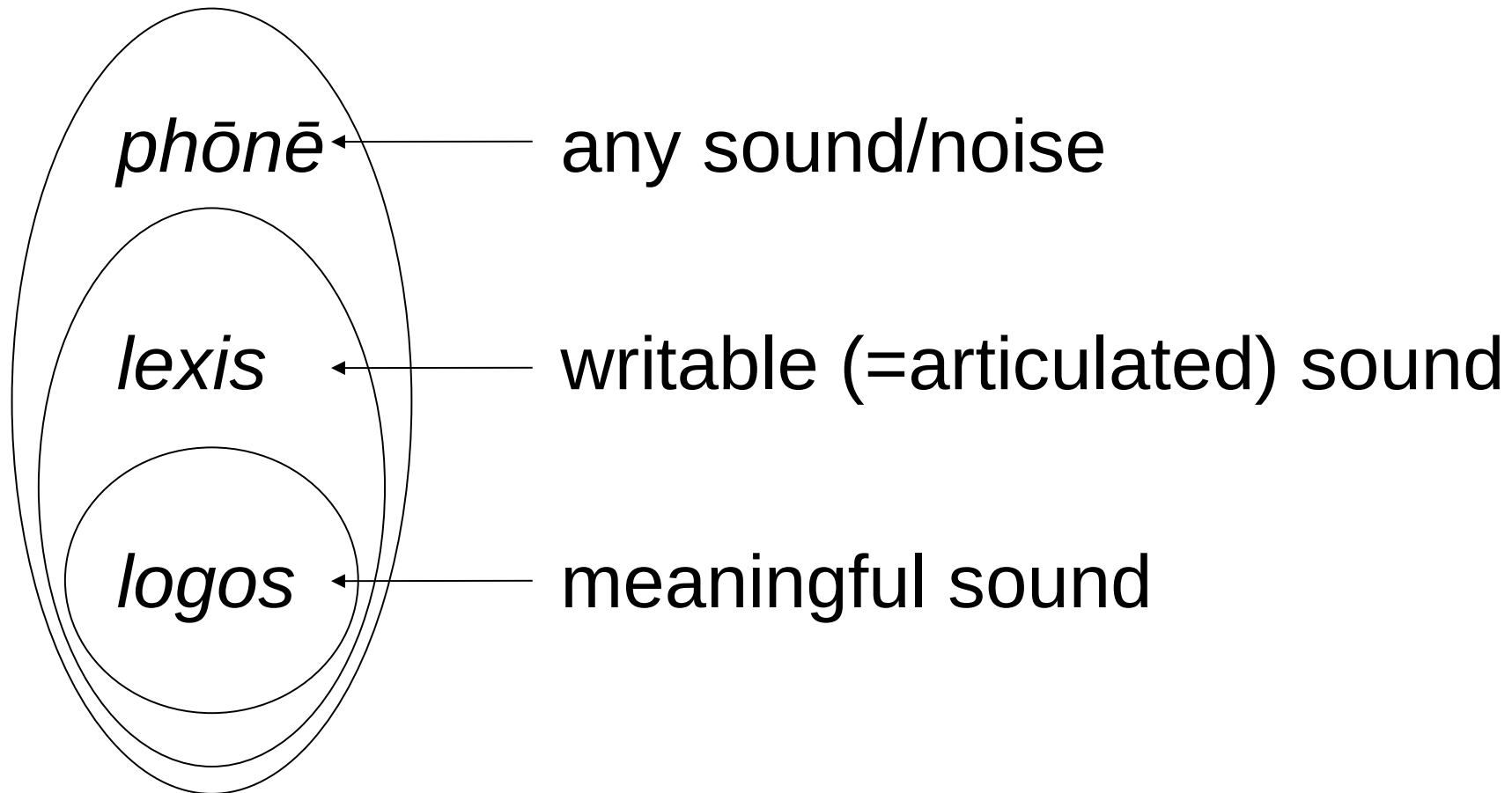


## Ancient Greece: Stoicism

- Very influential school of philosophy in centuries following Aristotle, in Rome too
- Hardly any writings survive — (a disaster!)
- Our knowledge fairly sketchy
- Very important for development of grammar as a discipline
- Issues of language discussed under rhetoric and dialectic ( $\approx$  logic)

# Ancient Greece: Stoicism

Basic theory of linguistic forms:



## Ancient Greece: Stoicism

*Some* theory of the meaning relation and the nature of signs — details unclear

*sēmainon* ‘signifier’ ↔ *sēmainomenon* ‘signified’

