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Ψελλός, ψελλίζειν, ψελλίζεσθαι, ψελλότης, ψελλισμός.  
τραυλός, τραυλίζειν, τραυλότης, τραυλισμός.  
ισχωνόφωνος, ισχνοφωνία.  
βατταρίζειν, βατταριστής, βατταρισμός.

1. The German synonyms that correspond to the Greek words gathered here are “stottern”, “stammeln” and “lallen”, but in Greek the semantic boundaries are differently arranged. Hence, it is useful to keep in mind, first of all, the differences in our mother tongue. *Eberhard* in his *Synonymisches Handwörterbuch der deutschen Sprache*, No. 1104, clearly distinguishes:

«“Stottern” indicates the cutting off, blocking, and repeating words and syllabic sounds, combined with a painful sense of effort of the speaker. This is due to a defective predisposition by nature or an unfortunate addiction. “Stammeln” and “lallen” mean a not accomplished speech without further defects reported by “stottern”: it is the case of the first attempt of the children, when they can say only half-words, so their language, not yet drilled, even in these fragments of speech is so nice. “Lallen”, compared with “stammeln”, specifies a higher level, because it refers to sounds articulated with the simple movement of the tongue.»

2. We have a good distinction of those words in the following passage: 1] Arist. *problem.* 11,30: διὰ τί *ισχνόφωνοι* παῖδες ὄντες μᾶλλον ἢ ἄνδρες; ἢ ὡσπερ καὶ τῶν χειρῶν καὶ τῶν ποδῶν ἀεὶ ἤττον κρατοῦσι παῖδες ὄντες, καὶ ὅσοι ἐλάττους οὐ δύνανται βαδίζειν, ὁμοίως καὶ τῆς γλώττης οἱ νεώτεροι οὐ δύνανται; ἐὰν δὲ παντάπασι μικροὶ ὦσιν, οὐδὲ φθέγγεσθαι δύνανται ἀλλ' ἢ ὡσπερ τὰ θηρία διὰ τὸ μὴ κρατεῖν. εἴη δ' ἂν οὐ μόνον ἐπὶ τοῦ *ισχονόφωνου*, ἀλλὰ καὶ *τραυλοὶ* καὶ *ψελλοί*. ἢ μὲν οὖν *τραυλότης* τῷ γράμματός τινος μὴ κρατεῖν, καὶ τοῦτο οὐ τὸ τυχόν, ἢ δὲ *ψελλότης* τῷ ἐξαιρεῖν τι, ἢ γράμμα ἢ συλλαβὴν, ἢ δὲ *ισχνοφωνία*, ἀπὸ τοῦ μὴ δύνασθαι ταχὺ συνάψαι τὴν ἑτέραν συλλαβὴν πρὸς τὴν ἑτέραν. ἅπαντα δὲ δι' ἀδυναμίαν· τῇ γὰρ διανοίᾳ οὐχ ὑπηρετεῖ ἢ γλώττα. ταῦτό δὲ τοῦτο καὶ οἱ μεθύοντες πάσχουσι καὶ οἱ πρεσβύται· ἤττον δὲ πάντα συμβαίνει. — With this agrees 2] *ib.* 11,54: διὰ τί *ισχνόφωνοι* γίνονται; ἢ αἴτιον ἢ κατάψυξις τοῦ τόπου ᾧ φθέγγονται, ἢ ὡσπερ ἀποπληξία τοῦ μέρους τούτου ἐστίν; διὸ καὶ θερμαινόμενοι ὑπὸ οἴνου καὶ τοῦ λέγειν συνεχῶς, ῥᾶον συνείρουσι τὸν λόγον. Cf. *ib.* 11,50.60.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 11,55: διὰ τί μόνον τῶν ἄλλων ζώων ἄνθρωπος γίνεται *ισχνόφωνος*; ἢ ὅτι λόγου κοινωνεῖ μόνον, τὰ δὲ ἄλλα φωνῆς; οἱ δὲ *ισχνόφωνοι* φωνοῦσι μὲν, λόγον δὲ οὐ δύνανται συνείρειν. 11,60: διὰ τί *ισχνόφωνοι* γίνονται; πότερον διὰ θερμότητα προπετέστεροί εἰσιν, ὡστε προσπταίνοντες ἐπίσχουσι, ὡσπερ οἱ ὀργιζόμενοι; καὶ γὰρ οὗτοι πλήρεις ἀσθματος γίνονται. πολὺ μὲν οὖν τὸ πνεῦμα συμβαίνει. ἢ διὰ τὴν ζέσιν τοῦ θερμοῦ ἀσθμαίνουσιν, διὰ τὸ πολὺ εἶναι καὶ μὴ φθάνειν ὑπεξίον τῷ τῆς ἀναπνοῆς καιρῷ; ἢ μᾶλλον τούναντίον κατάψυξις ἢ θερμότης τοῦ τόπου ᾧ φθέγγονται, ὡσπερ ἀποπληξία τοῦ μέρους τούτου; διὸ καὶ θερμενόμενοι ὑπὸ οἴνου καὶ τοῦ λέγειν συνεχῶς ῥᾶον συνείρουσι τὸν λόγον. 10,40: διὰ τί μόνον τῶν ζώων ἄνθρωπος γίνεται *ισχνόφωνος*; πότερον ὅτι καὶ ἐνεόν, ἢ δὲ *ισχνοφωνία* ἐνότης ἐστίν;

Hence, ισχνόφωνος would be the *stutterer*, who mostly cannot finish his speech, and gets stuck; but in the Aristotelian description there is no mention of the painful repeat the words. Ψελλός could correspond to *stammer* (*Stammer*), who has to deal with various difficulties of pronunciation. Τραυλός could correspond to a *lisping* (*lallenden*) guy, who lisps, *i.e.* cannot articulate some consonants.<sup>2</sup>

3. Ίσχυοφωνία, being related with a finished speech (συνείρειν τὸν λόγον, 2]), is not attributable to children, whose problem is not to put together the parts of a speech, but the speech itself, *i.e.* a greater train of thought. Hence, in 3] they can only ψελλίζειν and τραυλίζειν, and in 4] these types of speech seem to be caused by a physical defect. On the other hand, a lot of people, even the majority, if they begin to get sloshed and their tongue unties, can speak much more freely than they would if, while completely sober, were "plagued with clouding of thought,"<sup>3</sup> that is with lingering on pros and cons without being able to bring themselves to a specific assertion. Cf. 2]. — 3] Arist. *h. an.* 4,9,16s.: ὅσοι δὲ κωφοὶ γίνονται ἐκ γενετῆς, πάντες καὶ ἐνεοὶ (*deaf-mute*) γίνονται· φωνὴν μὲν οὖν ἀφιαῖσι, διάλεκτον δ' οὐδεμίαν. τὰ δὲ παῖδιά, ὥσπερ καὶ τῶν ἄλλων μορίων οὐκ ἐγκρατῆ ἔστιν, οὕτως οὐδὲ τῆς γλώττης τὸ πρῶτον, καὶ ἔστιν ἀτελῆ καὶ ἀπολύεται ὀψιαίτερον, ὥστε **ψελλίζουσι** καὶ **τραυλίζουσι** τὰ πολλά. 4] Id. *part. an.* 2,17,2: καὶ πρὸς τὴν τῶν γραμμάτων διάρθρωσιν καὶ πρὸς τὸν λόγον ἢ μαλακῆ καὶ πλατεῖα (γλώττα) χρήσιμος· συστέλλειν γὰρ καὶ προβάλλειν παντοδαπῆ τοιαύτη οὐσα καὶ ἀπολελυμένη μάλιστ' ἂν δύναιτο. δηλοῖ δ' ὅσοις μὴ λίαν ἀπολέλυται **ψελλίζονται** γὰρ καὶ **τραυλίζουσι**, τοῦτο δ' ἔστιν ἐνδεῖα τῶν γραμμάτων.<sup>4</sup>

