Introduction

Like other genres of literature, comedy is full of meaning. Moral imperatives, aesthetic tastes, lofty sentiments, and political opinions can be extracted from the comic text not just by clever interpreters but by ordinary audience members engaged in the communicative act of spectating and listening. Unlike other genres, however, comedy has a long tradition of resistance to such discovered meanings. For every reader who has found in certain comedies a metapoetic discourse regarding the poet's role, or subtle codes of religious initiation, or allegories revealing Aristophanes' politics, or some other system of references or allusions, there is a persistent backlash which insists that not "all" of comedy is meaningful; rather that some of it is just "foolery" or "fun."

Ian Storey, for example, in questioning the alleged political seriousness of Eupolis' *Demoi* articulates comedy's peculiar problem in general terms (2003, 173, my italics):

> Too many critics of *Demoi*, from Körte onwards ("the greatest political comedy of all time"), assume that Eupolis shared this alleged serious approach of Aristophanes and therefore see in *Demoi* comedy's healing response to a time of crisis. *But comedy need not be as serious as that*. Eupolis and Aristophanes were comedians first and foremost. They saw in the Athens of their day, in her people, events, and issues, the material for *brilliant fantasy* and *comic fun*.

Storey's complaint rests on an opposition: there is the "serious" on the one hand, "fantasy/fun" on the other. Something would be lost, such opinion suggests, if all comedy were treated "seriously": indeed, if all comedy contributed to serious meaning, it would not be comedy at all.

The sentiment is widespread and chronic: MacDowell, for example, writes: "[A]s we read the plays, it is reasonable to expect that we shall find, at least occasionally, a scene or passage in which Aristophanes is not just trying to make the Athenians laugh but is making some serious point

which is intended to influence them."[1] Here the opposition is similar: there is "some serious point" on the one hand, and "just trying to make Athenians laugh" on the other. The claim is not that there is an opposition between seriousness and laughter, but something more subtle: to unpack MacDowell's "just," when comedy *is* making a serious point it is usually *also* making the Athenians laugh.[2] The perceived non-meaningful part of comedy, however, seems not to be that which is "funny" but rather, that which is *just* funny, *just* fantasy.

Some scholars adopt metaphors of "beneath" or "behind" to describe this relationship between the meaningful and non-meaningful in comedy. Körte, for example, whom Storey cites above for treating Eupolis' *Demoi* too seriously, himself a century earlier censured contemporary scholars for finding too much meaning "behind" the buffoonery of Aristophanes' *Frogs*.[3] Similarly, McGlew describes those who "search behind [comedy's] humor to find its attitudes toward the political questions of the day,"[4] while Malcolm Heath allows that "serious points can be conveyed in comic guise."[5] It is "beneath" not "behind" for Ralph Rosen who writes "the conventional (or read: 'carnivalesque') elements of a comic play compel the audience to find seriousness beneath the surface details of the play,"[6] and De Luca who writes, "By making us laugh at these extremes, Aristophanes also makes us laugh at the arguments which underlie them, and so Aristophanes induces us to question their validity."[7] Whether "behind" or "beneath," it seems that there is some part of comedy that is meaningful, and that somewhere, there is some part where meaning, or at least "serious" meaning, is absent.

[1] MacDowell (1995) 5.

[2] Ruffell's (2011) opposition between "funny" and "serious" (e.g., at 55), rather than the more typical "playful" and "serious," may cause him to overlook the nuance of previous scholars who join Ruffell in seeing comedy's meanings (or "interventions" to use Ruffell's more subtle term, e.g., at 26) in, not outside of, its humor.

[3] Körte (1904) 487 (my italics): "Kaibel [*RE* II 981] already made legitimate objections against the view, which has become common since Stallbaum [*De persona Bacchi in Ranis Aristophanis*. Lipsiae 1835], that Dionysus is a personification of the Athenian public: one has here, as often is the case, sought to find too much *behind* the rambunctious exuberance of the buffoonery." "Gegen die seit Stallbaum üblich gewordene Auffassung des Dionysos als Personification des athenischen Publicums hat Kaibel bereits berechtigte Einwendungen gemacht, man hat hier, wie auch sonst oft, zu viel *hinter* dem derben Uebermuth [sic] der Posse gesucht."

[4] McGlew (2002) 12. [5] Heath (1987) 15. [6] Rosen (1988) 6 n. 21.

