OT5077: Linguistics for Exegetes

Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary

Fall 2019   Prof. Cherney

Course objectives:

By the end of this course you will have:

1) **Defined** "linguistics" and **contrasted** it with the traditional, grammar-and-syntax approach to language study.

2) **Mapped** the terrain in the field of linguistics by **distinguishing** nine of its subdomains: lexicology, morphology, syntax, phonetics/phonology, cross-cultural semantics, pragmatics, text linguistics, historical linguistics, and language typology.

3) **Applied** insights from each subdomain of linguistics listed above to a problem in the biblical languages and/or the biblical text.

4) **Critiqued** sample exegetical arguments on linguistic grounds.

5) **Named** implications of what you've learned for your study of Scripture in the original.

As a **two-credit course**, OT5077 should require around **ninety total hours of work** on your part (actual results may vary).

Course tools:

1) Dirven, René and Verspoor, Marjolijn. *Cognitive Exploration of Language and Linguistics.* Second revised edition (reprinted in 2009) Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2004.

2) Collins, Billie Jean et al., eds. *The SBL Handbook of Style: For Biblical Studies and Related Disciplines.* Second edition. Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2014.

Both the above books are required. The *SBL Handbook* is the official style guide of WLS and you'll need it for your paper (see below).

In place of *Cognitive Exploration*, previous incarnations of this course used this book:

3) Mihalicek, Vedrana and Wilson, Christin, eds. *Language Files: Materials for an Introduction to Language and Linguistics.* Twelfth edition. Columbus, OH: The Ohio State University Press, 2016.

… which is broader and more comprehensive, but most of it applies less directly to biblical studies. Recommended if you're building a linguistics library, but not required for this course.

4) Your usual tools for Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek exegesis: text, lexicon, grammar, and concordance. Your Bible Study software program of choice will probably be fine. For Hebrew, see the WLS OT Department's list of resources (website) for recommendations.

5) Other resources (articles, etc.) and select biographies will be posted on the course Moodle site.

Course procedure:

1. **Prepare.**

   a. Read the assigned portion in *Cognitive Exploration* or other posted articles (when applicable).

   b. Watch the posted PowerPoint lecture (when applicable).

   c. Take the online **quiz** or complete the online **assignment.**

2. **Post.** Participate in the forum discussions. These will mostly involve the application of insights from the readings and/or lecture to a problem in biblical Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek.

3. **One major *paper:***

   Title: The ____(A)_____ of _____(B)_____ .

"A" in the blank above is one of the subdomains of linguistics that we will consider, or one of its concerns. "B" is a feature of biblical Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek, or a feature of the biblical text.

Examples:

"The Phonology of Biblical Aramaic vs. Biblical Hebrew"

"Ditransitivity [involves Syntax] and the Verb עבד"

"Implicature [involves Pragmatics] in Paul's Letter to Philemon"

"Reference and Meaning [involves Semantics]: Hebrew עֶבֶד as Case Study"

"Cohesive Devices [involves Discourse Analysis] in Ephesians 1:3-14"

Suggestions *only*. If the titles above make no sense to you right now, don't worry. They very soon will.

Paper directions: *Aim for an article that would be publishable in an academic journal,* although whether and where you choose to submit it for publication is up to you. 10,000 words maximum including everything (footnotes, bibliography, etc.). 12 pt type (16 pt for any Hebrew), line spacing "Exactly" at "16 pt" (solves spacing problems with Hebrew), 1" margins, no title page necessary. Your implied reader is committed to the authority of Scripture and knows the biblical languages but has not studied linguistics formally. Use *The SBL Handbook of Style* 2nd edition. Consult the *Chicago Manual of Style* (17th edition) for anything *SBL* doesn't cover. Any Hebrew must be either in SBL Hebrew/Times New Roman font, or transliterated. If you choose to transliterate, use SBL "Academic Style" (*SBL Handbook.*, p 56f). For Greek, use Times New Roman with the language changed to "Greek" on your computer.

Due date: First draft: 11/22. Submit (electronically, as a Word document) one copy to your instructor and one copy to your assigned peer editor (see below). **Final draft: 12/13.** Submit this to your instructor only. In your final draft, you don't have to agree with or incorporate all of your editor's feedback, but you should engage with it. Each day late = minus one letter grade. More than 1 mechanical error per page in the final draft = minus 5 points. More than 2 = minus 10 points. More than 3 = (Let's not go there).

4. One ***paper review and edit.*** Edit and critique the paper written by one of your peers. You will be assigned a peer's paper for editing. This is most easily done using the Review>>New Comment feature in Word. Use *The SBL Handbook* also to guide your editing. Append broader comments and an evaluation at the end of the paper in another color. **Due** (i.e., copies are in both my hands and the author's): **11/29.**

Your grade

Quiz/assignment average: 25%

Paper: 40% (first draft 25%; final draft 15%)

Service as peer editor: 15%

Forum participation (Definition: this was a better course because you were in it): 20%

Instructor   Kenneth A. Cherney, Jr., PhD
               Home: 6604 W. Wartburg Circle, Mequon, WI, 53092
               920-323-0656
               Kenneth.Cherney@wls.wels.net