Then, the fact that ψελλίζειν indicates the greater inability and τραυλίζειν the less one, as explained in the Aristotelian definition, is shown especially by remarking that the

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ἀλλὰ δὴ καὶ οὐδ' ὅλως πεπλήρωται τοῦτο τὸ μέρος. ἢ ὅτι κοινωεῖ μᾶλλον λόγου, τὰ δ' ἄλλα φωνῆς; ἔστι δὲ ἡ ισχυοφωνία οὐ κατὰ τὸ ὄνομα ἐν ἡ οὐ συνεχῶς διεξιέναι. 11,35: διὰ τί οἱ ισχνόφωνοι οὐ δύνανται διαλέγεσθαι μικρόν; ἢ ὅτι ἴσχονται τοῦ φωνεῖν, ἐμποδίζοντός τινος; οὐκ ἴσης δὲ ἰσχύος οὐδ' ὁμοίας κινήσεως, μὴ ἐμποδίζοντός τε τὴν κίνησιν μηδενὸς καὶ ἐμποδίζοντος βιάσασθαι, δεῖ. ἢ δὲ φωνὴ κινήσις ἔστι· μειζον δὲ φθέγγονται μᾶλλον οἱ τῆ ἰσχύι χρώμενοι. ὥστ' ἐπεὶ ἀνάγκη ἀποβιάζεσθαι τὸ κωλύον, ἀνάγκη μειζον φθέγγεσθαι τοὺς ισχυοφώνους. — The text of *probl.* 11,35 raises questions that we can not discuss here; suffice it to say here that we let βιάσασθαι depend on ἐμποδίζοντος, not on δεῖ.

<sup>2</sup> *V. infra.*

<sup>3</sup> It is a bizarre quote from Shakespeare (*Hamlet* III 1: *sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought!*)

<sup>4</sup> The passage quoted by Schmidt is incomplete and needs some comment. The tongue—writes Aristotle—“is certainly the most loose and flexible organ of the human body, and it is also large (ὁ μὲν οὖν ἄνθρωπος ἀπολελυμένην τε καὶ μαλακωτάτην ἔχει μάλιστα τὴν γλώτταν καὶ πλατεῖαν), so that it is useful to two functions (ὅπως πρὸς ἀμφοτέρους ἢ τὰς ἐργασίας χρήσιμος)”, the first of which is “to taste substances (πρὸς τε τὴν τῶν χυμῶν αἴσθησιν)”; here Aristotle seems to insert an incidental consideration that the edd. put into brackets: “in fact, of all the animals, man is the most sensitive (ὁ γὰρ ἄνθρωπος εὐαίσθητότατος τῶν ἄλλων ζώων), and the flexible language is the most tactile unity (καὶ ἡ μαλακῆ γλώττα ἀπτικωτάτη γάρ), and the taste is a kind of touch (ἡ δὲ γεῦσις ἀφή τις ἔστιν)”. Then, the second function: “... and to clearly articulate the letters (καὶ πρὸς τὴν τῶν γραμμάτων διάρθρωσιν)...”. We do not agree with the punctuation of the edd., since the explanation of both functions (ἐργασίαι) ends here. The phrase καὶ πρὸς τὸν λόγον has to do with πλατεῖα—which, not containing the idea of thickness, includes the idea of *flat*, not *thick*—; therefore, we see this way: “καὶ πρὸς τὸν λόγον (*and to talk*) ἢ μαλακῆ (γλώττα) καὶ πλατεῖα χρήσιμος (*it is useful that the flexible tongue is large, too*): *in fact, with such a characteristics of fluency* (τοιαύτη οὐσα καὶ ἀπολελυμένη) *one can really say that it can* (μάλιστ' ἂν δύναιτο) *συστέλλειν ... καὶ προσβάλλειν παντοδαπῆ [not προβάλλειν] (contract and relax as it likes). This is proved by those who have got a not too loose tongue: they babble and mistake consonantal sounds, and that is a speech defect.*”

first term, specifying the imperfect utterance of a child, can be reported, in a figurative sense, even to those who strike an inadequate, almost childish, attitude. 5] Plat. *Gorg.* 485 B: ... καὶ ἔγωγε ὁμοιότατον πάσχω πρὸς τοὺς φιλοσοφούντας ὥσπερ πρὸς τοὺς ψελλιζομένους καὶ παίζοντας. ὅταν μὲν γὰρ παιδίον ἴδω, ᾧ ἔτι προσήκει διαλέγεσθαι οὕτω, ψελλιζόμενον καὶ παίζον, χαίρω τε καὶ χαρίεν μοι φαίνεται καὶ ἐλευθέριον καὶ πρέπον τῇ τοῦ παιδίου ἡλικίᾳ, ὅταν δὲ σαφῶς διαλεγόμενου παιδαρίου ἀκούσω, πικρὸν τί μοι δοκεῖ χρῆμα εἶναι καὶ ἀνιᾶ μου τὰ ὦτα καὶ μοι δοκεῖ δουλοπρεπές τι εἶναι· ὅταν δὲ ἀνδρὸς ἀκούσῃ τις ψελλιζόμενου, ἢ παίζοντος ὀρᾶ, καταγέλαστον φαίνεται καὶ ἀνανδρον καὶ πληγῶν ἄξιον. 6] Arist. *metaph.* 1,4,3, on both the Empedocles' principles of things, which he calls *φιλία* and *νεῖκος*: εἰ γὰρ τις ἀκολουθοίῃ καὶ λαμβάνοι πρὸς τὴν διάνοιαν καὶ μὴ πρὸς ἃ ψελλίζεται λέγων Ἐμπεδοκλῆς, εὐρήσει τὴν μὲν *φιλίαν* εἶναι<sup>5</sup> τῶν ἀγαθῶν, τὸ δὲ *νεῖκος* τῶν κακῶν. 7] *ib.* 1,10,2: ψελλιζομένη γὰρ ἔοικεν ἢ πρώτη φιλοσοφία περὶ πάντων, ἄτε νέα τε καὶ κατ' ἀρχὰς οὐσα καὶ τὸ πρῶτον· ἐπεὶ καὶ Ἐμπεδοκλῆς ὅσπουν τῷ λόγῳ φησὶν εἶναι.<sup>6</sup>

A faulty pronunciation of certain sounds, that is, the consonants, properly signified by *τραυλίζειν*, in some cases causes a pleasant effect. This can happen when an “r”, which in Greek should be strongly vibrated, is replaced by an “l”, which requires a single stroke of tongue, and, in general, when hard consonants give way to weak consonants, or, also, when in a consonantal group one of them is replaced by a vowel. Who first, since other would have never run into that, had pronounced *τετύφαται* instead of *τέτυπται*, he would have made a real mistake of voice. Hence, *τραυλός*, but not *ψελλός* or *ἰσχνόφω-νος*, can be a term for a melodious sound, e.g. the birds' singing. 8] Mnasalca, *Anth. Pal.* 9,70: τραυλὰ μινυρομένα, Πανδιονὶ παρθένε, φωνᾶ, | Τηρέος οὐ θεμιτῶν ἀψαμένα λε- χέων, | τίπτε παναμέριος γοάεις ἀνὰ δῶμα, χελιδόν; 9] Philipp., *Anth. Plan.* 141: Κολχί-δα τὴν ἐπὶ παισὶν ἀλάστορα, τραυλὲ χελιδών, | πῶς ἔτλης τεκέων μαῖαν ἔχειν ἰδίων;

