

Chapter 7

Support-verb constructions as level-of-speech markers in a corpus of hagiographical literature


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This contribution traces the diachronic development of a specific type of verbo-nominal collocations in a post-classical Greek corpus limited to prototypical support-verb constructions with ποιέω *poieō* + eventive noun. For this purpose, the chapter draws on an extensive corpus of Byzantine saints' lives and adopts an eclectic methodology, which benefits from the developments in corpus linguistics, sociolinguistics, and Byzantine studies. In addition to stylistic and register variation, it delves into the lexical and syntactic properties of some of these collocations and pinpoints reasons for their development and renewal. The study focusses on a wide selection of texts of the hagiographic genre, covering a wide timespan (4th–14th centuries). It contributes to the better understanding of the procedures of formal renewal and variation of support-verb constructions and constructions with support-verb extensions in diachrony.

Esta contribución rastrea el desarrollo diacrónico de un tipo específico de colocaciones verbo-nominales en un corpus griego postclásico limitado a construcciones prototípicas de verbo soporte con ποιέω *poieō* + sustantivo eventivo. Para ello, he compilado un extenso corpus de vidas de santos bizantinos y he adoptado una metodología ecléctica, que se beneficia de los desarrollos de la lingüística de corpus, la sociolingüística y la bizantinística. Además de la variación estilística y de registro, profundizo en las propiedades léxicas y sintácticas de algunas de estas colocaciones y voy a dar cuenta de su desarrollo y renovación formal. El estudio se centrará en una amplia selección de textos del género hagiográfico, abarcando un amplio espectro temporal (siglos IV–XIV). Con ello se espera obtener una mejor caracterización de los procedimientos de renovación y variación formales de las construcciones con verbo soporte y de las construcciones con extensión del verbo soporte en diacronía.



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1 Introduction

In the present chapter, I deal with ancient Greek support-verb constructions (SVCs henceforth) in diachrony, focusing specifically on an extensive corpus of hagiographical literature.¹ In the case of verbo-nominal collocations, a basic distinction is generally accepted between functional collocations (also called SVCs) and lexical collocations (Koike 2001: 78, Baños 2014: 5). In the former type of collocation (e.g. *take a walk*), the nominal base of the collocation is an abstract noun that usually nominalises an event and therefore has its own argument structure; in the latter (e.g. *play the piano*), although the verb also has a figurative sense (*to play* here means *to perform with the piano*), the base is a concrete noun.

With a few recent exceptions (Fendel 2021, 2023a,b, Vives Cuesta & Madrigal Acero 2022) the diachronic examination of Ancient Greek SVCs remains a rather unexplored field of study (Baños et al. 2022). What I consider innovative in my approach to the topic is the incorporation of historical sociolinguistics, something I consider of paramount importance in the linguistic approach to the study of post-classical Greek and Byzantine learned literature.

To understand the synchronic and diachronic variability of SVCs inherent in the development of Greek during the Byzantine millennium, we must start from the sociolinguistic situation of *diglossia* (Toufexis 2008). In dealing with it, most authors tend to speak of levels of *style*, following Ševčenko (1981)'s seminal article. However, there are reasons to believe that the rewriting goes beyond a question of style and again involves changes in *levels of speech* (Hinterberger 2010, 2021). It is therefore closer to the definition of sociolinguistic terms, such as sociolect or diastratic variant.²

A key issue that highlights the issues with defining levels of speech in diachrony concerns linguistic variation (Bentein 2017). In the study of the social mechanisms that govern linguistic change, studies applied to oral variants have been remarkably predominant. However, based on the work of Romaine (1982: 122) it can be argued that the socio-historical approach she develops is applicable to written texts such as those under study here and, and on the other hand,

¹The dataset is accessible here: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5287/ora-n652gamyj>.

²Other authors, such as Markopoulos (2009), prefer to use the concept of register, which I believe does not do justice to the largely mimetic situation, resulting from a process of rewriting, which our texts present. As in Vives Cuesta & Madrigal Acero (2022), I have opted for the term *levels of speech*, knowing that it competes with other terms such as *register*, *style* or even *variation*. Style tends to refer to literary or rhetorical variation, while variation is too vague a term to comprehend the linguistic reality I deal with. However, the strictly linguistic characterisation of many phenomena invites us to opt for this terminology.

they are reference texts for understanding the development of many linguistic changes in Postclassical Greek, as Klaas Bentein has shown in several studies (Bentein 2017, 2019, 2020).

The concept of levels of speech is used in the field of Byzantine studies to distinguish linguistic variants that occur for sociolinguistic reasons. At the heart of any study of post-classical Greek is the question of which variants were in use and which were borrowed from the learned language. Two or three levels can be distinguished in scholarly Greek, depending on various variables. These levels are not airtight and were used creatively by Byzantine authors (Hinterberger 2014b). To these levels of the learned language, we must add the vernacular, which undoubtedly has a greater influence on the lower registers of cultivated Greek. The identification of these different levels, which interact with each other, is complex. The situation is further complicated by the lack of a common terminology to define them.

Here, I make a distinction between ‘low’ and ‘high’ (*koine*) levels and reserve the term Atticism for cases where there is direct continuity with syntactic usages attested in Classical Greek (CG henceforth) or New Testament Greek (NTG henceforth). Recognising this general trend in the description of the New-Testament (NT henceforth) language does not necessarily imply that all NT authors adopt the Atticist style in all its aspects. There are factors such as free stylistic choices and bilingual interference due to the multilingual context in the writings of the Gospels that should be considered in the study of each collocation (Baños 2015, Baños & Jiménez López 2017).³

Attempts to characterise sociolinguistic variation in hagiographic texts have been rare. The few that are available have focused on the comparison of different versions of the same *Vita* and on stylistic rather than linguistic aspects (Zilliaccus 1938, Schiffer 1992, 1999, Franco 2009). To date, with the sole exception of Churik (2019), we have not found a reference that relates the functioning of SVCs to different levels of speech in Byzantine Greek.

