

THE MULTILINGUAL JESUS: AN ANALYSIS OF THE SOCIOLINGUISTIC
SITUATION OF ANCIENT PALESTINE WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE
GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

by

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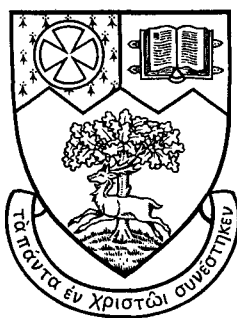
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ABSTRACT

“The Multilingual Jesus: An Analysis of the Sociolinguistic Situation of Ancient Palestine with Special Reference to the Gospel of Matthew”

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Was Jesus multilingual? Which languages did he speak? What does the linguistic composition and sociolinguistic situation of first-century Palestine look like? On what occasions were Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin spoken in that ancient community? These questions have biblical scholars searching for answers since the sixteenth century, proposing different opinions on the issues related to these questions. Answers to these questions significantly influence our understanding of the various sociolinguistic elements and facets of early Christianity, the early church, and the text of the New Testament. But those answers depend upon our depiction of the multifarious sociolinguistic dynamics that compose the speech community of ancient Palestine, which include its historical linguistic shifts under different military regimes, its geographical linguistic landscape, the social functions of the languages in its linguistic repertoire, and the specific types of social contexts where those languages were used. Using a sociolinguistic model, this study attempts to paint a portrait of the sociolinguistic situation of ancient Palestine, consequently providing answers to these questions.

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Introductory Chapter: The Multilingualism of Ancient Palestine and of Jesus

DEFINING THE ISSUE AND PROBLEM

The languages spoken by Jesus continue to be a subject of scholarly interest. Scholars still hope to reach a consensus regarding the extent to which Jesus would have spoken Greek, Aramaic, Hebrew, and Latin, as well as the composition of the linguistic landscape of first-century CE (or ancient) Palestine. In this absence of a consensus, recent scholarship has nevertheless acknowledged the multilingual environment of Jesus' world.¹ But it needs to be mentioned that this scholarly scenario is radically different from nineteenth-century scholarship, which mainly portrayed Jesus as an exclusively Aramaic speaker. Few today will contend that Jesus only spoke Aramaic. As Hans Dieter Betz states: "a knowledge of Greek can no longer be denied to Jesus."² For the most part, the recognition of Jesus' multilingual environment is greatly induced by the discovery of the widespread literary and non-literary artifacts in the middle of the twentieth century, particularly in Qumran and other Judean Desert sites. This discovery reveals the existence and use of at least four languages—Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin—in ancient Palestine.³ The evidence provided by the New Testament that was virtually transmitted in Greek also establishes the fact that Greek, not Aramaic, was the prestige language of the time (see especially chapter 3), although scholars have generally failed (or refused) to recognize it. Because scholars have become aware of these facts, their

¹ The characterization of Jesus' multilingual environment as triglossic, trilingual, or bilingual has also been suggested by Poirier, "The Linguistic Situation," 55–56; Lapidé, "Insights from Qumran," 498; Voelz, "The Linguistic Milieu," 84; Horst, *Studies on Jewish Hellenism*, 26; and Lee, *Jesus and Gospel Traditions*, 105–73.

² Betz, "Wellhausen's Dictum," 15.

³ For surveys of the evidence of these artifacts, see the bibliographical list in Porter, *Criteria*, 140–1 n. 31 and 32. See also Lee, *Jesus and Gospel Traditions*, 106–10, 156–60.

main concern since has been with determining how to interpret the available linguistic evidence and to identify the language(s) Jesus would have spoken.⁴

As will be seen in the next chapter, previous scholarly works mostly used conventional means, such as logical inferences, identification of linguistic and grammatical characteristics, historical arguments, or a combination of these in their investigation of the linguistic evidence. In some ways, it is easy to see that these studies have provided a wealth of information and a number of theories regarding the multilingual situation of ancient Palestine. In other ways, however, it is also fair to say that their methods of inquiry do not (as they probably cannot) really enable them to paint a clear portrait of the multilingualism of ancient Palestine. The earlier argument that Jesus typically or exclusively spoke Aramaic, or that he also spoke Greek on occasions, must now be spelled out clearly and explicitly. In the light of this discussion, I wish to note that Michael O. Wise's insight two decades ago proves unpersuasive; he states: "Unfortunately, the nature of the linguistic evidence from ancient Palestine makes a complete linguistic analysis impossible. The best one can hope for is an approximation of the facts."⁵ If one were to accept Wise's argument, then it follows that future scholarly research cannot result in any hopeful investigation, let alone paint, even in the broadest strokes, a correct picture of the multilingual situation of ancient Palestine.

It is with regard to Wise's remark that I wish to situate this study. On the one hand, I do not believe that scholarly hopes for understanding the multilingual landscape of ancient Palestine should rest solely on approximation of facts. Even though we cannot

⁴ Gundry, "Language Milieu," 405, observes "that usually the strongest arguments in favor of conflicting views are left largely unrefuted, the weight of discussion being put on evidence favorable to the author's viewpoint."

⁵ Wise, "Languages," 434.

make absolute claims for our findings, we can still continue to find new ways and develop new methods to understand better the linguistic milieu of the first century CE; assuredly, the responsibility of a research and development department is not just for the upkeep of the business, but also for its continuous growth and improvement. Thus, on the other hand, it still remains a noble goal to strive for a scholarly consensus, but only under two agreeable conditions: first, scholars must be willing to set aside, at least temporarily, what theological convictions are associated with particular views in their investigation to avoid clouding their own judgment of or showing bias towards the linguistic evidence; and second, they must be open to new avenues of studies from other disciplines, especially when these studies can provide more sophisticated methods for handling and examining the evidence. Employment of methodological tools from other disciplines can enable and lead to the formulation of an appropriate method for the investigation of our subject matter. In this study, I used sociolinguistic theories to paint a picture of the multifarious dynamics of the multilingualism of ancient Palestine. My objective is to demonstrate that Jesus must have been a productive user of Aramaic and Greek, and at the same time, a receptive user (to some degree) of Hebrew and Latin, in order to interact with diverse social groups and individuals, and most importantly, in order to accomplish his mission as a religious prophet and teacher in the multilingual speech community of ancient Palestine.

OUTLINE AND CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

This study is composed of five major chapters that attempt to accomplish the objective. It is perhaps the most comprehensive treatment of the subject matter to date in terms of its survey of the secondary literature and of its analysis of the sociolinguistic

environment of ancient Palestine. Chapters 3 to 5 constitute the main contributions of this study to the scholarly research on the subject. These three chapters altogether provide us with a clear picture of the sociolinguistic composition of the speech community of ancient Palestine from a historical, geographical, societal, and community and individual (i.e., personal) standpoints. A highlight of these chapters is the set of sociolinguistic rules for the language selection in ancient Palestine, which I list in chapter 5. Chapter 2 also provides a major contribution to both the discipline of sociolinguistics and New Testament research. This chapter provides a survey of numerous works that utilized sociolinguistics in New Testament studies, and it exemplifies the development and formulation of a sociolinguistic model (based on an amalgamation of various sociolinguistic theories) that can be applied to New Testament exegesis and research. In what follows, I give a brief summary of each chapter, before I explain in the subsequent section how I will use the Gospel of Matthew for the purposes of this study.

Chapter 1 surveys previous discussions of the languages of ancient Palestine and of Jesus. This chapter discusses the two intertwined issues relating to the Greek language of the New Testament and to the use of Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin in ancient Palestine. The survey indicates great diversity and complexity in the scholarly proposals for the linguistic composition of ancient Palestine. Whereas nineteenth-century scholarship largely argues for the so-called Aramaic hypothesis, recent scholarship allows more flexibility in theorizing the linguistic composition of ancient Palestine, with a small number of scholars trying to revive the Hebrew vernacular hypothesis (or that Hebrew did not replace Aramaic as the native language of the Jews).

Chapter 2 surveys previous sociolinguistic approaches used in New Testament studies, and introduces the methodological framework that undergirds this study. The survey in the first part of this chapter shows that sociolinguistic theories have generally been used in three main areas of New Testament research—Bible translation, the linguistic environment of ancient Palestine, and New Testament exegesis (or biblical interpretation). The sociolinguistic theory most widely used to date (yet still by a minority of biblical scholars) has been the Hallidayan Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), although there is discussion whether SFL should be categorized under sociolinguistics or treated as a distinct discipline of its own.⁶ The second part of this chapter deals with the description, definition, and history of sociolinguistics, as well as its strengths and weaknesses as a methodological tool. I articulate in this section my proposed sociolinguistic model, discussing why and how I combine various sociolinguistic theories to formulate my proposed sociolinguistic model, and explaining how the model can be applied to the historical and textual data. The proposed model consists of three levels of analysis—macro, micro, and textual analyses—and the theories associated with each level are elucidated and applied to the historical or textual data in chapters 3 to 5.

Chapter 3 attempts to map out the sociolinguistic landscape of ancient Palestine. It demonstrates that ancient Palestine was a multilingual speech community and that Greek was most likely its *lingua franca* and prestige language from a sociolinguistic perspective. This conclusion derives from the two main sections of this chapter. The first section traces the historical chronology of the language contact, shifts, and maintenance

⁶ See Porter and Ong, “An Appraisal of SFL as a Distinct Discipline of Its Own” (paper to be presented at the Tunisia Systemic Functional Linguistics Conference and Workshop in Hammamet, Tunisia, 26–28 March 2015).

of ancient Palestine under four military regimes. The chronology shows the time periods in which each of the four languages—Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin—came to be spoken by the Jews. The second section examines the geographical distribution and concentration of the use of Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin in eight regions of ancient Palestine—Nabatea, Idumea, Judea, Samaria, Galilee, the Decapolis, Perea, and Phoenicia.

Chapter 4 analyzes the micro-sociolinguistic environment of Jesus. This chapter is composed of three major sections. The first discusses the six major social institutions of ancient Palestine, which, in sociolinguistic terms, are labeled as “social or language domains.” These social domains represent the actual social contexts where the first-century CE people interacted with each other. The second section outlines the social networks of Jesus to determine the kinds of social relationships he established within the community and the level of his interaction with each of them. Jesus’ social networks show that he frequently interacted with three groups of people—his disciples (and women), the religious leaders, and the crowd. The third section deals with the multilingual proficiency of Jesus to understand how and where Jesus acquired his spoken languages and the degree to which he was able to use them. I conclude that Jesus was probably an early, consecutive bilingual, who learned Aramaic from his bilingual parents and Greek from the society in general.

Chapter 5 attempts to identify the specific language Jesus would have used in the episodes of Matthew’s Gospel. There are two major sections in this chapter. The first discusses ethnography of communication theory and explains how it can be applied to the text of Matthew. The second section analyzes the Gospel episodes to determine the

specific language Jesus would have used in a particular speech event, classifying them into five categories—Aramaic, Greek, Aramaic and/or Greek (with language-shifting and code-switching), Hebrew or Aramaic, and Greek or Latin. This section also provides a list of various sociolinguistic rules that can serve as criteria for evaluating and determining the specific language for the episodes in the Gospels.

THE USE OF THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

I wish to discuss in this section how I will handle and appropriate the Gospel of Matthew, as well as what I am searching for in the text of the Gospel. Before doing so, however, I need to address two areas of concern. The first concerns the nature and degree of my interaction with the secondary literature on the Gospel of Matthew. It is important to note that most of the secondary literature deals with issues concerning authorship, provenance and setting, and dating of the Gospel of Matthew, the relationship between Matthew and Mark and Luke (the Synoptic Problem), Matthew and Judaism (i.e., the situation of the Matthean community and the Jewish synagogues, Jewish-Christian relations, and anti-Judaism), textual and exegetical problems and comments (including theological, christological and ecclesiological concerns), Matthew's use of the Old Testament and his attitude towards the law, methodological questions (especially redaction criticism and the place of narrative, reader response, and social-scientific methodology), and the literary genre, structure, and composition of the book.⁷ None of these issues, however, is my concern in this study.

⁷ Summative discussion of these introductory issues can be found in commentaries on and introductions to the Gospel of Matthew. For surveys of the developments of these topics in Matthean scholarship, see Stanton, *The Interpretation of Matthew*, 1–26; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:692–727; Senior, “Matthew at the Crossroads of Early Christianity,” 3–24; and Gurtner, “The Gospel of Matthew from Stanton to Present,” 23–38. See also Allison, *Studies in Matthew*, 17–264. For a recent commentary and bibliography on Matthew, see Evans, *Matthew*, esp. 1–30.

Since Stanton's 1994 survey, Daniel M. Gurtner has reviewed a set of new issues that have emerged in Matthean scholarship, including Matthew and empire studies, use of *Wirkungsgeschichte* methodology (Ulrich Luz), a sapiential reading of Matthew (wisdom Christology), and Matthean and Pauline relations.⁸ Perhaps the only subject that is somewhat related to my subject of interest is the discussion that Matthew's Gospel originates from a Semitic (Hebrew or Aramaic) source,⁹ and the use of social-scientific approaches to interpreting Matthew (at least with reference to sociolinguistics).¹⁰ Nevertheless, this slight connection appears to have little impact on the overall purpose and goal of this study, particularly since, with reference to the Hebrew Gospel (or proto-Gospel or Aramaic Matthew), this hypothesis can only be maintained at a purely conjectural level. As a matter of fact, if we are open to the theory that the social environment from which Matthew wrote his Gospel was multilingual, there is no need to argue for nonexistent Semitic sources of the Gospel. With reference to use of social-scientific approaches, I have noted below some of its limitations and its relationship with the discipline of sociolinguistics (see chapter 2—Usefulness of a Sociolinguistic Model).

My textual analysis of Matthew's Gospel in chapter 5, therefore, only serves as one of the means by which I can demonstrate the veracity of my thesis. In other words, I use the Gospel of Matthew as a primary source for the kinds and types of sociolinguistic contexts and situations that existed in the first-century CE Palestinian community.

⁸ See Gurtner, "The Gospel of Matthew from Stanton to Present," 32–38.

⁹ For a recent discussion on the relationship between the Gospel of Hebrew and the Gospel of Matthew, see Edwards, *The Hebrew Gospel*, esp. 243–58.

¹⁰ There have been two social-scientific models developed to analyze the social setting of Matthew. The first model focuses on the "distant comparisons" of cross-cultural social settings (see Neyrey, *Honor and Shame in the Gospel of Matthew*), and the second one employs the "close comparisons" of similar cultural and historical settings (see Overman, *Matthew's Gospel*; and Stanton, *A Gospel for a New People*).