[7] De Luca (2005) xiii. Cf. Wright (2012) 2, my italics: "*Beneath* these features of presentation [i.e., jokes and irony], there is in fact a surprising amount of common ground between comedy and the later critical tradition"; Katz (1976) 353, my italics: "Aristophanes, *amidst much comic foolery*, intended his divine embassy of Poseidon, Heracles and Triballios . . . to remind his audience of the curious troika placed in charge of the Sicilian expedition."

What part of comedy is this? One might immediately turn to "humor" or the "comic," that is, the part of comedy that makes audiences laugh. Perhaps that silly incongruence which seems to trigger jokes will also accommodate this phenomenon which lies outside of serious meaning. However, this overlooks precisely what many of the above scholars are indicating: that the potentially serious parts of comedy are somehow *in* its humor, not separate from it.[8] It is impossible to disentangle a joke about Cleon from a negative judgment about him, since jokes, as has been argued, so often contain judgments.[9] Moreover, the "point" of such jokes seems to be the judgments themselves: Cleon is a cheat, Cleisthenes effeminate, Cratinus a drunk. To consider humor not "serious" or "meaningful" would overlook the fact that humor can be taken seriously and that these serious meanings are in no way separate from the humor itself. This is why it is often comedy's humorous moments (regarding, for example, Cleon's treatment of jurors or Hyperbolus' military policies) that form the core of the "serious" readings of comedy.

Thus, whatever this phenomenon is which is opposed to comedy's "meaning," it cannot be humor.[10] The joke-form slips through the fingers and all that remains is the content of serious judgment. The scholars' sentiments above (or so many other similar views) cannot be alleviated by diagnosing the perceived fun and foolery of comedy as the mere vessel for its ubiquitous significance: for then there would be no part of comedy not prey to interpretation (and thus one has returned to the idea which provokes the Storey (2003)/Körte (1904) backlash in the first place). Nevertheless, there is a reason for this chronic reaction against comedy's seriousness, and, as I will argue, the reason has to do with the nature of comedy itself. Unlike other genres which use language instrumentally to create meaning, comedy often seems to produce a sort of language which escapes meaning – a language which I will be calling nonsense. So too, unlike other genres like lyric or tragedy, where impenetrable statements are received as "obscure" (a token of faith that meaning is "there," but not immediately intelligible), comedy often suggests a different interpretive gesture, which is not to interpret at all. In comedy and perhaps no other genre language can be left as "nonsense," and it is this

[8] Silk (2000) 304–12, reviewing Heath's (1987) and Henderson's (1990) senses of "serious," suggests instead that comedy has "serious" artistic goals (see Chapter 3 below for discussion); but this loses sight of the contrast of play vs. seriousness (*OED* s.v. "serious" 3) which is surely at the center of the debate.

[9] See, e.g., Freud (1989[1905]) 5–11 for versions of this view.

[10] For the changing meanings of "humor" through history, see Chapter 4, 119 n. 4. Here I simply mean that the non-serious/non-meaningful part of comedy cannot be humor by virtue of the fact that humor is often taken seriously/found meaningful.

phenomenon, I argue, that is behind the resistance to serious meaning that has plagued comedy's reception.

What, then, is this "nonsense"? An initial definition might be "meaningless language," "meaningless communication," or, more broadly, "that which seems to be interpretable but is not," since not only utterances are called "nonsense."[11] This "seemingly interpretable" part of the definition is important, since it is clear that "nonsense" is not the same thing as "noise" – that is, nonsense is not *any* meaningless sound, *any* meaningless phenomenon, but rather certain phenomena (utterances, gestures, data, etc.) that present themselves as being interpretable, but turn out not to be. So, for example, one would not call an inarticulate cry "nonsense," but might call an indecipherable sentence "nonsense." One would not call a bird's chirping "nonsense," but, if someone continued to chirp in response to an interrogation, one might call such responses "nonsense." One would never call the stars "nonsense," but might call the read-outs from machines charting the pulses of these stars "nonsense." Nonsense must first present itself as being decipherable (e.g., be written in an alphabet, spoken in recognizable phonemes, occur in a communicative context, etc.) for it to have the possibility of being called "nonsense."