The kind of variation in diachrony which we are talking about has an important linguistic exponent in the use of SVCs in contrastive contexts, such as those

³In a forthcoming paper, Baños and Jiménez López demonstrate the variability in the selection of SVCs when translating different collocations from the language of the *Septuagint* version involving the noun καρπός *karpos* (καρπὸν φέρω *karpon phero* ‘to bear fruit’, δίδωμι *didomi* ‘to give’ or ποιέομαι *poieomai* ‘to make’). The selection shows, on the one hand, the idiosyncratic character of this type of complex predicate and, on the other hand, how the literal translation of sacred texts becomes a means of creating new collocations in Greek, as well as semitisms that find continuity in the Gospels and form the basis for the lexical creation of new collocations through literary *imitatio* operating in the genre of hagiography.

presented in passages like (1), where there is an alternation between the synthetic (ἔρχεσθαι πυκνά *erk^hest^hai pykna* ‘to go frequently’) and analytic forms (ποιεῖσθαι τὰς προσευλεύσεις πυκνάς *poieist^hai tas proseleuseis* ‘to make frequent visits’).

- (1) a. καὶ ἀπολύ-σας τοὺς γον-εῖς αὐτ-οῦ μετὰ
kai apoly-sas t-us gon-eis aut-u meta
 and dismiss-PTCP-NOM.SG the parents-ACC.PL he-GEN.SG with
 εὐλογι-ῶν παρ-ή-γγειλ-εν μὴ πυκνὰ ἔρχ-εσθαι
eulogi-on par-e-ngeil-en me pykn-a erk^h-est^hai
 blessing-GEN.PL next-PST.exhort.-AOR-3SG NEG often come-INF
 πρὸς αὐτ-όν
pros aut-on
 to he-ACC.SG

‘And, bidding the parents farewell and blessing them, he asked them not to visit him often’

(*Vita antiquior Sancti Danielis Stylitae* 5.16)

- b. ἐντειλά-μενος δὲ τ-οῖς αὐτ-οῦ πατρ-άσιν ὁ
enteila-menos de t-ois aut-u patr-asin ^ho
 command.PTCP PRT the.DAT he-GEN.SG parents-DAT.PL The.NOM.SG
 τ-ῆς μον-ῆς προεστ-ὼς μὴ πυκνὰς
t-es mon-es proest-os me pykn-as
 the-GEN.SG monastery-GEN.SG abbot-PTCP-NOM NEG frequent-ACC.PL
 ποιεῖσθαι πρὸς τ-ὸν παῖδ-α τ-ὰς προσελεύσ-εις,
poiei-st^hai pros t-on paid-a t-as proseleus-eis,
 make-INF to the child-ACC.SG the.ACC.PL visit-ACC.PL
 χαίρ-οντας ἐκπέμπ-ει γον-εῖς τὸ
k^hair-ontas ekpemp-ei gon-eis to
 rejoice-PTCP-ACC.PL send-PRES-3SG-ACT parent-ACC.PL the
 καινό-τατον υἱοῦ στερο-μένους
kaino-taton ^hyi-u stero-menus
 new-SPRL.NOM.SG son-GEN.SG leave-PTCP-ACC.PL
 ‘The abbot of the monastery, asking the parents not to make frequent visits to the child, bids the parents, who are happy in most strange a way, since they were losing a son’

(*Vita sancti Symeonis Stylitae* 5.23)

In what follows, I first present my own definition of the concept of SVC (Section 2), which follows that of the Spanish research projects led by Baños

and Jiménez López respectively (*DiCoLat* & *DiCoGra*).⁴ I then provide a brief overview of the corpus compiled for my survey (Section 3), the methodology used for the analysis (Section 4), several types of SVCs with motion nouns (Section 5.1), an overview of support-verb-extension constructions (SVECs henceforth) (Section 5.2), and edge cases represented by verbs of realisation (Section 5.3). Finally, I summarise my conclusions (Section 6).

2 Definition of support-verb constructions

SVCs are considered a special kind of verbo-nominal collocations that are situated at the interface between syntax and semantics.⁵ Lexically, they are considered verbal multi-word expressions, since support verbs are form-identical with the lexical form of a verb when lexical and auxiliary forms coexist (Bentein 2013a). Lexical features of the components of the construction are its discontinuity, variability (Booij 2014), and ambiguity (Herzig Sheinflux et al. 2019: 50). SVs are limited in their combinations and variability. Concrete examples of SVCs show their untranslatable and language-specific character. For example, the same activity of ‘giving a lecture’ is expressed with different SVs in different languages: *Elle fait une présentation* (French), *Sie hält eine Vorlesung* (German) or *está dando una conferencia* (Spanish).

Syntactically, SVCs are complex predicates that typically (but not exclusively) take the form of combinations of a verb and a predicative noun that fill the predicative frame of an SV as ποιεῶ *poieō* ‘to make’ or δίδωμι *didōmi* ‘to give’, see (2a–2b), both of which are exemplified here with the polysemous and high-frequency noun λόγος *logos* ‘word’ (Vives Cuesta 2021).⁶

⁴I am honoured to be involved in this Spanish project (*Interacción del léxico y la sintaxis en griego antiguo y latín 2: Diccionario de Colocaciones Latinas. DiCoLat y Diccionario de Colocaciones del Griego Antiguo. DiCoGra*) which has developed extensive databases on Latin (<https://dicolat.iatext.ulpgc.es/>) and Greek collocations (<https://dicogra.iatext.ulpgc.es/>).

⁵The use of the term *light verb* instead of *support verb* continues to dominate the literature (Pompei et al. 2023a). It focusses on the loss of semantic weight of the verb. The term *light-verb construction* is widely used in language-contact studies (Myers-Scotton 2002, Fendel 2021, 2023a). This paper uses the term *support verb*. We believe that this term has important theoretical advantages in semantic terms, but syntactically it may be too restrictive, as it reduces the descriptive scope to verbo-nominal collocations with the noun base as the direct object. Kälviäinen (2013) carries out a statistical study in which he demonstrates the tendency for syntactic constructions to become increasingly complex in an irregular manner over the course of the Byzantine millennium.