4. We find more precise information too, so *τραυλίζειν* meant primarily the inability to pronounce “r” or “tr”, while *ψελλίζειν* stated numerous omissions and confusion, not excluding the inability to sing. 10] Plut. *Alc.* 1, about Alcibiades: τῇ δὲ φωνῇ καὶ τὴν τραυ-λότητα ἐμπρέψαι λέγουσι, καὶ τῷ λάλῳ πιθανότητα παρασχεῖν χάριν ἐπιτελοῦσαν. μέμνηται δὲ καὶ Ἀριστοφάνης αὐτοῦ τῆς τραυλότητος ἐν οἷς ἐπισκώπτει Θέωρον· «εἶπ' Ἀλκιβιάδης εἶπε πρὸς με τραυλίσας· | Ὀλᾶς Θέωρον; τὴν κεφαλὴν κόλακος ἔχει. | ὀρ-θῶς γε τοῦτ' Ἀλκιβιάδης ἐτραύλισεν (= ὀρᾶς, Θέωρον, κόρακος).<sup>7</sup> 11] Galen. vol. IX p. 268: ὥσπερ τὸ *ψελλίζεσθαι* τῆς διαλέκτου πάθος ἐστίν, οὐ τῆς φωνῆς, οὕτω καὶ τὸ *τραυλίζειν*, μὴ δυναμένης τῆς γλώττης ἀκριβῶς ἐκείνας διαρθροῦν τὰς φωνάς, ὅσαι διὰ τοῦ τ καὶ ρ λέγονται, καθάπερ αὐτὴν τε ταύτην τραύλωσιν, καὶ ὁμοίως τάσδε τρέ-χει, τρέμει, τραχύς, τροχός, τρυφερός, ὅσαι τε ἄλλαι παραπλήσιαι κτλ.<sup>8</sup> — 12] Eustath. p. 1635,22: ὁ κωμικὸς (Ar. fr. 536) τὸ κάππα ἐξελὼν γέλωτα ἐκίνησεν εἰπὼν οὕτω ψελ-λόν ἐστι (τὸ παιδίον) καὶ καλεῖ | τὴν ἄρκτον ἄρτον, τὴν δὲ Τυρῶ τροφαλίδα, | τὸ δ'

<sup>5</sup> After *φιλίαν*, *αἰτίαν* is missing. Moreover, Schmidt, according to a regrettable but common habit, alters *οὔσαν* into *εἶναι*, because he cuts off the sentence.

<sup>6</sup> Shortly before Aristotle says: "And they [*scil.* these philosophers] talk about confusedly (*ἀμυδρῶς*)." So *ψελλιζομένη* and *ἀμυδρῶς* explain each other.

<sup>7</sup> The untranslatable pun is between *κόραξ* "crow" and *κόλαξ* "bootlicker".

<sup>8</sup> *V. infra.*

ἄστν σῦκα. 13] Plut. *mor.* p. 621 E: τοῖς λεγομένοις προστάγμασιν ἐξυβρίζουσι προστάττοντες ἄδειν ψελλοῖς, ἢ κτενίζεσθαι φαλακροῖς, ἢ ἀσκωλιάζειν χωλοῖς.

5. When forms like *ψελλότης* and *ψελλισμός*, *τραυλότης* and *τραυλισμός* are in use at the same time, usually the first one indicates the quality, the second the action, but a strict distinction can not be respected. Compare ex. 1]—where the condition of *ψελλός* and *τραυλός* in a global sense is meant by *ψελλότης* and *τραυλότης*—with ex. 14], where there is talk about the imitation of an action. 14] Plut. *mor.* 53 C: ὡς που καὶ Πλάτωνος ἀπομιμείσθαι φασιν τοὺς συνήθεις τὸ ἐπίκυρτον, Ἀριστοτέλους δὲ τὸν τραυλισμόν, Ἀλεξάνδρου δὲ τοῦ βασιλέως τὴν ἔγκλισιν τοῦ τραχήλου καὶ τὴν ἐν τῷ διαλέγεσθαι τραχύτητα τῆς φωνῆς.

6. From the above, *τραυλίζειν* corresponds perfectly to our “lallen”, by which first of all we, too, think of the exchange of “r” and “l”; *ψελλίζειν*, however, is a bit less than our “stammeln”, since by this word we think of getting stuck in speaking, while *ψελλίζειν* only reports a faulty pronunciation. Rather, it is the *ισχνόφωνος* that is a stutterer (“der Stammelnde”), *i.e.* he sticks in speaking; but, when a Greek speaker thinks of the action and its effect and wants to express that with a verb, highlights with *ψελλίζειν* only a defective articulation.

Our “stottern” is undoubtedly *βατταρίζειν*, *βατταριστής*, *βατταρισμός*, of which words even the ancients partly recognized, rightly, the onomatopoeic nature. But at the grass roots level, if no etymological relationship was apparent or there was not at all, people preferred them come from individuals. Cf. Hdt. 4,155.<sup>9</sup> 15] Strabo 14,2,28: οἶμαι δὲ τὸ βάρβαρον κατ' ἀρχὰς ἐκπεφωνῆθαι οὕτως κατ' ὀνοματοποιίαν ἐπὶ τῶν δυσεκφόρως καὶ σκληρῶς καὶ τραχέως λαλούντων, ὡς τὸ βατταρίζειν καὶ τραυλίζειν καὶ ψελλίζειν. These words are not very frequent, because the real stuttering (“stottern”) afflicts few individuals, and generally it cannot be attributed to children. On the other hand, it is not conceivable that orators or other important people are suffering from that; at the most, one can forgive them for the *τραυλότης*. According to the usual method of glossographers, the following definition could be just as well for *ψελλίζειν*. 16] Phryn. in Bekk. *An.* I, p. 30,24: **βατταρίζειν**· ἄσημα καὶ ἀδιάρθρωτα διαλέγεσθαι; in fact, it is natural that the stuttering

<sup>9</sup> ἐντεῦθεν δὲ τὴν Φρονίμην παραλαβὼν Πολύμνηστος, ἐὼν τῶν Θηραίων ἀνὴρ δόκιμος, ἐπαλλακεύετο. χρόνου δὲ περιόντος ἐξεγένετό οἱ παῖς ἰσχνόφωνος καὶ τραυλός, τῷ οὐνομα ἐτέθη Βάττος, ὡς Θηραίοι τε καὶ Κυρηναῖοι λέγουσι, ὡς μέντοι ἐγὼ δοκέω ἄλλο τι· Βάττος δὲ μετωνομάσθη, ἐπεῖτε ἐς Λιβύην ἀπίκετο, ἀπὸ τε τοῦ χρηστηρίου τοῦ γενομένου ἐν Δελφοῖσι αὐτῷ καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς τιμῆς τὴν ἔσχε τὴν ἐπωνυμίην ποιούμενος· Λίβυες γὰρ βασιλέα βάττον καλέουσι, καὶ τούτου εἵνεκα δοκέω θεσπίζουσιν τὴν Πυθίην καλέσαι μιν Λιβυκὴ γλῶσση, εἰδυῖαν ὡς βασιλεὺς εἶσται ἐν Λιβύῃ. ἐπεῖτε γὰρ ἠνδρώθη οὗτος, ἦλθε ἐς Δελφοὺς περὶ τῆς φωνῆς· ἐπειρωτῶντι δὲ οἱ χρᾶ ἢ Πυθίῃ τάδε·

