The thesis¹ which I wish to argue in this paper is that Aristotle introduces for the first time in the history of the Greek language the progressive sense for the present periphrasis in order to establish a new metaphysical theory, and furthermore, that this grammatical innovation was indeed necessary in order to express this theory in a plausible fashion as it applies to crucial examples. The theory is that what a thing is, or more accurately what a thing is in itself, is determined by members of all ten categories, but only in a primary way in relation to the category of substance (οὐσία) and in secondary ways in relation to the other categories. In other words, in answer to the question "What is it (in itself)?", one may correctly say "a man" or "an animal" and thus say what it is (in itself) primarily, but in addition, one may say that it is white, three feet high, or walking, and thus say what it is (in itself) secondarily. (The crucial examples in question are those of the continuous action of an agent going on at the time of the assertion.) This equivocation of being-in-itself is virtually the same as the famous equivocation of being explained in *Metaphysics* Z 1. To establish this historical point about the Greek language and the philosophical interpretation of Aristotle's metaphysics which parallels it, I shall focus my interpretation upon a difficult but crucial passage in *Metaphysics* Δ 7 – 1017 a 22-30, and especially 11. 27-30 where Aristotle asserts that "A man is walking" does not differ from "A man walks".

However, before entering upon a discussion of Aristotle's text, it is necessary (1) to clarify the grammatical notion of a periphrasis and the logical notion of the progressive sense, (2) to establish the historical

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¹ This paper was written as a response to discussions with my colleague, Professor J. N. Hattiangadi, concerning his view that the structure of language, including its grammatical structure, is the "crystallization" of theory. This means that new terms and innovations in grammar are introduced into a language in order to express new theories. I hope that what I am trying to establish will provide an example of his wider theory concerning language and its growth. However, I am solely responsible for the contents of this paper and any defects that it may have.
facts, as determined by the best authorities, of the periphrasis and
the introduction of the progressive periphrasis into Greek, and (3)
to present my interpretation of Aristotle's identification of the present
inflected form of a verb (e.g. "...walks") and the present periphrastic
form of the verb (e.g. "...is walking").

By "periphrasis" is meant here the expression of a form of a verb,
as differentiated by tense, mood, voice, number and person, by
employing a participle and an auxiliary verb, rather than some in-
flated form of the main verb stem. In this study of periphrasis, I
shall limit my attention to the present indicative active; an example
of the distinction between the present periphrastic form of the verb
and its present inflected form would be "... runs" and "...is running".
For my purposes, it is important to point out that the present inflected
and the present periphrastic form of the verb in modern English are
definitely not equivalent in meaning; the former generally expresses,
when it occurs as an element of statements, a dispositional or recurrent
state of affairs, though the action involved, if any, is not implied to
be taking place at the time of the assertion, while the latter generally
expresses a continuous action taking place at the time of the assertion.
For instance, one might say: "John runs when he must" or "John
jogs every morning before breakfast", or on the other hand, "John
is jogging now". In most cases, it is not enough in order to make a
complete statement to simply state that a subject does something
(using the present inflected form of a verb) without further grammat-
ical determinations, whereas one does make a complete statement
by joining a subject to a present periphrastic form of a verb. Thus
"John runs" is incomplete (one might say "John runs every day"
in order to make a complete statement), but it is enough to say
"John is running" in order to have made a complete statement of
what John is presently doing. However, there are cases in modern
English in which the present inflected form of a verb plus a subject
are sufficient to make a complete statement, and by considering the
following example of this, we shall be able to see better what the
distinctive sense of the modern English periphrasis is. One may say
both "John drinks" and "John is drinking", and in certain contexts the
former is complete. Now clearly the two statements are quite distinct
in meaning: the first means that John is an alcoholic while the second
means that he is drinking some liquid now (perhaps something as
innocent as water). What I hope that this shows is that the present
periphrastic form, combined with a simple subject, is used almost