, 1979); Carlotta Smith, *The Parameter of Aspect*, 2nd ed., SLP 43 (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1997). These kinds of distinctions among predicates have received a number of different labels. Perhaps most prominent among them has been the term *Aktionsart*, German for "action type." Other terms that have gained some credence among linguists are "actionality" (a term that is essentially an Anglicized version of the German word *Aktionsart*), "lexical aspect" (Mari Olsen, "A Semantic and Pragmatic Model of Lexical

terminology decisions of Emma Pavey and Christopher Butler and refer to these classes as "predicate classes."[24] This captures the important fact that these are kinds of predications, not lexemes, and is thus a transparent label.[25]The original Vendlerian classes (state, achievement, accomplishment, activity) are provided in 5 with representative English predicates.[26]

5. a. States: *be sick, be dead, know, believe*
   b. Achievements: *pop, explode, shatter* (the intransitive versions)
   c. Accomplishments: *melt, freeze, dry* (the intransitive ver sions); *learn*
   d. Activities: *march, walk, roll* (the intransitive versions); *swim, think, write*

The distinctions among these types are rather clear, at least in their prototypical realizations. States and activities are atelic. Achievements and accomplishments involve a change of state, and thus are inherently telic. States differ from activities by their static nature compared to the dynamic nature of activities. Achievements are instantaneous and accomplishments are not.

---

and Grammatical Aspect," [PhD diss., Northwestern University, 1994]), and "situation aspect." The final term was proposed by Smith (*Parameter of Aspect*) as a label that attempts to capture both the inherent semantics of the category and also its relationship to aspect. When referring to the distinction between perfective and imperfective, which we might label as "aspect proper," Smith prefers the term "viewpoint aspect."

24 Emma Pavey, *The Structure of Language: An Introduction to Grammatical Analysis* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 2010); Christopher S. Butler, *Structure and Function: A Guide to Three Major Structural-Functional Theories*, 2 vols., SLCS 63–64 (Amsterdam: Benjamins, 2003).

25 The traditional term *Aktionsart* has a complex history in Greek grammar as far back as the 1870s with work in Indo-European that conflated aspect and *Aktionsart* together into a single category, beginning with Georg Curtius's use of the term *Zeitsart* (Georg Curtius, *The Greek Verb: Its Structure and Development*, trans. Augustus S. Wilkins and Edwin B. England, 2nd ed. [London: Murray, 1883]). This adds additional difficulty for using this term, since it involves the history of Greek grammar over the past 150 years that has developed independent of mainstream linguistics.

26 These examples are taken from Van Valin, *Exploring the Syntax-Semantics Interface*, 32.

RRG adds two classes. The first is Smith's "semelfactive."[27] These are instantaneous achievements, but with no change of state. Consider the achievement, "The balloon popped." Such a predicate denotes change in the state of the balloon. However, a sentence like "The candle flickered" does not express a similar change. The candle participates in a particular state of affairs (flickering), but remains unchanged afterward. The other addition is a complex type formed from activity predicates, called "active achievements."[28] This class may be formed by taking an activity predicate and adding an endpoint. Active achievements tend to be verbs of motion, consumption, and creation as shown in 6.

6. a.	The soldiers marched in the park.	Activity
a'.	The soldiers marched to the park.	Active achievement
b.	Dana ate fish.	Activity
b'.	Dana ate the fish.	Active achievement
c.	Leslie painted for several hours.	Activity
c'.	Leslie painted Mary's portrait.	Active achievement

We can derive all these clauses from four features: [± static], [± dynamic], [± telic], [± punctual]. The basic division involves static and nonstatic. Van Valin states,

> [This] distinguishes verbs which code a '"happening" from those which code a "non-happening." In other words, with reference to some state of affairs, one could ask, "what happened?" or "what is happening?" If for example, a sentence like *Bob just ran out the door* could be the answer to this question, then the verb *run* is [-static]. On the other hand, a sentence like *John knows Bill well* could not be the answer to this question,

27 Smith, *Parameter of Aspect*, 29.

28 There is some inconsistency in the terminology here. Active achievements were previously labeled "active accomplishments," a term used as recently as Van Valin, *Exploring the Syntax-Semantics Interface*. It has since been revised to "active achievement" in Pavey (*Structure of Language, 100–101*) on the basis that the final change of state involved in the class is an instantaneous one. The examples in (6) below are taken from Van Valin, *Exploring the Syntax-Semantics Interface*, 33, but have been revised according to this shift in terminology.

because nothing is taking place. Hence, *know* is a [+static] verb.[29]

The "happening" test helps us draw a distinction between states and the other five types. That is, states do not happen; they simply exist. The other features are less dramatic, marking more nuanced contrasts between the five classes, shown in 7.[30]

7.	a. State:	[+static], [–dynamic], [–telic], [–punctual]
	b. Activity	[–static], [+dynamic], [–telic], [–punctual]
	c. Accomplishment	[–static], [–dynamic], [+telic], [–punctual]
	d. Semelfactive	[–static], [±dynamic], [–telic], [+punctual]
	e. Achievement	[–static], [–dynamic], [+telic], [+punctual]
	f. Active achievement	[–static], [+dynamic], [+telic], [–punctual]

All six basic predicate classes also have in addition a complex causative form.[31] Noncausatives predicates are provided below in example 8 together with their causative alternative.

8.	a.	Tucker was terrified.	State
	a'.	Pierre terrifies Tucker.	Causative state
	b.	Dave walked around the park.	Activity
	b'.	Dave walked his dog in the park.	Causative activity
	c.	The door opened abruptly.	Accomplishment
	c'.	Rachel opened the door slowly.	Causative accomplishment
	d.	The car crashed into the barrier.	Achievement
	d'.	Dave crashed the car into the barrier.	Causative achievement

29 Ibid., 33.

30 The inclusion of the feature [± dynamic] in the presentation exists entirely for the distinction of active achievements from accomplishments, which share the features [+telic] and [–punctual]. Otherwise, [± dynamic] is redundant in terms of minimal distinguishability of features (ibid.).

31 The addition of causatives to the system is unique to Role and Reference Grammar, but has potential for valuable insight. Causativity has not played a role in the discussions of predicate/*Aktionsart* classes for Ancient Greek (e.g., Fanning, *Verbal Aspect*; Olsen "Semantic and Pragmatic Model"; and Mari Napoli, *Aspect and Actionality in Homeric Greek: A Contrastive Analysis* [Milan: FrancoAngeli, 2006]).

e. The soldiers marched to the park.	Active achievement
e'. The captain marched the soldiers to camp.	Causative active achievement
f. The lightning flashed in the night.	Semelfactive
f'. Henry flashed his headlights at another car.	Causative semelfactive

Causativity contributes an additional argument to the syntax. This reflects an increase in the number of participants in the proposition.

Finally, central to this typology are a number of morphosyntactic tests for the classification of a predicate as a state, activity, accomplishment, achievement, semelfactive, or active achievement. These tests are an important theoretical mechanism for language description in RRG since they aim to provide language-internal criteria for the status of a given predicate. Discussion of these tests is beyond the scope of the current project, but a thorough discussion is available in the standard RRG resources as well as several works related to Ancient Greek.[32]

2. ASPECT, NEGATION, AND PREDICATE TYPES IN PROHIBITIONS

To the best of my knowledge, there has been no thoroughgoing analysis of prohibitions and aspect that attempts to organize the data in terms of the event-types being prohibited—much less in terms of the scope of the negation, which follows in the next section.[33] The following is a survey of my data with a variety of verbs. These are organized, first, by the aspect of the imperative and then by the classification of the predicate types. Semelfactives (instantaneous predicates that involve no change of state) are excluded, as I have

32 See for example: Van Valin and LaPolla, *Syntax*, 82–130; Fanning, *Verbal Aspect*, 126–97; Peter Stork, *The Aspectual Usage of the Dynamic Infinitive in Herodotus* (Groningen: Bouma's Boekhuis, 1982), 29–38; Olsen, "Semantic and Pragmatic Model," 25–58; Napoli, *Aspect and Actionality*, 32–44.

33 Fanning provides some discussion. However, he deals with predication types in relation to prohibition as secondary in his analysis.

no data for prohibitions being used with a semelfactive. I take as already established the generalization that there is a correlation between the imperfective aspect with general commands/prohibitions and the perfective aspect with specific commands/prohibitions.[34]

2.1 Imperfective Prohibitions

Imperfective prohibitions involve an imperfective verb in the imperative mood preceded by the negator μή. For the sake of clarity and the ability to maintain fairly concise discussions, I have separated out each of the types of predicates: states, activities, active achievements, accomplishments, and achievements. The various types of causatives represent a unique case and I discuss them as a group. When I view a given example as being a prospective instance for the meaning STOP DOING X, I translate it accordingly.[35]

2.1.1 State Predicates

States predicates fairly clearly allow for the STOP DOING X reading and also the regular negation readings. The latter almost invariably refer to states of affairs that may exist iteratively or habitually. Similarly, these iterative or habitual readings consistently appear in general admonition contexts.

9. Εἷς δὲ μὴ πιστευέσθω μάρτυς
   Do not believe a single witness (Jos., *A.J.* 4.219)

10. μη δὲ μερίμνα πῶς Περσῶν ἄρξεις
    Do not be concerned with how the Persians rule (Sib. Or. 5.440–1)

Here in examples 9 and 10, we see this in action. In the prohibition from Josephus, the speaker directs the audience toward regular and appropriate legal practice for the testimony of witnesses. Example 10, again is also a general prohibition, referring to the

34 See Fanning, *Verbal Aspect*, 325–88. I also must reiterate that *correlation* does not mean that an imperfective imperative must then necessarily be a general command/prohibition or that a perfective one must be a command/prohibition. There is, however, an important pattern that Fanning shows to be motivated by the nature of each aspect.

35 In the survey that follows, all translations are my own.

general state of concern the audience should have for how other nations rule.

With state predicates, especially, the STOP DOING X usage is particularly clear when the imperfective prohibition refers to a specific situation. Thus in example 11, Jesus speaks to his disciple, Thomas, after appearing to him in the upper room, just after Thomas questions Jesus' resurrection.