⁶Synchronically, the syntactic status of collocations is ambiguous and may allow for a double analysis, according to whether the dependency is on the SV nucleus or on the predicative noun.

- (2) a. ὁ δὲ Σιτάλκ-ης πρὸς τε τ-ὸν Περδίκκ-αν
^ho de Sitalk-es pros te t-on Perdikk-an
 the PRT Sitalces.NOM.SG to and the Perdikkas-ACC.SG
 λόγους ἐποιεῖ-το
 log-us e-poiei-to
 words-ACC.PL PST.made.IMP.3G.MID
 ‘Sitalces spoke to Perdiccas’
 (Thucydides, *Histories* 2.101.2)
- b. τοῦτο δὲ ἀκού-σαντ-ες οἱ Ἕλλην-ες
 tuto de aku-sant-es ^hoi ^hellen-es
 this PRT Hearing-PTCPL-NOM.PL the-NOM.PL Greeks-NOM.PL
 λόγ-ον σφί-σι αὐτ-οῖσι ἐδίδο-σαν
 log-on sphi-si aut-oisi edido-san
 word-ACC.SG to.the-DAT.PL to.them-DAT.PL PST-gave-3PL.ACT
 ‘Upon hearing this, the Greeks exchanged their arguments among themselves’
 (Herodotus, *Histories* 8.9.1)

The definition of SVCs is fraught with theoretical problems. Within the batteries of tests used to identify SVCs (Langer 2004), one that stands out is the co-referentiality between the subject of the SV and the first argument of the predicative noun, which always tends towards *monoclausality* (Butt 2010). In this respect, the application of criteria commonly used to describe SVCs cross-linguistically has also proved relevant in the analysis of Ancient Greek SVCs (Jiménez López 2016): (a) the equivalence with a simplex verb; (b) the reduction of SVCs to noun phrases; (c) the co-referentiality of the subject of the verb and the first argument of the SVC noun; (d) noun variability, etc. From a sociolinguistic perspective, principle (a) should not be considered applicable, since the simple and multi-word constructions can in no case incur the redundancy of being considered pure synonyms. It is more accurate to think in terms of *reallocation* or *nuancing* from a diachronic and variationist perspective.

To my knowledge, the most comprehensive theoretical introductions to the treatment of SVCs applied to classical languages are Baños et al. (2022) and Pompei et al. (2023b), which provide an exhaustive state of the art. After the first seminal approach by Jespersen (1942), the first solid definition was given by von Polenz (1963), who defined the verbs in question as *Funktionsverben*. In all these treatments of the problem, the distinction between SVCs and other periphrastic constructions dominates. In the context of the *Lexique-Grammaire* theory and

the *Laboratoire d'Automatique Documentaire et Linguistique* (LADL), Gross (1989, 1996, 2004) developed an automated database model that makes it possible to describe the syntactic properties of SVCs. According to all these perspectives, the verb of an SVC only actualises the predicative noun. On the other hand, the Meaning-Text Theory and its formalisation resource, i.e., Lexical Functions (Mel'čuk 2004, Alonso Ramos 2004), present a type of analysis based on the collocational pattern and the selection of collocations which consist of a predicative noun (the base) selecting a semantically empty verb (collocative).

As far as our *DiCoGra* research project is concerned, the proposal I apply to the corpus is theoretically eclectic, although it is mainly dominated by the postulates of the *Lexique-Grammaire* and *Lexical-Functional Grammar* (LFG henceforth) theories (Baños et al. 2022).

In light of these theoretical developments, I propose the following definition of SVCs:

A semi-compositional construction formed by a predicative noun dependent on a semantically bleached verb, which is joined to the construction to form a multi-word phrase. It is sometimes equivalent to a simplex verb.

This definition corresponds to the function of these verbs, which act as an auxiliary or syntactic support for the noun with which they are constructed, forming a specific type of collocation. The verb has a very light semantic content and expresses the time, manner, and aspect of the event as a whole; the noun, which lexically selects the verb and is usually presented as its direct object (DO henceforth), provides the arguments (predicative frame) of the construction.

In addition to these functional SVCs with a genuine SV (ποιέομαι *poieōmai*, ἔχω *ekho*, γίγνομαι *gignomai*, δίδωμι *didomi*, τίθημι *tithēmi* etc.), languages have several heavier verbs called support-verb extensions (SVEs henceforth) that convey an aspectual or diathetic meaning (Vivès 1984, Gross 1989, Baños 2014, Baños & Jiménez López 2018). The range of SVs is language-specific, so that the mere existence of such SVEs shows the diffuse character of the consideration of an SV as a concept.

From CG onwards, some verbs that preserve much of their lexical content can metaphorically express diathetic (δέχομαι *dekhoμαι* 'to accept') or aspectual (ἅπτομαι *haptomai* 'to touch') content, see (3).

- (3) a. τ-ὸν μὲν τ-ῶν χρημάτ-ων λόγ-ον παρὰ
 t-on *men t-on* *k^hremat-on* *log-on* *para*
 the-ACC.SG PRT the-GEN.PL money-GEN.PL account-ACC.SG from

τούτ-ων λαμβάν-ειν
tut-on lamban-ein
 them-GEN.PL take-INF

‘You must **demand** from your paymasters **an account** of their money’
 (Demosthenes, *Speech* 8.47)

- b. καὶ ἅμα λόγ-οι πρὸς Λακεδαιμονί-ους περὶ
kai hama log-oi pros Lakedaimoni-us peri
 and together words-NOM.PL to Lacedaemonians-ACC.PL about
 τ-ῆς εἰρήν-ης ἐ-γίγνο-ντο
t-es eiren-es e-gigno-nto
 the-GEN.SG peace-GEN.SG PST.be-IMP-3PL-MID
 ‘And **negotiations** for peace **happened** at once with the
 Lacedaemonians’

(Lysias, *Speech* 13.5) (Jiménez López 2021: 231)

Linguistic change is expected to create semantic mechanisms of lexical innovation (conceptual metaphors and metonymies) in the domain of SVECs.

