RETHINKING METHODOLOGY FOR LEXICAL ANALYSIS
WITH ΛΟΓΊΖΟΜΑΙ IN ROMANS 4 AS A TEST CASE

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Introduction

The goal of this paper is to promote a method of doing lexical analysis that is grounded in modern linguistics.[1] By exploring various methods of doing lexical analysis, or "word study," as the practice is commonly called, this paper will survey the common methods of doing lexical analysis for Koine Greek words, and in so doing elucidate their various linguistic deficiencies. The critiques made of New Testament lexicography in this paper are not entirely new, but warrant being restated because they are often ignored, and, more importantly, because the advantages of the method I propose can be contrasted with the shortcomings of the numerous "word studies" that populate New Testament commentaries and other literature. To be more specific, some of the prevalent issues that will be reconsidered pertain to theological lexicography[2] and an over-reliance on reference tools such as

1. Word studies are common practice in biblical studies. Although there is no single method of doing a word study, the survey of word histories seems to be the most usual procedure. Consequently, surveying often involves using lexicons such as LSJ and BDAG as well as dictionaries such as *TDNT* as the primary (or only) repositories of data. Also note that there are some popular level resources for doing a word study such as Duvall and Hays, *Grasping God's Word*.

2. Cf. Barr, *Semantics*, 208. Barr shares the same criticism against how some lexicographers define the meanings of Greek words in the New Testament.

BDAG and Kittel's *TDNT*.[3] As an alternative, this paper will introduce the two modern linguistic concepts of monosemy and synchrony, which can orient lexical analyses according to a word's core meaning as well as to a word's meaning potential in a given time and place, and these together can help avoid many of the pitfalls and limitations one encounters with the popular and erroneous practices common in New Testament scholarship.

Even though the linguistic insights—when considered individually—discussed in this paper are not new, interpreters often ignore them, unaware of their applicability to biblical studies. One reason why modern linguistics still finds resistance among biblical scholars is due to its inaccessibility, being a discipline of its own with its own theories, concepts, and terminology. However, interpreters may find the linguistic notions of monosemy and synchrony better suited for lexical analysis than competing views precisely because of the accessible way I bring these concepts into relationship with one another. Thus, whereas theological lexicography continues to pervade recent scholarship,[4] this paper demonstrates that the meaning of a word can best be determined by means of the concept of synchronic monosemy. After giving definitions to some linguistic terms, this paper will make three critical comparisons to demonstrate the advantages the linguistic method I propose has over currently prevalent views: monosemy will be compared with polysemy, synchrony with diachrony, and some of the modern lexicons will be compared with one another. But first, to be able to effectively demonstrate the advantages of the modern linguistic principles I am addressing, a suitable lexical item for comparing the various methods first needs to be established.

3. One exemplary article addressing this issue is Mitchell, "Diotrephes," 299–320.

4. See Moo, *We Still Don't Get It*; Baxter, "In the Original Text"; Baxter, "Meanings of Biblical Words," 89–120; Baxter, "Hebrew and Greek Word-Study Fallacies," 3–32. Cf. Barr, *Semantics*, 206–62; Carson, *Exegetical Fallacies*, 28–64.

Λογίζομαι in Romans: A Test Case

For the present discussion, a good test case can be found with words that are commonly translated in several different ways even within the same book of the same Bible translation. One such word is λογίζομαι, which occurs forty times in its various forms in the New Testament, and among these, Romans exemplifies the most extensive and dynamic usage with nineteen occurrences. This term is also appropriate for the reason that virtually no two contemporary English translations interpret this word in the same way. Further complicating this term, the NASB, for example, translates λογίζομαι in seven different ways: "suppose" (2:3), "regard" (2:26; 9:8), "maintain" (3:28), "credit" (4:3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 22, 23, 24), "account" (4:8), "consider" (6:11; 8:18, 36), and "think" (14:14). Such variation by itself calls into question the accuracy of each translation. In other words, what makes the NASB understand λογίζομαι in Rom 2:3 as meriting the gloss "suppose" while rendering the same lexeme as "maintain" in 3:28?[5] Likewise, on what grounds do the NLT and ESV translate λογίζομαι in Rom 2:3 as "suppose," but then supply the translation "hold" (or "conclude" in the KJV and the CSB) in 3:28? The wide range of English glosses for a single Greek word raises serious questions regarding the criteria for defining Greek words.

Narrowing our focus, of the nineteen instances of λογίζομαι in Romans, eleven are found in Rom 4.[6] Such concentration may indicate the significant role of this word for the chapter; indeed, some even consider it as a "key word."[7] However, even if a word takes a significant role that itself cannot be an excuse to change its meaning without justifiable reasons. As one finds in various translations, different renderings of the word tend to appear only in Rom 4 such as "credit," "count," or even "impute," which

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5.   A discussion regarding such convoluted choices is found in Mitchell, "Diotrephes," 299–320.

6.   The nineteen occurrences in Romans are as follows: 2:3, 26; 3:28; 4:3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 22, 23, 24; 6:11; 8:18, 36; 9:8; 14:14. This lexeme appears forty times in the New Testament. Thirty-seven of the uses are found in the Epistles.

7.   Cf. Keck, *Romans*, 118.

deviate from the rest of Romans where λογίζομαι is mostly rendered as "think," "regard," "consider," or "maintain." Why can λογίζομαι in Rom 4:3, for instance, be read as "credit," while in Rom 2:3 it is rendered as "suppose," and why can both be construed as either "credit" or "suppose"? Can Rom 4:3 be read, "Abraham believed God, and he was *supposed* [instead of *imputed*] to be righteous"? Consequently, a dramatically different theological position can be articulated by the choice of one word over the other, and so employing a more objective method of lexical analysis is critical to accurately interpret this term. Otherwise, without scientific justification, any reading is possible.