Βάττ', ἐπὶ φωνὴν ἦλθες· ἀναξ δὲ σε Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων  
ἐς Λιβύην πέμπει μηλοτρόφον οἰκιστῆρα,

ὥσπερ εἰ εἶποι Ἑλλάδι γλῶσση χρεωμένη· Ὡ βασιλεῦ, ἐπὶ φωνὴν ἦλθες. ὁ δ' ἀμείβετο τοιοῦδε· Ὡναξ, ἐγὼ μὲν ἦλθον παρὰ σὲ χρησόμενος περὶ τῆς φωνῆς, σὺ δὲ μοι ἄλλα ἀδύνατα χρᾶς, κελεύων Λιβύην ἀποικίζειν· τέω δυνάμι, κοίη χειρὶ; ταῦτα λέγων οὐκ ἔπειθε ἄλλα οἱ χρᾶν· ὡς δὲ κατὰ ταῦτα ἐθέσπιζε οἱ καὶ πρότερον, οἶχετο μεταξὺ ἀπολιπὼν ὁ Βάττος ἐς τὴν Θῆβην. — First, we have to point out that *ισχνόφωνος* is the lesson accepted by Hude (Oxford <sup>3</sup>1927), while Legrand (*Les Belles Lettres* <sup>3</sup>1960) prefers *ισχύφωνος* (*v. infra* the Comment). Secondly, the expression ἐπὶ φωνὴν, in evident opposition with περὶ τῆς φωνῆς, is deliberately ambiguous, because it can mean “for recovering (your) voice”, “for getting (your) speech”, or “for listening to (my) voice” as the equivalent of ἐπὶ τὸ χρηστήριον: in fact, the Pythia evades the question, so as to try the patience of the consultant.

("stottern") include the stammering ("stammeln"). But the two following passages imply that βατταρίζειν had a broader meaning than ψελλίζειν. In addition, the latter refers to a normal phenomenon in little children, while βατταρίζειν certainly seems to indicate a deviation from the norm; then, its highly onomatopoeic nature should be considered, which is more or less similar to our "rappeln (to rattle)". All that does not suggest any way to a slow and hesitant speech, but rather a voice that "suddenly breaks and crackles". So you cannot doubt that βατταρίζειν is an expression that almost equals our "*stottern (to stutter)*". 17] Dio Chrys. 11, p. 317 R.: συμβάνει δὲ καὶ τοῦτο τοῖς ψευδομένοις ὡς τὸ πολὺ γε, ἄλλα μὲν τινα λέγειν τοῦ πράγματος καὶ διατρίβειν ἐπ' αὐτοῖς, ὅ τι δ' ἂν μάλιστα κρῦψαι θέλωσιν, οὐ προτιθέμενοι λέγουσιν οὐδὲ προσέχοντι τῷ ἀκροατῇ, οὐδ' ἐν τῇ αὐτοῦ χώρᾳ τιθέντες, ἀλλ' ὡς ἂν λάθοιεν μάλιστα, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο καὶ ὅτι αἰσχύνησθαι ποιεῖ τὸ ψεῦδος καὶ ἀποκνεῖν προσιέναι πρὸς αὐτό, ἄλλως τε ὅταν ἢ περὶ τῶν μεγίστων. ὅθεν οὐδὲ τῇ φωνῇ μέγα λέγουσιν οἱ ψευδομένοι, ὅταν ἐπὶ τοῦτο ἔλθωσιν· οἱ δὲ τινες αὐτῶν βατταρίζουσι καὶ ἀσαφῶς λέγουσιν· οἱ δὲ οὐχ ὡς αὐτοῖ τι εἰδότες, ἀλλ' ὡς ἐτέρων ἀκούσαντες. 18] Luc. *Jup. trag.* 27: ἐν πλήθει δὲ εἰπεῖν ἀτολμότατός ἐστι καὶ τὴν φωνὴν ιδιώτης καὶ μιξοβάροσ, ὥστε γέλωτα ὀφλισκάνειν διὰ τοῦτο ἐν ταῖς συνουσίαις, οὐ ξυνείρων ἀλλὰ βατταρίζων καὶ ταραπτόμενος, καὶ μάλιστα ὁπότεν οὕτως ἔχων καὶ καλλιῶρημοσύνην ἐπιδείκνυσθαι βούληται.

## COMMENT.

By the reading of No. 124 of the Schmidt's *Synonymik* we want to illustrate how a semasiological investigation of a group of alleged synonyms should be conducted—in a synchronic context, of course—, their differences to emerge. Similarly, those errors and contradictions will appear, which a lexicographer should avoid.

The observations of Schmidt rotate around an excerpt from the *Problems* of Aristotle (*cf. ex. 1*]). But the compiler of the *Problems* is not Aristotle. Although here and there Aristotelian material seems surfacing, the Greek of *Problemata* is not that of Aristotle, but of a much later author. If many Greek scholars are of opposite opinion, it is their problem.

That said, the only words that need to be considered are: βατταρίζειν, ἰσχνόφωνος, ἰσχροφωνία, τραυλός, τραυλίζειν, ψελλός ε ψελλίζεσθαι. In fact, ψελλότης, ψελλισμός, τραυλότης, τραυλισμός, and βατταρισμός appear more than five centuries after classic Greek, *i.e.* in Plutarch and Philodemus. The fact that ψελλότης and τραυλότης are met with not only in Plutarch but also in *Problemata*, corroborates our assertion. Finally, βατταριστής is only in Hesychius.<sup>10</sup>

Removed the ballast, we can begin analysing contexts.

7. The first word, of which we have got evidence, seems to be βατταρίζειν, both because you could meet with in Hipponax,<sup>11</sup> and because Herodotus is getting at.<sup>12</sup> The historian tells us that according to Theraeans and Cyrenians the son of Polymnestus had been named Battos because he was afflicted with speech impediment. This means that such an

<sup>10</sup> M. Schmidt, however, sets aside the lemma among the spurious glosses: βαταρισταις· τοῖς βαταρίζουσιν <βαττ-> (*cf. ed. min.* col. 295)

<sup>11</sup> Cf. I. Bekker, *Anecdota Graeca* I, Berolini (apud G.C. Nauckium) 1814, p. 85: Βατταρίζειν: Ἰππῶναξ.

<sup>12</sup> V. *supra* (note no. 9) the text of the entire paragraph.

impediment was expressed by a specific word directly connected with Βάττος, and that word could not be anything but βατταρίζειν. Nevertheless Herodotus does not specify that. Why? In the first place, we can assume that for prose reasons he preferred to use a noun or an adjective, and, failing any noun or adjective from βατταρίζειν, he replaced it with the combination ἰσχνόφωνος καὶ τραυλός. In this case, however, we should accept the following semantic equivalence, even if not very rigorous: *who βατταρίζει* is ἰσχνόφωνος καὶ τραυλός, and, *vice versa*, when the person who is ἰσχνόφωνος καὶ τραυλός talks βατταρίζει. Otherwise, Herodotus, avoiding the use of the verb, wanted in some way to underline the absence of any relationship between the name Βάττος and the defect of speech, as Battus did not βατταρίζειν, since he was ἰσχνόφωνος καὶ τραυλός, in which case the supposed semantic equivalence would be completely denied.