The "meaningless" part of nonsense's "meaningless language" definition presents more problems. "Meaningless" for whom? By what definition of "meaning"? When one exerts the slightest pressure on this idea, nonsense seems to disappear as a useful category altogether. Take, for example, the case of Noam Chomsky. Chomsky offered the line "colorless green ideas sleep furiously" as an example of a nonsensical sentence which was still grammatical.[12] One cannot help but be disappointed: such a sentence might be "nonsense" according to some standards, but anyone with literary leanings probably finds the sentence rather pleasant and metaphorical. Rather than lacking meaning, the line is brimming with it, exciting the mind with imagery and dark, hidden messages. The idealized vacuum that one wishes for "nonsense" in fact turns out to be semantically rich, and so it is no surprise that soon after Chomsky declared the sentence nonsensical, others began to plumb its hermeneutic depths.[13] It seems that meaning is "there" in such "nonsense," it is just a matter of finding it – and so, problems begin to arise around this initial definition of "meaningless language."

[11] OED s.v. nonsense, A.1.1.b. for "foolish or extravagant conduct"; A.1.3. for "a trivial or worthless thing." *Ran.* 198–202 for a Greek example. Chapter 1 for discussion.
[12] Chomsky (1957) 15.
[13] Erard (2010). As any Google search of the line will show, it has become a "pop culture artifact" (Erard, 2010, 420).

But perhaps the problem is simply the example itself: Chomsky wanted to create a sentence which was nonsensical but still grammatical, so a safer example might be found in one that is not grammatical at all. Better yet, to be extra cautious, one should find an example of "nonsense" that is not even made up of recognizable words – that is, pure gibberish. This *must* be nonsense, and one can turn to Aristophanes' ingenious character Pseudartabas for an example of this. At the beginning of *Acharnians*, Dicaeopolis is bemoaning the political situation of Athens and watching in disgust as Athenian ambassadors arrive from abroad, clearly tainted by one of Athens' sources of political corruption – Persia and its endless gold. The Persian ambassador Pseudartabas ("False Measure") is about to proclaim his announcement sent from the King of Persia himself. His costume must have been splendid, and the Athenian ambassadors make much ado in presenting the stunning character. But, when the moment arrives for this ambassador to proclaim the royal message to the Athenians, the message is not entirely clear: ἰαρταμαν ἐξαρξαν ἀπισσονα σατρα (100).

The line, scholars generally agree, is nonsense.[14] Although some exceptional linguists have "deciphered" this bit of Persian, most follow the impulse of Martin West that "it is gibberish made from Persian noises" or S. D. Olson that "this is gibberish and intended to be recognized as such."[15] But if Pseudartabas' words are "gibberish" or "nonsense," what does it *mean* that they are "gibberish" or "nonsense"? This is the question that the linguist Jean-Jacques Lecercle poses at the beginning of his book *The Violence of Language* regarding the nonsense-poet Edward Lear's gibberish letter of 1862 ("Thrippsy pillivinx, Inky tinky pobblebockle abblesquabs? – Flosky!" . . .), and at the beginning of his later *Philosophy of Nonsense* regarding Lewis Carroll's *Jabberwocky* ("'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves / Did gyre and gimble in the wabe . . ."). [16] If these texts are meaningless nonsense, what does it mean that they are "meaningless nonsense"? Or more precisely: in what sense can they be said to be "meaningless"? Lecercle reminds, for example, that much can be said about such "nonsense" at the level of phonology,

[14] E.g., Olson (2002a) ad *Ach.* 100. For discussion of this and other gibberish passages like the ναβαισατρεῦ of *Av.* 1615 and the νοραρεττεβλο on a Greek vase depicting comedy, see Chapter 4. For the language of foreigners in Aristophanes more generally, especially the Scythian in *Thesmophoriazusae*, see Willi (2003) 213–25.

[15] West (1968) 6. Those who have "cracked" the Persian code play an important role in this book, just as do those scholars who have "discovered" pervasive allegorical codes in the works of Aristophanes. Cf. Lecercle's (1994) discussion of Abraham Eddelson who, in 1966, "decoded" Carroll's *Through the Looking Glass* as a cryptogram for the Talmud (5–20). Such interpreters are important because, as readers and interpreters of texts, we are all implicated in their interpretive excess.