Unfortunately, however, no modern English version shows logical consistency with its renderings of λογίζομαι. Moreover, no commentator provides a linguistic account for why this is so. From a lexicographical standpoint, this is a precarious situation as the word seems to provide no semantic barrier as far as the translations are concerned. This maximalist position of the contemporary Greek lexicons not only tends to encourage loose translation of the Bible, but makes it exceedingly difficult even for a competent Greek exegete to make a confident choice for the best meaning of a word, which in turn affects one's understanding of the text. Should we simply assume that some words, such as λογίζομαι have such varying and unrelated meanings as suggested by these translations? If so, what is it that limits the number of meanings to the seven in the NASB, and what criteria is used to decide which meaning fits in which instance? Such ambiguity is a problem, but as Charles Ruhl notes, the greater issue is that current scholarship tends to promote "too much multiplicity too easily."[8] Thus, before this paper suggests a linguistic approach, it will demonstrate how the common exegetical and theological approaches to lexical analysis handle λογίζομαι in Rom 4.

8.   Ruhl, *Monosemy*, 5.

Approaches to the Meaning of Λογίζομαι in Romans 4

A lexical analysis of λογίζομαι in Romans involves a unique kind of complexity because how it is read in Rom 4 often differs from the rest of Romans.[9] To mitigate the difficulty, theological approaches seem to focus on its immediate co-text and the canonical context of Rom 4 with regard to the discourse of Abraham. In Rom 4:3, Paul seems to be citing Gen 15:6 closely and states, "Abraham believed God, and it was *credited* to him as righteousness" (NIV, emphasis added). Apparently, the Apostle Paul utilizes Abraham's faith as a motif and elucidates God's remedy for the human predicament in the following two verses.[10] He continues, "Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted [credited] as a gift but as his due. And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted [credited] as righteousness" (ESV).[11] As if considering the importance of this faith-righteousness motif, the KJV renders λογίζομαι with a more loaded theological term "imputeth" in Rom 4:6, 11, 22, 23, 24.

The peculiar understanding of λογίζομαι in Rom 4 often indicates the translator's perception of God's dealing with Abraham or David, as found in Gen 15:6b (ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην as in Rom 4:3b, 9b, 22),[12] or Ps 32:2b (Ps 31:2b LXX) (οὗ οὐ λογίσηται κύριος ἁμαρτίαν as in Rom 4:8b). Thus, Romans 4:3b and 4:8b appear to be instances where λογίζομαι is burdened to carry the most theological weight as they must imply the same Old Testament meanings. Commentators such as Douglas Moo suggest that this word denotes "reckoning" but also implies something that is "equivalent."[13] He states, "it is particularly the nature of the 'reckoning' that Paul is interested in,"[14] and he interprets it having a meaning of "reckoning" or "accounting" of

9.   Ruhl, *Monosemy*, 5.
10.   Cf. Ruhl, *Monosemy*, 112.
11.   The NIV's rendering is in the brackets.
12.   For the quotations of Gen 15:6 in the New Testament, see Rom 4:3, 9, 22; Gal 3:6; Jas 2:23.
13.   Moo, *Epistle to the Romans*, 262.
14.   Moo, *Epistle to the Romans*, 263.

wages. However, not only is the source of this idea of "wages" unclear,[15] but also his comments cannot equally apply to the other instances of λογίζομαι in Romans.[16] For instance, in Rom 2:26, Moo interprets λογίζομαι with the sense of "to consider," but he states it differs from its meaning in Rom 4 where "Paul borrows the combination of λογίζομαι εἰς from Gen 15:6 to denote, rather technically, the 'imputation' of faith."[17] Whether his comments are right or wrong, Moo clearly demonstrates that λογίζομαι is carrying multiple theological meanings depending on its context.

Similarly, Joseph Fitzmyer comments "The pass[ive] *elogisthē* is to be understood as a theological passive; Abraham's faith was counted *by God* as uprightness, because God sees things as they are."[18] Likewise, James Dunn states in his commentary that in "view of the important role filled by λογίζομαι from 3:28 through chap. 4, the word will be pregnant with significance as the focus steadily narrows to the *Christian* Gentile as such."[19] Dunn argues that this is a "forceful word, denoting conviction with practical consequences, and not just an abstract decision in the mind, is confirmed by its use in 6:11 and 14:14."[20] However, their arguments and uses of phrases such as "theological passive" or "forceful word" are not only difficult to substantiate grammatically, but also are not mutually applicable to the remaining uses of λογίζομαι in Romans. In fact, such interpretive judgments face at least three serious questions. First, how does the meaning of λογίζομαι suddenly shift to "to credit something" in Rom 4 from "to think" as in the rest of Romans? Second, regarding Abrahamic discourse, what makes it explicit that Paul must always cite the Old Testament with the same meaning? Third, how can one justify the interpretive choice for enforcing a (theological) concept into the meaning of a word? Thus, the

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15.   Cf. Porter, *Scared Tradition*, 193. Porter states that the better translation is "to credit" when its co-text (i.e., 4:4–5 esp.) is considered.

16.   Moo, *Epistle to the Romans*, 263.

17.   Moo, *Epistle to the Romans*, 169 n. 17.

18.   Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 373, emphasis his.

19.   Dunn, *Romans*, 122.

20.   Dunn, *Romans*, 187.

lexical investigation of λογίζομαι in Rom 4 must find a universal and scientific way of reading λογίζομαι apart from any theological prejudice.