We find the verb βατταρίζειν in a passage of Plato (*Tht.* 175D), that Schmidt does not cite perhaps because βατταρίζειν is not in the Ast's *Lexicon*.<sup>13</sup> Although the text provided by critical editions is not at all satisfactory, it seems clear that Socrates is talking about behaviour that a coryphaeus of philosophy, a founder, assumes when asked to deal not with utmost questions, but with arguments much more down to earth, ex. 19]: not being inured to that (ὑπὸ ἀηθείας), he gets anxious (ἀδημονῶν), does not know what to say (ἀπορῶν), hesitates, and speaks stiltedly (βατταρίζων). Verbs ἀδημονῶ and ἀπορῶ illustrate very well the semantic halo of βατταρίζω. So, even if that philosopher is not a stutterer, in the circumstances mentioned by Socrates he behaves stammeringly, *i.e.*, when he has to speak, he gets upset, does not know what to say, because silently he thinks of the word easier to utter, and at last he utters that almost exploding, and then he stops again. Hence, we may deduce that βατταρίζειν, applied to those who have no defect of speech, can mean *to speak as a stutterer*. Whether the verb may be applied to a real stutterer, it is a presumption, very plausible indeed, but a presumption. Some centuries later, Cicero will use βατταρίζειν the same way in relation to a freed slave who, even if without any speech impediment, replies to embarrassing questions haltingly, like a stutterer (*cf. Att.* 6,5,1).

8. Now let us go on to ψελλός and ψελλίζεσθαι. The first utilization of ψελλός seems to be in Aeschylus (*Prom.* 816), that Schmidt ignores. After explaining to Io her future wandering, Prometheus adds, ex. 20]: τῶν δ' εἴ τί σοι ψελλόν τε καὶ δυσεύρετον, | ἐπανδίπλαζε καὶ σαφῶς ἐκμάνθανε ("if one of what I <told you, seemed> to you unclear and difficult to grasp, repeat it several times <with me> and try to keep it in mind").<sup>14</sup> Here, Aeschylus' interpreters tend to attribute to ψελλόν the meaning of "obscure", "unintelligible"; however, the meaning of the adjective needs a specification. Prometheus is afraid that all those names which he has given, being unknown to Io, faded as something indistinct (ψελλόν) and δυσεύρετον, "difficult to grasp", "hard to keep in mind".

Schmidt, then, quotes a passage from Aristophanes (*see ex. 12*) mentioned by Eustathius, which for the time being we put aside, as the use therein of ψελλός seems in conflict with the same Aristophanes (*v. infra*).

<sup>13</sup> In fact, the Plato's editors borrow the lesson from Themistius, because the codices read βαρβαρίζων.

<sup>14</sup> It is very unlikely that ἐπανδίπλαζε might mean—as many interpreters want—"ask it again"; in fact, if it is true that ἐπαν suggests the idea of *again and again, once more, continuing, from the beginning*, διπλάζω has nothing to do with *asking*. Our supplement "with me" is required by the subsequent verse: σχολή δὲ πλείων ἢ θέλω πάρεστί μοι ("I have more time than I would").

In ex. 5] Plato gives a well circumstantiated use of ψελλίζεσθαι, which shows unequivocally that this verb indicates the “babbling” of infants, who, despite not having any problems with phonation or utterance, have not yet learned to articulate with care all sounds of their idiom, so that, beyond sympathy, a great many might struggle to understand them. The comparison with the passage from *Theaetetus* above seems inevitable and instructive too: there, it is a φιλόσοφος who βατταρίζει; here, is a φιλοσοφῶν who ψελλίζεται. There, the action of βατταρίζειν is triggered by a proximate cause; here, that of ψελλίζεσθαι is an affectation. It goes without saying that any philosophical speculation about could not concern us.

The meaning of ψελλός is further clarified by two Hippocratic passages. In the first (*Epid.* 7.8 [5,378,22 Littré]), about an elderly woman, the adjective refers to φωνή, ex. 21]: ἡ τε φωνὴ ψελλή διὰ τὸ παραλελυμένον καὶ ἀκίνητον καὶ ἀσθενὲς εἶναι τὸ σῶμα (“and her speech was faltering because the body was paralysed, motionless and bereft of strength”), then the normal utterance of sounds is hampered by paralysis and weakness. The second passage is more detailed (*Epid.* 7.105 [5,456,8 Littré]), ex. 22]: παρὰ ἀμφοτέρων ἀνιδρώσιες, γλώσσης ὑπὸ ξυρότητος ψελλοί (“absence of sweat in both subjects, babbling for the dryness of the tongue”); therefore, it is the dryness of the tongue, namely lack of salivation, that causes the condition of ψελλός. An example can be given by diabetics, who sometimes happen to feel their mouth completely dried, no saliva, with the urgent need to drink a bit of water: under such a circumstances they babble in a very similar way to children who are beginning to speak.

Therefore, the meaning of ψελλός and ψελλίζεσθαι in literal, medical, and figurative sense leaves no doubt.

9. And now we come to ἰσχνόφωνος, ἰσχροφωνία. In *corpus Hippocraticum* you can find the substantive only once in a passage not useful for our purposes (*Epid.* 2,5,1 [5,128,5 Littré]).<sup>15</sup> As for ἰσχνόφωνος contexts are not illuminating, but the comment of Galen gives us a helping hand. In *Epid.* 1.9 [5,656,1÷6 Littré], ex. 23], Hippocrates relates that in Thasos, during the year and season taken into account, the number of diseases was very great, and those who died of them were chiefly teenagers, young persons, adults..., the ἰσχνόφωνοι, those whose voice was harsh, those who lisped, and those who were hot-tempered. The text of Galen edited by Kühn (vol. 17 / I, p. 186ff.) has been indecently patched up and his Latin translation—if possible—is even worse, but thanks to Californian TLG<sup>16</sup> we can read it in the latest edition of Wenkebach (Leipzig 1934), ex. 23c]: λοιπὸν οὖν ἐστὶν ἐπισκέψασθαι περὶ τῶν ἰσχροφώνων καὶ τραχυφώνων καὶ τραυλῶν καὶ ὀργίλων, καὶ πρῶτον

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<sup>15</sup> The writer asserts that only a varix of the left or right testicle clears up the ἰσχροφωνία.

<sup>16</sup> The Californian *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* offers through subscription the possibility to search into the text of a large number of authors. Nevertheless, we cannot share some restrictions, because they assume that subscribers use both the searches and the texts offered without mentioning the source; in other words, they fear that the subscribers pass the searches results off as a product of their own genius and personal efforts, and insert them into publications for sale, so making an undeserved profit. That may be true, but not always it is so. As for the texts processed in digital form, it would be enough to agree with the copyright holders—if still alive—and put them on sale to subscribers. In any case, the TLG is a valuable tool, and we, who on this website offer free the results of our work, will quote it whenever any information comes from that source.