11. μὴ γίνου ἄπιστος ἀλλὰ πιστός.
Stop doubting, but believe (John 20:27).

Contextually, Thomas's already existing and currently ongoing state of doubt is widely acknowledged. Jesus seeks that it should cease now that he is physically present with them. Another good example where the already existing state is directed to end can be found in the Shepherd of Hermas in example 12.

12. ἐθαύμαζον δὲ ἐγὼ … λέγει μοι ὁ ποιμήν· Μὴ θαύμαζε εἰ τὸ δένδρον ὑγιὲς ἔμεινε τοσούτων κλάδων κοπέντων
I was surprised … The shepherd said to me, "Stop being surprised that the tree remained sound after so many branches were chopped off" (Herm. Sim. VIII, i, 5).[36]

Here again, the state of the person being spoken to in the prohibition is explicitly clear: the author is experiencing surprise at the events and the shepherd commands him to stop.[37] The past context involves a situation where the narrator (the audience of the prohibition) is already in a state of surprise as he watches the branches of the tree being chopped off.

Finally, there are also some state predicates in prohibitions that are ambiguous, exemplified in 13 and 14. Both of these clauses present prohibitions of specific states rather than general ones. However, it is not clear that the state being prohibited is one that the audience was already in. The imperfective prohibition in John 5:28 comes at a point midmonologue for Jesus and we have no access to the experiences or feelings of his disciples. One possibility for why

36 A similar instance is available in T.Levi 2.9.

37 The English translation here with "stop being" might sound awkward to some with a state predicate such as "surprise," This is not a result of the Greek, but because the English progressive aspect generally avoids collocation with state predicates.

the author chose the imperfective here rather than the normal perfective used for specific commands/prohibitions would be to imply to the reader that the disciples in listening to Jesus expressed surprise at his words.

13. μὴ θαυμάζετε τοῦτο
    Do not be astonished at this (John 5:28).

14. καὶ μὴ πιστεύετε αὐτῷ, ὅτι οὐ μὴ δύνηται ὁ θεὸς παντὸς ἔθνους καὶ βασιλείας τοῦ σῶσαι τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ ἐκ χειρός μου καὶ ἐκ χειρὸς πατέρων μου
    And do not trust him, because no God of any nation or kingdom is able to save his people from my hand and from the hands of my ancestors (2 Chron 32:15).

Likewise, here in 14, the representative of King Sennacherib is telling the people of Jerusalem not to trust Hezekiah, but it is not definite whether or not the representative believes that the people are currently in a state of trust in Hezekiah or not. Here the linguistic choice of the imperfective prohibition over the perfective prohibition might have been made on the assumption that the people of Jerusalem did trust their king.

2.1.2 Activity Predicates

Recall that activity predicates are dynamic, but they lack explicit and definable endpoints. For that reason, they are not telic. They do, however, involve duration. We find similar patterns with activity predicates as we do with state predicates. General prohibitions do not appear to allow for the STOP DOING X reading. Thus in Sirach 5:9, the author is making a general prohibition against a particular behavior.

15. μὴ πορεύου ἐν πάσῃ ἀτραπῷ
    Do not walk in every direction (Sir 5:9)

16. ὀργίζεσθε καὶ μὴ ἁμαρτάνετε·
    Be angry and do not sin (Eph 4:26)

Ephesians 4:26 in example 16 likewise presents a general prohibition against a behavior. The author is not prohibiting a specific, referential act of sin, but any sin, generally.

Activity predicates, like states, also provide clear instances of the STOP DOING X usage. In example 17, Jesus walks into the house of Jairus, whose daughter had died before Jesus arrived. Everyone is in mourning, weeping for the dead girl (ἔκλαιον δὲ πάντες καὶ ἐκόπτοντο αὐτήν).

17. Μὴ κλαίετε, οὐ γὰρ ἀπέθανεν ἀλλὰ καθεύδει.
Stop weeping—she isn't dead; she's asleep (Luke 8:52).

In the midst of this scene, Jesus walks into the house and his first words are: Μὴ κλαίετε. Contextually speaking, "stop weeping" is the clear interpretation here.[38]

Similar examples exist outside the New Testament. Consider 3 Baruch 16.1 in example 18 below.

18. Τάδε λέγει κύριος· Μή ἐστε σκυθρωποί, καὶ μὴ κλαίετε, μηδὲ ἐάσατε τοὺς υἱοὺς τῶν ἀνθρώπων·
Thus says the Lord, "Stop being sorrowful and stop weeping, but also do not leave the children of humanity alone (3 Bar. 16.1).

The larger context of this prohibition involves three groups of angels coming before the archangel Michael. The third group of angels comes before him in 3 Baruch 13, wailing and weeping. They have been watching over the unrighteous of humanity who have no good in them and they beg Michael to have them given a different task (3 Bar. 13.3–5). Michael tells them to wait until he has heard from the Lord. The Lord's response then comes in 16.1 above. God commands them to cease their sorrow and weeping and he commands them not to leave the people they are watching.[39]

38 Huffman's (*Verbal Aspect Theory and the Prohibitions*, 141) view that the proper interpretation should be, "Do not be weeping," feels like special pleading here. The main problem with Huffman's approach is that he assumes various uses of aspect in prohibitions (stop doing/do not start, general/specific, etc.) as competing theories of aspect and imperatives rather than contextualized realizations from the interface of multiple grammatical categories. Nevertheless, his work is incredibly useful as a compendium of prohibitions in the New Testament and their possible interpretations.

39 While it is not relevant to our purpose here, the use of the perfective imperative for the third prohibition rather than the normal perfective subjunctive is striking.

Examples 17 and 18 both involve prohibitions of specific activities, but prohibitions with activity predicates in specific contexts do not inherently require the STOP DOING X usage—just as we saw with state predicates. For example, the king of Syria going to battle against Ahab, king of Israel, and Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, gives orders to his men in 3 Kingdoms 22:29 using a imperfective prohibition and activity predicate.

19. Μὴ πολεμεῖτε μικρὸν καὶ μέγαν ἀλλ' ἢ τὸν βασιλέα Ισραηλ μονώτατον.
Do not engage in battle with the small or great, but only the king of Israel (3 Kgdms 22:31 / 1 Kgs 22:31).

The context demonstrates that this is a very specific prohibition, but it is also quite clear that the STOP DOING X usage is improbable here, perhaps even impossible.

2.1.3 Accomplishment Predicates

There are few prohibitions in the imperfective aspect that are also accomplishment predicates. Accomplishments are predicates where the event is presented by the speaker/author as a durational change of state. My data appear to involve general prohibitions rather than specific ones. Both these facts are likely a limitation of the data rather than a significant grammatical generalization. I provide two examples from the Septuagint below in 20 and 21. The first, from the Psalms, cannot be explicitly connected to a specific event or situation in the world. It appears in the context of a petition to the Lord for his judgment. The predicate κραταιούσθω is an accomplishment because becoming strong is a progressive change of state with inherent duration.

20. ἀνάστηθι, κύριε, μὴ κραταιούσθω ἄνθρωπος
Rise up, Lord, humanity must not grow strong/must stop growing strong (Psa 9:20)

This example is ambiguous as to the STOP DOING X usage. It seems either would be possible contextually. The question rests upon whether the idea that humanity has already begun to grow strong is a reasonable implicature to derive from 9:19: "For the poor

will not be forgotten in the end; the perseverance of the poor will not experience ruin forever."

21. Κατὰ τὰς ὁδοὺς τῶν ἐθνῶν μὴ μανθάνετε
According to the ways of the nations, do not learn (Jer 10:2).

The act of learning, here, inherently implies a durational period where knowledge is gained over time and is thus an accomplishment. The prohibition involves an implicature that communicates that there is another way of learning that the audience should be participating in. The STOP DOING X usage is not a possible interpretation of this prohibition. This prohibition appears at the beginning of a speech from the Lord through Jeremiah. The preceding context provides no interpretive cues for the audience to conclude that the people of Judah had been learning from the nations. The lack of a specific ongoing act of learning precludes the STOP DOING X usage.

2.1.4 Active Achievement Predicates

I noted in the introduction that active achievement predicates share similarities with activity predicates and achievement predicates. Traditionally, these sorts of predicates have been labeled accomplishments because they have both duration and an endpoint. However, their temporal structure is distinct from accomplishments. For an accomplishment, the duration and the arrival at the endpoint go hand in hand. If a person "learns math for an hour," then at any given point during that hour the person can be said to have learned math. That is: the change of state that causes the endpoint itself has inherent duration. For an active achievement, however, the change of state that causes the endpoint is presented by the speaker/author as instantaneous.[40] Thus, if a person "walks to the park," that person might walk for an hour or for five minutes and be no more in the park than he was when he began walking, but the change of state from "not in the park" to "in the park" is presented without duration. The duration only refers to the walking rather than the arrival.

40 Whether or not it is instantaneous in objective reality is not relevant. It only matters that it is subjectively conceived as instantaneous linguistically.

Example 22 is an active achievement in the same way. For the person who wrote the sign, the act of writing is, itself, an activity without an endpoint.

22. Μὴ γράφε· Ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων
Do not write: "The king of the Jews" (John 19:21)

Had he stopped writing half way through the sign with, "The king of," or simply spent the entire day writing the word, "king," repeatedly, we would not be able to say that he wrote, "The King of the Jews." However, the completed statement, since it is specific and referential, functions as an endpoint for the proposition. In addition, this very specific command in 70 is not a good candidate for the STOP DOING X usage because the sign's writing had already been completed at the time of speech. The Jewish leaders had seen the contents of the sign and at this point, it would have been incoherent for them to command Pilate, "Stop writing, 'the king of the Jews.'"

One tendency we see with active achievement predicates in prohibitions is that they demonstrate a general preference for specific situations rather than general ones. This is likely the result of the fact that for transitive active achievements (usually predicates of creation or consumption), a prerequisite is that the object is necessarily specific and referential.[41] Example 23 is one of the more complicated instances of this.