Scholars today who continue to impose the theological views discussed above have as their predecessors scholars such as Frederic Godet (1883), William Sanday and Arthur Headlam (1895), C. K. Barrett (1957), C. E. B. Cranfield (1975, 1979), and Ernst Käsemann (1980). Godet generally translates the word as "reckon," drawing from the Septuagint, where he also carries its meaning over to Paul's use of λογίζομαι in Phlm 18.[21] He sees Rom 4:22 to be a summation of Abraham's faith motif,[22] and for this and similar reasons he translates λογίζομαι in 4:11, 22, 23, 24 differently from the other uses of λογίζομαι in Rom 4—namely, "to impute something," which in this case means to impute God's own righteousness.[23] Unfortunately, his liberal exchange of words among "count," "reckon," and "impute" seem to be made under his theological presuppositions without linguistic justification. Moreover, Sanday and Headlam describe the use of λογίζομαι in Rom 4:3 as the "legal sense of imputation,"[24] and they neither mention this notion again outside the context of Rom 4, nor do they translate the word as "impute" in any other instance outside Rom 4. Also, regarding Rom 4:3, it was Godet who first argued that Paul used the Septuagint instead of the Hebrew Old Testament, but Cranfield seemed to follow Godet without criticism to render λογίζομαι as "reckon" in the passive sense.[25] Barrett supplements an explanation that this passive "conceals (in Semitic manner) a reference to God."[26] Although no emphasis of this notion is found in Cranfield,[27] Fitzmyer in his   commentary   seems   to   follow   Barrett   to   impose

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21.   Godet, *Commentary on Romans*, 170.
22.   Godet, *Commentary on Romans*, 183.
23.   Godet, *Commentary on Romans*, 183.
24.   Sanday and Headlam, *Epistle to the Romans*, 100.
25.   Cranfield, *Romans*, 84–87. Here 84. Cranfield also cites Barrett indicating their mutual agreement on this notion. Cf. Barrett, *Epistle*, 87.
26.   Barrett, *Epistle*, 59.
27.   Cranfield's commentary on Romans was first published in two volumes (1975, 1979).

unsubstantiated thought into the meaning of the word.[28] Käsemann, on the other hand, considers λογίζομαι insignificant for Paul's theology.[29] However, he also states that it is a common term in commercial language; Käsemann notices this word tends to form a "secular antithesis."[30] Interestingly, despite their lack of biblical consistency and linguistic objectivity, their comments seem to be carried over to contemporary Bible translations and their commentaries. In fact, it was within this context that two massive lexical references appeared. Walter Bauer's lexicons (first published in English in 1957), and Gerhard Kittel's theological dictionary series (first volume published in English in 1964) will be discussed in the following section with my linguistic proposal.

A Linguistic Proposal for Lexical Analysis

Linguistics analyzes the fundamentals and effects of language.[31] To some biblical scholars, linguistics is an emerging field of study that demonstrates the potentiality to "radically" change the study of the Greek New Testament.[32] Unlike most modern languages, Koine Greek is morphologically sophisticated, highly inflected, and syntactically non-configurational. For this reason, having linguistic competency is of great benefit to biblical scholars. However, significant linguistic competency is rarely found in biblical scholarship. For example, Benjamin Baxter once identified at least sixteen fallacies that were commonly found in New Testament commentaries.[33] The following linguistic proposal for a lexical analysis supplies a remedy to such shortcomings.

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28.   Cf. Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 373. Barrett's commentary on Romans was published in 1957.

29.   Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, 110.

30.   Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, 110.

31.   Cf. Campbell, *Advances*, 51–52. Cf. Cotterell and Turner, *Linguistics*, 26.

32.   Cf. Thomas, "Modern Linguistics," 23–24. Here, 23.

33.   Baxter, "In the Original Text."

Means of Lexical Analysis I: Monosemy vs. Polysemy[34]

Monosemy, as a theory of lexical semantics, is often misconstrued as assigning one rigid meaning to a word. In fact, however, monosemy is more concerned with identifying the general and highly abstract meaning that a word contributes in all, or the vast majority, of its uses in a corpus, which can then be modulated to take on various senses depending on other contextual factors. Charles Ruhl argues that words, in general, do not contribute multiple meanings, and the common perception towards multiple meanings of a word is the result of "dubious assumptions about language."[35] In this regard, Ruhl states, "Factoring out contextual meaning, we find that some words have a single, highly abstract meaning.[36] Based on this argument, Ruhl develops two plausible hypotheses: "A word has a single meaning" and if a "word has more than one meaning, its meanings are related by general rules."[37] The meaning of a word, then, "is fully reflected in its contextual relations . . . the meaning of a word is constituted by its contextual relations."[38] Thus, an accurate understanding of a word can only be determined by accounting for how its co-text modulates its highly abstract meaning.[39] For this reason, one of the most important features that the monosemous approach can contribute to the meaning of a word is that it directs the exegete to focus on the word's co-text and its context. In other words, the monosemous approach analyzes how the whole text contributes to the specific meaning of a word rather than how each word builds up the meaning of the whole text.

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34.   Although I can only touch briefly on this topic due to limited space, this contrast should be discussed much more comprehensively with regard to formal vs. functional linguistics as well as maximalist and minimalist approaches to meaning.

35.   Ruhl, *Monosemy*, 1.

36.   Ruhl, *Monosemy*, vii. Cf. Porter, "On the Shoulders," 52.

37.   Ruhl, *Monosemy*, 4.

38.   Cruse, *Lexical Semantics*, 16.

39.   For a recent example on how the general meaning of Greek words become modulated by their co-texts, and thus justify different translations in different contexts, see Porter, "θαυμάζω," 75–79.