Matthew's Gospel serves as a viable site for me to observe and analyze the use of Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin in ancient Palestine and by Jesus.¹¹ There are of course the other three Gospels to choose from—Mark, Luke, and John—but my selection of Matthew is simply a matter of preference, perhaps due to its chronological position in the canonical Gospels. Using Matthew as a primary source for the kinds of first-century CE sociolinguistic contexts conjures up a second area of concern.

This second area pertains to the historicity issue of the narrative material and Jesus sayings in the Gospel of Matthew. This is not a very important issue, however, as some have wanted to argue. First of all, nobody can really know whether an author has completely or accurately (if at all this is possible) recounted an actual event (or the truth for that matter) in a historical source or document; hence, to treat the Gospel of Matthew as a historical source is actually a matter of decision and choice of the person using it. Secondly, anyone can question the veracity and reliability of a historical source or document via multiple ways and means. But the more important question is whether this decision could serve one's purpose well if that person is studying the subject of history. In short, if Matthew is devoid of historical content, then what use or benefit would it provide for the historian or the analyst? In other words, if one wants to study how first-century CE people socially interact with each other, what historical documents can we

¹¹ There are two extreme views regarding the dating of Matthew's Gospel since twentieth-century scholarship; the first one dates it to the middle (ca. 40s to 60s CE) of the first century CE (e.g., J. Wenham, J.A.T. Robinson, W.C. Allen, C.F.D. Moule, B. Reicke, R.H. Gundry, J. Nolland, R.T. France, C.L. Blomberg, M.J. Wilkins, J.A. Gibbs, D.L. Turner, and D.A. Carson), and the other one to the end (following Martin Hengel and Ronald Huggins's hypothesis; e.g., M.S. Enslin, F.W. Beare). In between these two extreme views, we find all points of dating in the continuum that argue against a late first century CE dating (primarily based on Matt 22:7, which is believed to be an *ex eventu* allusion to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 CE that Matthew inserted in the parable), although the majority opinion dates the Gospel to various times in the final quarter of the first century CE. Nineteenth-century scholarship, at least some of them (so F.C. Baur, O. Pfleiderer, H.J. Holtzmann, A. Loisy, and H. von Soden), has a tendency to date the Gospel after 100 CE. See the list of dates tabulated by Allison and Davies, *Matthew*, 1:127–28. Cf. Hagner, "Determining the Date of Matthew," 76–92; and Evans, *Matthew*, 4–5.

consult except those that speak and contain stories and accounts of that time period? Of course, one can always argue that we can thresh the authentic from the inauthentic materials in a historical document. I agree. But that belongs to another area of concern, perhaps the second level of concern of the person who wants to study history. It is therefore imperative for one to decide first whether to use a document as a historical source.

In this study, I treat the narratives and episodes in Matthew as historical events, that is, they represent the kinds or types of sociolinguistic contexts that would have happened in the speech community of ancient Palestine—this is how I am using it and what I am after. Such historical treatment of the Matthean material naturally intertwines with at least two main areas of Gospel studies. The first area relates to the literary composition and structure of the Gospel of Matthew.¹² Whereas some scholars think that the “discourses” in Matthew reflect the actual sermons of Jesus at specific times and places or that the Gospel is a chronicle of the events and sayings of Jesus, other scholars, on the basis of their study of its structure and composition, argue that the Gospel is a coherent literary work of an author who collected remembered sayings of Jesus,

¹² There are four general views regarding the literary structure of Matthew. The first view offers topical outlines, which are based upon analyses of the contents of individual sections but disregard the literary coherence of Matthew. The second view follows the structure proposed in 1930 by Benjamin W. Bacon (see Bacon, *Studies in Matthew*, 82, 265–335), who shows that Matthew is divided into five discourses, all of which are introduced by the formula “And it happened when Jesus finished” (7:28; 11:1; 13:53; 19:1; 26:1), that correspond to the five books of the Pentateuch. The third view argues that Matthew is organized into a threefold division demarcated by the formulaic saying “From that time Jesus began” in 4:17 and 16:21. The fourth view abandons a topical outline for the Gospel and instead takes Matthew’s concept of salvation history as the key to the organization of the Gospel. For example, Georg Strecker points out that Matthew divides salvation-history into three epochs—prophecy, Jesus, and the church (see Strecker, *Der Weg der Gerechtigkeit*, 45–49, 184–88). See Kingsbury, *Matthew’s Structure*, 1–39; Bauer, *The Structure of Matthew’s Gospel*, esp. 11–20; and Smith, “Literary Evidence of a Fivefold Structure in the Gospel of Matthew,” 540–51). More recent works have revived the proposal of C.H. Lohr (“Oral Techniques in the Gospel of Matthew,” 403–35) regarding the chiasmic structure of Matthew (see for example, Vanderweele, “Some Observations Concerning the Chiasmic Structure of Matthew,” 669–73; and Derickson, “Matthew’s Chiasmic Structure and Its Dispensational Implications,” 423–37).

organizing them to fit his purpose and occasion for writing the Gospel.¹³ I do not wish to enter into the debate between these two camps, but I do wish to note that, if we are to investigate what the historical Jesus did and said in the first century CE, we have no better alternative than to treat the Gospel materials, Matthew in my case, as historically reliable. After all, only those who have advocated the “Christ-Myth” theory have fully denied the physical existence of Jesus of Nazareth (e.g., Bruno Bauer, Robert Price).¹⁴

So the second area with which this study intertwines is historical Jesus research. The literature here is vast, and it is difficult to select any particular scholars for discussion. Nevertheless, I can see that there are at least two major streams of studies or groups of scholars engaged in this field of study—this observation is of course only intended to provide a general assessment of this research field. The first group of scholars is those that wish to keep the business of historical Jesus running; hence, they treat the Gospel materials as historical documents, regardless of whether they are completely or partially accurate. To run the risk of oversimplifying the matter, these scholars continue to work on how to reconcile the historical Jesus with the Christ of faith.¹⁵ The second

¹³ France, *Matthew*, 8.

¹⁴ See Beilby and Eddy, “The Quest for the Historical Jesus,” 32.

¹⁵ There are two waves of scholars that belong to this first group. We may call the first wave of scholars as those who have propounded most of the preliminary assumptions and arguments that generally question the historical veracity and authenticity of the Gospels—the critique of the supernatural (the 17th century French and British deists), the distinction between biblical meaning and truth (B. Spinoza), the development of historical criticism (E. Troeltsch), the resurrection stories as fraud (H. Reimarus), the Gospels as myth (D.F. Strauss), the apocalyptic context of Jesus’ thought (A. Schweitzer), etc. The second wave of scholars are those who continued to develop the preliminary assumptions and arguments of the first wave scholars, but with varying methodological emphases—for example, linguistic (e.g., T.W. Manson, S.E. Porter, M. Casey), and historical and theological (e.g., E.P. Sanders, J.D.G. Dunn, N.T. Wright, J.P. Meier, B. Meyer, J.D. Crossan, D.C. Allison). More recently, a third wave of scholars appears to be emerging. These scholars employ various types of memory theories to understand the origins and background surrounding the historical Jesus (e.g., A. LeDonne, C. Keith, J. Schröter, R. Rodriguez, S. Byrskog, R. Bauckham). The bibliography here is large. For quick summaries, see Beilby and Eddy, eds., *The Historical Jesus*, esp. 9–54; Dawes, ed., *The Historical Jesus Quest*, 1–313; Witherington, *The Jesus Quest*, 14–248; and Porter, *Criteria*, chapters 1–3; for scholars who use memory theories, see Keith, *Jesus’ Literacy*, 50–70; and Eve, *Behind the Gospels*, 86–158.

group of scholars is those that attempt to put this historical Jesus business to a halt; hence, they claim that historical realities are irrelevant to faith matters.¹⁶ Again, to run the risk of oversimplification, these scholars neither take the historicity issue as important nor take it as relevant to the reconstruction of the life of Jesus. The argument of this second group of scholars, I should say, is a hard pill to swallow. I raise just one question here: what would be the purpose of studying the historical Jesus or understanding his sayings and teachings, if, after all, we are uninterested in the veracity and reliability of what he said and did? In other words, to engage in the study of the *historical* Jesus also means to believe (with critical assessment) in the veracity and reliability of the *historical* sources that speak about him. This is one of the reasons why I treat the materials in the Gospel of Matthew as reliable sources (for there is no better available alternative) for the study of the kinds and types of sociolinguistic interactions in the first-century CE, especially considering the fact that Jesus and his contemporaries were actual residents of that first-century CE Palestinian community. With these things in place, let us now look at the past scholarly discussions regarding the languages of ancient Palestine and of Jesus.

¹⁶ The typical periodization of the quests for the historical Jesus would classify this group into the “No Quest” period (e.g., M. Kähler, G. Tyrell, R. Bultmann, M. Dibelius, K.L. Schmidt, L.T. Johnson), but I am not an advocate of this periodization of the quests approach, to be sure. Together with a minority group of scholars (e.g., S.E. Porter, D.C. Allison, W.P. Weaver), I see a single line of historical quest for the historical Jesus in the history of research.

Chapter One: The Languages of Ancient Palestine and of Jesus—Previous Discussions

INTRODUCTION

This chapter offers a summary of previous discussions on the languages of ancient Palestine and of Jesus. A full summary treatment of this subject would certainly require an entire book of its own (or perhaps even several volumes on each major subject), and so this chapter focuses on selected issues and topics of the subject matter, while ensuring that the most important ones are taken into account in the discussion.¹ In my summary, I try to follow a simple format, that is, I attempt to highlight some of the most important scholars, issues, arguments, and linguistic evidences in the discussion of the languages of ancient Palestine and of Jesus, tracing them in a brief fashion at every major stage in the history of the discussion, while citing the major players or significant works in the footnotes. Although in this short chapter I can be neither too detailed nor adequately comprehensive (at least to my satisfaction) in my treatment of this vast topic, I nevertheless believe that I will have accomplished my objective, if readers can get a concise but clear picture of the current state of play in the discussion of the languages of ancient Palestine and of Jesus. Before moving on, I wish to note that discussions of this topic also often touch upon another field of research in Gospel studies, namely, historical Jesus research. As noted in my introductory chapter, the study of the languages of ancient Palestine and of Jesus will naturally have significant implications for the linguistic criteria of authenticating Jesus' words and actions in the Gospel accounts. Significant as the implications are, however, historical Jesus research is a distinct discipline of its own,

¹ The nature of this selection process of course involves a degree of subjectivity. Nevertheless, I have tried to be as inclusive as I can in the course of this survey.

and therefore, treatment of that subject, unless it bears direct relevance to a specific topic in my discussion, will have to be done in another study.

Treatments of the languages of ancient Palestine naturally deal with two entwined issues. The first issue is related to the nature of the Greek language of the New Testament, and the second one is concerned with the languages used or spoken in ancient Palestine, and consequently, by Jesus.² Many scholars typically conflate these two coinciding issues in their treatment of the subject, but it is important to note that there is a fine demarcating line that distinguishes them. This distinction becomes especially clear when we recognize that the linguistic context of the Gospel writers is different from that of Jesus and his disciples. This means that the historical and social situation during the time the Gospel writers penned their accounts of the Jesus story is different from that of Jesus and his disciples when the actual events took place, even though the hiatus between the event stage and the Gospel composition stage may have been only a few decades.³ To be sure, the actual words of Jesus recorded in the Gospels are in Greek, but it does not necessarily mean that they originally transpired in that language. With this in mind, the

² Cf. Porter, *Verbal Aspect*, 111–12; Porter, *Criteria*, 90.

³ I take the view that the Gospels were probably all written before the destruction of the temple in ca. 70 CE (see Ong, “Discussing Oral Tradition,” forthcoming; and Ong, “Orality, Literacy, Multilingualism, and Oral Tradition,” forthcoming; cf. Robinson, *Redating the New Testament*, 352). After all, this is only a few decades earlier than the view that scholars take today. The fact that we have many surviving second- to fourth-century papyri and parchment manuscripts of the Gospels, which are concurrently attested by extra-canonical writings (notably *P. Egerton 2* dated ca. 110–130 CE), including the idea that the source(s) of the Gospels was probably based on oral traditions, should prompt us to consider the possibility of an early dating of the four Gospels (On the manuscript transmission of the Greek text of the New Testament, see Porter, *How We Got the New Testament*, 79–146). The date of the writing of the Gospels would have been in close proximity to the circulation of the oral traditions about Jesus by eyewitnesses, especially if one takes a high view of the historical reliability of the Gospel accounts (for good theories on the oral tradition of the Gospels, see Westcott, “Introduction,” 165–212; Reicke, *The Roots of the Synoptic Gospels*, chapter 3; Linnemann, *Is There a Synoptic Problem*, esp. chapters 8–10; Porter, “The Legacy of B.F. Westcott,” forthcoming. For recent summary of studies of the oral tradition of the Gospels, see Eve, *Behind the Gospels*, 1–158; Dunn, *The Oral Gospel Tradition*, esp. chapters 1–2; Rodriguez, *Oral Tradition*, chapter 2; Horsley and Thatcher, *John, Jesus and the Renewal of Israel*, 55–95; and Bird, *The Gospel of the Lord*, 5–124).

goal of this chapter is to sketch the historical debate over the Greek language of the New Testament, followed by a synopsis of the various theories that have been proposed so far in the discussion of the use of Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin in ancient Palestine and by Jesus. It is noticeable in the course of this chapter that there are considerable topical overlaps in discussing these two issues, but this is simply indicative of the nature of the subject and how it has been treated by previous studies.

LINGUISTIC VARIETIES AND THEIR STATUS AND SOCIAL FUNCTIONS

In the course of this survey and the discussion in the subsequent chapters, it is important to distinguish several sets of terms that are typically used in studies of multilingual communities, especially since ancient Palestine is one such community. These terms are known or classified as linguistic types or varieties, and there are at least five major categories of them.⁴ The classification of linguistic varieties involves analysis of both their status and social functions, since people learn to use languages by complex acquisition, and they deploy them for different purposes in their social interactions (see chapters 3 and 4 upon which these statements are based).