23. ἐὰν δέ τις ὑμῖν εἴπῃ· Τοῦτο ἱερόθυτόν ἐστιν, μὴ ἐσθίετε δι' ἐκεῖνον τὸν μη νύσαντα καὶ τὴν συνείδησιν·
But if someone says to you, "This is sacrificed meat," Do not eat [it] for the sake of the one who informed you and their conscience (1 Cor 10:28)

On the one hand, this looks like a general prohibition. That could suggest that the implicit object "sacrificed meat" is nonreferential. The larger context of this clause makes two things clear. First, Paul is establishing a *specific* hypothetical situation: "But if someone says to you, 'This is sacrificed meat'" So in a sense we have a general command being given for a specific situation. Second, the missing object in the prohibition itself should be treated as a definite, in terms of

41 Consider: "He wrote literature" (nonspecific, nonreferential activity) vs. "He wrote Moby Dick" (specific, referential active achievement).

the mental representation Paul intends to create for the audience. That is to say, Paul views "it" as sufficiently referential in the discourse from the previous clause that he can drop it out and does not need to make it explicit. For that reason, the prohibition itself must be viewed as involving both activity-like duration (eating) and also an endpoint (the dropped referential object). Finally, it needs to be noted that while there are people at Corinth who have been eating food sacrificed to idols, the hypothetical situation presented here prevents this prohibition from being interpreted as an instance of the STOP DOING X usage. In fact, across my corpus of data, I have no clear examples of the STOP DOING X usage with an imperative involving a general command.

Example 24 provides an example of prohibition in a specific context with an active achievement.

> 24. ἐπεὶ πεφώραται πάντα ἐκεῖνα τῷ πατρί σου, μὴ παραγίνου πρὸς αὐτόν, ἂν μή τινα πορίσῃ παρὰ τοῦ Καίσαρος δύναμις
> Since all those things have been discovered by your father, do not come to him [Herod], unless you can obtain some authority from Caesar (Jos., *B.J.* 1.620)

Here the mother of Antipater has written a warning to her son that his father Herod the Great has discovered Antipater's plot against him and commands him not to come home. This prohibition is not a probable instance of the STOP DOING X usage because the writer of the prohibition, Antipater's mother, has no way of knowing whether he has yet begun his journey from Rome yet or not.[42]

2.1.5 Achievement Predicates

Recall that achievements are predicates that refer to changes of state that the speaker/author wants to present as instantaneous. Standard English examples are predicates like *shatter* or *pop*, where the duration is so quick that it is linguistically practical to refer to these situations as instantaneous. Other types are achievement predicates that involve a speaker conceiving of an event as the arrival at a terminal point or the crossing of a boundary. These event

42 If anything, it is probable that the clause assumes that Antipater is still in Rome, considering the difficulty of delivering a letter to a person in the midst of travel from Roman to Palestine.

conceptualizations may also be blended together in some manner. In Luke 21:21, a specific situation, we find that entering a city combines the boundary crossing and terminal point conceptualizations together in example 25.

25. οἱ ἐν ταῖς χώραις μὴ εἰσερχέσθωσαν εἰς αὐτήν
Those in the fields must not enter into it [the city] (Luke 21:21).

The use of the imperfective aspect could perhaps refer to ongoing unavailability of Jerusalem to those in the fields. The STOP DOING X usage is not an available reading here. Nor is it possible with the general prohibition in example 26.

26. γονέωνἀγαθῶν, ὁ δὲ μὴ μέλλων ἄγεσθαι παρθένον μὴ ζευγνύσθω συνοικοῦσαν ἄλλῳ νοθεύσας μηδὲ λυπῶν τὸν πρότερον αὐτῆς ἄνδρα·
Do not let a man who does not intend to marry a virgin join together with a woman living with another man, corrupting her and grieving her former husband. (Jos., *A.J.* 4.244)

The context of this prohibition involves Josephus's summation of the Jewish law in his history of the Jewish people. The achievement predicate "join together" conceptualized the event of sexual relations as instantaneous.[43]

My final example of a prohibition with an achievement predicate is, perhaps, the most notable. Here in example 27 is an instance of the STOP DOING X usage with a predicate that inherently lacks duration. Both the textual context and the cultural context make it clear that Peter, to whom this prohibition is directed, has been calling these foods unclean. Indeed, the entire point of the discourse here in Acts 10 is the cessation of a particular behavior that alienates gentiles from the gospel.

43 Note, also, that examples like this demonstrate that predicate types (*Aktionsart*) do not objectively refer to the external nonlinguistic world. Rather the speaker/author presents a conceptualization of an event with duration as if it were instantaneous. The verb ζεύγνυμι cannot be used to express duration.

27. Ἃ ὁ θεὸς ἐκαθάρισεν, σὺ μὴ κοίνου.
What God has made clean, you must stop calling unclean (Acts 10:15).[44]

This example is important because it demonstrates that the STOP DOING X usage and its association with imperfective aspect is not also constrained by predicate types that inherently express duration. Here rather than involving the cessation/prohibition of an event/action in progress, the imperfective aspect functions to signal habituality.

2.1.6 Causative Predicates

Causative predicate types are not entirely distinct from the others, since they are a complex type. There are causative states, causative activities, causative accomplishments, causative active achievements, and causative achievements. Each normal type has a causative alternative. Some are more difficult to test for, especially in a corpus. For example, the difference between a causative state and causative accomplishment is subtle, as in example 28.

28. μὴ παροργίζετε τὰ τέκνα
Do not make your children angry (Eph 6:4)

Is this clause best interpreted as a causative state (cause your children to be angry) or a causative accomplishment (cause your children to become angry). The English rendering above might suggest the causative accomplishment view, but the related noun (παροργισμός) is clearly a state. Deciding between causative state and causative accomplishment would hinge upon the nature of the derivational morpheme -ίζω together with the types of words it forms into causative verbs.[45] Moreover, the author of Ephesians is not prohibiting making one's children angry while implying

44 See also Acts 11:9. Arguably, this predicate could be treated as a state. BDAG provides the gloss, "consider/declare (ritually) unclean" (552), which is a difficult glossing to account for semantically—declaration being a fundamentally different type of situation than consideration in terms of the elaboration of events. Making a decision based on the various occurrences in the corpus is practically impossible.

45 Unfortunately, to the best of my knowledge, there is no comprehensive study of Greek causative derivational morphology.

that making someone else's children angry is perfectly acceptable. Rather he is simply making an absolute prohibition about anger and one's children.

Example 29 is a clear causative state (cause X to have Y) from the Apostolic Fathers.

29. μὴ ἀφορμὰς δίδοτε τοῖς ἔθνεσιν
Do not give any opportunity to the pagans (Ign. *Trall.* 8.2)

Here the speaker prohibits the audience from being the agent who causes a transference of opportunity, such that the pagans (τοῖς ἔθνεσιν) have opportunity. The context is a general one and does not refer to a specific situation to prohibit. Instead, Ignatius is warning against certain behaviors that would give cause for non-Christians to blaspheme God.

Finally, in example 30, we have an instance of a prohibition with a causative activity predicate.

30. Ἄρατε ταῦτα ἐντεῦθεν, μὴ ποιεῖτε τὸν οἶκον τοῦ πατρός μου οἶκον ἐμπορίου.
Get rid of these things! Do not make/Stop making my father's house a marketplace! (John 2:16)

This instance is a potential use of the STOP DOING X usage. Arguably, the rendering "do not make" does not make sense because the people had already done that. The temple court was already in use as a marketplace; Jesus is demanding the cessation of that situation. If this interpretation is the correct one, it is evidence of the STOP DOING X usage with causative predicates. It also functions as further evidence of the correlation between the STOP DOING X usage and prohibitions that refer to specific situations—the opposite of what is expected for imperfective imperatives.

2.1.7 Preliminary Observations

Before moving on to how perfective prohibitions interact with predicate types, it might be worthwhile, here, to briefly recap the patterns encountered above. We can distinguish two generalizations for imperfective prohibitions: one for predicate types and one for the general vs. specific distinction. In terms of predicate types, there seems to be a correlation between the STOP DOING X usage and

predicate types involving duration. Any of the predicate types can be used with the STOP DOING X usage, but achievements only do so in contexts that involve habitual or iterative events. This should not be surprising considering the natural relationship between the imperfective aspect and temporal duration. For the distinction between general vs. specific commands, the STOP DOING X usage consistently patterns with specific prohibitions. This is notable in as much as the normal expectation is for imperfective aspect to correlate with general commands/prohibitions. In the final summary of the predicate types below, we will discuss both these patterns in more detail and attempt to provide some explanation for what we are seeing in the data.

2.2 Perfective Prohibitions

Prohibitions in the perfective aspect diverge from the imperfective in that the normal expectation is for the mood to be subjunctive rather than imperative. Beyond that the pattern is similar with the negator μή being used for the prohibition. The scope of the negation is still contextually determined rather than morphosyntactically marked. As before the data is organized by predicate type, beginning with states.

One thing that becomes apparent rather quickly, both with state predicates and the others that follow is that it is far more difficult to distinguish contexts where the perfective prohibition's DO NOT START X usage is the probable function. There is much less semantic distinction between DO NOT DO X and DO NOT START X. This arises from the fact that the latter falls within the domain of the former. In contexts where the prohibited situation has not been initiated, DO NOT DO X subsumes DO NOT START X. Nevertheless, there are some generalizations that we can make and many of them are closely tied to the semantics of particular types of predicates.

2.2.1 State Predicates

State predicates, lacking both dynamicity and change in their semantic content, do not lend themselves to agent initiation, since initiation inherently implies change, if not also dynamicity. The prohibition of a state is more likely to have absolute connotations: STATE

X IS PROHIBITED. Example 31 provides an instance of this in a context with a specific prohibition.

31. *καὶ μὴ θαυμάσῃς εἰ δύναται μιμητὴς ἄνθρωπος γενέσθαι θεοῦ*
And do not be surprised when a person is able to become an imitator of God (Diogn. 10.4)

Here, the prohibition is specific because it functions within a metacomment on the actual discourse on faith and imitating God. Still, the same applies to general prohibitions as well, as with the prohibition in Luke 12:11.