3 Description of the dataset

As for the quantitative data of our corpus, we have also worked with the aim of studying the chronological evolution of a broad literary genre – Byzantine hagiography – and the inherent variations between versions of the same hagiographical text in its diachronic evolution. Byzantine hagiography covers an entire literary spectrum. This makes it a testing ground for the study of all kinds of diachronic variability (Bentein & Janse 2021).

According to Bentein (2013b), in terms of level of speech, Byzantine hagiographical literature is composed in a wide variety of registers, but always with the avoidance of the most Attic styles. However, this statement must be qualified to some extent, since the hagiographic texts of this period (4th to 14th centuries AD) and especially during the 9th century can be classified as belonging to the high style (Ševčenko 1981). Through linguistic analysis of the texts, we have been able to establish a clear picture of the sociolinguistic development of the linguistic style of Byzantine hagiography. There is an early period in which simpler, low-level hagiographical texts were written alongside more rhetorically elaborate ones. In the middle and even late Byzantine period, this would give way to a much larger proportion of high-level *Vitae*, often the product of rewriting, technically called *metaphrases* (Hinterberger 2010, 2014a).

As far as the chronology is concerned, because it is such a long period of time, I have divided the corpus into four sub-periods which are related to the lifespan of hagiographical literature in the Byzantine world:

- (i) *New Testament Greek* (1st century AD). According to Rico (2010: 61), the NT is representative of a low koine (vernacular) language that was in contact with Semitic languages (Aramaic and Hebrew). However, traces of Atticism can also be found in the language of the NT.
- (ii) *Proto- and Mesobyzantine Greek* (4th-9th centuries AD). The hagiographic texts of this period (at least those of the first half) tend to be more classifying than the metaphrastic corpus, although we can also find some texts of a simpler style.
- (iii) *Metaphrastic hagiography* (10th-11th centuries AD): Under the label *metaphrastic hagiography* there is room for a rewriting of texts to be understood as a synchronic intralingual translation (μετάφρασις *metaphrasis*) of the ancient versions of the same *Vita*. Symeon Metaphrastes' rewriting technique consists essentially of making lexical and syntactic changes to introduce modifications at the level of language with respect to the older versions of the *Vitae* and to establish a canonical text of reference for these works (Høgel 2002, 2021). Precisely, for this special literary status, the five *Vitae* of the *metaphrastic* period play a special role with regard to the variation of SVCs as markers of levels of speech.
- (iv) *Greek of the Comnene and Late Byzantine periods* (12th-14th centuries AD). Although the style of the hagiography of the Palaeologan period already shows certain demotic tendencies, it maintains the same high stylistic standards that characterise the canonisation of the work of the Metaphrastes (Hinterberger 2014b, 2021).

In accordance with this periodisation, all the works that have been collected in our representative selection of the corpus are shown in table 1.⁷

⁷With slight modifications, this is the corpus of a Masters that I supervised (Madrigal Acero 2022), and it also largely coincides with that of previous work (Vives Cuesta & Madrigal Acero 2022: 318-321). Not all the data are at the same descriptive level. In our dataset, we make a distinction between the main corpus and the control or reference corpus. In each of the selected periods, the texts are not necessarily grouped in chronological order. Links to other versions that rewrite earlier versions of the texts have conditioned the selection.

Table 1: Corpus and abbreviations

New Testament	<i>Evangelium secundum Matthaeum</i>
	<i>Evangelium secundum Lucam</i>
	<i>Epistula Pauli ad Corinthios i</i>
	<i>Epistula Pauli ad Corinthios ii</i>
	<i>Epistula Pauli ad Hebraeos</i>
Proto- and Meso-byzantine hagiography	<i>Vita antiquior Sancti Danielis Stylitae (BHG 489)</i>
	<i>Vita et martyrium sancti Anastasii Persae (BHG 84)</i>
	<i>Martyrium antiquior sanctae Euphemiae (BHG 619)</i>
	<i>Vita Stephani Iunioris (BHG 1666)</i>
	<i>Vita Symeonis Stylitae senioris (BHG 1683)</i>
Metaphrastic hagiography	<i>Passio sancti Anastasii Persae (BHG 85)</i>
	<i>Passio sanctae Euphemiae (BHG 620)</i>
	<i>Vita tertia Sancti Danielis Stylitae (BHG 490)</i>
	<i>Vita Stephani Iunioris (BHG 1667)</i>
	<i>Vita sancti Symeonis Stylitae (BHG 1686)</i>
Comnene and Late Byzantine hagiography	<i>Vita sancti Zotici (BHG 2480)</i>
	<i>Vita Leontii Patriarchae Hierosolymorum (BHG 985)</i>
	<i>Vita sancti Bartolomaei conditoris monasterii sancti Salvatoris Messanae (BHG 235)</i>
	<i>Miracula sancti apostoli Marci (BHG 1036m)</i>
	<i>Vita sancti Lazari (BHG 980)</i>

4 Methodology

My practical methodology is the identification of the most frequent predicative nouns (*collocative pattern*) of ποιέω/ποιέομαι *poieo/poieomai* ‘to make’ in the corpus. The selection has been restricted to this verb precisely (a) because of its prototypical character in this type of construction; (b) because of its very high frequency of use in our corpus, which means that it offers a sufficiently representative and comprehensive amount of data for our analysis; and (c) because of its syntactic variability, represented by a wide range of constructions that show diachronic variation and that do not occur with other support verbs.

In the selection, the nominal base is given priority, since in SVCs the meaning of a general verb is specified by the meaning of the noun with which it interacts at the syntagmatic level (Ježek 2011: 29). In the analysis of our data, we have chosen to include a broad notion of predicative noun, which includes all types of predicative nouns that function as DO of ποιέω *poieō*, and not only the *nomina actionis* traditionally considered (Garzón Fontalvo & Tur 2022). The SVCs already inventoried in previous studies of the NT (Baños & Jiménez López 2017) are considered to be more sensitive to the type of semantic or syntactic variation that this construction involves in the corpus, since many of the Saints’ lives reproduce traditional NT linguistic forms as their main intertextual source.