The vernacular language is an uncodified and unstandardized language, which can refer to either the native tongue or the first language acquired at home, an unofficial language of a country or state, or a language used for relatively circumscribed and informal functions. A vernacular is typically the colloquial variety used for daily conversations in the home, in informal public places, and with friends and acquaintances. Any of the three languages—Aramaic, Greek, and Latin—can be considered a vernacular in the linguistic context of first-century Palestine, depending upon the ethnic background

⁴ On linguistic varieties, see Holmes, *Introduction*, 74–93; Wardhaugh, *Introduction*, 25–87; and Hudson, *Sociolinguistics*, 22–45, 59–68.

of the social group or individual. Hebrew perhaps was not a vernacular variety anymore during the first century CE, having been replaced by Aramaic, although scholars until today have continued to debate this issue (see below). It is important to differentiate the native tongue from the first language. For instance, Jesus' native tongue was most likely Aramaic, a language he most likely acquired from his parents, but his first language was most likely Greek, since this is the language that he learned probably almost concurrently with his native tongue through both his parents (Joseph and Mary probably also knew Greek) and others (friends and the public). A native-born Jew will almost always learn Greek, the *lingua franca* (see below) of the community, in conjunction with his or her native tongue.⁵ By contrast, native Romans will have either Latin or Greek as their native tongue, and Greek as their first language. In sum, native tongue and first language are terms that can be used interchangeably, as they are acquired contemporaneously, but both terms need to be distinguished from second language acquisition.

The standard language, on the other hand, is a standardized and codified variety (i.e., with written grammar and lexicon). It is usually recognized as a prestige variety, since it is used for more formal functions, particularly in government institutions, legal courts, and education.⁶ Any of the four languages—Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, or Latin—can be considered as a standard language, since all of them have been standardized and codified. The main difference between these four languages is that only one of them can be considered as the prestige variety of the first century CE. It is most likely that during

⁵ For example, as a child, I learned Hokkien (in the home, speaking), Filipino (outside of school and home, speaking; in the classroom, reading and writing), and English (in the classroom, reading, writing, and speaking) almost simultaneously. This is a typical scenario for many multilingual individuals in different multilingual countries.

⁶ Holmes, *Introduction*, 78. Porter, "The Language(s) Jesus Spoke," 2457 (also Porter, *Verbal Aspect*, 154–55) notes that several interrelated sociolinguistic factors—power, economics, social hierarchy, and education—can make a particular variety the prestige language of the community.

Jesus' time, Greek would have been the more prestigious variety of the community, as it is the language used in the government administration, higher education (e.g., grammar, classics, and rhetoric and philosophy), and the trade and industry of the time.⁷

A *lingua franca* is a contact language or the language of communication between two people or social groups. It is also a natural language that is used as a convenient medium in a multilingual speech community.⁸ It is often the case that the *lingua franca* of various speech communities within a large geographical area is also the prestige language, especially as it is perceived to be the superior variety of language that can be used in more (formal and public) social contexts.⁹ As I will show in the next chapter, Greek was most likely both the prestige language and *lingua franca* during the first century CE except perhaps for the austere community of Qumran (see below),¹⁰ since it likely was the first language (or primary language)¹¹ of the younger generations and the second language of the older generations of people of the community.¹²

Pidgins are known as “extreme language mixtures,”¹³ and the term refers to a distinct language used by two linguistically differentiated social groups that attempt to communicate with each other in the presence of a third dominant linguistic group. They

⁷ Cf. Ong, “Linguistic Analysis,” 120; and Porter, *Criteria*, 175, who point out the confusion of a number of scholars over the issue of prestige language, and say that Greek was the prestige language in relation to Hebrew and Aramaic. See also Wardhaugh, *Introduction*, 28, who notes that Greek was the *lingua franca*, because it is the language of government and administration of the Romans.

⁸ Comrie, “Languages of the World,” 982.

⁹ See Ferguson, “Diglossia,” 29.

¹⁰ On Greek as the established *lingua franca* of the eastern Mediterranean and Roman East, see Horrocks, *Greek*, 72.

¹¹ I use the term “primary language” as the language most widely used by an individual or community.

¹² A comparable modern case scenario of ancient Palestine is that of Singapore, a unitary city-state with an ethnically diverse population that can speak four languages—English, Mandarin Chinese, Malay, and Tamil. See Sebba, “Societal Bilingualism,” 446.

¹³ Nevalainen, “Historical Sociolinguistics,” 281.

have a limited range of uses, since pidgins are mainly employed for referential rather than affective purposes.¹⁴ Asher Finkel suggests that Jesus' use of both Aramaic and Greek may point to the phenomenon of *Mischsprache* (mixed languages) within the Jesus tradition. This suggestion, however, can hardly be the case, since there is no such thing as a Greek-Aramaic variety!¹⁵

A creole is originally a pidgin but has come to acquire native speakers through a process known as creolization. Creoles turn to a standard variety through the process of decreolization. There is so far no evidence for pidgin and creole varieties in first-century Palestine.

THE GREEK LANGUAGE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

The study of the Greek language of the New Testament deals directly with various theories concerning the philology and type of Greek language of the New Testament,¹⁶ and this concern is often related to the history of the Greek language. Scholars trace the historical development of the Greek language through available linguistic evidences gleaned from epigraphy (e.g., archaeological artifacts), manuscripts

¹⁴ Holmes, *Introduction*, 83–85.

¹⁵ Finkel, "The Prayer of Jesus," 131–69. Cf. Stuckenbruck, "Semitic Influence on Greek," 91!

¹⁶ Silva, "Bilingualism," 206–7, itemizes twelve topics that are often considered by scholars in the investigation of the languages of Palestine and rightly notes that these topics are so intertwined that "viewpoints offered by the scholars involved are not limited to a single, well-defined issue." Some useful surveys on the question of the nature of the Greek of the New Testament include Stuckenbruck, "Semitic Influence on Greek," 75–80; Caragounis, *Greek*, esp. 39–44; Rydbeck, "The Language of the New Testament," 361–68; and most importantly, Porter, ed., *Classic Essays* (see esp. "Introduction," 11–38 [repr. with several significant changes and additions in Porter, *Studies in the Greek New Testament*, 75–99]); Porter, *Verbal Aspect*, 111–56; Porter, "The Greek Language," 105–12; Porter, "Greek of the New Testament," 430–1. More recent discussions on this issue that pay attention to the linguistic landscape of ancient Palestine as well as to methods of approaching the study can be found in Watt, "A Brief History of Ancient Greek," 225–41; and Land, "Varieties of the Greek Language," esp. 243–60. It is important to note that the study of Greek grammar (and grammarians) also encroaches upon this issue of the language of the New Testament. For helpful surveys, see Porter, "Greek Grammar and Syntax," 78–87 (Porter's footnotes may be mined for useful sources); and Porter, "The Greek Language," 112–24. For some recent works on this topic, see Adams, "Atticism, Classicism, and Luke-Acts," 91–111; Pitts, "Greek Case in the Hellenistic and Byzantine Grammarians," 261–81; and Lee, "The Atticist Grammarians," 283–308.

(e.g., Byzantine manuscripts), and other types of literature (e.g., Hellenistic literary texts). Despite the availability of these linguistic evidences, however, it is still not always easy to reconstruct this history. This becomes evident when we see that scholars share different opinions as to the historical development of the language, especially during the period known as the “dark age.” Nevertheless, scholars have attempted to trace the history of the development of the Greek language. The genesis of the historical development of the Greek language dates back to the Mycenaean civilization (ca. 2000–1200 BCE),¹⁷ passing through at least two major phases, the Archaic or Epic Greek (800–500 BCE) and the Classical or Attic (500–300 BCE) periods, and leading to the Post-classical or Hellenistic period (300 BCE–600 CE)—the era of the New Testament.¹⁸

Linguistic evidence of Mycenaean (or epic Achaean) Greek came from the nineteenth-century discovery of a number of tablets and inscriptions at Pylos on the Greek mainland, which written script (a syllabic form of writing) is known today as Linear B.¹⁹ The intervening period between the Myceneans’ occupation of the Greek islands and mainland and the emergence of the Greek language into multiple regional dialects (i.e., Attic-Ionic, Arcado-Cypriot, Doric and other west Greek varieties, and Aeolic) in 800 BCE is usually called a “dark age,” since little is known about the language

¹⁷ Adrados, *History*, xiii, notes that Greek is one of the two languages (the other is Chinese) that are still known and spoken today after 3500 years.

¹⁸ For helpful summaries, see Adrados, *History*, esp. 3–86; Horrocks, *Greek*, esp. 7–188; Palmer, *Greek Language*, 3–26, 57–82; Caragounis, *Greek*, 21–60; Porter, “The Greek Language,” 99–104; and Porter, “Greek of the New Testament,” 427–30.

¹⁹ Porter, “The Greek Language,” 99–100. A similar script known as Linear A remains undeciphered. On the history and decipherment of Linear B, see Chadwick, *Linear B*; and Chadwick, *The Decipherment of Linear B*. It is important to note that prior to 2000 BCE, a Greek dialect known as Common Greek (CG) had already existed in an area of northern Greece (see Adrados, *History*, 17–21, for a list of the essential characteristics of Common Greek). In fact, Horrocks says that the development of Mycenaean Greek was greatly influenced by the language of the Minoan culture of Crete, which written script is called Linear A, sometime during the later period of the sixteenth century BCE (see Horrocks, *Greek*, 1).

during this 400-year timespan.²⁰ Scholars have debated whether this fragmentation of the Greek language during this “dark age” continued into the subsequent centuries or whether there was also a tendency towards reunification. I will note some opinions of various scholars, but it is important to recognize that political hegemony would have almost always played a crucial role in the historical development of languages. For this reason, it is often the case that the historical development and relationship between language varieties or dialects are represented by way of either the family-tree model (*Stammbaumtheorie*), which can demonstrate how language varieties are related and diverge from each other as a result of historical changes, or the wave theory (*Wellentheorie*), which can show how language varieties spread from centers of influence. However, the actual circumstances that affect the historical development of a language are far too complex than can be shown through use of these models.²¹ Unless one looks into the sociolinguistic dynamics of a speech community at a particular time in its history, interpretations of the extant linguistic evidence will probably always remain arbitrary. This is why I have approached this language of ancient Palestine and of Jesus issue from a historical, geographical, and speech community perspective, focusing on the first century CE time period (see chapters 3 and 4).

So some say that this fragmentation of the Greek language, that is, the various regional dialects that emerged from the preceding Archaic or Epic period, were reunified once again in the subsequent period in the fifth-century BCE. Chrys C. Caragounis states

²⁰ See Horrocks, *Greek*, 6–16. Adrados, *History*, xiv, says, however that Doric, a western dialect, penetrated the Greek mainland and islands at a much earlier date (ca. 1200 BCE), with the eastern dialect already in place (ca. 2000 BCE).

²¹ See, for example, Horrocks, *Greek*, 16; and Palmer, *Greek Language*, 75–76, 101. For a discussion of the genealogical and wave theory models, see Hudson, *Sociolinguistics*, 37–41.

that “This resilience, this capacity of the Greek language to divide up into dialects and then to reunite and assert itself over all its speakers for the third time in its longer than 4000-year-long history, is unparalleled in the history of languages” (Herodotus 8.144.2 claims that the Greeks were of one blood and of one tongue).²² Others are more willing to recognize a history of splits and unifications of the Greek language at various time periods.²³ On the one hand, Francisco R. Adrados states,

Although Athens was unable to impose its political hegemony, having lost the war against Sparta, it did manage to impose linguistic hegemony: Attic began to infiltrate and substitute all the dialects, transforming them into *koine* or Common Greek. It absorbed the Ionic intellectual vocabulary, developed a new one, and the *koine* continued in this same path. There was again a ‘Common Greek’, the base for all subsequent languages of culture.²⁴

Still others, however, say that the local Greek varieties during this period became the foundation for the spoken Greek dialects of the Hellenistic as well as of the Medieval and Modern periods. Geoffrey Horrocks says that the Attic dialect became the pre-eminent form of Greek during the fourth century BCE: “This highly prestigious dialect was the principal foundation for the so-called Hellenistic Koine...that eventually came to dominate the Greek-speaking world, having first been endorsed and adopted by the all-conquering Macedonians and then carried out throughout the East as an administrative and cultural language by the campaigns of Alexander the Great.”²⁵

Whichever opinion one tends to favor, the arrival of the fifth-century BCE was definitely an important phase for the development of the Greek language of the New Testament. Stanley E. Porter notes that the Greek variety during this “classical period”

²² Caragounis, *Greek*, 21.

²³ See Adrados, *History*, xv–xvi.

²⁴ Adrados, *History*, xv–xvi.

²⁵ Horrocks, *Greek*, 4–5, 80–83.

sets the stage for the common written language of the Hellenistic world.²⁶ What is important to note is that the massive Hellenization program of Alexander the Great (and his successors) eventually led to the development of a more universalized language (Κοινή), which, according to Horrocks and Porter, was a regularized form of Attic-Ionic Greek.²⁷ And by the time of Jesus and the Greco-Roman Empire, Κοινή not only became the common language of the people, but it also became the prestige language of the empire.²⁸

This discussion so far about the history of the Greek language, however, has still left us the question of how the Greek of the New Testament is related to the languages spoken in Palestine and by Jesus. It is difficult to provide a straightforward answer to this question, especially since the linguistic evidence we have at hand apparently shows that the various social communities of ancient Palestine used multiple languages, whereas the New Testament was only transmitted in Greek.²⁹ Nevertheless, as Jonathan M. Watt points out, “The history of a language is intimately bound up with the history of the

²⁶ Porter, “The Greek Language,” 101; Porter, “Greek of the New Testament,” 428.

²⁷ See Porter, “The Greek Language,” 102; and Mussies, “Greek as the Vehicle,” 356–57. Similarly, Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, 58, states, “The bond which held the Hellenistic world together despite the fragmentation which began with the death of Alexander and continued thereafter, was Attic *koinē*.”

²⁸ Greek was the language of the people even in Asia Minor (e.g., Phrygia and Lycaonia; see Horrocks, *Greek*, 63–64; Palmer, *The Greek Language*, 175; cf. Acts 14:11). Thousands of papyri and other types of texts, mostly from Egypt and some from Palestine, may inform us about the daily life of the Hellenistic world (those dated during this period) in various social contexts (see, among others, Evans, *Ancient Texts*, 76–154; Cuvigny, “The Finds of Papyri,” 30–58; Dickey, “The Greek and Latin Languages,” 149–69; Cavallo, “Greek and Latin Writing,” 101–36; Turner, *Greek Papyri*, esp. 42–53, 74–126; Bagnall, *Reading Papyri*, esp. 1–72; Horsley et al., eds., *New Documents, Vol. 1–10* [1976–92]; White, *Light from Ancient Letters*; and Porter, “The Greek Papyri,” 292–316).