32. *ὅταν δὲ εἰσφέρωσιν ὑμᾶς ἐπὶτὰς συναγωγὰς καὶ τὰς ἀρχὰς καὶ τὰς ἐξουσίας, μὴ μεριμνήσητε πῶς ἢ τί ἀπολογήσησθε ἢ τί εἴπητε·*
When they bring you before the synagogues, the rulers, and the authorities, do not be anxious about how you should defend yourselves or what you should say (Luke 12:11).

As before, the static nature of the predicate does not fit well with the dynamicity of the DO NOT START X conceptualization. These two instances are representative for the rest of the corpus.

2.2.2 Activity Predicates

Activity predicates, being dynamic, fit better with the DO NOT START X conceptualization. However, unlike the STOP DOING X usage for imperfective prohibitions, it is difficult to refer to an explicit usage, since usually a simpler DO NOT DO X conceptualization also fits sufficiently well. For example, in Jeremiah 42:7 either understanding is feasible. A command to not start building houses or sowing seeds fits well with the larger context in which the Rechabites are explaining to Jeremiah that their ancestor Jonadab had commanded them to maintain a nomadic lifestyle.

33. *καὶ οἰκίαν οὐ μὴ οἰκοδομήσητε καὶ σπέρμα οὐ μὴ σπείρητε*
And you must not start building houses and you must not start sowing seed (Jer 42:7).

On the other hand, we see easily that "do not start building" and "do not start sowing" could easily be replaced "do not build" and "do not sow." Granted, distinguishing English translations is not an adequate criterion for deciding, but that is the central problem.

No definitive language internal criterion seems to present itself within the data.

Nevertheless, one hypothesis worth testing involves the perfective prohibitions relationship to general and specific commands. I noted previously in the discussion of imperfective prohibitions that there is a clear tendency for the STOP DOING X usage to prefer specific rather than general situations. The opposite might be at play here, too. Normally, we expect a perfective for specific commands/prohibitions. Perhaps one motivation for choosing a perfective verb in a nonspecific or general prohibition would be in order to take advantage of the DO NOT START X conceptualization. Of course, this does not mean that perfective prohibitions involving specific circumstances cannot also involve the DO NOT START X conceptualization.

Other occurrences that also fit this pattern are provided in examples 34 and 35.

34. μὴ πορευθῇς ταῖς ὁδοῖς τῆς ἀδικίας
    Do not walk in the way of the unrighteous (Tob 4:5)

35. μὴ φάγῃς πᾶν ἀκάθαρτον
    Do not eat anything unclean (Judg 13:4).

Each of these prohibitions fits with the DO NOT START X conceptualization, at least, with the caveats already stated and the limits of our ability to draw firm conclusions. Both clauses involve a contrast between an explicit prohibited action and an implicit encouraged one: Where one walks (the path of the righteous vs. unrighteous) and what one eats (clean vs. unclean). Still, despite that contrast, the prohibited place for walking and the prohibited kind of eating are nonspecific and nonreferential. The prohibitions are general in their nature with the specifics established elsewhere in the texts.

2.2.3 Accomplishment Predicates

Perfective prohibitions of accomplishment predicates are difficult to find in my corpus. The following is the only defendable example I have been able to find.

36. Ἐὰν δὲ καὶ ἐκκακῶν τις πλουτίσῃ, ὡς Ἡσαῦ ὁ πατράδελφός μου, μὴ ζηλώσητε
And though a man become rich by evil means, even as Esau, the brother of my father, do not become jealous (T.Gad 7.4).

The problem here is that it isn't clear whether the preferred rendering should be a state (do not be jealous) or an accomplishment (do not become/grow jealous). Contextually, the situation involves watching another person grow more and more wealthy by evil means and for this reason, I lean toward the accomplishment reading, where jealousy is presented as a change of state with duration parallel to the durational change of state implicit in becoming wealthy. Like the activity predicates above, the DO NOT START X conceptualization is at least plausible here, but again, there is no sufficient means of demonstrating it conclusively.

2.2.4 Achievement Predicates

Achievement predicates, those that conceptualize an event as an instantaneous change of state, appear in abundance. Because achievement predicates inherently lack duration and the perfective aspect cannot be used to convey iterative semantics, achievements do not collocate well with the DO NOT START X conceptualization. Thus, the prohibition against murder in example 37 is quite unlikely to have the meaning "do not start murdering."

37. Μὴ φονεύσῃς
Do not murder (Mark 10:19).

On the other hand, Headlam's explicit formulation of the generalization technically is not grounded in event initiation (which implies duration), but rather the prohibition of a future or prospective event, in his own words, "When the meaning is *Beware of doing this in future time*, and this meaning is to be conveyed by the verb alone, then μή must be followed by the aorist subjunctive."[46] The question is whether or not a clause like Mark 10:19 is referring to the prohibition of a prospective event or the prohibition of an event absolutely: "Do not do this at all."

46 Headlam, "Greek Prohibitions," 31.

Example 38 perhaps makes more sense in terms of the prospective prohibition reading.

38. μὴ λάβῃς γυναῖκα ἀλλοτρίαν
Do not take a foreign wife (Tob 4:12).

Here, the prohibited event can conceivably be conceptualized as prospective. Tobias is about to begin a search for a wife among his relatives. Tobit, his father, warns him with a perfective prohibition not to take a wife who is a foreigner. Examples like this one are important for the question above regarding absolute prohibitions vs. the prohibition of a prospective event for example (37). While Mark 10:19 could be argued to be ambiguous, Tobit 4:12 is much more clearly prospective in nature since the recipient of the prohibition has never married. Regardless of whether we take the more contemporary DO NOT START X phrasing or Headlam's prospective prohibition, it is of note that the examples above are instances of perfective prohibitions in nonspecific/general contexts, where we would normally expect an imperfective prohibition.[47]

2.2.5 Active Achievement Predicates

Active achievement predicates have duration followed by an instantaneous change of state. These are often verbs of motion to an endpoint or verbs of production or consumption. Because they involve duration, the DO NOT START X conceptualization is a feasible reading of the text.

39. μὴ ἐπέλθῃς ἐκεῖ, ἔκκλινον δὲ ἀπ' αὐτῶν καὶ παράλλαξον.
Do not go there, instead turn away from them and pass by (Prov 4:15)

40. μὴ προσέλθῃς αὐτῷ ἐν καρδίᾳ δισσῇ
Do not come to him with a divided heart (Sir 1:28).

Examples 39 and 40 each involve situations where the speaker of the prohibition wants the audience to refrain from doing something

47 To reiterate my position stated at the beginning of this section (Aspect, Negation, and Predicate Types in Prohibitions), I take the generalization for aspect and imperatives involving general (imperfective) and specific (perfective) commands as already shown in Fanning, *Verbal Aspect*, 325–88.

that has not yet taken place, paralleling what we have seen with the rest of the dynamic predicate types thus far. In each case, the speaker is not prohibiting the entire clause, but only a portion of it. Proverbs 4:15 evokes the image of two alternative paths at a fork in the road (cf. 4:14): one for the wicked and one for the righteous (4:18). Likewise, Sirach 1:28 implies a contrast between a united and a divided heart and prohibits the latter.

2.2.6 Causative Predicates

Finally, with causative predicates we find much of the same for perfective prohibitions. Causatives behave like other dynamic predicates rather than like states. Unfortunately, the data I have for causative predicates fails to suggest any kind of meaningful criteria for distinguishing the DO NOT START X conceptualization from a simple prohibition. There is little difference in usage with causatives compared to the above predicate types. A couple of illustrative examples are provided in 41 and 42. The first, from Acts of Pilate 15:5, is situated in a context where the priests are questioning Joseph of Arimathea about the disappearance of Jesus' body from the tomb where Joseph had buried him.

41. *καὶ σὺ οὖν μὴ κρύψῃς ἀφ' ἡμῶν ἕως ῥήματος.*
    And you, therefore, do not hide so much as a word from us (Acts Pil. 15:5).

The purpose of the prohibition is to dissuade Joseph from lying to them. Contextually, the DO NOT START X meaning fits here since, at the beginning of the interrogation, the speakers are prohibiting the initiation of hiding information—any and all information. Example 42 differs in that the prohibition is limited to a particular constituent of the clause rather than the clause—the beginning of the clause and also the larger context intimates that those who do obey can be led into Jerusalem. Nevertheless, the DO NOT START X meaning still fits rather well.

42. *τοὺς δὲ μὴ ἀκούοντάς σου, μὴ εἰσαγάγῃς αὐτοὺς ἐκεῖ* [=*εἰς Ἰερουσαλήμ*].
    Those who do not obey you, do not lead them there [=into Jerusalem] (4 Bar. 8.3).

Example 42 fits well the DO NOT START X conceptualization within the broader definition involving some form of future reference, since the initiation of leading people, whether spouses who follow the Lord or spouses who do not, has not yet begun. The commands/prohibitions here about whom to lead come before the beginning of the event.

2.3 Summary

The above survey of imperfective and perfective data for predicate types demonstrates patterns. For the imperfective aspect, we noted two generalizations: one related to predicate types and one related to the specific prohibitions. First, while all predicate types allow for the STOP DOING X usage, achievements only do so in contexts that involve habitual or iterative events. We can account for this by observing that the STOP DOING X usage is tied to the incomplete and durational character of the imperfective aspect. In turn, when the usage is realized with a predicate type that inherently lacks duration, such as achievements, the aspect must contribute the entire durational character by itself. The combination of achievement predicate semantics in conjunction with the imperfective aspect causes a given clause to be realized in terms of an instantaneous event that repeatedly takes place (e.g., "What God has made clean, you must stop calling unclean").