For CG, some authors (Jiménez López 2016, Fendel 2023a) have proposed, with almost the same conclusions, an inventory of the most statistically frequent SVs.⁸ In the dataset, I present the collocational patterns of ποιέω *poieo* formed by all the predicative nouns with which it is combined to form SVCs, as well as quantitative information.

In total, I analysed 614 examples of ποιέω/ποιέομαι *poieo/poieomai* + DO in the main corpus. Of these, 211 (34.36 %) used ποιέω/ποιέομαι *poieo/poieomai* as a candidate SV. The high distributional frequency of ποιέω/ποιέομαι *poieo/poieomai* in the corpus as the main support verb is a key factor in considering the SVCs we analyse. One of the effects of the high combinatorial frequency of two different lexical items is the tendency for them to form sub-groups. The combinatorial freedom of items is traditionally translated into the notion of “collocational frequency” (Fendel 2023b). This phenomenon has consequences at the cognitive

⁸Fendel (2023a), for literary classical Attic, offers the most comprehensive set of verbs available, including the following verbs, some of which have already been the subject of monographs: ἄγω *ago* ‘to pass / spend’, δέχομαι *dek^homai* ‘to receive’, δίδωμι *didomi* ‘to give’, ἔχω *ek^ho* ‘to have’, κομίζω *komidzo* ‘to give / receive’, κτάομαι *ktaomai* ‘to gain’, λαμβάνω *lambano* ‘to take / receive’, παρέχω *parek^ho* ‘to give’, πάσχω *pask^ho* ‘to suffer’, ποιέομαι *poieomai* ‘to make’, τίθημι *tit^hemi* ‘to put’, τυγχάνω *tynk^hano* ‘to get’, φέρω *p^hero* ‘to bring’, χράομαι *k^hraomai* ‘to use’. We add γίγνομαι *gignomai* ‘to become’ (Jiménez López 2021).

level, in the way speakers process them mentally (*analysability*), and at the level of discourse cohesion (*compositionality*). Indeed, constructions with *ποιέω poieo* ‘to make’ tend to be productive and semantically compositional, so that lexicalisation and other types of variation seem *a priori* unlikely.⁹ Finally, the study of the variability and discontinuity represented by these constructions cannot be understood without recourse to the potential SVECs attested with some predicative nouns. The creation of new constructions or the appearance of metaphorical or metonymic values associated with them demonstrates the productivity of the category and at the same time constitutes a resource for creations at the different levels of speech, such as dialectal variants of the *to take a shower / to have a shower* type (Özbay 2020).

5 Types of support-verb constructions

The three case studies below have been selected to illustrate the diachronic variability of SVCs in post-classical Greek. As for the most common noun bases in our corpus, I study motion nouns (Section 5.1), constructions with *ποιέω* *poieo* ‘to make’ as a verb of realisation (Section 5.2), and finally a special type of SVECs expressing metaphorical content (Section 5.3).

5.1 Support-verb constructions with motion nouns

The type of nouns that ποιέω/ποιέομαι *poieo/poieōmai* takes in my corpus are nouns of motion. Indeed, this kind of collocation was also very widespread in the classical period (De Pasquale 2023). Examples (4a–4b) are prototypical SVCs, while (5c) below is what is usually called an SVEC (Vivès 1984, Gross 1989, Baños 2014).

- (4) a. καὶ δι-ε-πορεύ-ετο κατὰ πόλ-εις καὶ
 kai di-e-poreu-eto *kata pol-eis kai*
 and through-PST-crossed-3SG-MID through city-ACC.PL and
 κώμ-ας διδάσκ-ων καὶ πορεί-αν
 kom-as didask-on kai porei-an
 village-ACC.PL teach-PTCP-NOM.SG and way-ACC.SG
 ποιού-μεν-ος εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα
 poiou-men-os eis Hierosolyma
 make-PTCP.MID-NOM.SG to Jerusalem

⁹Kyriasoupoulou & Sfetsiou (2003) confirm that the verb *κάνω kano* 'to do' is still the most common collocative in Modern Greek SVCs.

‘And he passed through cities and villages teaching and **travelling** towards Jerusalem’

(*Evangelium secundum Lucam* 13.22)

- b. ἀποστέλλ-ει αὐτ-οὺς πρὸς τ-ὸν... ἀρχιεπιμέν-α
apostell-ei *aut-us* *pros t-on* *ark^hipoimen-a*
 send-PRES-3SG-ACT they-ACC.PL to the-ACC.SG patriarch-ACC.SG
 τ-οῦ σὺν αὐτ-οῖς ποιῇ-σαι αὐτ-ὸν τ-ῇν
t-u *syn aut-ois* *poie-sai aut-on* *t-en*
 the-GEN.SG with they-DAT.PL make-INF he-ACC.SG the-ACC.SG
 πορεῖ-αν πρὸς τὸ... μοναστήρι-ον
porei-an *pros to* *monasteri-on*
 way-ACC.SG to the-ACC.SG monastery-ACC.SG

‘He sends them to... the patriarch, so that he would **make** with them the journey to the monastery’

(*Vita Stephani Iunioris* 42.12)

First, there is a diachronic continuity in their structure. SVCs with motion nouns already show a prototypical character in CG, which is confirmed in our corpus.¹⁰ SVCs with motion nouns present a range of meanings and functions, among which stylistic variation and the expression of connotative meanings stand out (De Pasquale 2023). Connotative meanings tend to be associated with a high level of speech, as they imply a reconceptualisation of the predicative noun, precisely because they are part of an SVC.

However, as can be seen in (5b–5c), we observe the innovation of a type of construction that occurs only very sporadically in CG.¹¹ One of the reasons for this syntactic variation in post-classical Greek is that, from the stage represented by NT texts onwards, the progressive semantic bleaching and gradual decline of the middle voice has affected the voice distinction between ποιέω/ποιέομαι *poieo/poieōmai* in many SVCs, see (5a–5c).