In contrast, the more common approaches to a lexical analysis are polysemic. Polysemic approaches see a word as carrying multiple, and even unrelated, meanings that must contribute to the text, and the exegete's main task is to select an appropriate sense for the word. In fact, polysemy with a diachronic inclination is the underlying perspective of all existing Greek lexicons and dictionaries such as BDAG and *TDNT*. Danker acknowledges that it is important "that we do not multiply meanings based on the rich reservoir of *synonyms* in our own language or on associations based on elaborate theological tradition."[40] For *TDNT*, however, Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich claim that they "bring out the theological significance of the words in question."[41] Thus, multiple meanings given in an entry of *TDNT* are often gathered through diachronic studies often with some theological biases and presuppositions.[42] For example, in volume IV, H. W. Heidland contributes an article on λογίζομαι.[43] He divides this entry into two chronological sections: "The Word Group Outside the New Testament," which deals with how the word is used before the time of New Testament writings; and "The Word Group in the New Testament." In the first section, Heidland surveys how λογίζομαι has been used differently from Demosthenes and Lysias to Plato. According to Heidland, its meaning shifts from "reckoning" in legal language uses to "to conclude" until it gained a more "political sense," and then shifted to mean "to regard."[44] When it came to the Septuagint usage, Heidland argues, it took upon "a subjective, emotional and even volitional character,"[45] to mean "to devise." Surprisingly, these are only the beginning of his lists of multiple meanings.[46] Moreover,

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40.   Danker, "Lexical Evolution," 25. Emphasis mine.

41.   Cullmann, *Christ and Time*, 38.

42.   Students and exegetes will quickly realize the standard definitions given in Greek lexica betray their translations. Just for an example, try to translate John 1 with the definitions given for πρός. One cannot get past the second verse without questioning how English translations arrived at their decisions.

43.   Heidland, "λογίζομαι, λογισμός," 284–92.

44.   Heidland, "λογίζομαι, λογισμός," 284.

45.   Heidland, "λογίζομαι, λογισμός," 284.

46.   Heidland, "λογίζομαι, λογισμός," 285.

Heidland also asserts that the meaning changes depend on its subject, or even by the change of form from verb to noun, which means a "plan."[47] Thus, according to Heidland's polysemous approach to lexical meaning, a word has different meanings not only over time but also in its various forms. Therefore, while a monosemous approach largely concerns the linguistic and textual issues of the word, polysemous analyses tend to survey the range of concepts that a word may accommodate.

Means of Lexical Analysis II: Synchrony vs. Diachrony

Consequently, the previously discussed question, whether a word has only one meaning or multiple meanings (i.e., monosemy or polysemy) demands a further analysis of how the change of time and situational context affect the meaning of a word. For this reason, the second consideration of a lexical analysis relates to the issue of *where in time* to read the meaning of a word. Two major concepts that are relevant to this discussion are synchrony and diachrony, which radically differ in perspective. Peter Cotterell and Max Turner rightly notice that "all languages change gradually with time, and words come to have new meanings, [and] older meanings often becoming obsolete."[48] Saussure also states "Language is no longer free, for time will allow the social forces at work on it to carry out their effects."[49] According to Saussure, who coined the terms *synchrony* and *diachrony*, synchrony mainly concerns a single perspective from the author's present standpoint whereas diachrony distinguishes two perspectives that relate to two different time periods: present and past.[50] In other words, synchrony is concerned with "the logical and psychological relations that bind together coexisting terms."[51] However, diachrony concerns the relations "that bind

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47.   Heidland, "λογίζομαι, λογισμός," 286.
48.   Cotterell and Turner, *Linguistics*, 131.
49.   Saussure, *Course*, 78.
50.   Saussure, *Course*, 90. Cf. Hong, "Synchrony and Diachrony," 522–24.
51.   Saussure, *Course*, 99–100.

together successive [i.e., chronological] terms not perceived by the collective mind."[52] For this reason, in biblical methodology, synchrony is often utilized for literary-critical analysis, whereas diachrony is used for historical-critical analysis.[53]

For the present matter of analyzing the uses of λογίζομαι in Rom 4, it is true that a diachronic approach may shed interpretive insight into how Paul used the Septuagint in his letter to the Romans. Thus, *TDNT* lists several nuanced senses, from commercial to religious and theological, that the word took on over time. Some of the listed meanings involve reckoning, thinking, considering, and imputing. Ostensibly, such a diachronic approach to meaning seems helpful to see how its religious implications are developed over time. Moreover, it is true, as David Hill asserts, that etymology *may* be beneficial to grasp the present meaning of a word in its fullness.[54] Some push this notion even further to argue that new lexical works should extend their diachronic consideration to Modern Greek "to gain more complete understanding of the vocabulary of the New Testament."[55] However, it seems difficult—if not impossible—to focus equally on both the co-textual meaning of a word and the diachronic significance of the changed meaning of a word in a way that they do not ultimately force the reader to choose a meaning over many others.[56]

Thus, while both methods can benefit biblical scholarship in their own ways, synchronic or diachronic analyses are not of equal value for interpreting words in context. Since the 1970s, the structuralist tradition has demonstrated the importance of making "a synchronic analysis of a text *prior to* a diachronic reconstruction of its composition."[57] James Barr asserts that the emphasis on etymologizing words through the diachronic reading of the text is not "only a wrong principle but certain to fail in

