

CHTH G120-C01 - NT/OT 6XL6 Linguistic Modeling for Biblical Study

McMaster Divinity College
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(Appointments through President's office)

Fall 2016 (Term 1)
Tuesday, 1:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m.

Course Description

This course focuses upon developing appropriate linguistic models and methods to enhance study of the Bible in its original languages. These models may include such approaches as forms of discourse theory, SFL-based models, 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. This course may be taken by those working in either Greek or Hebrew, and may be repeated in a new program with new content.

Course Objectives

The general objectives of the course are as follows, although individual students will have personal objectives based upon their own linguistic and research interests.

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
3. to gain familiarity with a wide variety of linguistic 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 chosen 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. A conversation with the professor is recommended.

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 research degree students to facilitate learning. This means that students will be expected to do suitable academic work outside of the classroom.

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 (10,000 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 13). The expectation is that all students will be present for all meetings, and materials for discussion will be distributed in advance per the agreed schedule.

Course Textbooks

Required reading:

Porter, S. E. *Linguistic Analysis of the Greek New Testament: Studies in Tools, Methods, and Practice*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2015.

Each student is also responsible for developing a pertinent bibliography for their own reading and research.

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. 4th ed. Rev. Christian M. I. M. Matthiessen. London: Routledge, 2014.

Halliday, M. A. K., and J. J. Webster. *Text Linguistics: The How and Why of Meaning*. London: Equinox, 2014.

- Hengeveld, K., and J. L. 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.
- Quigley, A. E. *Theoretical Inquiry: Language, Linguistics, and Literature*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004.
- 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 and Reading. Participation is required in all course 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. The student is also expected to read the required textbook and major sections of other books (such as those listed above) on method in linguistic research. Failure to demonstrate adequate depth and breadth of reading 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 4**). This paper is to be electronically distributed by the end of the previous Friday. The paper is due on **October 4**. 25%.

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. 10,000 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 theory and application must be suitably balanced so as to contribute to both. The revised and final copy of the paper is due the last day we meet (**December 13**). 50%.

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 meant as its own contribution to knowledge. It due

the last day we meet and is to take into consideration the revisions to the originally presented paper (**December 13**). 15%.

7. Prepared comments on the nature of linguistic modeling. Students should attend prepared to assess the work presented during the course and to respond 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 13**, and are designed to engender a genuine discussion among students, with minimal direction from the professor. 10%.

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 the *McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses* in presentations and submission of all written work. 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 Behaviour 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 are to be used for anything but course business. Please do not test the seriousness of this policy regarding classroom behaviour.

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 <https://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/programs/rules-regulations>.

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 by phone 416.620.2934; fax 416.622.2308; or e-mail books@readon.ca. Other book services may also carry the texts.

Course Schedule

The course will meet on Tuesday afternoons (the first meeting is **September 13**) from 1:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. (or thereabouts—sometimes longer). This outline is approximate. Adjustments may be made in light of student presentations.

September 13 Introduction of Course

- Discussion of objectives of course
- Preliminary agreement of topics and schedule

September 20: The Nature and Importance of Linguistic Modeling**September 27: Potential Linguistic Models**

- Brief discussion of progress toward two presentations and papers

October 4: Discussion of Various Linguistic Models

- Student Presentations of linguistic model. All students should come to class having read the papers distributed by the end of the previous Friday. They are to 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

October 11: Reading Week (no class meeting)

October 18: Presentations

October 25: Presentations

November 1: Presentations

November 8: Presentations

November 15, 22: ETS/SBL (no class meeting)

November 29: Presentations

December 6: Presentations

December 13 (Final week): Final Meeting to discuss general responses to topic

December 13: All other written Papers due in hard copy (only hard copy accepted for final version), along with previous drafts

This syllabus for this course 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.