Second, the STOP DOING X usage shows a consistent tendency to appear in prohibitions that are contextually specific situations, where the prohibition was not universal or generic in its scope, but instead had a distinct referent. Referentiality is the linguistic category that grounds the general versus specific generalization for prohibitions. A general prohibition is nonreferential; no individual event or situation functions as the reference for the prohibition. A specific prohibition is necessarily a referential prohibition because it points to a particular instance of something that should be prohibited. My data falls in line with Fanning's observation that the imperfective aspect is normally the preferred aspect

for nonreferential prohibitions (i.e., general prohibitions).[48] At the same time, my data show that the STOP DOING X usage is more likely to appear in referential prohibitions.[49] This is striking, but not unexpected, since commanding a person to cease something implies specific knowledge of that individual's actions and behavior. I would suggest a speaker's desire to use the STOP DOING X usage is one motivation for deviating from the expected perfective subjunctive for a referential/specific prohibition and using an imperfective imperative instead.

Prohibitions with the perfective aspect exhibit fewer clear-cut distinctions. This is because, as I noted a few times above, it is extremely difficult to distinguish between a simple prohibition (DO NOT DO X) and the proposed DO NOT START X construction. Still, it was clear in my data that the DO NOT START X meaning does not collocate with state predicates, likely as a result of the nondynamic nature of states. Further, I explored the possibility above that the DO NOT START X conceptualization seemed more common in contexts that were nonreferential. If this is true—and it does appear the case in my data—then the DO NOT START X conceptualization is, in a sense, a contextual motivation for a speaker to select a perfective subjunctive to express a general prohibition in the same way that the STOP DOING X usage is for specific prohibitions in the imperfective aspect.

3. LAYERS OF SCOPE AND NEGATION

In a simple and practical sense, negation scope is simply asking the question, "What portion of a clause is being negated?" My goal here is to provide some elaboration of how negation works in

48 The observation itself is actually much older than Fanning's work, but his *Verbal Aspect* is a useful reference because of its breadth and detail of discussion, dedicating an entire chapter to the topic of the use of aspect in commands and prohibitions. Equally important, however, is his survey of the relationship between reference and aspect in general without reference to the particular issues of commands and prohibitions (*Verbal Aspect*, 179–85).

49 In fact, the only instance I have of the STOP DOING X usage with a general or nonreferential prohibition is from the Psalms, which could be argued to also be specific for its original context and purpose.

conjunction with the generalizations I have noted in the analysis above. Essentially, this is a descriptive account of the interface between aspect, negation, and command-type illocutionary force that results in the creation of prohibitions.[50] The structure of the description here is organized on the basis of the degree of grammaticalization. Aspect and mood, being marked in the verb morphology, are the most grammaticalized categories and so I use them together as the primary point of organization.

Recall from the introduction that the grammatical categories tend to have scope over one of three layers of the clause, the clausal proposition, the core predication, and the nuclear predicate. The diagram of these three layers is presented again below in figure 2.

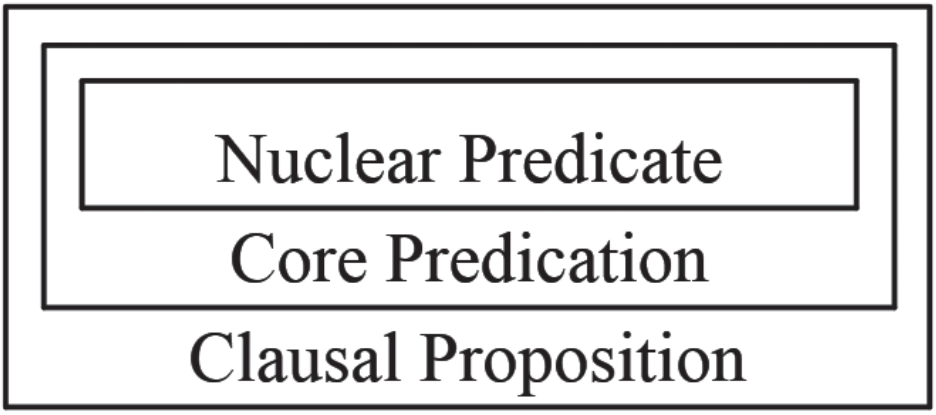

Figure 2. Layered Structure of the Clause

Aspect has scope over the nuclear predicate only, but negation might have scope over any of these layers. However, the aspect of the prohibition also influences which layers of scope are possible for negation. With the imperfective prohibitions (imperfective with the imperative), negation may have scope over any of these three layers of the clause, but with perfective prohibitions, only the clausal proposition and the core predication seem to be possible options for the scope of the negating element (μή for the imperative and subjunctive moods).

50 My research here functions as a small piece of a larger effort to work toward a full-scale descriptive reference grammar of New Testament and Koine Greek oriented toward linguists and translators.

In this section, I make two important claims. First, the STOP DOING X usage is inherently tied to the scope of negation for imperfective prohibitions. This relationship is derived from the nature of semantic scope for both aspect and negation. Secondly, the DO NOT START X conceptualization cannot be correlated with any particular layer of negation scope. This is significant because, despite the fact that the phenomena of aspect in prohibitions seem parallel, it demonstrates that the STOP DOING X and DO NOT START X are fundamentally distinct in their motivation and realization.

3.1 Imperfective Aspect with the Imperative Mood

In imperfective prohibitions when the negation has scope over the entire clausal proposition, the whole clause, including its arguments and its adjuncts, is negated. Such prohibitions have a tendency to be absolute in nature, as in example 43, which cannot mean that it is perfectly acceptable for the audience to make other people's children angry. The scope of the negator encompasses the entire clause.

43. *μὴ παροργίζετε τὰ τέκνα*
    Do not make your children angry (Eph 6:4)

44. *καὶ ἐάν τις ἐπαινῇ ὑμᾶς ὡς ἀγαθούς, μὴ ἐπαίρεσθε, μηδὲ μεταβάλλεσθε, μήτε εἰς τέρψιν, μήτε εἰς ἀηδίαν.*
    And if anyone praises you as good, do not be proud [lit. lifted up] and do not be affected**,** either to delight or disgust (T.Dan 4.3).

The same is true in example 44 from the pseudepigraphical Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs. Here we have Dan, the son of Jacob and Bilhah exhorting his family not to be proud or affected by other people's words. Again the negation covers the entire proposition. The two prepositional phrases *μήτε εἰς τέρψιν, μήτε εἰς ἀηδίαν* establish the comprehensive scope of the prohibition.

The conceptualization of clausal scope negation with the imperfective aspect is represented in Figure 3 below. The largest circle denotes clausal proposition scope, the middle circle refers to core predication scope where constituents like subject and object arguments reside, and the smallest circle to nuclear predicate scope, which is limited to the predicate itself. The bidirectional arrow

refers to the imperfective aspect, signifying the unboundedness of its internal temporal structure.

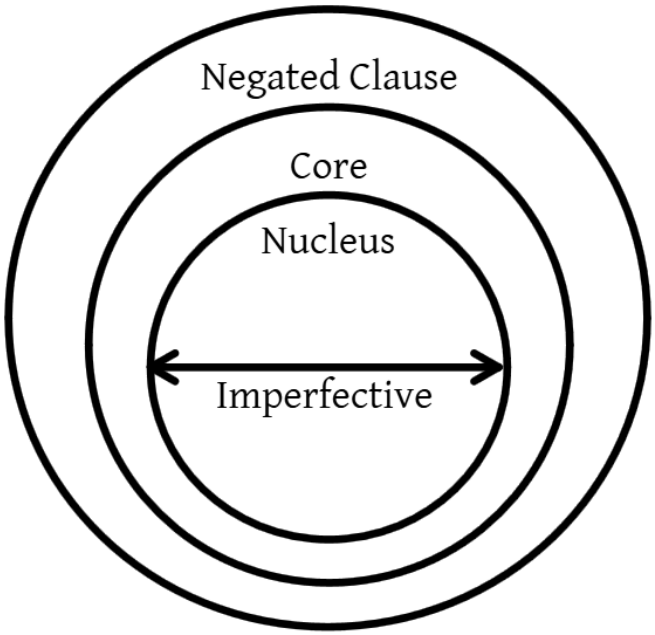

Figure 3. Negation with Scope over the Causal Proposition (Imperfective)

The two examples above, 43 and 44, both involve this type of scope. The negation encompasses the entirety of the clause. The entire clause is affected: the event, its internal temporal structure, and also the participants. The negation is absolute and comprehensive in nature.

We have also seen instances of negation where the scope is limited to a smaller portion of the clause, such as when an event is negated only with reference to particular participant rather than absolutely. A good example of this was observed in our discussion of imperfective prohibitions with state predicates, provided again below in example 45.

45. Εἷς δὲ μὴ πιστευέσθω μάρτυς
Do not believe a single witness (Jos., *A.J.* 4.219)

The negation in this clause only has scope over the number of witnesses to be believed. The speaker/writer does not want to prohibit belief itself—there are others who should still be believed. The larger context involves Josephus describing the legal requirements for witnesses in order to establish a sufficient burden of

proof. A single witness is insufficient as a burden of proof. Multiple separate witnesses are viewed as and assumed to be a more reliable guide for determining the facts than a single witness alone would.

There is a similar instance of negation scope in 2 Clement, which I provide in example 46.

46. μὴ φοβεῖσθε τοὺς ἀποκτέννοντας ὑμᾶς καὶ μηδὲν ὑμῖν δυναμένους ποιεῖν
Do not fear those who kill you and can do nothing else (2 Clem. 5.4).

Here we have a command from Jesus to Peter from an unknown source.[51] Jesus is exhorting Peter to be more concerned about spiritual death than physical death. Do not fear those who can only kill, but rather fear the one who "has power to cast both soul and body into fiery hell." Here again the purpose of the negation is not to prohibit fearing absolutely, but to prohibit fearing of a particular and specific participant. This narrows the scope of the negation from the clause to the core, as in Figure 4 below.