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52. Saussure, *Course*, 100.
53. Cf. McKenzie, *Introduction*, 26.
54. Hill, *Greek Words*, 4.
55. Hasselbrook, *Studies*, 209–10.
56. Cf. Barr, "Hypostatization," 88.
57. Hong, "Synchrony and Diachrony," 525.

practice."[58] He states "modern linguistic ideas have tended to set limits to the importance of etymology and stress the distortion of semantic information that can follow from [diachronic] etymological explanation even when it is factually correct."[59] Cotterell and Turner also state "in order to find out *what* a lexeme means at that particular time we have only to look at the contemporary *usage*. . . . We no more need to know the *history* of the language."[60] Thus, a word should only be held accountable to give meaning within its language and its own period of time with such usage.[61]

In his chess game analogy, Saussure argues, "it is perfectly useless to recall what had just happened ten seconds previously."[62] In other words, it is sufficient to know the present state of the game to make the next move. He then asserts, "All this is equally applicable to language and sharpens the radical distinction between diachrony and synchrony."[63] In chess, one may still argue that it can be helpful to know the opponent's *historical* pattern of playing for making an intelligent move. Only for the chess game, however, would such an argument stand, but certainly not in the interpretation of the Bible. For example, in a concluding remark under the fourth entry on Heidland's article, he categorizes λογίζεσθαι as the "Saving Act of God," and then states that the meaning of this word "never allows us to forget that this is possible only as a repetition of the justification effected at the cross, i.e., in faith."[64] He explains that such a shift of meaning has occurred since Paul made a "radical break with his Judaism."[65] Does λογίζεσθαι convey all that? Is this how a word is defined? If so, there seems to be no way that one can understand a word properly without first understanding the

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58. Barr, *Semantics*, 118. Cf. Porter, *Linguistic Analysis*, 87.

59. Barr, "Hebrew Lexicography," 715.

60. Cotterell and Turner, *Linguistics*, 132, emphasis theirs.

61. This insight is found almost verbatim in Barr, "Hebrew Lexicography," 715.

62. Saussure, *Course*, 89.

63. Saussure, *Course*, 89.

64. Heidland, "λογίζομαι, λογισμός," 291.

65. Heidland, "λογίζομαι, λογισμός," 291.

theological concept behind the word. It must be too much for a single word to carry. In fact, demonstrating the development of a word more often serves as a hindrance to anyone who wants to find the definite meaning of a word in the Greek New Testament. Thus, the diachronic rigor of *TDNT* actually counters the purpose of what New Testament lexicography pursues—defining words according to their first-century meanings.

Means of Lexical Analysis III: Comparison of Modern Lexicons

Regarding the present state of biblical lexicography, John Lee states "[our] trust is misplaced."[66] He explains that although lexicons are often considered authoritative to give the final word for meaning, they are still a man-made intervention between ancient and contemporary meanings.[67] Similarly, Barr says that a Greek or Hebrew lexicon "provides not definitions . . . but glosses."[68] Unfortunately, definition by gloss has been a basic method from the beginning of New Testament lexicography.[69] Lee stresses that the problem will also continue because "each language divides up the world in its own distinctive way, and words in different languages rarely, if ever, match exactly in their semantic range."[70] Consequently, it is imperative to recognize that "words do not appear in isolation, but in contextual relations, and that language users use words to divide the world, experience, feelings, in fact, all that they talk about, into various realms delimited by words."[71] The semantic stratum of the language, as Porter states, "is formulated around the register system, in which the

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66.   Lee, "Present State," 66.

67.   Lee, "Present State," 66–67. Lee states, "The coverage is in fact partial, unsystematic, and uneven in quality. To put it more bluntly: there are gaps everywhere, and even those things that seem to have been done have not been done as well as they could, and need reassessment" (here, 67).

68.   Barr, "Hebrew Lexicography," 719.

69.   Lee, *History*, 17.

70.   Lee, *History*, 19.

71.   Porter, "Linguistic Issues," 70.

context of situation places constraints upon the options available in the lexicogrammatical system."[72]

To illustrate the current status of lexicography, two lexicons, BDAG and Louw and Nida's, which take different lexical approaches, can be compared. Along with them, *TDNT* and William Mounce's *Analytical Lexicon* will be assessed. BDAG analyzes λογίζομαι with three senses:[73] (1) "to determine by mathematical process, *reckon, calculate*"; (2) "to give careful thought to a matter, *think (about)*, *consider*, *ponder*, *let one's mind dwell on*"; and (3) "to hold a view about someth[ing], *think*, *believe*, *be of the opinion*."[74] Sense (1) is subdivided into two sub-entries: (a) "*count, take into account*" of which the examples given are Rom 4:3, 5, 8, 9, 22; and (b) "as a result of calculation, *evaluate*, *estimate*, *look upon as*, *consider*" with Rom 6:11, 8:36, and 9:8 as its examples.[75] Especially with category (b), however, these results do not seem to manifest logical reasoning; it is not only unclear how "evaluate" can be put under the same category as "estimate," but also why Rom 4:5 ("his faith is credited/counted as righteousness") cannot be under (b) rather than (a). Unfortunately, such confusion is not uncommon in BDAG when it is critically analyzed. However, Mounce goes even further as he lists seventeen glosses for λογίζομαι.[76] Ironically, many of his entries seem redundant as "to count" and "to calculate" or "to think" and "to ponder" while some are vastly different from the others, such as "to impute" and "to be despised."[77]

Alternatively, Heidland in *TDNT* begins his explanation of λογίζομαι according to New Testament usages in the following way: "Paul was not merely acquainted with the popular

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72.   Porter, "Aspect Theory," 217.

