

The Prestige Language of Christianity in the Book of Acts

Linguistic Biblical Studies

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VOLUME 29

This series, *Linguistic Biblical Studies*, is dedicated to the development and promotion of linguistically informed study of the Bible in its original languages. Biblical studies has greatly benefited from modern theoretical and applied linguistics, but stands poised to benefit from further integration of the two fields of study. Most linguistics has studied contemporary languages, and attempts to apply linguistic methods to study of ancient languages requires systematic re-assessment of their approaches. This series is designed to address such challenges, by providing a venue for linguistically based analysis of the languages of the Bible. As a result, monograph-length studies and collections of essays in the major areas of linguistics, such as syntax, semantics, pragmatics, discourse analysis and text linguistics, corpus linguistics, cognitive linguistics, comparative linguistics, and the like, will be encouraged, and any theoretical linguistic approach will be considered, both formal and functional. Primary consideration is given to the Greek of the New and Old Testaments and of other relevant ancient authors, but studies in Hebrew, Coptic, and other related languages will be entertained as appropriate.

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The Prestige Language of Christianity in the Book of Acts

*Historical Sociolinguistic Approaches
to Multilingualism*

By

Sung Min Park



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Contents

Preface IX

Acknowledgements X

List of Figures and Tables XII

Abbreviations XIII

Introduction: The Prestige Language of First-Century Christianity 1

- 1 Defining the Issue and Problem 1
- 2 Outline and Contribution of the Study 6

1 The Multilingualism of First-Century Christianity 8

- 1 Introduction 8
- 2 The Multilingual Environment of the New Testament World 9
 - 2.1 *Previous Studies of the Multilingualism of Ancient Palestine* 9
 - 2.2 *Sociolinguistic Approaches to the Multilingualism of Ancient Palestine* 19
- 3 The Prestige Language of First-Century Christianity 28
 - 3.1 *The Code Choices of Jesus and His Disciples* 30
 - 3.2 *Paul's Code Choice* 46
- 4 Conclusion 51

2 Historical Sociolinguistic Approaches to the Prestige Language of First-Century Christianity 53

- 1 Introduction 53
- 2 Historical Sociolinguistic Approaches to the Multilingualism of First-Century Christianity 54
 - 2.1 *Historical Sociolinguistic Approaches to Biblical Studies* 56
 - 2.2 *Contemporary Sociolinguistics* 64
- 3 The New Proposal of the Historical Sociolinguistic Approach to the Inquiry of the Codes of Peter and Paul 78
 - 3.1 *The Style Model* 80
 - 3.2 *Historical Sociolinguistic Approaches to the Code Choices of Peter and Paul* 85
- 4 Conclusion 105

3	Macro Sociolinguistics: Linguistic Ideologies of the Roman Empire	107
1	Introduction	107
2	The Macro Context of the Roman State	108
	2.1 <i>Roman Citizenship</i>	111
	2.2 <i>Romanization</i>	121
3	The Linguistic Ideologies of the Institutional Communities	133
	3.1 <i>Education</i>	134
	3.2 <i>Government</i>	142
	3.3 <i>Religion</i>	147
	3.4 <i>Military</i>	156
4	Conclusion	159
4	Meso Sociolinguistics: Linguistic Ideologies of the Communities of Practice in the Greco-Roman World	161
1	Introduction	161
2	The Meso Contexts of the Greco-Roman World	163
	2.1 <i>Social Networks of the Socioeconomic Communities</i>	164
	2.2 <i>Linguistic Ideologies of the Jewish Families and Communities</i>	187
3	The Sociolinguistic Landscape of the Regional Communities	195
	3.1 <i>Judea</i>	199
	3.2 <i>Samaria</i>	213
	3.3 <i>Galilee</i>	217
	3.4 <i>Phoenicia</i>	230
	3.5 <i>Syria</i>	236
	3.6 <i>Cilicia</i>	244
	3.7 <i>Anatolia</i>	248
	3.8 <i>Sicilia and Cyprus</i>	253
	3.9 <i>Achaia and Macedonia</i>	257
	3.10 <i>Seleucid Empire and Parthian Empire</i>	262
4	Conclusion	267
5	Micro Sociolinguistics: Peter and Paul's Code Choices and the Prestige Language of First-Century Christianity in the Book of Acts	269
1	Introduction	269
2	The Plurilingualism of Peter, Paul, and Other Church Leaders	269
	2.1 <i>Criteria for Measuring the Church Leaders' Plurilingualism</i>	270
	2.2 <i>Peter's Plurilingualism</i>	276
	2.3 <i>Paul's Plurilingualism</i>	281
	2.4 <i>Other Church Leaders' Plurilingualism</i>	290