<μὲν περὶ τῶν πρῶτων><sup>17</sup> γεγραμμένων, τῶν ἰσχυρόφωνων. εἰ μὲν οὖν οὕτως εἴη γεγραμμένον, τοὺς ἰσχυροὺς τὴν φωνὴν <ἂν ἀκούοιμεν>.<sup>18</sup> ἰσχυρόφωνοι γὰρ ἔτι καὶ νῦν λέγονται τινες, ὥσπερ γε καὶ λεπτόφωνοι. ταῦτ' οὖν ἐκατέρου <τοῦ> ὀνόματος σημαίνοντος, διαφέρουσιν οὗτοι τῶν ἰσχυρόφωνων, ὡς ἐν τοῖς Περὶ φωνῆς εἴρηται, καὶ δέδεικται γίνεσθαι <τοὺς μὲν λεπτοφώνους> διὰ τὴν στενότητα τῆς τραχείας ἀρτηρίας<sup>19</sup> τοῦ λάρυγγος, τοὺς δὲ ἰσχυρομένους τὴν φωνὴν διὰ τὴν φυσικὴν μοχθηρίαν τῶν κινούντων τὸν λάρυγγα μυῶν. ἐκάτεροι δὲ δι' ἀρρωστίαν τῆς ἐμφύτου θερμοσίας ἀποτελοῦνται τοιοῦτοι κατὰ τὴν πρώτην διάπλασιν. ὥσπερ δ' ἐν τοῖς τὸν λάρυγγα κινούσι μισὶ φαυλότερον ἐξ ἀρχῆς οἱ ἰσχυρόφωνοι διεπλάσθησαν, οὕτως <ἐν> τοῖς τὴν γλῶτταν οἱ τραυλοί.<sup>20</sup> According to Galen, therefore, in his time (second century A.D.) ἰσχυρόφωνος and λεπτόφωνος<sup>21</sup> were more or less synonymous, hence, the only spelling that does not give rise to doubts would be ἰσχυρόφωνος,<sup>22</sup> i.e. ἰσχυόμενος τὴν φωνήν, *who pauses / gets stuck / stops while speaking*. In any case, even if Hippocrates had used an improper spelling, we can conclude that both ἰσχυρόφωνος and ἰσχύφωνος do not indicate a defect of pronunciation, which instead afflicts the τραυλοί, but a different problem of utterance: a problem of volume or tune in the former case (ἰσχυρόφωνος), a functional problem in the latter one (ἰσχύφωνος).

Thanks again to the aforementioned *TLG* we found another occurrence of ἰσχυρόφωνος in Alcidas, a pupil of Gorgias, almost contemporary of Isocrates. In his speech *On the sophists*, he compared those who prepare, write and read their speeches with those who, content with a mere outline, deliver an impromptu speech. The obvious superiority of the latter is exposed by smart and funny considerations. In § 16 he writes, ex. 24]: ὅταν γάρ τις ἐθισθῆ κατὰ μικρὸν ἐξεργάζεσθαι τοὺς λόγους καὶ μετ' ἀκριβείας καὶ ὀρθοῦ τὰ

<sup>17</sup> The meaning of this passage is given in the translation we propose. Then, taking into account the linguistic habits of Galen, we assume two different solutions: 1. Between πρῶτον and γεγραμμένων we assume the fall of <τῶν κατὰ τόνδε τὸν τρόπον>; 2. Integrating in any case the article τῶν before γεγραμμένων, we may think of an ὠδί πῶς in place of τῶν: therefore, καὶ πρῶτον <τῶν> γεγραμμένων ὠδί πῶς ἰσχυρόφωνων. What is certain is that πρῶτον γεγραμμένων is not to be understood according to the translation of some physicians of the xvi century (*qui primo sunt loco relati*), that is “the first in the list”!

<sup>18</sup> An integration is necessary; however, rather than an optative with ἂν, it seems more in line with the language of Galen a future, i.e. ἀκουσόμεθα.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Cic. *n.d.* 2,136: *aspera arteria (sic enim a medicis appellatur)*.

<sup>20</sup> «Well, we must examine the ἰσχυρόφωνοι, those whose voice is harsh, those who lisp, and those who are hot-tempered, and let us start by the spelling of ἰσχυρόφωνοι. If the spelling is that, we shall understand those whose voice is small, in fact, even today we say ἰσχυρόφωνοι for λεπτόφωνοι. Although both terms mean the same, the λεπτόφωνοι differ from the ἰσχύφωνοι, as we have said in the books *On the Voice*, where it is shown that the λεπτόφωνοι are so due to the stenosis of the trachea at the larynx, while the ἰσχυόμενοι τὴν φωνήν are so due to congenital fault of the muscles moving the larynx. Such a condition of both of them is due to insufficiency of the innate warmth at the time of their forming. And as the ἰσχύφωνοι have malformed from the beginning the muscles moving the larynx, so the τραυλοί have malformed those moving the tongue.»

<sup>21</sup> The term is in Aristotle, *hist. an.* 4,11 (Bekker p. 132): καὶ περὶ φωνῆς δέ, πάντα τὰ θήλεα λεπτοφωνότερα καὶ ὀξυφωνότερα, πλὴν βοός, ὅσα ἔχει φωνήν (*and as for the voice, the female in all animals that are vocal, has a thinner and sharper voice, except for the cow*). The addition of ὀξυφωνότερα clarifies that λεπτόφωνος — and, indirectly, ἰσχυρόφωνος / ἰσχύφωνος — does not allude to the highness of the voice, but either the quality (tone) or intensity (volume, power), or both.

<sup>22</sup> Note that the *Anonymus Antiatticista* (cf. I. Bekker, *Anecdota Graeca cit.*, I, p. 100) writes: Ἡρόδοτος ἰσχύφωνον (*v. supra* note no. 9).



θήματα συντιθέναι, καὶ βραδεία τῇ τῆς διανοίας κινήσει χρώμενος ἐπιτελεῖν τὴν ἐρμηνείαν, ἀναγκαῖόν ἐστι τοῦτον, ὅταν εἰς τοὺς αὐτοσχεδιαστοὺς ἔλθῃ λόγους, ἐναντία πράσσοντα ταῖς συνηθείαις ἀπορίας καὶ θορύβου πλήρη τὴν γνώμην ἔχειν, καὶ πρὸς ἅπαντα μὲν δυσχεραίνειν, μηδὲν δὲ διαφέρειν τῶν ἰσχυρόφωνων, οὐδέποτε δ' εὐλύτῳ τῇ τῆς ψυχῆς ἀγχινοῖα χρώμενον ὑγρῶς καὶ φιλανθρώπως μεταχειρίζεσθαι τοὺς λόγους. From this passage, indeed, we can only deduce that the ἰσχυρόφωνος does not speak ὑγρῶς καὶ φιλανθρώπως, but in § 21 Alcidamas states: τοῖς δὲ γεγραμμένα λέγουσιν, ἂν καὶ μικρὸν ὑπὸ τῆς ἀγωνίας ἐκλίπωσιν τι καὶ παραλλάξωσιν, ἀπορίαν ἀνάγκη καὶ πλάνον καὶ ζήτησιν ἐγγενέσθαι, καὶ μακροὺς μὲν χρόνους ἐπίσχειν, πολλάκις δὲ τῇ σιωπῇ διαλαμβάνειν τὸν λόγον, ἀσχήμονα δὲ καὶ καταγέλαστον καὶ δυσεπικούρητον καθεστάναι τὴν ἀπορίαν. Thus, the rhetorician, in a fit of anxiousness, is at a loss for words, hesitates, gets stuck and stops talking. The points of contact with the passage from *Theaetetus* (*v. supra*) are evident.