- (5) a. ἀλλ’ ὁ ποι-ῶν τὸ θέλη-μα τ-οῦ
all’ ^ho *poi-on* *to* *t^hele-ma t-u*
 but the-NOM make-PTCP.NOM the.ACC will.ACC the.GEN.SG

¹⁰The motion nouns involved in SVCs expressing movement are derived from different verb classes that encode the main conceptual components of movement: basic motion verbs, caused motion verbs, manner verbs and Path + Manner verbs (De Pasquale 2023).

¹¹For some motion nouns, such as ὁδός *^hodos* ‘way’ in ποιέω ὁδόν *poieo ^hodon* ‘marching’ (Herodotus, *Histories* 1.211.1), the loss of the diathetic distinction can be traced back to the beginning of the classical period (Marini 2010).

πατρ-ός μου τοῦ ἐν τοῖς οὐραν-οῖς
patr-os m-u t-u en t-ois uran-ois
 father-GEN my-GEN.SG the-GEN.SG in the.DAT.PL heavens.DAT.PL

‘But the one who **does the will** of my Father, who is in Heaven’

(*Evangelium secundum Matthaeum* 7.21)

b. μήτηρ μου καὶ ἀδελφ-οί μου οὗτ-οί
meter m-u kai adelph^h-oi m-u ^hut-oi
 mother my-GEN.SG and brothers-NOM.PL my-GEN.SG these-NOM.PL

εἰ-σιν οἱ τ-ὸν λόγ-ον τ-οῦ
ei-sin ^hoi t-on log-on t-u
 are-3SG-ATC the.NOM.PL the.ACC.SG word-ACC.SG the-GEN.SG

θε-οῦ ἀκούοντ-ες καὶ ποι-οῦντ-ες
t^he-u akuont-es kai poiunt-es
 God-GEN.SG hearing-PTCP-NOM.PL and doing-PTCP-NOM.PL

‘My mother and my brothers are those who hear and **do God’s word**’

(*Evangelium secundum Lucam* 8.21)

c. τί λέγ-εις; ποι-εῖς τ-ὴν κέλευσ-ιν
ti leg-eis; poi-eis t-en keleus-in
 what say-2SG-ACT make-2SG-ACT the.ACC.SG command-ACC.SG

τ-οῦ βασιλ-έως ἢ ἐπιμέν-εις τ-οῖς αὐτ-οῖς;
t-u basil-eos e epimen-eis t-ois aut-ois
 the-GEN.SG king-GEN.SG or stay-2SG-ACT the.DAT.PL they-DAT.PL

‘What do you say? Do you **do** the emperor’s **command** or do you stay with them?’

(*Vita et martyrium sancti Anastasii Persa* 37.2)

One can hardly observe a semantic contrast between the use of the active and middle voices, when commenting on phrases such as ποιέω ἔκβασιν *poieo ekbasin* ‘to escape’ (*Epistula Pauli ad Corinthios* 1 10.13), ποιέω γάμους *poieo gamus* ‘to make a wedding feast’ (*Evangelium secundum Matthaeum*. 22.2) or ποιέω δεῖπνον *poieo deipnon* ‘to make supper’ (*Evangelium secundum. Lucam* 14.16).

The distinction between the uses of ποιέω *poieo* as a verb of realisation and its prototypical uses as a light verb are minimal or difficult to establish. In my opinion, the general tendency towards analytic constructions throughout the post-classical period may have contributed to the remarkable increase in the use of SVCs (Horrocks 2014, Holton & Manolesou 2010).¹² This kind of choice, involving

¹²It is possible that the evolution of certain SVECs expressing aspectual or diathetic values fol-

the selection of constructions appropriate to a learned register in post-classical texts, is reminiscent of the stylistic tendency that Horrocks (2020) calls the “creative use of syntax”, and which we find especially in high-register Byzantine Greek. In fact, high-register Byzantine Greek was a living language, used creatively by its practitioners, developing its own idiosyncrasies and internal conventions in the process. It would not be inappropriate to compare it, for example, with the highly specialised literary language of the early Greek Homeric tradition, which retained many archaisms but allowed its authentic usage to evolve alongside the constant incorporation of linguistic innovations inherent in the native variants of each period.

Semi-lexicalised constructions, such as SVCs, are linguistic material in which these evolutionary tendencies of the language can be observed most clearly. The progressive blurring of the middle voice and the emergence of SVCs with ποιέω *poieo* ‘to make’, as I have discussed, are likely to have been additional factors to consider.

5.2 Edge cases: verbs of realisation

In this section, I discuss some collocations with active ποιέω *poieo* which, although sometimes disregarded as not proper SVCs (Alonso Ramos 2004: 113–115), have the syntactic behaviour of an SV but, unlike prototypical SVs, are semantically complete.

As with SVECs, they have certain combinatorial limitations. To some extent, the verbs of realisation project constructions that are midway between prototypical SVCs and SVECs. However, whereas an SV simply reports the existence of the action denoted by the noun, a verb of realisation indicates that the purpose for which the action exists has been achieved (Alonso Ramos 2004: 113–115).¹³

Unlike support verbs, which are semantically empty, realisation verbs are full: roughly speaking, they mean ‘to fulfil the requirement of something’ and, like support verbs, they produce collocations with their nominal bases. In their syntactic-semantic behaviour they are quite close to some of the SVECs with diathetic or aspectual functions (Mel’čuk 2022). In my opinion, this semantic

lows a path partially parallel to that of certain auxiliary verbs that are constructed periphrastically such as θέλω, *t^helo* ‘to want’, ἔχω, *ek^ho* ‘to have’, etc. in post-classical Greek (Markopoulos 2009). However, we do not have enough data to speak in canonical terms of grammaticalisation (Butt 2010).