[16] Lecercle (1990) 1–6 and (1994) 20–6.

morphology, and syntax. Regarding phonology, Lecercle notices that Lear's gibberish clearly sounds "English," and one could say the same with Pseudartabas' line (e.g., West's "gibberish . . . from Persian noises"), which, like the Carthaginian's speech at the opening of Plautus' *Poenulus*, seems to reflect the phonemes and sounds of the mimicked foreign language. Even if such phonological cues do not constitute meaning, it still seems that Pseudartabas' utterance is supplying certain information.

So too, morphological cues (e.g., the feeling that -μαν may be a verb-ending of ἰαρταμαν) and syntactic cues (e.g., the feeling that ἀπισσονα may be an adjective modifying the noun σατρα, both accusative) have caused some editors to edit the line with certain word separations.[17] Again, this probably does not constitute "meaning," but nevertheless the Persian gibberish offers certain roadmaps of intelligibility rather than communicative silence. However, it is at the level of semantic analysis that Pseudartabas' ἰαρταμαν ἐξαρξαν, Lear's "amsky flamsky," and Carroll's "slithy toves" begin to reveal themselves as "nonsense." The linguist, Lecercle confesses, is impotent to analyze these texts at the semantic level, and so, one might say that it is at this level that Pseudartabas' line is meaningless.[18]

But even here, things are not so simple. As Lecercle rightly argues, these "nonsense" words and phrases still activate our minds, they still ignite patterns of associations: Lear's "amsky flamsky" can unleash "am," "flam(e)," "ram," "dam(e)," etc., and in this unleashing, "meaning creeps into the text."[19] One can do the same with Pseudartabas' line: the gibberish does not create an empty blank in the mind, some ideal zen-like calm which one expects from language "signifying nothing," but rather concocts a stormy *excess* of associations (σατρα, σατράπης, ἐτράπην, σὰ τραγήματα, τράμις). This linguistic excess leads Lecercle to conclude that it is not that a line like Pseudartabas' has no meaning, but that it has *too much*. Upon hearing such "gibberish," the mind is alight with associations – even if those associations cannot unify themselves into a single sense. One might argue, then (as Deleuze seems to have argued),[20] that "nonsense" is not really the right word at all for this imagined phenomenon of meaningless language. Utterances which are generally called "nonsense" do not "mean nothing"

[17] The text and word separations are from Wilson (2007). Olson (2002a) chooses not to separate the words, choosing a more absolute form of gibberish; cf. West (1968) 7, who discerns the line's *να*-series and assimilation of word-endings.

[18] Lecercle (1990) 3: "Here, the linguist's impotence is complete. I am not even sure that the existing English words that I have recognized in the text have their usual meaning."

[19] Lecercle (1990) 4. Cf. Eco (1998) 145–9.

[20] Deleuze (1990) 71 declares that nonsense is not the absence of sense, but *opposed* to "the absence of sense."

but rather mean too much. Furthermore, if this is the case, such "nonsense" ought even to be perceived as a more bountiful language than "sensible" speech itself: there is *more* to analyze, fewer restrictions in the discovery of meaning. In such a scenario, one might follow the various trails blazed by Pseudartabas' vigorous line, and fill articles with its delirious significance, since one is no longer bound by some gravitational, unifying sense which limits all possible associations. In this case, nonsense *qua* "meaningless language," it would seem, does not exist at all. Meaning always prevails.

If this were the whole story of "nonsense" – namely, that nonsense-*qua*-"meaningless language" does not really exist, that everything has meaning, and that the phenomenon formerly known as nonsense ought to bear a different name[21] – there would not be much left to discuss about that old category of "nonsense," except perhaps the wording of its brief, polite eulogy.

But this is not the whole story of nonsense. Whether or not "real" nonsense exists (i.e., truly meaningless language), this uncertainty has not prevented numerous societies from insisting that it does. If one can judge from the large lexicons surrounding this category of "meaningless" or "useless" language, it might even be suggested that many cultures *require* the category. There is the English "nonsense," from the French *nonsens*, which maps nicely to other language equivalents like the German *Unsinn*. But as if "nonsense" were not enough to contain its own pejorative force, English also shares this nonsense terrain among words like "blather," "drivel," "twaddle," and "claptrap." In ancient Greek, a similar proliferation occurs over such "useless" or "meaningless" language: terms like *phluaria*, *lēros*, *phlēnaphia*, and *hythlos*, which I examine in Chapter 1. In Russian, one finds *chepukha*, *chushj*, *yerunda*, etc.,[22] and, in Chinese there is *hu shuo*, *fei hua*, and *xia che*.[23]