10. Finally, τραυλός and τραυλίζειν. The former—as we have seen—is already in Herodotus, the latter in Aristophanes. The contexts where Hippocrates uses τραυλός do not allow a semasiological investigation, but the comment of Galen (*see* above ex. 11]) to *aph.* 6,32 (ex. 25)],<sup>23</sup> which we quote in full, may provide some useful element, ex. 25c]: Ὡσπερ τὸ ψελλίζεσθαι τῆς διαλέκτου πάθος ἐστίν, οὐ τῆς φωνῆς, οὕτω καὶ τὸ τραυλίζειν, μὴ δυναμένης τῆς γλώττης ἀκριβῶς ἐκείνας διαρθροῦν τὰς φωνάς, ὅσαι διὰ τοῦ τ καὶ ρ λέγονται, καθάπερ αὐτὴν τε ταύτην τραύλωσιν, καὶ ὁμοίως τάσδε· τρέχει, τρέμει, τραχύς, τροχός, τρυφερός, ὅσαι τε ἄλλαι παραπλήσια. Δέονται γὰρ αἱ τοιαῦται πᾶσαι τῆς γλώττης μετὰ τοῦ πλατύνεσθαι στηριζομένης ἐπὶ τοῖς προσθίοις ὁδοῦσιν. Ὅταν οὖν ἀτονωτέρα τισὶ ὑπάρχη, στηρίζεται χειρόν καὶ οὐ διαρθροῖ τὸν τοῦ τ καὶ ρ φθόγγον, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τὸν τ καὶ λ μεταπίπτει. Δύναται δ' αὐτῇ γενέσθαι τοῦτο καὶ διότι βραχυτέρα πῶς ἐστὶ τοῦ προσήκοντος, ὅπερ ἐστὶ σπανιώτατον· ἀλλὰ καὶ διότι μαλακωτέρα τε καὶ ὑγροτέρα τὴν κρᾶσιν ἢ τραύλωσις γίνεται. Οὕτω γοῦν καὶ τὰ παιδία τραυλίζει παραπλησίον τοῦ συμβαίνοντος αὐτοῖς ὑπάρχοντος οἷόν τι καὶ περὶ τὴν βᾶδισιν γίνεται. Καὶ γὰρ καὶ ταύτην τὰ μὲν οὐδ' ὅλως, τὰ δ' οὐχ ἰκανῶς ἔχει τῶν σκελῶν αὐτοῖς διὰ μαλακότητα στηρίζεσθαι βεβαίως ἀδυνατούντων. Ἐνίοις δὲ καὶ τῶν τελείων, ὅταν διαλεγόμενοι κάμνωσι, συμβαίνει τραυλίζειν, ὥσπερ καὶ τοῖς ἐπὶ τὸ πλεῖστον αὐλήσασιν, οὕτω δὲ καὶ τοῖς ἐν νόσῳ κεκμηκόσιν ἰσχυρῶς τὴν δύναμιν, ὥσπερ γε καὶ διὰ τὸ σφοδρότερον ξηρανθῆναι τὴν γλῶτταν ἐνίοις. Ἀλλ' ἢ τοσαύτη ξηρότης οὐδενὶ τῶν κατὰ φύσιν ἐχόντων ὑπάρξει δύναται. Καὶ διὰ τοῦτο μόνης ὑγρότητος ἀμέτρου σύμπτωμά ἐστιν ἐν τοῖς φύσει τραυλοῖς ἢ τῆς διαλέκτου βλάβη μὴ δυναμένων τῶν μυῶν τῆς γλώττης ἐγκρατῶς στηρίζεσθαι. Τοῦτο δὲ αὐτοῖς συμβαίνει ἐγχωρεῖ μὲν καὶ διὰ τὴν οἰκειαν ἀρρώστιαν, ἐγχωρεῖ δὲ καὶ διὰ τὴν τῶν νεύρων, ὧν παρ' ἐγκεφάλου λαμβάνει δηλονότι. Καὶ οἱ μεθύοντες οὖν ἐνίοτε τραυλίζουσι, τοῦτο μὲν ὑγρότητι πολλῇ διαβροχομένου τοῦ ἐγκεφάλου, τοῦτο δ' ὑπὸ πλήθους αὐτῆς βαρυνομένου. Συμβήσεται γοῦν οὕτω καὶ τοῖς φύσει τραυλοῖς ἢ τοῦ ἐγκεφάλου ὑγρὸν ὑπάρχειν ἢ τὴν γλῶτταν ἢ ἀμφοτέρω. Τοῦ μὲν οὖν ἐγκεφάλου τοιαύτην ἔχοντος κρᾶσιν ἀπορρέειν μὲν εἰκὸς ἐστὶ περιττωμάτων ὑγρῶν πλήθος, ὑποδέχεσθαι δὲ αὐτὰ καταρρέοντα τὴν γαστέρα, κἀντεῦθεν ἀλίσκεσθαι διαρροῖαις μακρῶς τὸν ἄνθρωπον. τῆς γλώττης δ' αὐτῆς ὑγροτέρας οὔσης σφόδρα φύσει καὶ τὴν κοιλίαν εἰκὸς εἶναι τοιαύτην, ὡς ἂν θατέρου τῶν χι-

<sup>23</sup> Cf. 4,570,10 [Littre]: τραυλοὶ ὑπὸ διαρροῖαις μάλιστα ἀλίσκονται μακρῆς.

τώνων αὐτῆς κοινοῦ πρὸς τὴν γλῶτταν ὑπάρχοντος, ἀσθενοῦς δὲ δι' ὑγρότητα, κοιλίας δ' οἰκεῖον πάθημα, χρονία διάρροια (vol. 18/1, p. 50÷53 [Kühn]).<sup>24</sup> We can notice: *a.* both ψελλιζεσθαι and τραυλίζειν are not due to a problem of phonation, but of pronunciation; *b.* τραυλίζειν may mean a defect both congenital (φύσει)—namely the inability to pronounce the consonantal group “τρ”—and a phase, which can be transitory—like the childish speech—or occasional, as a result of drunkenness, tiredness, weariness.

It is not clear why Schmidt cite Aristophanes through Plutarch rather than directly. Anyhow, we easily deduce from ex. 10] (*v. supra*), citing *Vesp.* 44 ÷ 46, that τραυλίζειν specifies the inability to articulate the sound “ρ”. The writer uses this same verb in two other places, of which we only use the second one,<sup>25</sup> *nub.* 1380÷1385, es. 26]: ὅστις, ὦ 'ναῖσχυντέ, σ' ἐξέθρεψα | αἰσθανόμενός σου πάντα τραυλίζοντος, ὅ τι νοοίης. Εἰ μὲν γε βρῶν εἴποις, ἐγὼ γνούς ἂν πιεῖν ἐπέσχον· | μαμμῶν δ' ἂν αἰτήσαντος ἤκόν σοι φέρων ἂν ἄρτον· | κακκῶν δ' ἂν οὐκ ἔφθης φράσας, κἀγὼ λαβὼν θύραζε | ἐξέφερον ἂν καὶ προυσχόμην σε.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>24</sup> «While ψελλιζεσθαι is a matter of pronunciation, not of voice, on the other hand the cause of τραυλίζειν is a tongue which fails to properly articulate the words containing “τ” followed by “ρ”, as in the word itself τραύλωσις and, also, in these below: τρέχει, τρέμει, τραχύς, τροχός, τρυφερός, and others alike. All of these, in fact, need the tongue, while it is widening, levers on the front teeth. When, therefore, it happens that a tongue has a lower muscle tone, it does not force sufficiently and cannot articulate the sound “τ” followed by “ρ”, but it fails and utters “τ” followed by “λ”. This, however, can also happen, when the tongue is shorter than it should be—a very rare case indeed—, but there is τραύλωσις, when it is softer and more humid by constitution. In truth, even the infants τραυλίζει, (but only) because they happen something similar while beginning to walk: some of them do not walk at all, others hardly do that, simply because their legs, being weak, are unable to stand firmly. Some of them, once grown up, happen to τραυλίζειν, if they get tired by talking unceasingly, or when they blew too much an instrument, or are weighed down by an illness, or, again, have their tongue terribly dry, even if such dryness cannot occur if one is well. So, who is τραυλός by nature has a bad pronunciation only because of excessive humidity, so that the muscles of the tongue cannot force. This can be due to a specific disease or to diseased nerves, which—as you know—(the tongue) receives from the brain. Sometimes the inebriates, too, τραυλίζουσι, because the brain soaks in a lot of humidity, whose abundance weighs down. The same happens to the τραυλοί, no matter if both the brain and the tongue are humid, or only one of them is that. When the brain is in such a condition, it is obvious that humours in excess flow down abundantly into the abdomen, which receives these outflows, so that the patient is afflicted with persistent diarrhoea. When, then, the language itself is extremely humid by nature, also the belly is obviously humid, as if, since one of its two membranes is in common with the tongue, it were (as a consequence) weak due to humidity. Chronic diarrhoea is a belly's specific disease.»