73.   BDAG, 597–98.

74.   BDAG, 597–98.

75.   BDAG, 597.

76.   Mounce, *Analytical Lexicon*, 302. They are: to count, calculate, enumerate, set down, impute, account, to be set at naught (with οὐδέν), despise (with οὐδέν), regard, deem, consider, infer, conclude, presume, think upon, ponder, and reason.

77.   Mounce, *Analytical Lexicon*, 302.

philosophical idea of thought. He expressed it exactly in his use of λογισμός. The apostle even uses it in a positive sense in R. 2:15."[78] Heidland rightly explains how Paul used λογισμός in Romans. However, he still seems to overload the word with non-textual ideas, which—as Barr notes—can be a good theological (or philosophical) case that is often spoiled by bad linguistic argument.[79] He asserts that it is "not the presence of theological methods, but the belief in the necessary reflection of theological structures in the linguistic structures, which causes the distortion of linguistic evidence."[80] This is not to discredit the contribution of Heidland or *TDNT* altogether, but to carefully question if *TDNT* can offer reliability to a student or scholar who is searching for the meaning of a word. As far as the present state of lexicography is concerned, polysemous and diachronic approaches are basic characteristics of *TDNT*, BDAG and the other works discussed above. In the case of BDAG, however, Danker does not seem to advocate as strongly for a polysemous position.[81] They can offer interesting insights for the New Testament theology in terms of what a word may imply theologically, but without well-defined linguistic support they cannot do justice to the reference of the meaning of a word.

Unlike the sources discussed above, Louw and Nida provide four definitions, rather than multiple glosses, for λογίζομαι: "a. reason about," "b. keep mental record," "c. hold a view," and "d. charge to account."[82] Despite the polysemous approach, their use of semantic domains creates the possibility of a unified, abstract, single meaning of λογίζομαι because semantic domain theory acknowledges that different words can be used to refer to similar concepts, which are often shared under a specific context or culture. Lee points out that Louw and Nida's 1988 work has made at least two innovations; it adopted a semantic domain theory

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78. Heidland, "λογίζομαι, λογισμός," 286.
79. Barr, *Semantics*, 127.
80. Barr, *Semantics*, 127.
81. Danker, "Lexical Evolution," 25.
82. Louw and Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 2:153.

and used definitions to indicate meaning.[83] Thus, Louw and Nida's lexicon was a large step forward in linguistic-based lexicography. However, it is what we do next that will be more important, not only for lexicography but New Testament studies. After all, no lexicon is authoritative in giving the final definition of a word, but it is the co-text and the context of a word that reveal the specific sense of a word.[84] From the same vein of conviction, Peter Malik has also taken on the semantic issues of a Greek word, and states, "[linguistic method] has not been hitherto employed in the study of the present problem and which has proven useful for identification of unnecessary emphases that may have been detrimental to our understanding."[85]

Defining the Meaning of Λογίζομαι in Romans 4

Romans 4 begins with a number of challenging interpretive issues. Starting from 4:1, scholars disagree why Paul deviates from his usual pattern of diatribe (cf. 3:5; 6:1; 7:7; 8:31; 9:14, 30).[86] Porter acknowledges that not only are the various textual issues troublesome, but Paul's use of Abraham exacerbates the debates.[87] Additionally, Paul's relation to the law, of which Rom 4 forms a quintessential argument, is one of the toughest issues that has troubled many scholars, even more so since the burgeoning of the New Perspective on Paul.[88] Achtemeier also points out that Scripture shows an ostensible conflict between Paul's use of Ps 31:2 and Prov 24:24, which says, "whoever says to the guilty, 'You are innocent,' will be cursed by peoples and denounced by nations."[89] Thus, Benjamin Schliesser rightly

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83.   Lee, "Present State," 69.

84.   Regarding this Porter states, "lexical meaning is the result of the contribution of contextual or linguistic and contextual or extralinguistic factors" ("On the Shoulders," 52).

85.   Malik, "Some Notes," 9.

86.   Cf. Hultgren, *Paul's Letter*, 179 n. 60.

87.   Porter, *Letter to the Romans*, 103.

88.   Part three of *The Romans Debate* is devoted to the discussion. See Donfried, ed., *Romans Debate*, 299–346.

89.   Achtemeier, *Romans*, 79.

poses two crucial questions about Rom 4: "In which sense does Paul employ Gen 15:6 for his argument? Can he said [*sic*] to be doing justice to the nature of the text?"[90] Also realizing an interpretative anomaly, Schliesser states, "Neither is the verb האמין of Gen 15:6 Paul's notion of 'believing,' nor the noun צדקה 'righteousness' in the Pauline sense."[91] Apparently, without a "fair" explanation, Paul seems to be making either a contradictory argument or Paul did not understand Scripture correctly. The understanding of the verb λογίζομαι can be a key to reconciling this issue. In other words, finding the meaning of λογίζομαι certainly helps mitigate this dilemma of understanding Paul's argument in Rom 4.

As noted above, Paul uses various forms of λογίζομαι nineteen times throughout Romans. In eleven of these occurrences the word appears in one of the most difficult sections of Romans. Regarding this, in Rom 4, and especially 4:3, Paul seems to develop a new component of the Abrahamic faith motif using Gen 15:6 with emphasis on the terms πιστεύειν, λογίζεσθαι, and δικαιοσύνη.[92] It is important to notice that Paul utilizes Abraham to evince that Abraham is not only "our [i.e., the Jews] father according to flesh" (4:1), but also "the father of all who believe" (4:11).[93] Apparently, Paul now "joins with the Old Testament in the making of his claim."[94] In other words, a crucial point to notice is that it is Paul who attributes the specific sense to λογίζομαι, of which definition can be found through the linguistic analysis presented in this paper. It will demonstrate how λογίζομαι should be understood and how it contributes to bringing clarity to this difficult passage.

