CHTH G120-C01 - NT/OT 6F06 Directed Study: Linguistic Modeling for Biblical Study

McMaster Divinity College   Fall 2014 (Term 1)
Stanley E. Porter, Ph.D.   Tuesday, 10:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m. (selected days)
(Appointments through President's office)

Course Description

Because a number of students have common interests, this directed study will meet periodically throughout the term to discuss issues in developing appropriate linguistic models and methods to enhance study of the Bible in its original languages. These models may include such topics as forms of discourse theory, relevance theory, translation theory and related topics, according to individual student interest—all applied to selected issues and passages in the original languages of the Bible.

Course Objectives

As a directed study, students are responsible for setting their own specific course objectives in the light of their research needs, especially as they justify and develop their own linguistic model. General objectives include the following:

Knowing:
    1. to develop the student's ability to formulate and analyze advanced linguistic methods and models appropriate to study of the Bible in its original languages
    2. to master the pertinent literature regarding such methods and models
Being:
    3. to become a competent constructive critic of the linguistic models of others
    4. to apply such methods or models in appropriate and interesting ways to enhance understanding of the Bible
Doing:
    5. to be able to articulate the nature of the method or model in dialogue with others
    6. to become competent at devising and developing relevant linguistic models for biblical analysis
    7. to utilize recent advances in supporting media, such as OpenText.org, in the development of such methods and models

Course Prerequisites

Prerequisites: At least two years of study of the appropriate ancient language(s), admission to the M.A. or Ph.D. programs of McMaster Divinity College, and permission of the professor.

Course Requirements

This is a graduate research-level course in biblical studies, and will be taught in this way. Therefore, it is assumed that students will perform as advanced degree students to facilitate learning. This means that students will be expected to do suitable academic work outside of the classroom. The nature of a directed study means that the burden of work falls directly (and virtually entirely) on the student.

The major requirements include demonstrated knowledge of a range of linguistic methods (as demonstrated in a single 5,000 word paper), the development and application of a particular linguistic model along with pertinent bibliography (12,500 word paper), and critical response to the work of other students, including one formal response to a specific student's work (c. 2,500 words). The student is to do new (for the student and the discipline) work that goes well beyond summary of previous work and suggests and develops new ways of understanding (i.e. literature surveys are to be kept to a minimum in the major paper). Dates for discussion of topics and presentation of material will be set on the first meeting of the course (the first meeting is Tuesday, September 9). The expectation is that all students will be present for all agreed meetings, and materials for discussion will be distributed at least one week in advance.

Course Textbooks

Each student is responsible for developing a pertinent bibliography for reading and response. A shorter list of the key works in the area should be provided for all students.

Some helpful books in this area include:

Davis, P.W. *Modern Theories of Language*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1973.
De Beaugrande, R. *Linguistic Theory: The Discourse of Fundamental Works*. London: Longmans, 1991.
Dixon, R.M.W. *Basic Linguistic Theory. I. Methodology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.
Droste, F.G., and J.E. Joseph, eds. *Linguistic Theory and Grammatical Description*. Amsterdam: Benjamins, 1991.
Glinz, H. *Textanalyse und Verstehenstheorie I, II*. Wiesbaden: Athenaion, 1977.
Halliday, M.A.K. *Introduction to Functional Linguistics*. London: Arnold, 1985 [note that this is not the third edition]
Hengeveld, Kees, and J. Lachlan Mackenzie. *Functional Discourse Grammar: A Typologically-based Theory of Language Structure*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Ivic, M. *Trends in Linguistics*. The Hague: Mouton, 1970.
Lepschy, G.C. *A Survey of Structural Linguistics*. London: Andre Deutsch, 1980.
Longacre, R.B. *Grammar Discovery Procedures*. The Hague: Mouton, 1968.
Pilch, H. *Empirical Linguistics*. Munnich: Francke, 1976.
Sampson, G. *Empirical Linguistics*. London: Continuum, 2001.

Course Assessment

Each student is required to complete all of the following requirements (failure to complete all constitutes grounds for failure of the course):