This makes the nonsense-problem presented by Lecercle (and Deleuze) somewhat knottier. Whatever one can claim about the "true" state of nonsense language, one cannot overlook that entrenched vocabulary found in a number of societies which declares that certain utterances are without meaning or use. The label of "nonsense," after all, is not applied to utterances which are perceived to have an *excess* of meaning, or even to those utterances which are perceived to lack unity; rather the label "nonsense" claims that the utterance *as a whole* is meaningless, useless, and, so should be

[21] E.g., Deleuze's (1990) 71 "absence of sense." [22] See Pervukhina (1993) 25 for a handy list.
[23] *Hu shuo* means "thoughtless talk" (perhaps originally "barbarian talk"); the others respectively "waste talk" and "blindly pull."

disregarded in its entirety,[24] rather analogous, perhaps, to the category of "waste."[25] On the other hand, once one starts to consider the uses of such "useless" phenomena, they quickly stop being "waste" or "nonsense" – and thus, the fate of Chomsky's colorless green ideas, which turned out to be highly meaningful after all.

Thus, it is necessary to reconsider or refine this initial definition of nonsense as "meaningless language." As the semiotic framework of Lecercle implies above, objective nonsense is out of the question: simply put, words can always mean. Instead, "nonsense" seems to be something more intersubjective: that is, a subjective label that arises between two parties, whether due to communication breakdown or something else. A more appropriate definition of nonsense, then, should be "language perceived as being unworthy of interpretation." After all, the application of the label "nonsense" is hardly confined to perceived gibberish, and this is especially the case when "nonsense" is being applied to comedy.

If nonsense is language perceived as being unworthy of interpretation, one can find an opening for nonsense's related denotation: that is, not the "nonsense" which denotes "no meaning," but the one which denotes "no serious meaning." For surely it is that latter nonsense, not the former, which has a more significant purchase on comedy. Consider, for example, Plato's *Apology*, where Socrates describes *Clouds* in the following terms (19c):

> ταῦτα γὰρ ἑωρᾶτε καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐν τῇ Ἀριστοφάνους κωμῳδίᾳ, Σωκράτη τινὰ ἐκεῖ περιφερόμενον, φάσκοντά τε ἀεροβατεῖν καὶ ἄλλην πολλὴν φλυαρίαν φλυαροῦντα, ὧν ἐγὼ οὐδὲν οὔτε μέγα οὔτε μικρὸν πέρι ἐπαΐω.
>
> You have seen yourselves in Aristophanes' comedy, a certain Socrates being carried around there, saying that he is walking on air and a great deal of other nonsense, things about which I know nothing, neither a lot nor a little.

The key words of the passage are φλυαρίαν φλυαροῦντα, "speaking empty nonsense." I will have a lot to say about these Greek words in Chapter 1, but for now it is enough to follow LSJ and those translators who turn the phrase as "speaking nonsense." The representative passage that Socrates is referring

[24] The relationship between meaning and use is discussed further in Chapter 1. The categories often overlap, e.g., for Wittgenstein (*Phil. Grammar* 1:29: "Is the meaning really only the use of the word? Isn't it the way this use meshes with our lives?"). Cf. Dummett (1976).

[25] I.e., one might rightly claim that there is no such thing as "actual" waste (such objects, after all, *can* be useful: fertilizer for plants, reuseable materials, etc.), but such claims would overlook that vital organizational principle which distinguishes between what is "useful" and what is not; what is worthy of consideration and what is not. For studies on waste, see Laporte (2000); Stockton (2011); Douglas (2002[1966]) 2: "[d]irt is essentially disorder." The nonsense synonym "rubbish" is pertinent here.

to here is the one in which Strepsiades first encounters the great teacher, hanging in a basket (222–4):

Στ. ὦ Σωκράτης.
ὦΣωκρατίδιον.
Σω. τί με καλεῖς ὦφήμερε;
Στ. πρῶτον μὲν ὅ τι δρᾷς ἀντιβολῶ κάτειπέ μοι.
Σω. ἀεροβατῶ καὶ περιφρονῶ τὸν ἥλιον.

St. So-cra-tes! Socky-pie!
So. What are you calling me for, creature of a day?
St. First off, tell me, please, what you're doing.
So. I'm air-treading and contemplating the sun.