²⁹ This has been a perennial question since at least the time of the Reformation (see, for example, Flacius, *Clavis Scripturae*, 1).

peoples who speak it,' and the development and expansion of Greek in the ancient world is a classic example of this principle."³⁰ Watt is right with his theory.

The expansion of the Greek language in the ancient world would also entail the waning or weakening of other living languages that simultaneously existed with it. This linguistic phenomenon happens due to the fact that a language only exists because of its users. When speakers of a particular language become extinct, the language that they spoke dies with them. Similarly, when there are migration activities within a community, language shifts are inevitable.³¹ Simply put, the relationship between the Greek language of the New Testament and the languages of ancient Palestine and of Jesus can only be established with the assumption that Greek was actually the *lingua franca* and the prestige language of the first century (about which more will be said in the subsequent chapters), such that the society's residents, which include Jesus and the Gospel writers, would have had been users of that language. Otherwise, one would have to necessarily (and contrarily) assume that a Semitic *Vorlage* or source lies behind the Greek of the New Testament. Scholars have debated this issue, and the history of the discussion shows that they share both extreme opinions as well as all points in between.³²

³⁰ See Watt, "A Brief History of Ancient Greek," 226, citing *Baugh and Cable, History*, 1.

³¹ Language shifts and migrant activities are closely related to the language users' linguistic repertoire at their respective levels of generation within a multilingual society (see Ong, "Linguistic Analysis," 114–16; and Ong, "Language Choice," 70–2).

³² For summaries of the debate, see Maloney, *Semitic Interference*, 7–34; Voelz, "The Language of the New Testament," 894–930; Porter, *Studies in the Greek New Testament*, esp. 75–92.

Holy Ghost Greek, Semitic Greek, Classical Greek, or Hellenistic Greek?

The history of the debate has been about the issue of seeing the Greek of the New Testament as a type of Holy Ghost, Classical (i.e., Attic), Semitic, or Hellenistic Greek.³³ For the most part, the departure point of scholarly discussions has been the question as to why the New Testament was written in Greek, when Jesus and the early Christians were Aramaic speakers (or Palestinian Jews). Thus, prior to the discovery of the documentary papyri in Egypt, and shortly before the turn of the twentieth century, scholars have mostly debated whether the New Testament was written in Semitic Greek or in Classical Greek.³⁴ Proposals, however, vary from scholar to scholar and range from all points in between the Semitic and the Classical Greek extremes.³⁵

On the one hand, responding to the late nineteenth-century view that the New Testament was written in a Holy Ghost Greek,³⁶ Henry Gehman and Nigel Turner argue for a Semitic Greek (i.e., a hybrid dialect) that was spoken in ancient Palestine. Both scholars believe that the Semitic languages spoken in Galilee influenced the kind of Greek that Jesus and his disciples used.³⁷ The linguistic influence is conceived either as an adaptation of language from the Old Testament or as a translation from an original

³³ For a more comprehensive treatment of this issue, see the anthology of essays in Porter, ed., *Classic Essays*, 11–226, esp. 11–38. See also an evaluative critique of the debate in Porter, *Studies in the Greek New Testament*, 75–99.

³⁴ Cf. Porter, “Greek of the New Testament,” 430; Porter, “Introduction,” 28–31; Caragounis, *Greek*, 3. For an overview of this issue, see Thackeray, *Grammar*, 16–55.

³⁵ Porter, “Introduction,” 12; and Porter, *Studies in the Greek New Testament*, 76.

³⁶ Cremer, *Biblico-Theological Lexicon*, 693–98, has been a reference point of the Holy Ghost Greek view (see also, Cramer, *Anecdota Graeca*).

³⁷ For Gehman’s work, see “The Hebraic Character,” 81–90 (repr. in Porter, ed., *Classic Essays*, 163–73); “Hebraisms,” 141–48; and “ΑΓΙΟΣ in the Septuagint,” 337–48. For Turner’s work, see “The Unique Character,” 208–13; “The Language of the New Testament,” 659–62; *Grammatical Insights*, 174–88 (repr. in Porter, ed., *Classic Essays*, 174–90); “Jewish and Christian Influence,” 149–60; “The Literary Character,” 107–14; and “Biblical Greek,” 505–12.

Semitic language.³⁸ Gehman says, for instance, that “The object of a translator obviously is to render a document clearly into the vernacular,” and he then claims, on the basis of the apparent differences between the text of the LXX and the Masoretic Hebrew text,³⁹ that “we can [also] hardly avoid speaking of a Jewish Greek, which was used in the Synagogues and in religious circles.”⁴⁰ On Turner’s part, he maintains that the Greek of the New Testament is different from that of the Egyptian papyri, as the New Testament Greek evinces features of both “spoken and written Jewish Greek.”⁴¹ The difference between the theories of these two scholars, however, is that Gehman, focusing on the nature of the Greek of the LXX, thinks that the spoken dialect was only a temporary phenomenon,⁴² whereas Turner claims it to be “a distinct type of Jewish Greek, which I [i.e., Turner] would prefer to call biblical Greek, spoken by Jesus,”⁴³ on the basis of distinctly Greek features, such as wordplay, alliteration, and lexical choice, as well as the possible Semitic languages Jesus would have spoken.

Both Gehman’s and Turner’s theories, however, look problematic in the light of Georg Walser’s statistical, grammatical analysis of the Greek of the Pentateuch in the LXX. Walser compares use of Greek participles, conjunctions, and particles with a selection of Jewish and non-Jewish Hellenistic texts, including a number of Greek

³⁸ See Gehman, “The Hebraic Character,” 170. Turner, “The Language of Jesus,” 174, argues that “If Jesus spoke Aramaic, rather than the Greek of the NT writings, then the earliest records of his teaching and his apostles’ teaching were transmitted in Aramaic, and the realization of this must influence our interpretation of them in their Greek dress...[and]...would demand that his own language be translated as literally as possible.”

³⁹ Gehman, “The Hebraic Character,” 81, 90, concludes that “the LXX is full of Hebrew idioms.”

⁴⁰ Gehman, “The Hebraic Character,” 163.

⁴¹ Turner, *Grammatical Insights*, 183.

⁴² Porter, “Introduction,” 31.

⁴³ Turner, “The Language of Jesus,” 184.

papyri.⁴⁴ Walser argues that the Greek of the LXX evinces the polyglossic nature of the Greek in the Hellenistic period, in which various Greek varieties were used according to genre or situation. For instance, he claims that the Greek variety of the Pentateuch is a prestige variety for use within the synagogue (i.e., “Jewish texts,” to use his term). And according to him, this variety contrasts with the kind of Greek variety found in *Aristeas*, Paul, Josephus, and Philo, which more closely resemble the colloquial or spoken non-literary Greek (i.e., “non-Jewish texts”).⁴⁵ More recently, most scholars engaged in the historical Jesus research have typically emphasized the Jewishness of Jesus (see below) as in the words, for instance, of W.D. Davies and E.P. Sanders:

since there was tension between the Christian communities and Jews, this tension, and even antithesis and conflict, came to be reflected in the sources...The Greek character of the Gospels involved the translation of an originally Aramaic or Hebrew tradition into another language...and the Greek of the Gospels necessarily coloured the tradition they preserved and reinterpreted it.⁴⁶

On the other hand, those who argue for the Greek of the New Testament from the perspective of Classical (or Attic) Greek have variously suggested that Κοινή (or Post-classical or Hellenistic Greek; ca. 300 BCE–600 CE) was related in one way or another to the different regional Greek dialects that can be traced to the so-called Archaic or Epic Greek (ca. 800 BCE–500 BCE) or at least to the Classical or Attic Greek period (ca. 500 BCE–300 BCE). Those who wish to maintain the special character of the Greek of the New Testament are often confused over the significant differences between the Greek of the New Testament and the Greek of literary writers (e.g., the convoluted periodic style

⁴⁴ See Walser, *Greek*, 18–173.

⁴⁵ Walser, *Greek*, 162–71.

⁴⁶ Davies and Sanders, “Jesus,” 619.

of Thucydides or the complex and artificial style of Polybius).⁴⁷ By contrast, Caragounis claims that Koine Greek “was basically Attic Greek, but it had received morphological, lexical and syntactical influences from the other dialects, particularly the Ionic, as well as acquired neologisms.”⁴⁸ A.N. Jannaris even goes to the extent of arguing that the ancients never used the term Κοινή to refer to a vernacular language or a colloquial usage; Κοινή refers to those elements that are common to such regional dialects as Attic, Ionic, Aeolic, and Doric.⁴⁹ Accordingly, Κοινή “never had a concrete real existence or place in written composition.”⁵⁰

The problem for New Testament scholars, however, is the question of how they might be able to describe or classify the Greek of the New Testament. For Porter, the answer is straightforward—“it is written in a form of non-literary Greek of the Hellenistic period.”⁵¹ Porter is probably right. Because the diachronic history of the Greek language appears to have made a fine demarcation of the stages or periods, when each of the Greek varieties existed from the earliest Mycenaean period (ca. 2000 BCE–1200 BCE) down to the post-Hellenistic period (ca. after the sixth to the ninth century CE), it is clear that the period of the New Testament falls within the period when Alexander the Great and his successors (ca. 300–100 BCE) undertook their massive Hellenization program in the Mediterranean world. This Greek conquest resulted in the establishment of the language of communication among the indigenous social groups of the time. Thus, Ionic-Attic

⁴⁷ See Porter, “Greek of the New Testament,” 430.

⁴⁸ Caragounis, *Greek*, 39.

⁴⁹ See Jannaris, “The True Meaning of Κοινή,” 93–6.

⁵⁰ Jannaris, “The True Meaning of Κοινή,” 93.

⁵¹ Porter, “The Greek Language,” 105.

Greek or Hellenistic Greek, or what we now call Κοινή (common language) Greek, would have been the contact language in both speech and writing.⁵²

The advent of the discoveries of the Egyptian documentary papyri and Greek inscriptions during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century shed even more light on the nature of the Κοινή Greek of the New Testament and further proved that Κοινή was indeed a vernacular Greek spoken among the people.⁵³ Proponents of this view follow the lead of Gustav A. Deissmann, Albert Thumb, and James H. Moulton.⁵⁴ These three scholars argue that the Greek of the New Testament was neither a Holy Ghost nor a “classical” language (i.e., resembling the standards of Classical/Attic Greek). Unlike Gehman and Turner, who argue for a Semitic Greek of the New Testament, these scholars explain and demonstrate that the character of the written Greek of the New Testament is similar to that of the spoken Greek vernacular of the time.

In one important article, for example, Deissmann differentiates the Greek of the LXX from the Greek of the New Testament, arguing that the latter represents the

⁵² Porter, “The Greek Language,” 102. See also Watt, “A Brief History of Ancient Greek,” 227–36, who states, “Greek had developed into a cross-cultural commodity, carrying its Hellenistic laurels across land and sea, and right into the next era” (233).

⁵³ At least two groups of scholars, however, have doubted the purity of this type of Alexandrian or Egyptian Greek, questioning its validity as a standard by which Hellenistic Greek can be measured. Whereas one group posits that Alexandrian Greek was influenced by the large Jewish population in the region (e.g., Dalman, *The Words of Jesus*, 17; Ottley, *Handbook*, 165; James, *The Language of Palestine*, 57–75), a second group claims that it was influenced by the Egyptian Coptic language, in which its syntax, according to its proponents, is similar to the Semitic languages (e.g., Vergote, “Grec Biblique,” cols. 1320–69; Gignac, *Grammar*, 1:46–48; Gignac, “The Papyri,” 157–58).

⁵⁴ For a list of proponents that follow these three scholars’ view, see Porter, “Introduction,” 17 n. 1. For Deissmann’s work, see *Bibelstudien* and *Neue Biblestudien* (translated by A. Grieve); and *Licht vom Osten* (translated into *Light from the Ancient East* by L.R.M. Strachan). Moulton’s bibliography is large, but see “Grammatical Notes (CR 15),” 31–39, 434–42; “Grammatical Notes (CR 18),” 106–12, 151–55; “Characteristics (Exp 6.9),” 67–75, 215–25, 310–20, 359–68, 461–72; “Characteristics (Exp 6.10),” 24–34, 168–74, 276–83, 353–64, 440–50; “Notes (Exp 6.3),” 271–82; “Notes (Exp 6.7),” 104–21; “Notes (Exp 6.8),” 423–39; Moulton, *Prolegomena*; and Moulton and Milligan, *Vocabulary*. For Thumb’s work, see *Die griechische Sprache*, esp. chapters 1 and 2; and *Handbook of the Modern Greek Vernacular*. See also a discussion of these scholars’ work in Porter, *Criteria*, 129–30 n. 6.

Hellenistic Greek variety, a written and spoken commercial language in use during the Post-classical Greek period.⁵⁵ Moulton likewise shows numerous lexical items and grammatical constructions in the New Testament that parallel the Egyptian papyri and concludes that the Greek of the New Testament was simply the popular vernacular of the bilingual environment of Palestine.⁵⁶ On Thumb's part, after explaining the true character of Κοινή from the perspective of Modern Greek, he concludes: "Meine Ausführungen berühren sich eng mit denen Deissmanns."⁵⁷ Subsequent scholars (at least a good number of them) since the middle of the twentieth century have argued for the widespread use of Greek in the multilingual society of ancient Palestine.⁵⁸ Their arguments largely but firmly rest upon "the role of Greek as the *lingua franca* of the Roman Empire, the trilingual nature of the Judean Desert documents, including Greek Bar Kochba letters, and other remaining evidence, and most importantly the linguistic fact that the New Testament has been transmitted in Greek from its earlier documents."⁵⁹

The Deissmann-Thumb-Moulton hypothesis, however, has not come without detractors from the camp that continues to maintain the priority of Aramaic as the dominant language during New Testament times. Advocates for this view are many, and their works have progressed in several stages.⁶⁰ Some of the early attempts of this

⁵⁵ See Deissmann, "Hellenistic Greek," 39–59, esp. 48.

⁵⁶ Moulton, *Prolegomena*, 4–5.

⁵⁷ Thumb, *Die griechische Sprache*, 9 n. 3.