3	The Prestige Language of First-Century Christianity	292
3.1	<i>Indexical Cycle of Jerusalem Church</i>	295
3.2	<i>Indexical Cycle of Palestine Churches</i>	306
3.3	<i>Indexical Cycle of Syrian Antioch and Other Diaspora Churches</i>	309
4	Conclusion	317
6	Conclusion	319
	Appendix 1: The Geographical and Functional Distributions of Languages	323
	Appendix 2: Historical Figures' Social Networks and Plurilingualism	330
	Appendix 3: The Density of Peter's Social Networks with Other Historical Figures	355
	Appendix 4: The Density of Paul's Social Networks with Other Historical Figures	361
	Appendix 5: The Code Choices of the Historical Figures in the Book of Acts	367
	Bibliography	404
	Index of Modern Authors	438
	Index of Ancient Sources	440

Preface

As I embarked on my doctoral journey at McMaster Divinity College, I was fortunate to cross paths with Hughson T. Ong, whose work introduced me to the field of sociolinguistics. In addition, my supervisor, Stanley E. Porter, deepened my understanding of sociolinguistic methodologies and their potential applications in biblical studies. This book is, therefore, both a culmination of my scholarly endeavors during my doctoral studies and a tribute to the mentors who shaped my academic perspective.

This work employs historical sociolinguistic approaches to the book of the Acts by synthesizing the sociology of language, critical constructivism, variationalist sociolinguistics, and ethnographic-interactional sociolinguistics. These methodologies provide a robust framework which identify the complex multilingual environment of Greco-Roman world, offering new insights into the sociolinguistic landscapes at the dawn of Christianity.

While contemporary scholars in the fields of ancient history and ancient languages have increasingly recognized the significance of historical sociolinguistics, its application in biblical studies has been still in an infant stage. Although biblical scholars often mention sociolinguistic issues in biblical studies, they do not have a comprehensive understanding of sociolinguistics. Biblical scholars who employ sociolinguistics are very few, and even they employ outdated theories that once prevailed in the 1970s. This book aims to bridge this gap by introducing contemporary sociolinguistic theories and models that can contribute to our understanding of the prestige language of the early Christianity and of how it was employed in the official settings of the churches, such as preaching, evangelism, and teaching. I hope this book will serve as a resource for scholars and students alike, providing a robust methodological toolset for those seeking to understand the linguistic and social underpinnings of the New Testament studies.

This publication would not have been possible without the invaluable contributions of numerous colleagues and mentors. I am particularly grateful to the academic community at McMaster Divinity College for their support and encouragement throughout this project. To my readers, I extend an invitation to explore the intricate interplay of language and society in the ancient world, as unveiled through the Acts of the Apostles.

Acknowledgements

This book is the fruit of the assistance provided by many individuals. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to those who have generously supported me throughout my long journey in pursuing my PhD degree.

First and foremost, I offer a prayer of gratitude to God for the knowledge and strength that he has graciously granted me. God has been my constant source of strength and inspiration. Through this research, I aspire to give glory to God and hope to contribute to the advancement of God's kingdom.

I would like to express my gratitude to Dr. Stanley E. Porter, my supervisor and mentor. His guidance and unwavering support have been instrumental in shaping my academic journey. He guided my studies with passionate instruction and extensive knowledge, contributing to my academic growth and inspiring me to continually expand the boundaries of my learning. His mentorship has played a pivotal role in my research and overall academic development. The time I have spent under his guidance has been a cherished experience that I will forever hold dear.