These four lines, including the particular line that Socrates alludes to (ἀεροβατῶ καὶ περιφρονῶ τὸν ἥλιον), are surely not "nonsense" in the same way that Pseudartabas' line (ἰαρταμαν ἐξαρξαν ἀπισσονα σατρα) is nonsense. There is nothing indecipherable about ἀεροβατῶ καὶ περιφρονῶ τὸν ἥλιον, despite the temporary blip from that initial comic coinage. Rather, it seems that Socrates singles out the phrase (and the depiction of him more generally) as one unworthy of interpretation, or, at least, unworthy of serious interpretation. Stephen Halliwell explains the situation in this way: "Plato makes Socrates refer to the 'empty nonsense' (*phluaria*) of his depiction in Aristophanes' *Clouds* not in order to cast comedy as a serious causal factor in the spread of slanders about him, but in order to suggest that those slanders are no more substantial than the distorted fantasies which everyone knows are the stock-in-trade of comic drama."[26] Nonsense, for Halliwell, is something which is not "substantial" and so, through that very insubstantiality, cannot be a "causal factor." One cannot build on nonsense, his words suggest, since such speech disintegrates: it is not of sturdy stuff, like consequential speech.

Yet, although Pseudartabas' "nonsense" and Socrates' "nonsense" are not nonsense in the same way, there are certain similarities the two share, not least the fragile subjectivity inherent in their very status as "nonsense." Like Pseudartabas' gibberish, which has been deciphered by some and so found not to be "nonsense" at all, Aristophanes' ἀεροβατῶ καὶ περιφρονῶ τὸν ἥλιον (and the depiction of which it is part) is far from being "nonsense" in any absolute or objective way. After all, critics have viewed Socrates' portrayal in *Clouds* as playing "the decisive role" in Socrates'

[26] Halliwell (2008) 255. Cf. Frese (1926).

condemnation,[27] which is to say that the lines have been found by many readers to be not "nonsense" at all – as Plato's Socrates would have it – but quite the contrary, substantial and causal to the highest degree. The intersubjective aspect of "nonsense," it seems, is central to its discovery in both instances: whether it is Pseudartabas' gibberish or Socrates' ἀεροβατῶ καὶ περιφρονῶ τὸν ἥλιον, the discovery of "nonsense" is that which separates certain utterances from potential chains of meaning.

Thus, as I have been arguing, there is some part of comedy which is perceived to lie outside of its meaning and this part is its "nonsense." This "part," however, does not seem to be *in* the comic text at all. That is, there is no passage which one can point to in comedy and objectively label "nonsense" since nonsense to one person may be highly meaningful to another. Whether it be Pseudartabas' gibberish or the foolery of *Clouds*, the question of nonsense instead seems to be a question of interpretation. Detecting certain formal features like repetition or grammatical oddities is ultimately of little help: nonsense can only be found by analyzing certain comic passages and asking what is lost when they are interpreted. This lost "part" is what I am calling nonsense.

Nonsense is *of* not *in* comedy and, as I will argue, its discovery is a central pleasure of the genre. What is lost when comedy is interpreted is precisely this discovery of nonsense. If interpretation is the discernment of consequence in an utterance or action, that mode which deprives utterances and action of their consequence – namely, the mode in which nonsense is found – is its opposite. The choice of interpretation excludes that option, and in that exclusion, comedy experiences its central loss.

This argument begins in Chapter 1 "Greek Notions of Nonsense" where I define a concept of nonsense via ancient Greek usage of "nonsense" terms. Exploring the semantic territory of words like *phluarein* and *lērein* in prose writers like Isocrates, Xenophon, and the Hippocratic corpus, I notice that although the term "nonsense" is most frequently used as a pejorative in rhetorical contexts (e.g., "my opponent is speaking nonsense"), the two contexts in which it is not pejorative – and so shed the most light on what the pejorative aspect is trying to convey – are the contexts of mental illness and play. In the Hippocratic corpus, when patients are suffering from some sort of fever or mental impairment, they are said to "speak nonsense." On the other hand, in contexts of sympotic play, when one is fooling around, joking, or making small talk, one might also be said to be "speaking

[27] Henderson (1998)b 5; Halliwell (2008) 255 n. 94 for similar views; cf. Ruffell (2011) 6–8; Wright (2012) 112–13.