⁵⁸ See, for example, Abbott, *Johannine Grammar*; Argyle, "Did Jesus Speak Greek?" 92–92, 383; Argyle, "Greek among the Jews," 87–89; Smith, "Aramaic Studies," 304–13; Sevenster, *Do You Know Greek*; Lieberman, *Greek in Jewish Palestine*; Lieberman, "How Much Greek in Jewish Palestine," 123–41; Mussies, "Greek in Palestine and the Diaspora," 1040–64; Mussies, "Greek as the Vehicle," 356–69; Treu, "Die Bedeutung des Griechischen," 123–44; Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, esp. chapter 2; and Ross, "Jesus's Knowledge of Greek," 41–47.

⁵⁹ Porter, *Studies in the Greek New Testament*, 87.

⁶⁰ Porter, "Introduction," 18.

Semitic hypothesis prior to World War II include the works of Arnold Meyer, Julius Wellhausen, Eberhard Nestle, Gustaf Dalman, Friedrich Blass, and James A. Montgomery,⁶¹ and the overarching theory behind their attempted reconstruction is the identification of possible Semitisms, such that priority in the search for linguistic parallels is given to some hypothetical Aramaic sources rather than to the surviving Greek papyri.⁶² Porter rightly points out that these earlier attempts have failed to support their Aramaic reconstructions with evidence of actual Aramaic sources.⁶³ In fact, reiterating what I mentioned earlier about the fine line that distinguishes the Greek of the New Testament from the languages spoken by Jesus and his contemporaries, if the Gospel authors were multilingual, there is really no need to posit such Aramaic reconstructions and reversions of the Greek text of the New Testament, for they would have been able to write in either Aramaic or Greek.⁶⁴

Later attempts to defend the Semitic hypothesis have thus come to the scene with more sophisticated approaches. The proposals of C.F. Burney, Charles C. Torrey, and Dalman,⁶⁵ among others, for example, have not only been confined to positing “apparent mistranslations, ambiguity in the Aramaic text, and parallels with the LXX,”⁶⁶ but they have also claimed that portions of the Greek text of the New Testament (e.g., the

⁶¹ Meyer, *Jesu Muttersprache*; Dalman, *Jesus-Jeschua*; Dalman, *The Words of Jesus*, 43–71; Wellhausen, *Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelien*; Montgomery, *The Origin*; Nestle, *Philologica Sacra*; Blass, *Philology of the Gospels*.

⁶² Stuckenbruck, “Semitic Influence on Greek,” 78.

⁶³ Porter, *Studies in the Greek New Testament*, 81; Porter, “Introduction,” 18.

⁶⁴ See further discussion in Ong, “Linguistic Analysis,” 109–14, esp. 111.

⁶⁵ Burney, *The Aramaic Origin*; Burney, *The Poetry of Our Lord*; Torrey, *Our Translated Gospels*; Torrey, *The Composition and Date of Acts*; and Torrey, “The Aramaic of the Gospels,” 71–85 (repr. in Porter, ed., *Classic Essays*, 98–111).

⁶⁶ Porter, *Studies in the Greek New Testament*, 82; Porter, “Introduction,” 18.

Gospels, Acts 1—15, and Revelation) can be reverted into their Aramaic original.⁶⁷ For Burney and Torrey, however, who build upon the work of Dalman and upon their own linguistic analysis of the Aramaic *Targum Onkelos*, their use of *Onkelos* as basis cannot be representative of either Palestinian or biblical Aramaic, since this Targum was a mixed text.⁶⁸ Thus, Matthew Black, one of the major writers on the Aramaic hypothesis conducts his study based on the Aramaic represented by the Cairo Geniza, which both is free from Hebrew influence and predates the *Onkelos* tradition.⁶⁹ By and large, these kinds of arguments characterize studies of the Aramaic hypothesis as well as the forces and movements of the discussion approximately between the middle and the third quarter of the twentieth century.

Other scholars, however, have emphasized the presence of a Hebrew *Vorlage* or original behind the Greek New Testament.⁷⁰ They argue that Hebrew was a living language during the first century, and so there is the possibility that either it was used as a vernacular variety by the society (and intuitively, by Jesus) or that it at least formed the

⁶⁷ This proposal has continually been either adapted or promoted by subsequent scholars. See Zimmermann, *The Aramaic Origin*, esp. 3–23; Schwarz, ‘*Und Jesus Sprach*’; and Casey, *Aramaic Sources*; Casey, *An Aramaic Approach*; Casey, *Jesus of Nazareth*; Manson, *The Teaching of Jesus*, 45–86; Jeremias, *Die Abendmahlsworte Jesu*; Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus*; Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 1–37; Evans, “Life of Jesus,” esp. 447–55; and Evans, “Introduction,” v–xxv.

⁶⁸ The term *Onkelos* is taken from the alleged author אֲוֹנֵקְלוֹס, a convert to Judaism during the Tannaic times (ca. 35–120 CE). For a recent summary of Dalman’s work, see Thompson, “Gustaf Dalman,” 36–54. According to Thompson, Dalman’s position that Jesus spoke and taught in Aramaic rather than in Hebrew was largely due to his anti-Semitic spirit and his deep faith commitment.

⁶⁹ See Black, “Aramaic Studies,” esp. 113–18, who cites the important works of Paul Kahle (*Mosoreten des Ostens*; *Mosoreten des Westens, II*; and *Cairo Geniza*) regarding the Masoretes and Cairo Geniza.

⁷⁰ For example, whereas Beyer, *Semitische Syntax*, 17–18, has argued for a Hebrew *Vorlage* of the Johannine writings, and Carmignac, “Studies in the Hebrew Background,” 63–93, for a Hebrew original of the synoptic Gospels, Thompson, *The Apocalypse*, 2–6, 108 (also Charles, *Commentary*, 1:cxliii), and Howard, *Matthew* (see also Howard, “Hebrew in First Century,” 57–61), have argued for a Hebrew source behind Revelation and Matthew’s Gospel, respectively.

linguistic foundation of the Jesus and Gospel traditions.⁷¹ Some of these scholars distinguish between an Aramaic “Sprache der Haggada” and a Hebrew “Sprache der Halacha” of Jesus.⁷² M.H. Segal has even proposed that Mishnaic Hebrew was a popular vernacular at all levels of the society during the period from ca. 400 BCE to 150 CE. He firmly states: “The home of MH [Mishnaic Hebrew] was Palestine. So long as the Jewish people retained some sort of national existence in Palestine, MH continued to be the language of at least a section of the Jewish people living in Palestine.”⁷³ This view gained further credence after the discovery of the Judean Desert documents in the middle of the twentieth century, particularly those from Qumran and the Hebrew Bar Kochba letters. Additionally, others have argued their case on the basis of Aramaic or Hebrew syntactical interference with the Greek text.⁷⁴ Towards the end of the twentieth century, Jerome A. Lund suggests that Jesus spoke multiple dialects of Middle Hebrew, Biblical Hebrew, Middle Aramaic, and Greek.⁷⁵ His thesis is anchored in the various audiences of Jesus in Judea, Samaria, Eastern and Western Diaspora, and Galilee.⁷⁶

⁷¹ See Grintz, “Hebrew as the Spoken and Written Language,” 32–47; Rabin, “Hebrew and Aramaic,” 1007–39; Bar-Asher, “The Study of Mishnaic Hebrew,” 9–42; Carmignac, “Hebrew Translations,” 18–79; Emerton, “The Problem of Vernacular Hebrew,” 1–23; Emerton, “Did Jesus Speak Hebrew,” 189–202; Rabinowitz, “Be Opened—Ἐφραθα (Mark 7 34),” 229–38; Birkeland, *The Language of Jesus*; and Edwards, *The Hebrew Gospel*.

⁷² See, for example, Rüger, “Zum Problem der Sprache Jesu,” 113–22; Flusser, *Die rabbinischen Gleichnisse*; Young, *Jesus and His Jewish Parables*; and Blizzard and Bivin, *Understanding the Difficult Words of Jesus*.

⁷³ Segal, *Grammar*, 10. See also Segal, “Mishnaic Hebrew,” 670–700, 734–37; E.Y. Kutscher follows Segal’s view (see “Hebrew Language,” cols. 1592–93; and *History*, 115–20).

⁷⁴ See, for example, Beyer, *Semitische Syntax*, 17–18, 296–98; Beyer, “Woran erkennt man,” 21–31; Martin, *Syntactical Evidence*, 5–43; Martin, *Syntax Criticism*, 131–35; and Davila, “How Can We Tell,” 43–48. See also the discussion by Porter, *Studies in the Greek New Testament*, 86–87; and Stuckenbruck, “Semitic Influence on Greek,” 88–90.

⁷⁵ The terms “Middle Hebrew” and “Middle Aramaic,” both of which refer to the spoken vernacular, originated from Barr and Fitzmyer, respectively.

⁷⁶ See Lund, “The Language of Jesus,” 139–55.

During this interim period from Deissmann to the third quarter of the twentieth century, it is fair to say that scholars have largely favored the Aramaic hypothesis. Nevertheless, the Greek hypothesis continued to have its advocates. One in particular is Lars Rydbeck, who, in a 1975 article, calls for a revival of the study of the New Testament.⁷⁷ Rydbeck concludes with eight theses that argue for the Greek New Testament as sharing a common grammatical base with the papyri evidence, the popular philosophical literature, and the technical prose writers.⁷⁸ Moisés Silva in a 1980 article, on the other hand, provides some ground-clearing work on the issue of the influence of the Semitic native tongue of the Jews upon their spoken Greek. He rightly points out that answers to this issue from previous proposals were “not limited to a single, well-defined issue but rather include a good number of separate questions.”⁷⁹ Silva argues that the Κοινή of the New Testament must be treated separately according to geographical locations, categorizing them into three main headings: the Κοινή in general, the Κοινή in Alexandria, and the Κοινή in Palestine. Thus, Silva, after discussing in brief fashion the various proposals of such scholars as Deissmann, Thumb, Turner, Moulton, J. Vergote, Francis Gignac, Albert Wifstrand, and Black, and then showing that there was not only the lack of definition for the term “dialect” (and “bilingualism”), but that there was also the failure to distinguish clearly between *langue* (language system) and *parole* (speech instance) in the linguistic investigation of these scholars, says that the bilingualism of a

⁷⁷ Rydbeck, “What Happened to NT Greek,” 424–27. See also Porter, “Introduction,” 31.

⁷⁸ See Rydbeck, “On the Question of Linguistic Levels,” 197–204, esp. 199 (repr. from *Fachprosa*, 186–99).

⁷⁹ Silva, “Bilingualism,” 206.

particular location like Alexandria, for example, cannot be simply assumed as the bilingualism of Palestine.⁸⁰

To some degree, Silva has rightly pointed out the importance of the distinction between *langue* and *parole*, but he, unfortunately, stopped short of suggesting a good solution to the problem in order to move the discussion forward.⁸¹ Fortunately, the turn of the twenty-first century saw the production of new and innovative studies on this language issue relating to ancient Palestine and Jesus. These studies are equipped with better tools, using theories from modern linguistics and sociolinguistics, in investigating the available linguistic evidence, which as we have so far seen, has been confined to all sorts of logical inferences from the historical information. These linguistic and sociolinguistic studies are not many; therefore, this fact should tell us that this promising discipline in New Testament studies is still in its infancy stage. Nevertheless, they are substantial enough to merit a chapter of its own, to which I will return in chapter 2. In the meantime, I wish to discuss previous scholarly opinions on the use of Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin in ancient Palestine and by Jesus.

THE USE OF HEBREW, ARAMAIC, GREEK, AND LATIN

At the beginning of this chapter, I highlighted the fine distinction between studies of the Greek of the New Testament and of the languages spoken in ancient Palestine and by Jesus. I also briefly traced in the previous section the historical development of the scholarly research in this field of study. In this section, I wish to focus the discussion on the kinds of linguistic evidence and the concomitant theories scholars have proposed in arguing for the use of Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin in ancient Palestine and by

⁸⁰ Silva, "Bilingualism," 205, 207, 220, 226. Cf. Porter, *Studies in the Greek New Testament*, 94–95.

⁸¹ See Ong, "Ancient Palestine," forthcoming.

Jesus.⁸² With the plethora of linguistic evidence, especially the archaeological discoveries from the caves of Qumran near the Dead Sea and the Judean Desert in the middle of the twentieth century, it is now high time for scholars to keep both eyes open in looking at the linguistic situation of Palestine.⁸³ As the following survey indicates, the multilingual nature of this first-century society can hardly be ignored. That a society is multilingual also implies that its members are multilingual, since a society only exists because of the existence of its members who relate to each other by means of language.

Previous studies have proceeded in terms of a categorization of each of these four languages, Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin, determining or speculating which language would have been predominantly used in ancient Palestine (or by Jesus) based upon the available linguistic evidence and the various theories suggested by their respective proponents and advocates. Proponents and advocates for each view are many (as we have seen above), and there are numerous surveys that can be consulted.⁸⁴ Among these surveys, there are three surveys that stand out and are worth mentioning.

⁸² There is linguistic evidence for the use of Nabatean (e.g., 4Q343; Mur 71; 5/6 Hev 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 9; XHev/Se Nab. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6) in the northwest and western shores of the Dead Sea (see Tov, *Revised Lists*). There was also a small fragment labeled P.Yadin 36 that was discovered in 1961 (see Starcky, "Un Contrat nabateen sur papyrus," 161–81; and Yardeni, "Legal Texts from the Judean Desert," 121–37). See also Yadin et al., eds., *The Documents*, for recent evidence on the Nabatean language. Porter, "Role of Greek," 395, notes that there was widespread use of Greek after Nabatea came under Roman control in 106 CE.

⁸³ Many of these archaeological finds are now accessible via "The Leon Levy Dead Sea Scrolls Digital Library" in high-definition spectral images. This digital library also provides information regarding the discovery, sites, history, scrolls content, and languages and script of them (see "The Leon Levy Dead Sea Scrolls Digital Library" @ <http://www.deadseascrolls.org.il/home>).