<sup>25</sup> The text of *nub.* 860 ÷ 864 (εἶτα τῷ πατρὶ | πειθόμενος [*erroneously "corrected" by Bentley in* πειθόμενος] ἐξάμαρτε· κἀγὼ τοί ποτε, | οἶδ', ἐξέτει σοι τραυλίσαντι πειθόμενος, ὃν πρῶτον ὀβολὸν ἔλαβον ἠλιαστικόν, τούτου πριάμην σοι Διασίσις ἀμαξίδα), despite the agreement of the edd., raises problems which will be discussed elsewhere. Suffice it to say that there are two objections: firstly, ἐξέτει, because a six year-old sound child pronounces correctly. Van Leeuwen wondered in his edition (Leiden 21898, p. 139): "At etiamne sexennes Athenis pueri blaeso ore loquebantur?». Secondly, the two aorist participles τραυλίσαντι πειθόμενος force to assume a real permanent speech impediment, not a large pronunciation (cf. v.. 873). A scholion suggests an explanatory paraphrase: κἀγὼ οἶδα καὶ γινώσκω, ὅτι ποτὲ ἡμάρτον πειθόμενός σοι ἐξαετεί ὄντι καὶ ἤδη τὴν βρεφικὴν ἡλικίαν παρατρέχοντι, καὶ τραυλίσαντι καὶ ὑποψέλλως καὶ παιδαριωδῶς αἰτοῦντι ὃν πρῶτον ἔλαβον ὀβολὸν ἠλιαστικόν. But—we repeat it—the two aorist participles, τραυλίσαντι and πειθόμενος, not determining as aorists any circumstances, cannot mean what the scholiast would like. The specialists of Aristophanes seem to ignore what is the verbal aspect and what does it mean.

<sup>26</sup> The linguists, preferring to masturbate their brain with the imaginery Indo-European, are not concerned with child language, and yet it would be their duty. It is not a coincidence that the son of a neighbour of ours

## CONCLUSION.

Herodotus (*cf.* note no. 9) and the examples 19] and 24] show that βατταρίζειν (*verbum*) and ισχνόφωνος (*nomen agentis*) are forms somehow suppletive; we might add ισχνοφωνία too (*nomen actionis*), but only by inference. Before proceeding, however, we must briefly dwell upon the question of spelling, raised by Galen: ισχνόφωνος or ισχύφωνος? We prefer ισχύφωνος, granting to ισχνόφωνος the only partial synonymy with λεπτόφωνος. However, apart from the place of Herodotus, where the lesson ισχύφωνος (*cf.* notes nos. 9 and 22) seems to be more correct, the manuscript tradition shows no uncertainties. We have to assume an early misuse of ισχνόφωνος, because of which the correct ισχύφωνος, no longer understood, became an obsolete word. On the other hand, these are words of infrequent use, which speakers happen to employ rarely and with little or no care. In Italian language, too, although there are various specific terms (“balbo”, “balbettone”, “tartaglione”, “scilinguato”, “balbuziente”, “bleso”, “bisciolo”), most people ignore them and only use “balbuziente”.

So, βατταρίζειν, which is of clear onomatopoeic origin, corresponds to “stutter”, “stammer”, and ισχ(ν)όφωνος to “stutterer”, “who stops speaking”.

The “babble” of children, however, is expressed by both ψελλίζεσθαι and τραυλίζειν, with a difference: ψελλίζεσθαι emphasizes the difficulty of understanding in the listener, while τραυλίζειν emphasizes the exchange and confusion both of consonantal sounds and pieces of words. In strict sense, however, applied to an adult, τραυλίζειν states the speech of one who is τραυλός, *i.e.* “lispings”.<sup>27</sup> Ψελλός is who, unable to articulate sounds because of circumstantial conditions, babbles in a childish way, so it is hard to understand what he utters; hence the figurative use in ex. 20] and perhaps in ex. 12] too, where actually, according to Eustathius, Aristophanes describes as ψελλόν a child who τραυλίζει. The dialect difference indicated by Moeris Atticista (τραυλίζειν Ἀττικοί· ψελλίζειν Ἑλληνες) does not seem borne out by the authors. It is more difficult to understand—because of the scarcity of the texts—the semantic value of the middle voice: in ex. 5] Plato uses the middle present participle ψελλιζόμενος, not the active one ψελλίζων. In ex. 3] Aristotle uses the active voice, ψελλίζουσι, whose subject is τὰ παῖδια, “the tots”, while in ex. 4] uses the middle one, ψελλίζονται, whose logical subject is ὅσοις ἢ γλῶττα μὴ λίαν ἀπολέλυται. Well, we can only speculate with some likelihood that the middle voice emphasizes that one does not make himself understood, and the effect of such a babble—funny, embarrassing or annoying—is explained by the context or understood. So, in the two quoted Aristotelian examples ψελλίζουσι is a simple noting, while the middle ψελλίζονται, if referred to those who have a tongue impairment, betrays embarrassment of both the person who ψελλίζεται and listener(s).

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said “brum-brum” when he wanted water. Then, many children say “am-mam-mam” when they want some bread: every parent knows that. Finally, “cacca-cacca” is what all Italian children said when they felt the urge to defecate (now the situation is different, because the modern nappy is made in order to reduce any discomfort and prolong—for money—its use!). The most curious fact is that we are not talking about children born in Greece twentyfive centuries ago, but born in Italy in the XXth century.

<sup>27</sup> But, while in English “to lisp” means properly “to give sound of *th* or *dh* to the sibilant letters *s* and *z*”, in Greek τραυλίζειν implies the replacement of “*q*” with “*λ*”.

Finally, the figurative use, well documented for ψελλίζεσθαι and ἰσχ(ν)όφωνος, does not include τραυλίζειν and τραυλός, while βατταρίζειν is excluded from the medical terminology.

All later examples cited by Schmidt not only are not useful, but also they give rise to twisting of the meaning: exx. 8] and 9] do not provide any evidence suggesting that τραυλός «can be a term for a melodious sound», or that ex. 13] infers the inability of singing, since that passage may imply that it is not enough to have a voice for singing, but one ought to pronounce distinctly.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Ten years after the publication of the third volume of the *Synonymik*, in his *Handbuch der Lateinischen und Griechischen Synonymik* (Leipzig, Teubner, 1889, p. 150f.) Schmidt will specify a little better the meaning of ψελλίζεσθαι and τραυλίζειν, but he will repeat some wrong observations, and, above all, will leave the reader believe that words, for example, like βατταρίζειν and βατταριστής deserve the same account, whereas the former is supported by authors, the latter not at all!