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focus on my education and research, leading to the achievements I have experienced. Without the support and love of my family, none of this would have been possible.

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Figures and Tables

Figures

1	Linguistic Competence to Use Sociolinguistic Resources as Act of Identity	82
2	Indexical Cycle of First-Century Christianity	97
3	Phoenician Trade Networks	167
4	Social Networks between Greek Cities and Colonies	169
5	Shipwrecks in the Mediterranean Sea and Lead in the Greenland Ice Sheet	172
6	Trade Networks for the Economy of the Eastern Provinces	179
7	The Eight Types of Social Networks	273
8	The Indexical Cycles of the Palestine Churches	308
9	The Indexical Cycles of the Diaspora Churches	317

Tables

1	Macro, Meso, and Micro Sociolinguistics	67
2	Social Practices for the Local Economy	178
3	Peter's Social Networks	278
4	Paul's Social Networks	286
5	The Indexical Cycle of the Jerusalem Church	305

Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Yale Bible Commentaries
AJA	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>
ANRW	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt</i>
ASOR	<i>American School of Oriental Research</i>
BARev	<i>Biblical Archaeology Review</i>
BASP	<i>The Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists</i>
BBR	<i>Bulletin For Biblical Research</i>
BCAW	Blackwell Companions to the Ancient World
BÉFAR	Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome
BINS	Biblical Interpretation Series
BT	<i>The Bible Translator</i>
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
CBET	Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CBR	<i>Currents in Biblical Research</i>
CPhil	<i>Classical Philology</i>
CQ	<i>The Classical Quarterly</i>
CR	<i>Classical Review</i>
DAPSAC	Discourse Approaches to Politics, Society and Culture
EeC	Études et Commentaires
ESEC	Emory Studies in Early Christianity
ÉtTrav	<i>Études et Travaux</i>
Exp	<i>The Expositor</i>
FN	<i>Filología Neotestamentaria</i>
GCRW	Greek Culture in the Roman World
GOTR	<i>Greek Orthodox Theological Review</i>
GR	<i>Greece & Rome</i>
HSCP	<i>Harvard Studies in Classical Philology</i>
IEJ	<i>Israel Exploration Journal</i>
JBL	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
JGRChJ	<i>Journal of Greco-Roman Christianity and Judaism</i>
JH	<i>Jewish History</i>
JHS	<i>Journal of Hellenic Studies</i>
JHSL	<i>Journal of Historical Sociolinguistics</i>
JNES	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
JÖAI	<i>Jahreshefte des österreichischen archäologischen Instituts in Wien</i>
JRA	<i>Journal of Roman Archaeology</i>

JRASup	Journal of Roman Archaeology Supplement Series
<i>JRS</i>	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series
<i>JSocL</i>	<i>Journal of Sociolinguistics</i>
<i>L&C</i>	<i>Language & Communication</i>
LBS	Linguistic Biblical Studies
LHBOTS	Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies
LSLS	Language in Social Life Series
<i>MH</i>	<i>Museum Helveticum</i>
<i>MUSJ</i>	<i>Mélanges de l'université Saint-Joseph</i>
<i>Neot</i>	<i>Neotestamentica</i>
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NovTSup	Supplements to Novum Testamentum
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
NTTS	New Testament Tools and Studies
PAST	Pauline Studies
PBA	Proceedings of the British Academy
<i>RB</i>	<i>Revue Biblique</i>
SBG	Studies in Biblical Greek
SBL	Studies in Biblical Literature
SBLABS	SBL Archaeology and Biblical Studies
SBLMS	Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
SBLSymS	Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series
SJLA	Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
<i>SwJL</i>	<i>Southwest Journal of Linguistics</i>
<i>SwJT</i>	<i>Southwestern Journal of Theology</i>
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum Antiken Judentum
<i>TynBul</i>	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>
<i>VT</i>	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
YCS	Yale Classical Studies
<i>ZPE</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i>