Ultimately, the linguistic method must begin with three decisions. First, there is only one general meaning that the word λογίζομαι contributes to Romans. Interestingly, as mentioned in

90. Schliesser, *Abraham's Faith*, 426.

91. Schliesser, *Abraham's Faith*, 426.

92. Schliesser, *Abraham's Faith*, 428. For detailed discussion on Paul's use of the Old Testament, see Porter and Pitts, "Paul's Bible," 9–40.

93. Cf. Achtemeier, *Romans*, 79.

94. Porter, *Letter to the Romans*, 105.

the beginning, not a single contemporary Bible translation that I consulted (CEB, ESV, GNB, HCSB, KJV, NASB, NET, NIV, NLT, NRSV, and RSV) demonstrated consistency on how this term should be rendered. Second, regardless of what the word meant in Gen 15:6 and Ps 31:2, Paul's understanding of λογίζομαι in Rom 4 must take priority over however the Septuagint used this word to translate the Hebrew original. Thus, the outward "anomaly," such as the one Benjamin Schliesser pointed out,[95] should not affect the meaning that Paul ascribes to the word. Otherwise, the lexical analysis of λογίζομαι can only end up with theological glossing. Third, and relating to the previous two conditions, for the word to be contextually meaningful, the sense of λογίζομαι itself cannot imply anything commercial, mathematical, or even theological because its lexical meaning cannot carry such conceptual burdens.[96]

Paul Achtemeier states that in the Old Testament, "Abraham is the new beginning God makes after the baleful account of one human sin after another."[97] However, in Romans, Paul uses Abraham as "the first ray of hope . . . in the midst of God's wrath."[98] In other words, there was a certain and common assumption about Abraham in Paul's day. Porter states that the assumption is "that Abraham was a well-known righteous person, no doubt to Jews but possibly to Gentiles as well (at least to Paul!)."[99] Whatever Porter meant by "at least to Paul!" it seems safe to assume that Abraham was at least well-known to Jews. Thus, Paul frequently uses both "believed" and "is reckoned" to construe Abraham's actions.[100] These words are used, for example, to explicate "what it means to 'do' something" and what he "receives as the reward for doing it (Rom. 4.5–6)."[101] In this context, to understand λογίζομαι as "to reckon" may be fitting, but it fails to satisfy the three lexical principles formulated

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95.   Schliesser, *Abraham's Faith*, 426.
96.   Cf. Moo, *Epistle to the Romans*, 263.
97.   Achtemeier, *Romans*, 80.
98.   Achtemeier, *Romans*, 80.
99.   Porter, *Letter to the Romans*, 103.
100. Porter, *Letter to the Romans*, 104.
101. Porter, *Letter to the Romans*, 104.

above. For example, the translation of the KJV, "to impute," cannot be the meaning of λογίζομαι in Rom 4 because while "to impute" may work for eleven instances in Rom 4 it will not work for the remaining eight in Romans.

15x	Table 1: Λογίζομαι pertaining to "justification"
2:3	**λογίζῃ** δὲ τοῦτο, ὦ ἄνθρωπε ὁ κρίνων τοὺς τὰ τοιαῦτα πράσσοντας καὶ ποιῶν αὐτά, ὅτισὺ ἐκφεύξῃ τὸ κρίμα τοῦ θεοῦ;
2:26	ἐὰν οὖν ἡ ἀκροβυστία τὰ δικαιώματα τοῦ νόμου φυλάσσῃ, οὐχ ἡ ἀκροβυστία αὐτοῦ εἰς περιτομὴν **λογισθήσεται**;
3:28	**λογιζόμεθα** γὰρ δικαιοῦσθαι πίστει ἄνθρωπον χωρὶς ἔργων νόμου.
4:3	τί γὰρ ἡ γραφὴ λέγει; Ἐπίστευσεν δὲ Ἀβραὰμ τῷ θεῷ, καὶ **ἐλογίσθη** αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην.
4:4	τῷ δὲ ἐργαζομένῳ ὁ μισθὸς οὐ **λογίζεται** κατὰ χάριν ἀλλὰ κατὰ ὀφείλημα·
4:5	τῷ δὲ μὴ ἐργαζομένῳ, πιστεύοντι δὲ ἐπὶ τὸν δικαιοῦντα τὸν ἀσεβῆ, **λογίζεται** ἡ πίστις αὐτοῦ εἰς δικαιοσύνην,
4:6	καθάπερ καὶ Δαυὶδ λέγει τὸν μακαρισμὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ᾧ ὁ θεὸς **λογίζεται** δικαιοσύνην χωρὶς ἔργων,
4:8	μακάριος ἀνὴρ οὗ οὐ μὴ **λογίσηται** κύριος ἁμαρτίαν.
4:9	ὁ μακαρισμὸς οὖν οὗτος ἐπὶ τὴν περιτομὴν ἢ καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν ἀκροβυστίαν; λέγομεν γάρ, **Ἐλογίσθη** τῷ Ἀβραὰμ ἡ πίστις εἰς δικαιοσύνην.
4:10	πῶς οὖν **ἐλογίσθη**; ἐν περιτομῇ ὄντι ἢ ἐν ἀκροβυστίᾳ; οὐκ ἐν περιτομῇ ἀλλ' ἐν ἀκροβυστίᾳ·
4:11b	καὶ σημεῖον ἔλαβεν περιτομῆς, σφραγῖδα τῆς δικαιοσύνης τῆς πίστεως τῆς ἐν τῇ ἀκροβυστίᾳ, εἰς τὸ εἶναι αὐτὸν πατέρα πάντων τῶν πιστευόντων δι' ἀκροβυστίας, εἰςτὸ **λογισθῆναι** [καὶ] αὐτοῖς [τὴν] δικαιοσύνην,
4:22	διὸ [καὶ] **ἐλογίσθη** αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην.