⁸⁴ See, for example, among others, Fassberg, "Which Semitic Language," 263–80, esp. 263 n. 1; Stuckenbruck, "Semitic Influence on Greek," 73–94; Tresham, "Languages Spoken," 71–94; Poirier, "The Linguistic Situation," 55–134; Porter, "Did Jesus Ever Teach in Greek?" 200–9; Porter, "Scholarly Opinion," 140–8; Porter, "The Language(s) Jesus Spoke," 2455–71; Porter, *Criteria*, 134–41 (a wealth of sources can be mined in the footnotes); Turner, "The Language of Jesus," 174–88; Fitzmyer, "The Languages of Palestine," 501–31 (repr. in Fitzmyer, *A Wandering Aramean*, 29–56; and with further corrections and additions in Porter, ed., *Classic Essays*, 126–62); Safrai, "Spoken and Literary Languages," 225–44; Voelz, "The Linguistic Milieu," 81–97; Selby, "The Language in Which Jesus Taught," 185–93; Macfarlane, "Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin," 228–38; Wise, "Languages," 434–44; Greenfield, "The Languages of Palestine," 143–64; Lapide, "Insights from Qumran," 483–501; Barr, "Which Language Did

The first one is Porter's *The Language of the New Testament: Classic Essays*, which is a collection of articles by various proponents of the Aramaic, Hebrew, and Greek hypotheses that was published in 1991. This volume not only showcases some of the leading or prominent voices of the time, but it also provides a synthesis of these various voices, tracing the historical development of the scholarly discussion on the Greek of the New Testament.

The second one is the seminal article of Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "The Languages of Palestine in the First Century A.D.," which originated from his presidential speech to the Catholic Biblical Association in 1970.⁸⁵ This article has been cited repeatedly and extensively by subsequent studies, and in my opinion, has served as a crucial foundation for studies in the languages of first-century Palestine, as it attempted to thrash out the uses of the Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin languages of ancient Palestine.

The third and last one is John C. Poirier's article "The Linguistic Situation in Jewish Palestine in Late Antiquity" that appeared in the *Journal of Greco-Roman Christianity and Judaism (JGRChJ)* in 2007.⁸⁶ This long article (79 pages) in many ways can be considered as the most comprehensive summary treatment of the subject matter,

Jesus Speak?" 9–29; Gundry, "The Language Milieu," 404–8; Lund, "The Language of Jesus," 139–55; Barr, "Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek," 79–114; Smelik, *Targums*, 1–14; Smelik, "The Languages of Roman Palestine," 122–41; Thompson, "Gustaf Dalman," esp. 48–54; Meyers and Strange, *Archaeology*, 62–91; and most recently, Spolsky, *The Languages of the Jews*, esp. 46–63. One fairly recent article, Buttrick, "The Language of Jesus," 423–44, does not really contribute to the discussion of the linguistic situation of ancient Palestine except for its title. Another study that may contribute to this discussion is Buth and Notley, eds., *The Language Environment*. Only some studies have included Latin in the equation. On the use of Latin, see Porter, "Latin," 630–1; Fitzmyer, "Languages of Palestine," 126–62; Millard, "Latin," 451–58; Millard, *Reading and Writing*, 125–31, 148–53; Werner, "The Language of Power," 123–44; Macfarlane, "Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin," 228–38; Millar, *The Roman Near East*, 527–28; and Geiger, "How Much Latin," 39–57. See also the bibliographical list in Poirier, "The Linguistic Situation," 55 n. 1.

⁸⁵ Fitzmyer, "The Languages of Palestine," 126–62. Most of Fitzmyer's work on this linguistic issue can be found in his essays in *A Wandering Aramean*, esp. 1–27, 57–84; Fitzmyer, *Essays on the Semitic Background*; and Fitzmyer, "The Aramaic Language," 5–21.

⁸⁶ Poirier, "The Linguistic Situation," 55–134.

especially as it dealt with numerous examples of the discovered linguistic evidences from Qumran and the Judean Desert sites. With these three significant surveys in place, my objective in this section is simply to trace once more the main arguments for the use of Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin, and adding to them the new arguments (if any) since Poirier's article.

Hebrew

Hebrew has been thought to be used predominantly in liturgical and educational contexts, although some scholars have also argued that the language was also used as a spoken vernacular during Jesus' time.⁸⁷ As a result, the debate over the use of Hebrew has not only been about whether it was one of the dominant languages of the first century, but about whether it existed in two varieties—written (biblical) and spoken (Mishnaic).⁸⁸ To be sure, Fitzmyer states:

If asked what was the language commonly spoken in Palestine in the time of Jesus of Nazareth, most people with some acquaintance of that era and area would almost spontaneously answer Aramaic. To my way of thinking, this is still the correct answer for the *most commonly* used language, but the defense of this thesis must reckon with the growing mass of evidence that both Greek and Hebrew were being used as well [emphasis original].⁸⁹

The prevailing view of the nineteenth century was that Aramaic had totally replaced Hebrew shortly after the Babylonian captivity (ca. 586–536 BCE).⁹⁰ Abraham Geiger believes that Hebrew was only spoken among the priests and sages since the captivity.⁹¹

⁸⁷ For a more extensive discussion and list of supporters for the view that Hebrew was a possible vernacular widely spoken in ancient Palestine, see Poirier, "The Linguistic Situation," 64–102; and most recently, Fassberg, "Which Semitic Language," esp. 275–78.

⁸⁸ For a helpful survey of the issues involved in deciding the extent of the use of Hebrew, see Emerton, "The Problem of Vernacular Hebrew," 1–23.

⁸⁹ Fitzmyer, "The Languages of Palestine," 147.

⁹⁰ More recently, this extreme position has been proposed by Beyer, *The Aramaic Language*, 40–43, saying that Hebrew lasted as a spoken vernacular only until ca. 400 BCE.

Early in the twentieth century, however, Segal challenged this prevailing view by arguing that the Mishnah, the Jewish “oral Torah” (as opposed to the “written Torah”) composed (i.e., put into writing) by Rabbi Judah NaHasi in the early third-century CE, was written in a vernacular form of Hebrew that can be differentiated from the Hebrew of the Bible.⁹² Scholars are generally convinced that this is logically possible, especially with the presence of many rabbinic schools during the third-century C.E. The general argument is that Hebrew, contrary to what previous scholars thought, did not become a dead language but was actually continually spoken as evidenced in the Mishnah.⁹³

To some extent, Segal was right in saying that Hebrew did not become a dead language (yet) at least in Jesus’ time,⁹⁴ since strictly speaking, a dead language means that no speakers of that language exist.⁹⁵ Moreover, the presence of Hebrew inscriptions, particularly in ossuaries and the Temple and synagogues throughout Palestine, as well as other epigraphic and literary materials from Qumran, the Wadi Murabba‘at, and the Nahal Hever, seem to suggest that Hebrew was still a language that was used by the first-

⁹¹ Many scholars (e.g., Poirier, “The Linguistic Situation,” 65; Barr, “Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek,” 82; Sáenz-Badillos, *History*, 162; Graves, *Jerome’s Hebrew*, 76 n. 2; cf. Fellman, “Mishnaic Hebrew,” 21–22, who mentions the predecessors of Geiger) attribute this nineteenth-century view to Geiger (see his *Lehr- und Lesebuch zur Sprache der Mischnah*).

⁹² Segal’s argument is based upon analysis of the grammar and vocabulary of Mishnaic Hebrew and not upon external evidence (see *Grammar*, esp. 1, 7–9).

⁹³ See Segal, *Grammar*, 9–10.

⁹⁴ There are several phases involved in the historical development of the Hebrew language. The first identifiable phase is what is called *Archaic Biblical Hebrew* (before ca. 1000 BCE), followed by what is known as the *Biblical Hebrew* phase (ca. 1000–600 BCE), the *Late Biblical Hebrew* phase (ca. 600–200 BCE), and the *Rabbinic Hebrew* phase (ca. 200 BCE–300 CE). After the Bar Kochba Revolt (ca. 132–135 CE), Rabbinic Hebrew began to wane due to the Roman suppression and the deportation of the Jews into the Aramaic-speaking Galilee (see McCarter, “Hebrew,” 321). However, the theory of an Aramaic-speaking Galilee may not necessarily be true (see the Greek theory below).

⁹⁵ Cf. Watt, “The Current Landscape,” 25, who claims that a dead language is a language that has “no *living* native speakers” (emphasis original).

century community.⁹⁶ In fact, Dalman's statement, "That Hebrew benedictions should be inscribed at entrances to synagogues...is natural," is highly likely if it were the language of liturgical worship.⁹⁷ Similarly, Eric M. Meyers and James F. Strange point out that this idea also suggests that the readers of these inscriptions were priests.⁹⁸ Internal evidence from the Lukan accounts in the New Testament (e.g., Luke 4:16–19; Acts 21:40; 22:2; 26:14) could also point to the use of Hebrew not only in the synagogues and by priests but also in the daily life of the community.⁹⁹ It is important to note, however, that Luke's three references to τῆ Ἑβραϊδὶ διαλέκτῳ (the Hebrew dialect) may not necessarily refer to the Hebrew language, but rather, and most likely, to the language of the Hebrews.¹⁰⁰ All these written evidences for the use of Hebrew, however, do not necessarily imply that the language was actually spoken by first-century people.¹⁰¹

Consequently, more recent discussions have steered the focus toward some documents that were found to have been written in Mishnaic Hebrew, such as the Qumran documents 4Q229, 3Q15 (widely known as the Copper Scroll), and 4QMMT (4Q394-399),¹⁰² together with four—4Q345, 4Q348, 6Q26—Hebrew documents from

⁹⁶ See Poirier, "The Linguistic Situation," 68–69; Emerton, "The Problem of Vernacular Hebrew," 5; Fitzmyer, "The Languages of Palestine," 158–59; and Howard, "Hebrew in First Century," 60.

⁹⁷ Dalman, *Jesus-Jeshua*, 29. Cf. Poirier, "The Language of Palestine," 83 n. 82.

⁹⁸ Meyers and Strange, *Archaeology*, 69.

⁹⁹ Some have even argued for a Hebrew Gospel of Matthew (see Edwards, *The Hebrew Gospel*), alluding to Papias's statement in Eusebius (*Hist. Eccl.* 3.39.16).

¹⁰⁰ For further discussion of τῆ Ἑβραϊδὶ διαλέκτῳ, see Poirier, "The Narrative Role of Semitic Languages," 91–100.

¹⁰¹ Contra Fitzmyer, "The Languages of Palestine, 161, who is more optimistic about this issue: "That Hebrew was being used in first-century Palestine is beyond doubt...but this fact is scarcely sufficient evidence for maintaining that Jesus therefore made use of it." See also, Barr, "Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek," 6.

¹⁰² On 4Q229, see Martínez and Tigchellar, "The Dead Sea Scrolls," 1:484; on the Copper Scroll, see the bibliography in Evans, *Ancient Texts*, 98 (3QTreasure=3Q15 [Copper Scroll]); and Poirier, "The Linguistic

the Second Temple period as well as the 1996 Khirbet Qumran ostrakon (KhQ1). In addition to these, three of the five documents discovered in Wadi Murabba‘at that were said to be written during the First Revolt—Mur 22, Mur 25, and Mur 29—were also written in Hebrew.¹⁰³ Another location, the Cave of Letters in Nahal Hever, also produced three documents—P.Yadin 44, P.Yadin 45, and P.Yadin 46—all written in Hebrew, although scholars have dated them in the period during or after the Second Jewish Revolt in 132–135 CE.¹⁰⁴ These Hebrew documents, however, have been subject to question as to whether they actually point to the use of Hebrew in ancient Palestine. Based on his investigation of the economic documents from the Judean Desert, Hanan Eshel concludes that, “Apparently, following the destruction of the Second Temple, people no longer used Hebrew.”¹⁰⁵ Perhaps these documents only served as indicators of the Qumran community’s emphasis on the Hebrew language as well as the people’s nationalistic sentiments during the First and the Bar-Kokhba Revolts.¹⁰⁶ The strong bond of unity (the *Yahad*) among the members of the Qumran community is undeniable, as shown in the evidence from 4QMMT (Some Works of the Torah), which explains why they “separated” themselves from other Jews.¹⁰⁷ As such, it is likely that they preserved

Situation,” 70 n. 50; on 4QMMT, see Schniedewind, “Linguistic Ideology,” 245–55, who explains that the Hebrew of the scroll differs from that of biblical Hebrew; and Poirier, “The Linguistic Situation,” 71 n. 51.

¹⁰³ See Eshel, “The Hebrew Language,” esp. 249.

¹⁰⁴ See Yadin, “Expedition D,” 235–57; Lewis, *The Documents*; and Yadin et al., *Documents from the Bar Kochba Period*.

¹⁰⁵ Eshel, “The Hebrew Language,” 256–57. For further information, see Dimant, “The Qumran Manuscripts,” 34–35; Eshel and Stone, “464. 4QExposition,” 215–30; Schniedewind, “Qumran Hebrew,” 235–52; and Cotton, “The Languages of the Legal and Administrative Documents,” 221–22.

¹⁰⁶ Emerton, “The Problem of Vernacular Hebrew,” 5–8, however, believes that “Even if Mishnaic Hebrew was written for nationalistic reasons, its use seems to presuppose a wider acquaintance with it among the people” (8).

¹⁰⁷ Charlesworth, “The Fourth Evangelist,” 173. See also Stegemann, *The Library of Qumran*, 140–53; and Stegemann, *Die Essener*, 227–31.

their Jewish identity through the use of the Hebrew language; Jonathan Campbell writes, “Hebrew was special for the Qumran community.”¹⁰⁸ Thus, it can be reasonably argued that Hebrew may have been used to a considerable degree at Qumran, and it is still universally agreed that the excavated Qumran documents resemble more closely biblical Hebrew (or Late Biblical Hebrew) than Mishnaic Hebrew.¹⁰⁹

This consensus, nevertheless, may not be necessarily correct. As P. Kyle McCarter points out,

the literary documents from Qumran exhibit substantial continuity with Late Biblical Hebrew, while the few nonliterary documents stand much closer linguistically to Rabbinic Hebrew. From the viewpoint of the development of language, there is a distinction between the Hebrew of the early rabbinical works—the Mishnah, the Tosefta and certain other, primarily halakic compositions (c. first–third centuries AD)—and that of the later rabbinical works—the Jerusalem and the Babylonian Talmuds and certain other, primarily haggadic compositions (fourth century AD and later). Viewed as a whole, this phase in the development of language is called the *Middle* or *Rabbinic Hebrew* (RH).¹¹⁰

If McCarter is right, what we want to call biblical Hebrew and Mishnaic Hebrew appear to be vague terms unless properly defined, as the linguistic evidence that is available to us encroaches upon both the preceding and following phases of development of the Hebrew language. Thus, it is possible that there are different varieties of Hebrew used during Jesus’ time, depending upon who was using it and where it was used. As the Rabbi Yochanan puts it (in the mid-third-century CE): “The language of the Torah [biblical Hebrew] unto itself, the language of the sages unto itself” (*b. Avod. Zarah* 58b). With reference to Qumran, whether its Hebrew was a literary variety or represents the

¹⁰⁸ Campbell, “Hebrew and Its Study,” 47. For the importance of Hebrew as an identity marker of the Qumran community, see Schiffman, *Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 171, 173–74; and Segert, “Hebrew Essenes,” 169–84.