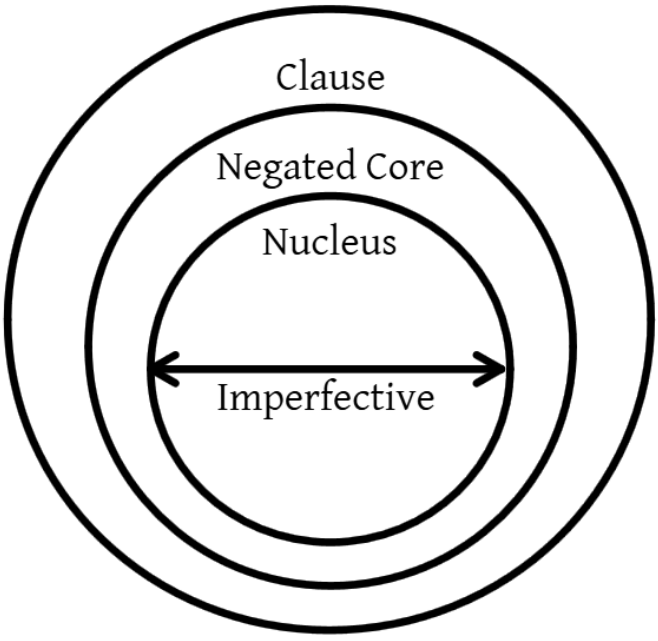

Figure 4. Negation with Scope over the Core Predicate (Imperfective)

51 See Holmes, *Apostolic Fathers*, 112 n. 9. This particular saying has a parallel in Matt 10:28.

With core negation, the proposition itself remains intact since the negation pertains only to an argument rather than the verb. At least this is the normal account for indicative clauses (i.e., "John didn't bring pizza; he brought soup" means the event of bringing still happened). Because prohibitions are nonindicative, the relationship between negation and the proposition is more complicated. Commands and prohibitions involve situations that are desired by the speaker/writer that may or may not exist. They project a particular declarative state of affairs onto their recipient. If Rachel were to say to John, "Do not bring pizza, bring soup," then Rachel's desired expectation is that when John arrives at the door with soup, he could say, "I brought soup, not pizza." The scope of core negation with nonindicative clauses places an expectation on the desired event, such that the predication still takes place but with different participants.

In the case of example 45 above, belief itself is not prohibited. The audience of the prohibition is still completely free to believe witnesses. The question is how many there are. The prohibition projects a state of affairs where "I do not believe just one witness" would be true. Similarly, in example 46, the speaker of the prohibition is not concerned with people being afraid, but that their fear has the proper source. In both cases, significant portions of the proposition that is desired by the speaker/writer are left intact and are not affected by the negation.

Finally, I propose that negation with scope solely over the nuclear predicate provides the best explanation for the existence of the STOP DOING X usage. I would go so far as to argue that *both* the nature of scope for negation and the nature of scope of the imperfective aspect work together to communicate the STOP DOING X usage. Recall from the introductory discussion of scope that aspect as a grammatical category only has scope over the nuclear predicate. It does not have scope over the individual arguments or other peripheral constituents of the clause. Thus in our example clause, repeated here as example 47, whether the perfective aspect is used or the progressive aspect is used, the participants (the speaker "I" and "some water") are unaffected by the temporal structure.

47. a. I <u>was pouring</u> some water (progressive)
    b. I <u>poured</u> some water (perfective).

Regardless of the aspect chosen, the basic event and its proposition remain. Each sentence (a) and (b) entails the other.[52] Now, the difference between a perfective aspect, on the one hand, and a progressive (English) or imperfective (Greek) aspect on the other is dependent upon the internal temporal structure presented by the speaker. By presenting an event as incomplete or in progress, it then becomes at least possible to end the event part way through without full completion. It appears that Greek takes advantage of this fact for the expression of a particular contextualized meaning by means of a combination of aspect, negation, and modality. Fundamentally, then, in a clause such as example 48, it is the temporal structure of the aspect that is being negated. The speaker has "παράτασις, duration, continuation in mind" and desires its cessation.[53] When this is the context for a sentence, each of these three elements has a grammatical corollary: duration/continuation (imperfective aspect), desire (modality, i.e., imperative), and cessation (negation). Bringing these three together creates a semantic expression that is more than merely the sum total of its constituent parts.

48. μὴ γίνου ἄπιστος ἀλλὰ πιστός.
Stop doubting, but believe (John 20:27).

The context of this clause provides clarity that the STOP DOING X usage is the correct interpretation. Thomas had heard from the other disciples that Jesus was alive and had appeared to them, rejecting the idea with grand declarations. Then Jesus appears before Thomas in 20:26 and commands him to stop doubting here in 20:27. The duration of Thomas's doubt is at the forefront of Jesus' mind and he commands its cessation. Effectively, what we have with the STOP DOING X usage in terms of negation scope is something that perhaps looks like Figure 5 below.

52 At least, this is true for these two particular sentences, entailment and aspect is a more complicated affair than this in other situations, particularly when telicity is involved—which is not the case here with this particular sentence pair. For a full discussion of aspect and entailment, see Olga Borik and Tanya Reinhart, "Telicity and Perfectivity: Two Independent Systems," in *Proceedings of LOLA 8 (Symposium on Logic and Language)*, ed. László Hunyadi, György Rákosi, and Enikő Tóth (Debrecen, Hungary, 2004), 13–34.

53 To adopt a turn of phrase from J. P. Louw, "On Greek Prohibitions," *Acta Classica* 2 (1959), 46.

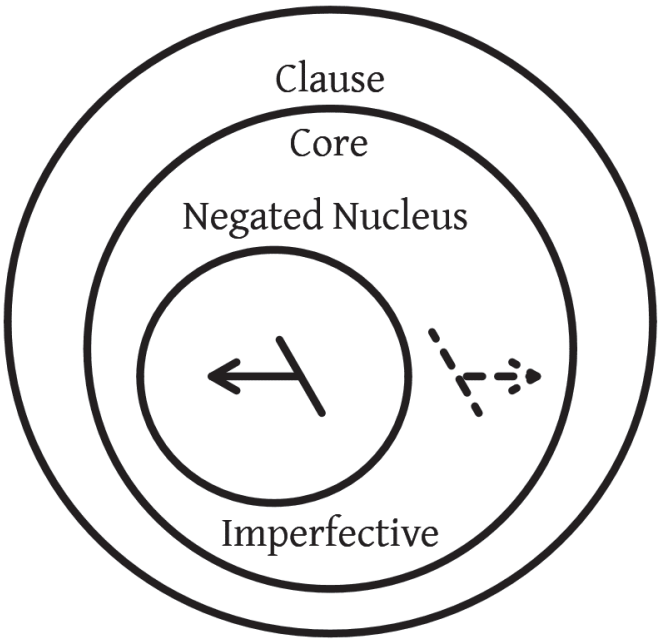

Figure 5. Negation with Scope of the Nuclear Predicate (Imperfective)

In this diagram, the negation is narrowed to the internal temporal structure of the nuclear predicate. The imperfective aspect is necessary for the STOP DOING X usage because the alternative choice, the perfective, lacks internal temporal structure entirely in its conceptualization.[54] The imperfective aspect is a necessary element for the negation scope.

Another striking example is 1 Timothy 5:23 below in example 49. Clauses where the negator is μηκέτι rather than merely μή are particularly helpful in seeing the pattern.

49. μηκέτι ὑδροπότει, ἀλλὰ οἴνῳ ὀλίγῳ χρῶ διὰ τὸν στόμαχον καὶ τὰς πυκνάς σου ἀσθενείας
End your sobriety, instead use a little wine for your stomach and your frequent health issues (1 Tim 5:23).

Other discussions of prohibitions, such as those of Huffman or Boyer,[55] have difficulty with 1 Timothy 5:23 as a candidate for meaning STOP DOING X because of the verb ὑδροπότει, typically glossed

54 Perfect imperatives notwithstanding.

55 Huffman, *Verbal Aspect Theory*, 158; James L. Boyer, "A Classification of Imperatives: A Statistical Study," *GTJ* 8 (1987) 35–54.

as "drink water." The argument goes that it is absurd for Paul to command Timothy to stop drinking water. However, this difficulty feels contrived and results from an insufficient understanding of compounding and the resulting semantics. Like most constructional processes, compounding tends to result in a final meaning that is more than the sum of its parts.[56] For this particular verb, the incorporation of the noun ὕδωρ into the verb πίνω creates a meaning more specific than "drink water," which an examination of other occurrences bears out. This verb is nearly always used in contexts that explicitly contrast with the drinking of alcohol.[57] Sobriety is an emergent semantic property that arises from the combination of these two disparate lexical elements in conjunction with the shared knowledge of the world.[58] Fundamentally, this verb seems to be less

56 The seminal article demonstrating this fact is Charles J. Fillmore, Paul Kay, and Mary Catherine O'Connor, "Regularity and Idiomaticity in Grammatical Constructions: The Case of Let Alone," *Language* 64 (1988): 501–538. More recently, see for an introductory overview of the nature of constructions: Adele E. Goldberg, *Constructions at Work: The Nature of Generalization in Language*, Oxford Linguistics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

57 These include: Hdt., *Hist*. 1.71.3, Luc. *Bis acc*. 16, Dan 1:12 LXX; Plato, *Resp*. 561c; Plut., *Para*. 19, and Xen., *Cyr*. 6.2.26. The last of these is the most striking for determining the meaning of this compound verb. What is notable about this instance of the verb is that is appears in contrast not only with the drinking of wine, but also in contrast with the transitive verb πίνω with the accusative object ὕδωρ:

> "As for wine, everyone should bring only enough to last until we can grow accustomed to sobriety (ὑδροποτεῖν). For most of the journey, wine will be unavailable. Even if we take a large quantity, all the wine we can carry will be insufficient. To avoid falling ill when we suddenly find ourselves out of wine, this is what we must do: we must immediately begin to drink water (πίνειν ὕδωρ) at our meals, for by so doing we shall not greatly change our manner of living" (Xen., *Cyr*. 6.2.26–27).
>
> The thrust of the speaker's argument is that they should start drinking water (πίνειν ὕδωρ) at meals now in order to slowly transition away from wine so that when they are forced to be sober (ὑδροποτεῖν), they will not need to endure miserable withdrawal symptoms.
>
> Finally, there are two instances in the verb that appear merely in highly ascetic contexts are: Luc., *Macr.* 5 and App., *Pun.* 11. While neither of these contrast explicitly with the drinking of alcohol, the sobriety sense still fits.