¹³There is a real terminological issue with this type of verb. In addition to the more common term “verbs of realisation”, the term can also be found in the literature as “verbs of fulfillment” (Mel’čuk 2004).

restriction is partly aspectual, since the verb element implies a phase of the action after that of the SV and the noun must therefore refer to a telic action (Gross 1998). The absence of grammaticalisation of these constructions (Butt 2010) also explains why not all the criteria for the formation of an SVEC are necessarily met, e.g. the non-strict co-referentiality between noun and verb in (5).

We have identified borderline contexts that can lead to confusion as to whether the verb is a true SVC, or a verb of realisation, or even a causative verb. The canonical SVC with the collocative ποιέομαι *poieomai* + predicative noun is largely preserved and reconstructed in the corpus of texts belonging to a high-level of speech, which, not by chance, largely coincides with the metaphrastic versions of the *Menologion* of Symeon Metaphrastes and other late *Vitae* of the Palaeologian era shown in (6).¹⁴

- (6) a. ... μηδέν-α λόγ-ον ποιού-μεν-ος τ-οῦ
meden-a *log-on* *poiui-men-os* *t-u*
 nobody-ACC.SG word-ACC.SG make-PTCP-NOM.SG the-GEN.SG
 ταύτ-ας ἀπωθεῖ-σθαι τολμῶ-ντ-ος αἰρεσιάρχ-ου
taut-as *apot^hei-st^hai* *tolmo-nt-os* *^hairesiarc^h-u*
 these-ACC.PL repel-INF dare-PTCP-GEN.SG heresiarch-GEN.SG
 βασιλ-έως
basil-eos
 king-GEN.SG
 ‘... without paying attention to the Emperor who dares to refuse them’
 (Vita Stephani Iunioris 30.26)
- b. τ-ὸν δὲ κεκαρωμέν-ην ..., ἔχ-οντ-α τ-ῆν
t-on de kekaromen-en *ek^honta* *t-en*
 the. PRT stupefied-PTCP-NOM.SG have-PTCP-ACC the-ACC.SG
 διάνοι-αν, λόγ-ον μὲν μηδέν-α τ-ῶν
diano-i-an, *log-on* *men* *meden-a* *t-on*
 thought-ACC reason-ACC.SG PART no-one-ACC.SG the-GEN.PL
 ἐκείν-ου λόγ-ων ποιή-σα-σθαι
ekain-u *log-on* *poie-sa-st^hai*
 his-GEN.SG reason-ACC.SG do-AOR-INF.MID
 ‘He who falls into a deep stupor, ... even if he is mentally lucid, makes no sense of any of his discourses’
 (Vita sancti Lazari 603.2.38)

¹⁴In situations of language contact, the metalanguage of cross-linguistic translation is expected to serve as a trigger for the creation of new SVCs (Fendel 2021, Baños & Jiménez López 2018).

In this section, we have seen that when considering an SVC, there are borderline cases that mean that it needs to be defined in very vague terms.

5.3 Support-verb-extension constructions and conceptual metaphors

Several explanations have been proposed for the motives underlying the lexical features that characterise collocations. These explanations are generally based on the idea that there is some semantic compatibility between the nominal base and the collocational verb, although this compatibility has been understood in different ways.

One of the most typical and universal ways of creating and explaining the formal renewal of SVCs is the conceptual metaphor (Lakoff & Johnson 1980). SVCs represent a lexical domain in which many of their uses can be captured (Salas Jiménez 2022, 2024). Indeed, some verbo-nominal collocations develop aspectual, see (7), or diathetic, see (8), values, expressing different ranges of fixation and compositionality. The persistence of these values in the development of post-classical Greek proves that any noun that can be reconceptualised as eventive can be metaphorically extended by this kind of SVEC (Fedriani 2016, Tur 2020).

In this sense, the metaphor by which initiating an action is conceptualised as making contact with an object, see (7a–7b), acquires an inchoative aspectual sense:

- (7) a. ὥστε πολέμ-ου μὲν μηδ-ὲν ἔτι ἄψα-σθαι μηδε-τέρ-ους
^hoste polem-u men med-en eti ^hapsa-st^hai mede-ter-us
 so.that war-GEN PRT nothing-ACC yet touch-INF no.one-DU-ACC
 ‘So that neither the one nor the other **made war** [lit. touched war]’
 (Thucydides, *Histories* 5.14.1)
- b. πρὸς λέοντ-α δορκ-ᾶς ἥ-πτ-ετο μάχ-ης
 pros leont-a dork-as ^he-pt-eto mach-es
 against lion-ACC.SG Gazelle.NOM.SG PST-touch-3SG battle-GEN-SG
 ‘A gazelle **engaged in battle** against a lion’
 (*Vita et martyrium sancti Anastasii Persa* 5 17.15)

Conversely, the SVECs in (8) correspond to the conceptual pattern by which an object falling (ἐπίπτω *emipto* ‘to fall’) would serve to figuratively encode an inagentive or anticausative event:

- (8) a. ὁψέ δέ ποτε βιασ-θεῖς ὑπὸ τ-ῶν πραγμάτ-ων
opse de pote biast-^heis ^hypo t-on pragmat-on
 look PRT ever force-PTCP.PASS by the circumstances
 ἐν-ε-έπεσ-εν εἰς τ-ὸν νῦν δε-δηλωμέν-ον
en-e-pesen eis t-on nyn de-delomen-on
 in-PAST-fell-AOR-3SG into the-ACC.SG now PRF-referred-ACC.SG
 πόλεμ-ον
polem-on
 war-ACC.SG
 ‘But later, forced by circumstances, he entered the war [fell into the war] referred to’
 (Polybius, *Histories* 14.12.4)
- b. πολλ-ῇ δὲ προθυμί-α περὶ τὴν ὁδοιορί-αν
poll-^ei de prot^hymi-^ai peri t-en ^hoidopori-an
 much-DAT.SG PRT courage-DAT.SG about the-ACC.SG way-ACC.SG
 χρωμέν-η εἰς νόσ-ον ἐν-ε-πέσ-ε μεταξὺ
k^hromen-e eis nos-on en-e-pes-e metaxy
 using-NOM.SG into illness-ACC.SG in-PST-fell-3SG-ACT while
 πορευομέν-η
poreuomen-e
 walking-PTCP-OM.SG
 ‘She fell ill while walking, having shown great eagerness while walking’
 (*Vita et Miracula Sancti Artemii* 2.4.12)