4:23	Οὐκ ἐγράφη δὲ δι' αὐτὸν μόνον ὅτι **ἐλογίσθη** αὐτῷ,
4:24	ἀλλὰ καὶ δι' ἡμᾶς οἷς μέλλει **λογίζεσθαι**, τοῖς πιστεύουσιν ἐπὶ τὸν ἐγείραντα Ἰησοῦν τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν ἐκ νεκρῶν,
6:11	οὕτως καὶ ὑμεῖς **λογίζεσθε** ἑαυτοὺς [εἶναι] νεκροὺς μὲν τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ ζῶντας δὲ τῷ θεῷ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.

Still, as shown above, it is interesting that fifteen out of the nineteen uses of λογίζομαι in Romans appear in a specific discussion that relates to the cause and effect of "justification": 2:3, 26; 3:28; 4:3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 22, 23, 24; 6:11. Moreover, in these references, λογίζομαι consistently predicates an idea that is in an antithetic relation between "sin," i.e. unrighteous deed, and "righteousness." For example, Rom 2:26 reads, "So then, if those who are not circumcised keep the law's requirements, will they not be regarded as though they were circumcised?" (NIV). Likewise, Rom 3:28 reads, "For we hold that a person is justified by faith apart from works prescribed by the law" (NRSV). On the other hand, however, the remaining four instances refer to something other than "justification": 8:18, 36; 9:8; 14:14. Interestingly, these four references also portray some antithetical ideas: between suffering and glory (8:18), sheep for the slaughter and conquering through Christ (8:36–37), flesh and promise (9:8), and unclean and clean (14:14). Thus, Rom 9:8 reads, "In other words, it is not the children by physical descent who are God's children, but it is the children of the promise who are regarded as Abraham's offspring" (NIV).

Then, according to the three principles of lexical analysis, the meaning of λογίζομαι pertains to the measurement of a view or position in between two antithetical concepts or positions. More specifically, to briefly define Paul's use of λογίζομαι in one general meaning such as "to measure" is not only to say it can be construed by words such as to consider, regard, hold, reckon, suppose, think, or even to count, but also to attest it always involves a decision between two opposing choices. Conceptually, applying this definition, Rom 3:28 will be read, "For we *measure* that a person is justified by faith apart from works prescribed by

the law," and Rom 9:8, "In other words, it is not the children by physical descent who are God's children, but it is the children of the promise who are *measured* as Abraham's offspring." However, the final question still remains: How much does this definition help the understanding of Romans? For one matter, it can restrict the theological prejudice that the exegete and interpreters may impose upon the word. For example, λογίζομαι cannot be construed as having "to give" or "to impute" righteousness to Abraham in Rom 4:3. When considering the context of Gen 15:6 λογίζομαι may be construed as "being given" or "being imputed" righteousness by God. However, this same implication cannot capture the antithetical values that Paul seems to stress in Romans. Thus, by performing a lexical analysis with the concept of monosemic synchrony, the exegete will have the best available knowledge of the abstract, generalized meaning of λογίζομαι, and it will ground the exegete as she or he explores its contextual meaning and translations.

Conclusion

Moisés Silva states, "great interpreters depend heavily (probably more than they realize) on their instincts."[102] From this standpoint, it is true that biblical interpretation is an art as much as it is a science.[103] Regarding lexicography, Danker also states, "lexicography is more of an art than a craft trotting out traditional glosses."[104] In this regard, the scholars and commentators mentioned above—either positively or negatively—excel in their fields of study like professional artists and experienced scientists. Their learned practices for doing lexical analysis have contributed greatly to the understanding of the words in the Greek New Testament. As demonstrated above, however, this does not mean there is no room for further development, and the insights from modern linguistics have proven to be not only an alternative but also a more scientific means to do lexical analysis. D.

102. Silva, *Interpreting Galatians*, 26.
103. Silva, *Interpreting Galatians*, 26.
104. Danker, "Lexical Evolution," 25.

A. Carson acknowledges that the potential impact of modern linguistics on the study of New Testament is like an eruption that arrived with "torrential force."[105] Obviously, it seems amiss if one neglects such force.

Thus, this paper has attempted to sketch a linguistic methodology for doing lexical analysis in the Greek New Testament. It has been a study that involves comparisons of linguistic viewpoints. It also addressed the pitfalls and shortcomings of existing lexicographical works while constructing an alternative method that yields more reliable and linguistically informed outcomes. This paper has detailed a model for lexical analysis that is monosemous and synchronic in orientation, and also one that resists the kinds of fallacious theologizing about words characteristic of other works by defining the word meaning based on contextual factors. In turn, the triadic principle offered in this paper should challenge both biblical scholars and lexicographers to consider modern linguistics seriously as an alternative perspective in defining and translating Greek words. Although the translation of the word λογίζομαι was not a primary goal of this paper, the lexical analysis of this term has yielded some insightful findings of this word, which demonstrates the potential for more work done in this fashion in New Testament scholarship.

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105. Carson, "Linguistics," 18.

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