58 On emergence, embodiment and their importance to cognitive science, see Raymond J. Gibbs, *Embodiment and Cognitive Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Francisco J. Varela, Evan Thompson, and Eleanor Rosch, *The Embodied Mind: Cognitive Science and Human Experience* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991).

about literal drinking of water and more a euphemistic means of referring to alcoholic sobriety. In that context, Paul's command to Timothy makes the most sense as an instance of the STOP DOING X usage. Timothy has been abstaining from alcohol and Paul wants him to stop for health reasons.

The cognitive and grammatical processes involved in the formation of the verb ὑδροπότει are precisely parallel to those involved in the formation of the STOP DOING X usage. As I have already stated, nuclear scope negation does not happen in Greek independent of a particular aspect, a particular mood, and a particular mental representation on part of the speaker—he has an ongoing event in mind and desires its cessation.[59] This mental representation, in turn, functions to provide explanation for an additional fact that I find in my data: the STOP DOING X usage only appears with specific, referential events. It does not appear possible to use the construction with general, nonreferential contexts. This makes sense logically. One wonders how someone would stop doing something nonreferentially.[60]

3.2 Perfective Aspect with the Subjunctive Mood

The perfective aspect's relationship to negation scope is dramatically simpler. Unlike the imperfective aspect and the STOP DOING X usage, there is no clear correlation between negation scope and the perfective aspect's DO NOT START X expression. It appears that for the perfective aspect negation in Greek functions much the same as it does in English—clause scope negation and core scope negation are possible options, but nuclear scope negation is only possible with derivational morphology—the α-privative prefix, for

59 It is an open question in my mind as to whether or not the imperative mood is a necessary element of the construction or whether it is possible for nuclear scope negation to arise solely with a negator and the imperfective. In such a situation, the cessation of the event would not be a command/prohibition, but a statement of fact. In theory, such a construction might appear with a past imperfective indic. verb that still functions in the narrative as a foregrounded event in the storyline rather than as background context. As a construction, this seems plausible, but I have not searched the data.

60 On the other hand, logic has never stopped language from doing fascinating things before. The fact that this construction is tied to an irrealis modality makes the question of referentiality more flexible.

example.[61] This not surprising given the lack of temporal structure of the Greek perfective aspect.

Independent of the possibility of nuclear scope negation with perfective imperatives in Greek, the evidence is against the DO NOT START X meaning from involving such negation. Consider the following examples.

50. μὴ διαβιβάσῃς ἡμᾶς τὸν Ιορδάνην.
Do not make us crossover the Jordan (Num 32:5)

Example 50 here and example 51 diverge from one another in their negation scope. Example 50 involves a situation where the negation has scope over the entire clause. The speakers of the prohibition are the people of the Israelite tribes of Gad and Reuben. They do not want to cross over the Jordan because they find the land of the western bank to be better for their way of life. The scope of μὴ falls over the entire clause because the speakers want to prohibit the entire proposition. While it is possible that they would find other river crossings to be acceptable, there is not an alternative river within the context that they could cross instead. Without a contextual contrast, the necessary interpretation is that the entire clause is being negated, both the verb and its arguments.[62] We can represent clausal negation scope with perfective prohibitions with Figure 6 below.

61 It deserves to be emphasized at this point that is not uncommon for individual aspects to interact with imperatives in general and prohibitions in particular in different ways. Some languages do not allow the perfective aspect to be used with prohibitions at all—constraining aspect and negation in a much more extreme manner than what we seen in Greek. See, for example, John Forsyth, *A Grammar of Aspect: Usage and Meaning in the Russian Verb*, Studies in the Modern Russian Language Extra Volume (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970).

62 One could argue that there could be a contrast between the tribes of Gad and Reuben and the other ten that would convey narrow scope negation. If that were the case, however, we would see the speakers' position of the pronominal constituent ἡμᾶς in a syntactic position in front of the verb in order to mark it as contrastive rather than in its default postverbal position.

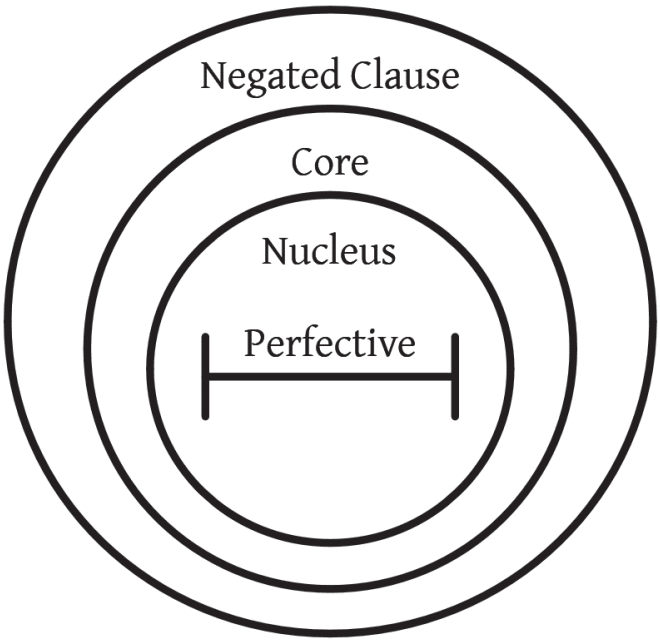

Figure 6. Negation with Scope over the Clausal Proposition (Perfective)

Conversely example 51 provides an excellent example of how core negation scope functions with perfective prohibition with a clear contrast provided between two alternatives.

51. μὴ ἐπέλθῃς ἐκεῖ, ἔκκλινον δὲ ἀπ᾽ αὐτῶν καὶ παράλλαξον.
Do not go there, instead turn away from them and pass by (Prov 4:15)

This clause appears within a proverb that relies on a LIFE AS A JOURNEY metaphor in 4:10–19. The speaker is warning the audience of two possible roads of travel. There are those roads of lawlessness where the ungodly set up camp. They are dark and dangerous roads. There are also the roads of the just and righteous that are well lit with daylight. The speaker, here in 4:15, prohibits the audience from traveling the roads of the ungodly and instead gives them an alternative: turn away, pass them by, and travel the roads of the righteous. The context makes it clear: only specific roads are being prohibited and not merely the traveling of roads more generally. The prohibition projects a state of affairs where the recipient could say, "I did not go there; I went elsewhere." The scope of the negator falling upon ἐκεῖ, which in turn refers back to ὁδοὺς ἀσεβῶν (roads of the ungodly) and ὁδοὺς παρανόμων (roads of lawlessness)

in 4:14. As such the negation scope can be represented in Figure 7 in the core rather than the clause below.

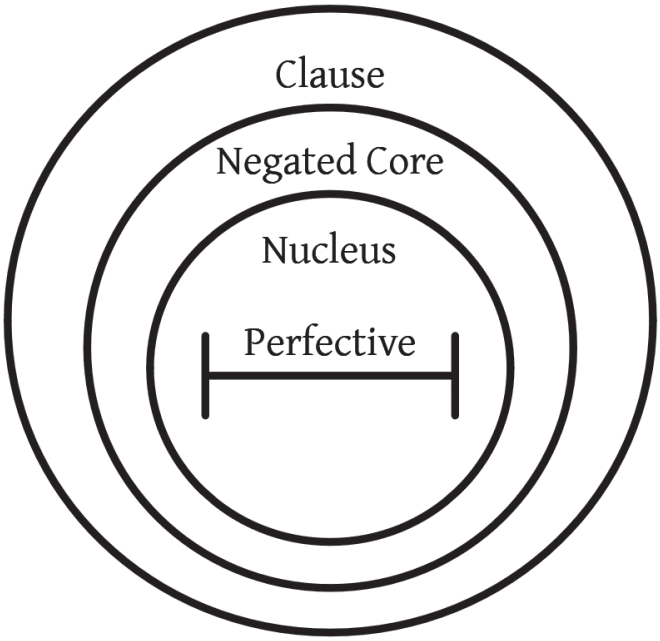

Figure 7. Negation with Scope of the Core Predication (Perfective)

As I said before, there is no evidence for nuclear scope negation with perfective prohibitions. Unlike the STOP DOING X construction, the DO NOT START X meaning cannot be correlated in any way with negation scope. Recall the following two causative prohibitions from examples (41) and (42) above, repeated here as examples 52 and 53. The first of these involves negation over the entire clause; the second over only the pronominal object *αὐτούς*.

52. *καὶ σὺ οὖν μὴ κρύψῃς ἀφ' ἡμῶν ἕως ῥήματος.*
    And you, therefore, do not hide so much as a word from us (Acts Pil. 15.5).

Here, the prohibition is absolute and comprehensive. The prohibition encompasses the entire proposition and forbids any and all hiding of information.

53. *τοὺς δὲ μὴ ἀκούοντάς σου, μὴ εἰσαγάγῃς αὐτοὺς ἐκεῖ* [=*εἰς Ἰερουσαλήμ*].
    Those who do not obey you, do not lead them there [=into Jerusalem] (4 Bar 8.3).

Fourth Baruch 8.3 contrasts with the prohibition in (52) in that the overt accusative argument αὐτούς is locus of the prohibition.[63] This prohibition appears in a message from the Lord to his people through Jeremiah. Specifically, it fits within a discourse of instructions regarding what the Jews should do with Babylonian spouses: gather them by the Jordan and say to everyone, "Let those who desire the Lord leave the works of Babylon behind" (4 Bar. 8.2). The spouses who obey (οἱ ἀκούοντες) and leave behind the works of Babylon may be brought into Jerusalem. The spouses who do not obey, must not be brought there. These two examples (52–53) are important evidence that both clause and core negation are possible with the meaning DO NOT START X. Granted, that does not rule out the possibility that there are instances of nuclear scope negation with perfective prohibitions. Unfortunately, my analysis has not provided any guidance for either what they would look like semantically or how one would go about searching for them. For that reason, Figure 8 leaves it as an open question.