¹⁰⁹ Poirier, “The Linguistic Situation,” 73.

¹¹⁰ McCarter, “Hebrew,” 320.

community's vernacular is disputed.¹¹¹ On the one hand, if it resembles the biblical Hebrew variety, then it should evince a literary character similar to that of biblical Hebrew. But, on the other hand, if it were used to preserve Jewish identity, then the Qumran members probably would have used Hebrew as a daily language. Nevertheless, some scholars have taken the safer, middle route: "that Qumran Hebrew 'preserves imprints of a spoken language' yet should not 'be defined in terms of a spoken language'."¹¹² Regardless of which route one opts to take, two questions still remain unanswered. One is whether other social groups within the general populace of ancient Palestine also spoke Qumran's Hebrew,¹¹³ and another is whether Mishnaic Hebrew actually became a spoken language of the time.¹¹⁴ For Jozef T. Milik, the former theory is rather conclusive:

The thesis of such scholars as Segal, Ben-Yehuda and Klausner that Mishnaic Hebrew was a language spoken by the population of Judea in the Persian and Graeco-Roman periods can no longer be considered an assumption, but rather an established fact... The copper rolls and the documents from the Second Temple Revolt prove beyond reasonable doubt that Mishnaic Hebrew was the normal language of the Judean population in the Roman period... evidence can be found in the inscriptions on contemporary ossuaries. The presence of Hebrew, beside Greek and Aramaic, on the ossuaries (which represent the use of the middle classes) surely attests that this was a natural language in that milieu.¹¹⁵

¹¹¹ For scholarly opinions, see Weitzman, "Qumran Community," 35–45, esp. 36; and Reif, "The Second Temple Period," 133–49.

¹¹² Poirier, "The Linguistic Situation," 74–75. Inside quotation is from Hurvitz, "Was QH a 'Spoken' Language?" 113.

¹¹³ Fitzmyer, "The Languages of Palestine," 127, believes that it is so by virtue of the idea that the composition of Daniel and Ben Sira points to its continued use. Similarly, Tal, "Aramaic Targum," 357–58, writes, "[t]he cardinal discoveries in the Judean Desert... anchor the vitality of Hebrew in Palestine during the Second Temple period." Cf. Kitchen, "The Aramaic of Daniel," 31–79.

¹¹⁴ The use of Mishnaic Hebrew as a spoken language has been discussed extensively by Lund, "The Language of Jesus," 140–45. Cf. Barr, "Which Language Did Jesus Speak?" 12, (see also, 18–22) who argues (in favor of Dalman, *Jesus-Jeshua*, 16, but against Segal, "Mishnaic Hebrew," 648–737; cf. Manson, *The Teaching of Jesus*, 47, 50) that "The Hebrew of the Mishnah was of course in existence at this time, but it was not a real spoken language; rather, it was an artificial scholarly lingo, used only by Rabbis in their discussions."

¹¹⁵ Milik and Barthelemy, *Discoveries*, 70; Milik, *Ten Years of Discovery*, 130–1.

For other scholars, they have supported their Hebrew hypothesis with other kinds of evidence. The first type of evidence draws heavily upon rabbinic literature.¹¹⁶ One recent treatment of this issue is by Steven E. Fassberg: “Jewish scholars have looked to rabbinic literature, in particular the Mishnah, for the key to what languages were used in Palestine in the first centuries C.E.,”¹¹⁷ although he presents no new argument or evidence to the discussion. Already in the beginning of the twentieth century, Segal argued that Mishnaic Hebrew, which, according to him, is dependent upon biblical Hebrew, was the vernacular or common language of the natives of Judea from 400 B.C.E. to 150 C.E.¹¹⁸ However, with the competing Aramaic vernacular in place, scholars have tried to relegate Mishnaic Hebrew to the educated classes,¹¹⁹ since the available linguistic evidence for the use of Aramaic is overwhelmingly more than that of the use of Hebrew (see below). Chaim Rabin writes, “Those who, like Jesus, took part in the synagogues (Mark 1:21) and in the Temple of Jerusalem (Mark 11:17) and disputed on Halakah (Matthew 19:3) no doubt did so in mishnaic Hebrew.”¹²⁰ The rabbinic schools where the educated classes attended, however, had only become common in the third-century CE. In fact, during that time, it would be a mistake to assume that the majority of men would have had any form of formal education in Hebrew.¹²¹

¹¹⁶ A sustained discussion is provided by Emerton, “The Problem of Vernacular Hebrew,” 8–17; and Poirier, “The Linguistic Situation,” 87–102.

¹¹⁷ Fassberg, “Which Semitic Language,” 267.

¹¹⁸ Segal, *Grammar*, 13. See also Segal, “Mishnaic Hebrew,” 647–737. Tresham, “Languages Spoken,” 75, points out that Segal’s conclusion seems radical both then and now.

¹¹⁹ Segal, *Grammar*, 17. Segal’s view has been gaining acceptance since then (see Barr, “Which Language Did Jesus Speak?” 18; and Lund, “The Language of Jesus,” 140).

¹²⁰ See Rabin, “Hebrew and Aramaic,” 2:1036.

¹²¹ Hezser, *Jewish Literacy*, 39–41.

The second type of evidence comes from the presence of Aramaic terms and idioms in the Gospels, which seem not to point in the direction that Jesus usually spoke Aramaic but that he actually spoke Hebrew more often. This idea has been the proposal of the Jerusalem School of Synoptic Research (JSSR), which assumes a Hebrew proto-gospel that was translated into Greek and that was later reorganized and redacted, such that the various narrative units, discourses, and parables were detached from their original context.¹²² This school holds the view that Luke, not Mark, was the first of the synoptic Gospels. This has also been the contention of Harris Birkeland and J.M. Grintz, who argue that, while Jesus' use of Hebrew was translated into Greek (hence, the Greek New Testament), the Gospel authors retained Jesus' use of Aramaic and left them untranslated.¹²³ Similarly, James W. Voelz also assumes that there is Semitic interference in the Greek of the New Testament in terms of lexical borrowing of foreign terms and syntactical constructions, which are not typical to common forms of Greek.¹²⁴

The third type of evidence is the preservation of 1 Maccabees, Ecclesiasticus, and other apocryphal and pseudepigraphal literature in the Hebrew language.¹²⁵ E. Kautzch says that this body of literature indicates that not only was Hebrew still extant during the first- and second-century BCE, but that it also was used by the people.¹²⁶ There are also

¹²² For major proponents of the JSSR, see Lindsey, *A Hebrew Translation*, esp. 62–63, who works on the Gospel of Mark; Flusser, *Jewish Sources*, esp. 11; Young, *Jesus and His Jewish Parables*, esp. 40–2, 144–46; and Grintz, “Hebrew as the Spoken and Written Language,” 33–47, who studies the putative Semitic substratum of Matthew.

¹²³ Birkeland, *The Language of Jesus*, 25; Grintz, “Hebrew as the Spoken and Written Language,” 32. Cf. Black, “Aramaic Studies,” 124, who finds Birkeland's hypothesis an extreme position.

¹²⁴ For examples, see Voelz, “The Linguistic Milieu,” 90–3; and Barr, “Which Language Did Jesus Speak?” 15–17.

¹²⁵ Cf. Tresham, “Languages Spoken,” 77; and Emerton, “Hebrew in First Century,” 60. But see, especially, Greenfield, “The Languages of Palestine,” 148–49.

¹²⁶ Kautzch, ed., *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, 16.

both Hebrew and Aramaic words found in the writings of the first-century Jewish historian Josephus (e.g., *Ant.* 3.156, 3.282, 3.7; cf. 1.5, 33; 10.8 [commenting on 2 Kgs 18:26]; *J.W.* 6.96).¹²⁷ In fact, interestingly, both Henry B. Swete and Vincent Taylor have long pointed out that Jesus' cry Ελωι ελωι λεμα σαβαχθανι (*eloi eloi lema sabachthani*; Mark 15:34) is actually a Hebrew phrase except for the term σαβαχθανι,¹²⁸ the correct full Aramaic phrase should have been Ελαι ελαι λεμα σαβαχθανι (*elai, elai, lema sabachthani*).¹²⁹ Moreover, the parallel text in Matt 27:46 reads: Ηλι ηλι λεμα σαβαχθανι (*Eli eli lema sabachthani*)—a direct transliteration of Ps 22:1 (אֱלֹהֵי אֱלֹהֵי לְמָה צָרָבְתָנִי).¹³⁰

And the fourth and last piece of evidence is the various types of artifacts found at the caves of Qumran, Masada, Murrabba'at, and Nahal Hever, such as deeds, biblical texts, hymns or prayers, bills of divorce, marriage contracts, property transactions, rental contracts, phylacteries, and other numismatic articles that were written in the Hebrew text.¹³¹ A summative treatment of the various evidence from before and after the Judean Desert discoveries has recently been provided by Fassberg; he concludes, contra the recent theories of Eshel and Avigdor Shinan (who both argued for the priority of

¹²⁷ Cf. Lapidé, "Insights from Qumran," 488–89.

¹²⁸ Cf. Porter, "The Language(s) Jesus Spoke," 2462.

¹²⁹ See Swete, *St. Mark*, 385; and Taylor, *St. Mark*, 593.

¹³⁰ Ps 22:2 in the Hebrew Bible. Note, however, that in both Mark 15:34 and Matt 27:46 λεμα (see the UBS⁴ and NA²⁸) departs from a direct transliteration of לֵמָה—the vowel *gameš* could have been substituted for the vowel *seve*. Recently, Buth, "The Riddle of Jesus' Cry," 395–421, has pointed out that, whereas Matthew records a Hebrew reference to Ps 22:2, Mark transliterates it fully into Aramaic.

¹³¹ For a good discussion of the linguistic evidence found in these locations, see Greenfield, "Languages of Palestine," 150–2. See also Meyers and Strange, *Archeology*, 71–72; Wise, "Languages," 435–36; and Macfarlane, Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin," 234–36.

Aramaic),¹³² that Jesus would not only have been able to read the Torah, but would also have been fluent in speaking Hebrew.¹³³

One important issue to note in the discussion of the use of Hebrew is its relation to and interaction with the use of Aramaic. Did the Aramaic language actually replace the Hebrew language as the principal vernacular of ancient Palestine as is the prevailing view of nineteenth century scholarship, or was Hebrew only used for specific purposes and occasions and confined to some geographical locations?¹³⁴ The recent collected-essays volume of Randall Buth and R. Steven Notley (2014) has sought to challenge and discredit the so-called “exclusive Aramaic hypothesis,” which argues that Hebrew had been fully replaced by Aramaic in the time of Jesus as the daily vernacular of the Jews.¹³⁵

Buth states:

Throughout the twentieth century, New Testament scholarship primarily worked under the assumption that only two languages, Aramaic and Greek, were in common use in the land of Israel in the first century. Studies on Gospels have assumed that Aramaic was the only viable language for Jesus’ public teaching or for any early Semitic records of the Jesus movement, whether oral or written. Hebrew was considered to be restricted primarily to educated religious teachers and unsuitable for speaking parables to peasants, especially in Galilee. However, during the twentieth century, specialists working in the field of Mishnaic Hebrew have proven that three languages, Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, were in common use. Their studies have moved out of a restricted, marginal status within the first-century language use. The articles in this volume investigate various areas where increasing linguistic data and changing perspectives impact...prevalent assumptions on language use within the field of New Testament studies.¹³⁶

¹³² Eshel, “Hebrew,” 41–52; Shinan, *Pirke Avot*, 26–27.

¹³³ See Fassberg, “Which Semitic Language,” 264–75, 280.

¹³⁴ For further discussion of this issue, see Poirier, “The Linguistic Situation,” 82–102. See also the articles by Joosten, “Aramaic or Hebrew,” 88–101, and Naveh, “Hebrew versus Aramaic,” 17–38, which have not been mentioned by Poirier.

¹³⁵ Buth and Notley, eds. *The Language Environment*, esp. 1–5, chapters 1, 5, 6, and 7.

¹³⁶ Buth, “Introduction,” 1.

Whether the contributors of Buth and Notley's volume are correct in their estimation is a matter that needs critical evaluation, especially since neither of the Semitic languages was the *lingua franca* of the time. It is highly likely that, by the time of Jesus, Aramaic had already replaced Hebrew as the native tongue of the Jews, with Greek functioning as the *lingua franca* of the speech community. Even if we presume that Hebrew was still in use as a daily vernacular of the Jews, we still need to identify the specific social contexts where it could have been used in that manner (see chapters 4 and 5), not least since archaeological and literary evidence for Hebrew have mostly been discovered in locations inhabited by the Qumran community.

Aramaic

I mentioned in my introductory chapter that recent scholarship has finally accepted or has now been willing to recognize that ancient Palestine was a multilingual society. But one unresolved, lingering issue concerns which language became the principal vernacular of first-century Palestine. Willem F. Smelik notes, after citing a number of surveys on the linguistic situation of ancient Palestine, that "all of them presuppose bi- or multilingualism and usually Aramaic as the principal spoken language."¹³⁷ Smelik is right, and it is accurate to say that many recent scholars still argue for the priority of Aramaic as the community's and Jesus' exclusive or main language in his public ministry and teaching.¹³⁸ They follow the earlier consensus that traces back to the late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century works of J.A. Widmanstadt and J.J.

¹³⁷ Smelik, *The Targum*, 8. Porter, "Scholarly Opinion," 140, notes that, despite the weak linguistic evidence, the majority of scholars has long favored the use of Aramaic as the primary language of the Jewish population and of Jesus in Palestine, further noting that this theory will continue to last.

¹³⁸ Cf. Porter, "The Greek of the Jews and Early Christians," 351.