   1. Participation in all agreed meetings, including evidence of having read the paper(s) of the day and active participation in discussion of the paper(s). Failure to participate adequately can result in reduction of the student's final grade.
   2. Presentation and defense (5,000 words) of a particular linguistic model in relation to other potential models available for the study of the Bible, including their relationships, contributions, strengths and weaknesses. This should be a specific engagement of one linguistic model with other potential linguistic models (**October 7**). 20%.
   3. Presentation of a major research project on an appropriate method for linguistic study of the Bible, with application to a selected text(s) (including distribution of paper by the previous Friday, with bibliography). The presentation will be two minutes maximum, but discussion will take the entire period. Date for presentation to be agreed. See number 4 below.
   4. Submission of a major research paper on an appropriate method for linguistic study of the Bible (c. 12,500 well-selected words). The research paper should chart new ground in the subject—both in terms of the student's own and previous work and in terms of the discipline. This is to be a revised form of the paper presented under par. 3 above, benefiting from the response, class discussion and further reflection. The revised and final copy of the paper is due the last day we meet (**December 9**). 60%.
   5. Presentation of a formal, critical response to one of the major research projects, including two minutes of formal presentation (as well as distribution of the response paper two days in advance, with bibliography).
   6. A written critical response to one other paper presented for the course (2,500 words). This written response, a revision of par. 5 above, is due the last day we meet (**December 9**). 10%.
   7. Prepared comments assessing the work presented during the course, including responses to individual presentations and more general trends in linguistic modeling. These comments will be presented orally at the final meeting of the course on **December 9**, and are designed to engender a genuine discussion among students, with minimal direction from the professor. 10%.
   8. Other assignments as agreed between the supervisor and student.

The professor assumes that students already know how to research and write papers. Content, clear thinking and depth of analysis and research are the most important requirements, but clarity and consistency of presentation are also of high importance. Students *must* follow a recognized style sheet in the presentation of their work (to be indicated on the paper under the student's

name). Submission of all written work *must* conform to the *McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses*. Failure to do so will result in a lower grade.

Late papers are reduced 5% per day they are late, including late distribution of papers for others (both major presentation and response). Failure to make a valid attempt at each and every assignment may result in failure of the course. Drafts of papers read and returned by the professor (the student is under no obligation to receive the professor's comments) must be returned with the final submission to qualify as a complete paper submission (failure to return the draft paper results in a 20% grade reduction).

Classroom Behavior and Policies

The following guidelines are presented to encourage all students to participate together in this course, and should be kept in mind at all times.
1. Please respect the opinions of others, even if you do not agree with them. Extend courtesy by not ridiculing others' ideas, but feel free to respond to them logically and critically and in an orderly manner.
2. Students should be on time to class, or be prepared to offer an explanation after class to the professor.
3. Students are expected to stay for the entire class session, unless arranged in advance.
4. Students may eat or drink in class so long as they do not distract others or leave the remains of such activities behind for others to clean up (and bring enough for the professor as well!)
5. Students are not expected to be doing work on any other subject except that of this course according to the outline below and as appropriate.
6. Students are not to carry on other conversations in class, especially with those seated immediately adjacent to them. If something being said or done in class is not clear, please ask the professor at an appropriate time and in an appropriate way.
7. No cell phones may be used in any way, and no computers on anything but course business. **Students who fail to respect these guidelines will be dismissed from the class, with all of the consequences implied.**

Statement on Academic Honesty
Academic dishonesty is a serious offence that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one's own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on one's academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College.

Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty at www.macdiv.ca/regs/honesty.php.

Gender Inclusive Language
McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all of its publications. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected. The NRSV and TNIV are examples of the use of inclusive language for human beings. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments.

READ On Bookstore
The required textbook for this class is available from the College's book service, READ On Bookstore, Room 145, McMaster Divinity College. Texts may be purchased on the first day of class. For advance purchase, you may contact READ On Bookstores, 304 The East Mall, Suite 100, Etobicoke, ON M9C 5K1: phone 416.620.2934; fax 416.622.2308; e-mail books@readon.ca. Other book services may also carry the texts.

Course Schedule

The course will meet on select Tuesday mornings (the first meeting is **September 9**) from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. (or thereabouts—sometimes longer), with other meetings to be agreed at the first meeting. Besides the first meeting, there will be one intermediate progress report meeting, one general presentation meeting, one meeting per student presentation, and a final meeting during the finals week to review the work of the semester. Once these days are agreed, it is expected that all students will be in attendance.

September 9   Introduction of Course
      Discussion of objectives of course
      Preliminary agreement of topics and schedule

September 23 Progress Report
      Discussion of progress toward two presentations and papers

October 7   Discussion of Various Linguistic Models
      All students should come with their paper and be prepared to discuss a range of different linguistic models, including how theirs is positioned in relation to these others.
      Paper on Variety of Linguistic Models Due

The following dates are possibilities for meetings for major student presentations (to be discussed), with one or two presentations per session:
      October 21
      October 28
      November 4
      November 11
      December 2

The class may meet longer than two hours if necessary to accommodate student presentations and discussion.

December 9   Final Meeting to discuss general responses to topic

December 9   All other written Papers due in hard copy (only hard copy accepted for final version)

This syllabus for this course G120 is for information only and remains the property of the respective professor. This syllabus is prepared with the best information available, but the professor reserves the right to change the content and format of the course at any time.