63 Note also that this pronoun is resumptive from the fronted noun phrase in the left-detached position of the sentence. This is evidence that negation scope is a distinct phenomenon from the focus domain of information structure. Most of the time negation scope will parallel the focus domain of a given clause. Here, however, the resumptive pronoun is necessarily topical and thus by definition cannot be within the focus domain.

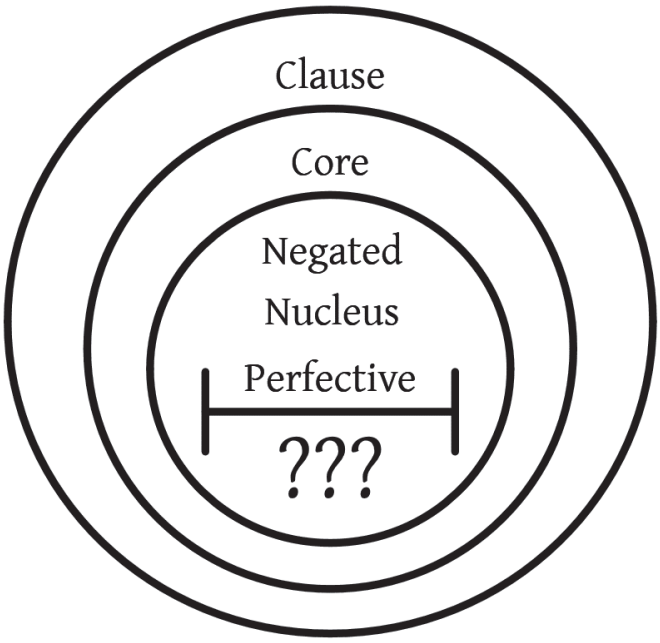

Figure 8. Negation with Scope of the Nuclear Predicate (Perfective)

4. CONCLUSION: PROHIBITIONS AS COMPLEX CONSTRUCTIONS

Language is fundamentally constructional in nature. Individual formal elements involve their own semantic expression and when multiple forms come together, more complex meanings arise, meanings that are greater than the constituent pieces. That is precisely what we have seen with Greek prohibitions. Neither the STOP DOING X meaning nor the DO NOT START X meaning is a defining characteristic of what an imperfective or perfective prohibition is. Instead in both cases, aspect, negation, modality, and referentiality all come together in formation of each of them.

On the basis of my analysis, I propose the following formal criteria for expression.

The STOP DOING X construction requires:

- Imperfective aspect
- Imperative mood
- Nuclear-scope negation*
- A specific, referential event*

The DO NOT START X construction requires:

- Perfective aspect
- Subjunctive mood
- Negation of any scope*
- A nonspecific, nonreferential event (?)

The criteria marked by asterisks are proposals that I have argued for in the analysis presented above. The idea of nuclear scope negation being a prerequisite for the STOP DOING X construction is, perhaps, the most novel proposal here. However, I view the idea as compelling because of how well it fits with the nature of the imperfective aspect and also because of the lack of clear data evincing alternative negation scopes, particularly core negation.[64] The fact that my data only consisted of instances of the STOP DOING X construction with referential events suggests that the construction is a particular type of divergence from the standard usage of the imperfective imperative for general commands and prohibitions.

The DO NOT START X construction was more ambiguous in its usage. Its semantics in particular contexts were clear, however. For one, there is clear evidence that negation scope does not play a role in its formation. Clear instances of both clause and core negation are quite common. Additionally, the larger textual contexts in which the construction appears tends to involve nonreferential events. This almost feels like a logical necessity, since referentiality *tends* to be tied to existence either in the world or, at the very least, in the discourse for the mental representation of the audience. My data, at best, demonstrates a *preference* for nonreferential events. This preference could be related to the fact that this construction often seems to function prospectively, where the speaker is desiring to prevent a potential event from occurring.[65] Still, this relationship between the DO NOT START X construction and referentiality is

64 It deserves to be emphasized that the claim does not mean that it would be impossible for a Koine Greek speaker to say, with core negation, perhaps "Stop going *to Tarsus*" with negation scope over the core argument, but rather that such a meaning would be expressed with a periphrastic construction rather than with a single imperfective prohibition.

65 This might suggest that Jo Willmott's analysis of such clauses as preventative rather than prohibitive is correct (*The Moods of Homeric Greek*, CCS [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008], 96).

the most tenuous in terms of its relationship to the language data. It represents an opportunity for future research moving forward.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aubrey, Michael G. "The Greek Perfect and the Categorization of Tense and Aspect: Toward a Descriptive Apparatus for Operators in Role and Reference Grammar." MA Thesis, Trinity Western University, 2014.

Borgen, Peder, Kåre Fuglseth, and Roald Skarsten. The Works of Philo: Greek Text With Morphology. Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2005.

Borik, Olga and Tanya Reinhart. "Telicity and Perfectivity: Two Independent Systems." Pages 13–34 in *Proceedings of LOLA 8 (Symposium on Logic and Language)*. Edited by László Hunyadi, György Rákosi, and Enikő Tóth. Debrecen, Hungary, 2004.

Boyer, James L. "A Classification of Imperatives: A Statistical Study." *GTJ* 8 (1987): 35–54.

Brannan, Rick. *Greek Apocryphal Gospels, Fragments and Agrapha: Texts and Transcriptions*. Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2013.

Butler, Christopher S. *Structure and Function: A Guide to Three Major Structural-Functional Theories*. 2 vols. SLCS 63–64. Amsterdam: Benjamins, 2003.

Butler, Christopher S., María de los Ángeles Gómez-González, and Susana M. Doval-Suárez. *Dynamics of Language Use: Functional and Contrastive Perspectives*. P&B NS 140. Amsterdam: Benjamins, 2005.

Crane, Gregory R., ed. Perseus Digital Library. Tufts University. http://www.perseus.tufts.edu

Curtius, Georg. *The Greek Verb: Its Structure and Development*. 2nd ed. Translated by Augustus S. Wilkins and Edwin B. England. London: Murray, 1883.

Dowty, David. *Word Meaning and Montague Grammar: The Semantics of Verbs and Times in Generative Semantics and in Montague's PTQ* . SLL 7. Dordrecht: Reidel, 1979.

Fanning, Buist. *Verbal Aspect in New Testament Greek*. OTM. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990.

Fantin, Joseph. *The Greek Imperative Mood in the New Testament: A Cognitive and Communicative Approach*. SBG 12. New York: Lang, 2010.

Fillmore, Charles, Paul Kay, and Mary Catherine O'Connor. "Regularity and Idiomaticity in Grammatical Constructions: The Case of Let Alone." *Language* 64 (1988): 501–538.

Forsyth, James. *A Grammar of Aspect: Usage and Meaning in the Russian Verb*. Studies in the Modern Russian Language Extra Volume. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970.

Gibbs, Raymond W. *Embodiment and Cognitive Science*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Goldberg, Adele E. *Constructions at Work: The Nature of Generalization in Language*. Oxford Linguistics. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Headlam, Walter. "Greek Prohibitions." *ClR* 19 (1905): 30–36.

Holmes, Michael W., ed. *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007.

———, ed. *The Greek New Testament: SBL Edition*. Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010.

Huffman, Douglas S. *Verbal Aspect Theory and the Prohibitions in the Greek New Testament*. SBG 16. New York: Lang, 2014.

Lakoff, George. *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things: What Categories Reveal about the Mind*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987.

Lakoff, George, and Mark Johnson. *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and Its Challenge to Western Thought*. New York: Basic Books, 1999.

Langacker, Ronald. Foundations of Cognitive Grammar. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1987.

Louw, J. P. "On Greek Prohibitions." *Acta Classica* 2 (1959): 43–57.

Moulton, James Hope. *A Grammar of New Testament Greek: Prolegomena*. 3rd ed. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1908.

Napoli, Maria. *Aspect and Actionality in Homeric Greek: A Contrastive Analysis*. Milan: FrancoAngeli, 2006.

Niese, Benedikt. *Flavii Iosephi Opera Recognovit*. 7 vols. Berlin: Weidmannos, 1888–1895.

Olsen, Mari. "A Semantic and Pragmatic Model of Lexical and Grammatical Aspect." PhD diss., Northwestern University, 1994.

Pavey, Emma. *The Structure of Language: An Introduction to Grammatical Analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge, 2010.

Penner, Ken, and Michael Heiser. *Old Testament Greek Pseudepigrapha with Morphology*. Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2008.

Porter, Stanley. *Verbal Aspect in the Greek of the New Testament: With Reference to Tense and Mood*. SBG 1. New York: Lang, 1989.

Rahlfs, Alfred, and John Hanhart, eds. *Septuaginta: Editio altera*. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2006.

Smith, Carlotta. *The Parameter of Aspect*. 2nd ed. SLP 43. Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1997.

Stagg, Frank. "The Abused Aorist." *JBL* 91 (1972): 222–31.

Stork, Peter. *The Aspectual Usage of the Dynamic Infinitive in Herodotus*. Groningen: Bouma's Boekhuis, 1982.

Taylor, John. *Linguistic Categorization*. 3rd ed. OTL. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Van Valin, Robert D., Jr. "An Overview of Role and Reference Grammar." 2010. http://linguistics.buffalo.edu/people/faculty/vanvalin/rrg/RRG_overview.pdf

———. *Exploring the Syntax-Semantics Interface*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Van Valin, Robert D., Jr., and Randy J. LaPolla. *Syntax: Structure, Meaning, and Function*. CTL. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Varela, Francisco J., Evan Thompson, and Eleanor Rosch. *The Embodied Mind: Cognitive Science and Human Experience*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991.

Varner, William. *James*. EEC. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2014.

Wallace, Daniel B. *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of New Testament Greek With Scripture, Subject, and Greek Word Indexes*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996.

Willmott, Jo. The Moods of Homeric Greek. CCS. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Xenophon. *Cyropaedia*. Translated by Walter Miller. 2 vols. LCL. New York: MacMillan, 1914.