*lekton* ‘what may be put into words’

Precise meaning not clear, but seems to be precursor to classification of sentence types and propositions

Best Stoic discussion of sign theory is St Augustine’s *De dialectica!*

# Ancient Greece: Alexandrian philology

- Famous Alexandrian libraries established in early 3<sup>rd</sup> c. BC (Mouseion & Serapeion)
- Goal: to compare existing manuscripts of earlier texts (*p.ex.* Homer) and establish the putative original; scholarly community!
- which parts of a text are original and which are later interpolations?
- which parts have been correctly transmitted and which have been garbled?  
→ Textual criticism



# Ancient Greece: Alexandrian philology

- Standardisation of alphabet
- Introduction of punctuation and accent marks
- Symbols to indicate problems in text
- Commentaries on text
- Scholarly discussions of issues like the identity of Homer (not much remains)
- Glossaries of difficult words (archaic, dialectal)
- Notes on points of morphology
- Standardised "editions" of important texts

# Ancient Greece: Alexandrian philology

Dionysios Thrax (~100 BC): "Grammar is the practical study of the normal usage of poets and prose writers. It has six parts."

- competence in reading aloud observing prosody
- interpretation with attention to figures of speech
- explanation of difficult words and allusions
- investigation of the true meaning (*etymologia*) of words (probably Plato-like)
- analysis of analogy (probably morphology)
- criticism of poems, the finest branch of subject

# **Ancient Greece: Alexandrian philology**

- basically textual criticism, closer to literary studies than to anything else
- philology in 19<sup>th</sup> century European sense
- grammar an ancillary discipline (though, of course, branches of science were not yet compartmentalised)
- seminal work, very important for future of humanities as academic disciplines and of European culture in general



# Ancient Greece: Summary

- Philosophical interest: language and reality / truth / knowledge
  - meaning, syllogisms, sentence types
    - Plato, Aristotle, Stoics
- Practical interest: effective use of language
  - rhetoric, poetry, style, metaphor
    - Sophists, Aristotle, rhetoricians
- Philological interest: language as the raw material of poetry & prose
  - spelling, punctuation, morphology
    - Alexandrian scholars (Aristophanes, Zenodotos...)

## Rome: Grammar as a discipline

Patterned entirely on Greek models

But develops in new direction: school grammar, organised in a methodical way

Language seen "from outside" (learning Greek!)

Almost nothing remains from the crucial period  
(1<sup>st</sup>–2<sup>nd</sup> c. BC)

Twenty-odd grammars from 3<sup>rd</sup>–5<sup>th</sup> c. AD

Plus: Varro's *De lingua latina* (1<sup>st</sup> c. BC) and  
Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria* (1<sup>st</sup> c. AD)

Also Greek grammars in a similar tradition

## Rome: M. T. Varro's *De lingua latina*

- One of the greatest scholars of Antiquity
- Lengthy treatise, only 6 books out of 25 remain, in a single corrupt manuscript
- Unlike anything else on language!
- Philosophically grounded discussion of grammar and vocabulary; general principles (we would now call it theoretical linguistics)
- Analogy vs. anomaly (~ inflectional vs. derivational morphology — outstanding!)

## Rome: Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria*

- ~ *Training of the public speaker*
- Includes discussion of what is / should be taught to children
- One of the most important things: grammar — why?

## Excursus: schooling in Antiquity

- basic literacy & numeracy
  - reading some outstanding pieces of literature (Vergil's Aeneid; in Greece Homer); grammar
  - no compartmentalisation of subjects: ~history, geography, mythology all through literature
  - higher education:
    - rhetoric (esp. in Rome)
    - philosophy (esp. in Greece)
    - law
- verbal skills, consciousness of language

## Rome: Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria*

- ~ *Training of the public speaker*
- Includes discussion of what is / should be taught to children
- One of the most important things: grammar
  - letters/sound (*litterae*)
  - word classes
  - figures of speech ("virtues and vices" of speech)
- Also includes brief historical recapitulation of grammar as a discipline; word classes, categories etc. (see handout)

## Rome: Extant grammars (late period)

- Semantically oriented grammars
  - aka *Ars* (scil. ‘art’, *tekhnē*), Schulgrammatik
- Formally oriented grammars
  - aka *Regulae*

(none of these names are very good since in the manuscripts anything can be called anything, if there is a title at all, but there is a tradition of using them in the literature)