The examples (7–8) show the variability and discontinuity of SVCs in post-classical Greek in terms of discourse levels. From a sociohistorical perspective, the linguistic innovations involved in the survival or creation of new SVCs and SVECs through conceptual metaphors in written texts obey the logic of lexical change. The semantic innovation induced by these metaphors confirms that the behaviour of support verbs forms a distinct linguistic category that helps to represent the structure of the (sub-)event. By observing the functioning of these metaphors, we can conclude that the formation of these predicates can be detected through a formal renewal in the lexicon, thus rejecting, as Butt (2010) demonstrates, the possibility of explaining the changes on the grounds of the strict rules associated with the canonical processes of grammaticalisation (Hopper & Traugott 2003). The existence of SVCs that end up being realised in compounds by univerbation of the type λογοποιέω *logopoieō* ‘to write speeches’

(λόγον *logon* + ποιέω *poieō*) or νομοθετέω *nomot^heteo* ‘to make laws’ (νόμον *nomon* + τίθημι *tithēmi*) in post-classical Greek seems to be indicative of the dissolution of compositionality (Pompei 2006). This is consistent with the nature of lexical change that affects any kind of multi-word construction.¹⁵

In all the cases studied above, we find the survival of SVCs introduced by ποιέομαι *poieomai* and other verbs (δίδωμι *didomi*, λαμβάνω *lambano*, γίγνομαι *gignomai*, etc.), combined with the same predicative nouns as these terms combined with in CG. The frequency of the presence of these elements is significantly higher in our so-called ‘metaphrastic’ period. None of this can be a coincidence. Among other possible explanations, we should not ignore the possibility that their survival is the result of the actualisation of a practice of intralinguistic translation as recently put forward by Lavidas (2022: 94):

Intralingual translation, which is directly related to the diachrony of a language, describes the transfer of a text within one language due to the fact that the development of this language can be divided into two or more periods, for instance, ancient and modern, and can function as evidence of grammatical change.

However, from the understanding of metaphrasis as a kind of intralingual translation, we must be very careful in drawing conclusions. Lavidas is arguing in favour of a ‘translation’ into a modernised form of language. Strictly speaking, it cannot be claimed that these are the kind of metaphrastic transpositions of the 10th century.

In fact, such transpositions are adaptations of a more recent understanding and literary aesthetic that can be called “modern”, but in their formal expression Symeon Metaphrastes chose a more conservative register than the authors of his model texts. It is only by considering this limitation of the scope of the concept of “intralingual translation” that we can make generalisations about the functioning of syntactic or lexical variation in this process of rewriting, in which the most avant-garde literary tendencies recover linguistic uses of learned Greek. In this respect, it is striking that the generic term for the Byzantine activity of rewriting (μετάφρασις *metap^hrasis*) has among its basic meanings that of inter- and intralingual translation (Signes Codoñer 2014). It is not surprising, therefore,

¹⁵In this volume, Pompei & Ricci give an account of the multiple phenomena that affect some of the collocations that undergo univerbation, configuring a typical case of nominal incorporation (Vives Cuesta 2012). In any case, we do not believe that these forms should be understood as authentic morphological compounds, since they do not meet the requirements of idiomaticity and lexicalisation that this type of nominal formation presupposes (Tribulato 2015: 30–33).

that the main SVCs that were in common use in earlier periods predominate in the periods when metaphrastic activity was more widely cultivated by hagiographers.

6 Conclusions

The SVCs form a heterogeneous group of productive multi-word expressions in classical and post-classical Greek. Regarding this kind of constructions in the corpus studied (Byzantine hagiography), I have detected a general evolution of the literary genre from a popular (low) koine to a more learned (high) koine, which may have had some direct or indirect influence on the higher frequency of occurrence and type of these collocations as devices of intralingual translation which built new collocations.

However, this partial conclusion needs to be nuanced by the case studies of specific predicative nouns, as we have previously done with εὐχή *euche* and synonyms (Vives Cuesta & Madrigal Acero 2022). The data analysed allow us to verify trends in the general behaviour of these constructions which are compatible with the rewriting procedures detected in Greek literature of the post-classical period, especially in the texts called ‘metaphrastic’, which tend to recover classical linguistic forms that were already fixed in earlier periods of the history of the language and from which a certain variation in the distribution of the constructions can be explained. The analysed data enables verification of trends in the general behaviour of these constructions, which are compatible with the rewriting procedures detected in Greek literature of the post-classical period. This is particularly evident in the texts referred to as ‘metaphrastic’, which aim to recover classical linguistic forms that were already established in earlier periods of the language’s history, and from which a certain variation in the distribution of certain constructions can be explained.

Some SVCs existing in CG remain stable from a formal and syntactic point of view in hagiographic texts of the high level of speech, as can be seen in the case of motion nouns such as πορείαν/ἔκβασιν ποιέω *poreian/ekbasin poieo* (Section 5.1), and partially in the borderline cases of the so-called verbs of realisation θέλημα/λόγον/κέλευσιν ποιέω *t^h elema/logon/keleusin poieo* (Section 5.2), and even in SVECs conceptualised by means of metaphors with verbs such as ἄπτομαι *h aptomai* or ἐμπίπτω *empipto* (Section 5.3). Within the corpus, the emergence of new verbo-nominal collocations (SVCs or SVECs) is particularly noticeable in the metaphrastic reworking of older *Lives*.

In short, there is a convergence of sociolinguistic and purely linguistic factors in the life cycle of SVCs in post-classical Greek. In future research, the scope of

these general statements can be refined by studying the diachronic evolution of particular SVCs from CG to the end of the Byzantine period.

Abbreviations

DO	Direct Object	SVE	support-verb extension
NT	New Testament	SVEC	support-verb-extension
NTG	New Testament Greek		construction

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