Scaliger.¹³⁹ Prior to the work of both of these scholars, there had been no distinction made between the languages—Syrian, Hebrew, and Chaldean—of the first century.¹⁴⁰ As a result of their work, a few centuries later, some began to reconstruct first-century Aramaic based on the text of the Greek Gospels.¹⁴¹

For the most part, the first and strongest argument for this view at least before the archaeological discoveries from Qumran and the other Judean Desert sites in the middle of the twentieth century is the fact that Jesus' native tongue was most likely Aramaic. In historical Jesus research, for instance, the use of the Semitic language and the dissimilarity criteria suggests that Jesus could have only known Aramaic as his spoken language, since both criteria were posited to prove the authenticity of the Jesus sayings and actions on the basis of Aramaic transliterations and features in the Gospel texts (e.g., Matt 7:34; 27:6, 46; Mark 5:41; 7:11, 34; 10:51; 14:36; 15:34; John 1:41, 42).¹⁴² In other words, only those materials in the Gospels that evince Aramaic or Palestinian Jewish

¹³⁹ See the beginnings of the discussion of the use of the Aramaic language spoken by Jesus in Schweitzer, *The Quest*, 269–92, esp. 270; cf. Porter, “The Criteria of Authenticity,” 706, who also notes the sixteenth century as the beginning of the discussion of the Semitic language criterion in historical Jesus research; Porter, *Criteria*, 90; and Büschel, “Die grieschische Sprache,” 133–42. Supporters of the Aramaic theory are many, but a short list will include those scholars who opposed the Deissmann-Thumb-Moulton hypothesis that I mentioned above, and additionally, among others, Sanday, “The Language Spoken in Palestine,” 81–99; Sanday, “Did Christ Speak Greek?” 368–88; Joüon, “Quelques aramaïsmes,” 210–29; Taylor, “Did Jesus Speak Aramaic,” 95–97; Bardy, *La question des langues*; Draper, “Did Jesus Speak Greek?” 317; Wilson, “Did Jesus Speak Greek,” 121–22; Wilcox, “Semitisms,” 979–86; Wilcox, “The Aramaic Background,” 362–78; Feldman, “How Much Hellenism,” 83–111; and Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 1:255–68.

¹⁴⁰ Scholars have later on debated the type of Aramaic dialect that Jesus spoke. For a summative discussion of this issue over the last 100 years, see Stuckenbruck, “An Approach to the New Testament,” 3–29.

¹⁴¹ For instance, Dalman, *The Words of Jesus*, investigates the background of Jesus; Burney, *The Aramaic Origin*, attempts to show how John's Gospel has been composed in Aramaic by reading it as a type of poetry; and Torrey, *The Four Gospels*, re-translated the four Gospels on the basis of a hypothetical Aramaic text.

¹⁴² The bibliography here is large. But see especially the collected essays in Bock and Webb, eds., *Key Events*, esp. Bock and Webb, “Introduction,” 1–7; and Beilby and Eddy, eds., *Five Views*, 48–51. Cf. Porter, *Criteria*, 89–99. A list of these Aramaic transliterations is found in Millard, *Reading and Writing*, 140–2.

features are considered to be the authentic sayings and actions of Jesus.¹⁴³ To be sure, the editors of the collected-essays volume *Key Events in the Life of the Historical Jesus* (2009) remark,

One of the key gains of recent work has been the careful attention given to Jesus' Second Temple environment as well as an appreciation for how his actions and teaching were set in and addressed a Jewish context. Precursors include the kind of work done by Joachim Jeremias, who sought to be sure the Jewish roots of Jesus were not lost. George Caird insisted that the right place to start with Jesus was in a backdrop focused on Israel. Martin Hengel also sought roots in the Jewish context, but not at the expense of Greco-Roman concerns, noting how intertwined Hellenism and Judaism had become by Jesus' time.¹⁴⁴

Darrell L. Bock and Robert L. Webb may be correct in their assessment of current historical Jesus scholarship, especially since many of these scholars have been reacting against the reliability and utility of the criterion of dissimilarity.¹⁴⁵ This criterion argues for the authenticity of Jesus' sayings or actions when they deviate from a Jewish context. In fact, according to James K. Beilby and Paul R. Eddy, a "rare consensus" is being achieved among historical Jesus scholars in terms of emphasizing the Jewishness of Jesus: "a commitment to taking seriously the Jewishness of Jesus."¹⁴⁶ Porter also calls the

¹⁴³ Cf. Lund, "The Language of Jesus," 139, 145. However, as Gundry, "The Language Milieu," 408, rightly notes, "the absence of Semitisms does not lessen the possibility of authenticity...the presence of Semitisms does not necessarily indicate an Aramaic (or Hebrew) substratum." Voelz, "The Linguistic Milieu," 92–93, points out that there are two Semitisms that are attributable to internal factors. One is the linguistic influence of the LXX, which, according to him, is "heavily Semitic," on the spoken vernacular of the first century, and the other is the linguistic competence of the individual whose native tongue was either Hebrew or Aramaic.

¹⁴⁴ Bock and Webb, "Introduction," 1–2. A group of scholars who generally question the usefulness of the traditional criteria of authenticity is represented in Keith and Le Donne, eds., *Jesus, Criteria, and the Demise of Authenticity*. For the works of the scholars mentioned here, see Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*; Caird, *Jesus and the Jewish Nation*; and Hengel and Schwemer, *Jesus und das Judentum*.

¹⁴⁵ There are also some who argue for the criteria of "double dissimilarity" and "double similarity." The double similarity criterion is the proposal of Wright, *Jesus*, 131–33, 226, 450, 489, esp. 132, as a counterargument to the idea that authentic Jesus materials are those that deviate from both Judaism and early Christianity. Superfluous as this criterion of similarity is, it is also clear that authenticity cannot be proven on this basis alone.

¹⁴⁶ Beilby and Eddy, "An Introduction," 48. See also Charlesworth, "Jesus Research," 5, 9; Meier, "The Present State," 483–86; and Theissen and Merz, *Historical Jesus*, 10–11.

present state of historical Jesus research as a period dominated by the Aramaic hypothesis in his 2010 article, while positing his Greek language criteria.¹⁴⁷

In all these discussions, however, I wish to underscore an important dimension that needs to be considered in emphasizing the Jewishness of Jesus. While it is true that Jesus was a Jew and that his native tongue would consequently have been Aramaic, this fact does not automatically mean that he could not speak other languages, especially Greek.¹⁴⁸ When we closely examine the specific linguistic contexts or speech situations of some of the Gospel episodes, it is unlikely that the language that was used in those episodes was Aramaic.¹⁴⁹ Furthermore, in view of the multilingual nature of the available linguistic evidence, the idea that Jesus was a purely Aramaic speaker has received significant criticism from recent scholarship,¹⁵⁰ especially as it basically ignores the linguistic dynamics of the multilingualism of the first-century communities.

Aside from highlighting Jesus' native tongue, there also have been other types of evidences posited to support the Aramaic hypothesis. Two of the stronger ones are, according to Poirier, "(1) the weight of inscriptional and documentary evidence, and (2) the practice of translating Scripture into Aramaic (the targums) for the benefit of

¹⁴⁷ Porter, "Role of Greek," 376.

¹⁴⁸ Cf. Argyle, "Greek among the Jews," 89.

¹⁴⁹ For the possible use of Greek, see, for instance, Matt 4:25; Luke 6:17; Matt 8:5–13//John 4:46–54; John 4:4–26; Mark 2:13–14//Matt 9:9//Luke 5:27–28; Mark 2:13–14//Matt 9:9//Luke 5:27–28; Mark 3:8; Mark 5:1–20//Luke 8:26–39//Matt 8:28–34; Mark 7:25–30//Matt 15:21–28; Mark 12:13–17//Matt 22:16–22//Luke 20:20–26; Mark 8:27–30//Matt 16:13–20//Luke 9:18–21; Mark 15:2–5//Matt 27:11–14; Luke 17:11–19; Luke 23:2–4 //John 18:29–38; John 12:20–28 (Porter, *Criteria*, 158; Porter, "The Language(s) Jesus Spoke," 2462–63; Porter, "Role of Greek," 379–80); Mark 14:43–52, 53–65 (Ong, "Aramaic and Greek Language Criteria," 51–53); Mark 2:17; Luke 12:49–51; Matt 5:17 (Ong, "Language Choice," 81–82, 84–87); and Matt 26:47–56; 26:57–27:10 (Ong, "Linguistic Analysis," 126–31).

¹⁵⁰ A good introduction to this issue can be found in the debate between Porter, who argues for the Greek hypothesis, and Casey, who argues for the Aramaic hypothesis. See Porter, *Criteria*, 89–99, 164–80; Porter, "A Response to Maurice Casey," 71–87; Porter, "The Criteria for Authenticity," 695–714; Casey, "In Which Language," 326–28; and Casey, "An Aramaic Approach," 275–78.

synagogue congregations.”¹⁵¹ So the second argument for the Aramaic hypothesis draws on inscriptional and documentary evidence. The kinds of evidence that have survived include “the hundreds of inscribed ossuaries from first-century Jerusalem,”¹⁵² the vast collection of ostraca, funerary inscriptions, and synagogue inscriptions.¹⁵³ Additionally, there are also Aramaic letters and documents typically in fragments of papyri that were discovered in the archives in the areas of the Dead Sea (e.g., the wadis of Murabba‘at, Habra, Nahal Hever, and Seiyâl), such as the Bar Kokhba (ca. 132–135 CE) and the Babatha caches (ca. 94–132 CE).¹⁵⁴ However, as Poirier also notes, there are some problems that everyone must face regarding the use of this linguistic evidence as proof for the degree to which Aramaic (and other languages for that matter) was used in ancient Palestine.

One problem is the pervasive use of personal names with the prefix בר (e.g., Barabbas, Barjona, Bartimaeus, Bartholomew), which cannot be outright categorized under Aramaic inscriptions, since the term might have been adopted as a Hebrew colloquialism in contrast to the more formal בן.¹⁵⁵ There are also place names in Aramaic

¹⁵¹ Poirier, “The Linguistic Situation,” 58. See also Safrai, “Spoken and Literary,” 226–28.

¹⁵² One popular Aramaic ossuary inscription was located in a lot belonging to Caiaphas’s family (see Greenhut, “Burial Cave,” 28–36; Reich, “Caiaphas Family,” 223–25; and Reich, “Caiaphas Name,” 38–44).

¹⁵³ For these evidences, among others, see Meyers and Strange, *Archaeology*, 73–78; Fitzmyer, “The Languages of Palestine,” 148–53, esp. 150 n. 4; Schwartz, “Language, Power and Identity,” 15; Meyers, *Jewish Ossuaries*; Albright, “The Nash Papyrus,” 158–60; Ott, “Um die Muttersprache Jesu,” 6; Gregg and Urman, *Jews, Pagans, and Christians*, 95; Urman, “Jewish Inscriptions,” 16–2; Klein, *Jüdisch-palästinisches Corpus Inscriptionum*; and Rahmani, *A Catalogue of Jewish Ossuaries*. For collections of inscriptions, see Cotton et al., *Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaeae/Palaestinae, Vols. 1 and 2*; the relevant essays in Deines et al., eds., *Neues Testament und hellenistisch-jüdische Alltagskultur*; and Price and Yardeni, *Corpus of Jewish Inscriptions*, forthcoming.

¹⁵⁴ For a brief discussion of the content of these two archives, see Greenfield, “Languages of Palestine,” 150–2.

¹⁵⁵ See Clermont-Ganneau, *Archaeological Researches in Palestine*, 393; and Mussies, “Greek as the Vehicle,” 362. For further discussion, see Poirier, “The Linguistic Situation,” 59–60. Cf. Millard, *Reading and Writing*, 141.

forms (e.g., Gabatha [John 19:13], Golgotha [John 19:17], Bethesda [John 5:2], Abaddon [Rev 9:11], Armageddon [Rev 16:16]). Moreover, most of these ossuary and sepulchral inscriptions (prior to 1947) were mostly proper names, written in a cursive Hebrew-Aramaic style of writing, making it difficult to determine whether the inscribers were Hebrew or Aramaic speakers.¹⁵⁶

Another issue is the problem of how to treat bilingual inscriptions, such as the sign on top of Jesus' cross (John 19:20) as well as many ossuary inscriptions.¹⁵⁷ Do these bilingual inscriptions point to the presence of monolingual or bilingual groups of speakers? And can they actually tell us that these languages reflect the daily languages spoken by the people? For all we know, they may have simply been used for other purposes. Consider this bilingual inscription from Dabbura, where each of these languages, namely Aramaic and Greek, was probably used to give credit to the ethnic identity of the builders:

אלעזר רב ו...[ר]בה עבד עמו דיה דעל מן
 [PO]ΥCΤΙΚΟC EKT[ICEN...ימיה ופיצו] כפחה ופיצו
 El'azar the son of...made the columns above
 the arches and beams...Rusticus built (it).¹⁵⁸

A third problem is the distinction that needs to be made between literary and vernacular varieties. The Aramaic literary texts, for example, from Caves 4 and 11 of Qumran, where we find copies of targums of Job (4Q157=4QtgJob [Job 4.16–5.4] and 11Q10=11QtgJob [Job 17.14–42.11]) and Leviticus (4Q156), of Tobit, and of other texts

¹⁵⁶ Fitzmyer, "The Languages of Palestine," 148–49.

¹⁵⁷ A good number of these ossuaries are discussed in Millard, *Reading and Writing*, 132–40.

¹⁵⁸ Urman, "Jewish Inscriptions," 17. Cf. Poirier, "The Linguistic Situation," 61, who states, "The inscription is Aramaic, but switches to Greek for the sake of Rusticus."

containing the use of the phrases “Son of God” and “Son of the Most High,” may not necessarily suggest that they also represent the spoken language of the people.¹⁵⁹

A fourth and final problem is that there actually is more available linguistic evidence for Greek than for Aramaic that would contrarily suggest that Greek was the primary vernacular of ancient Palestine. Frey notes that, of the total number of available Jewish inscriptions in Palestine, 52 percent are in Greek, 40 percent are in Hebrew, and the remaining 8 percent are in bilingual Greek-Hebrew/Aramaic.¹⁶⁰ Interestingly, P. Van der Horst records that of all the Jewish funerary inscriptions, 70 percent are in Greek, 12 percent are in Latin, and only 18 percent are in either Hebrew or Aramaic.¹⁶¹ Even the thirty-five documents in the Babatha archive show that only three (compared to the seventeen in Greek) of them are in Aramaic.¹⁶² It is important to note, however, that what is formally inscribed in a linguistic artifact might not necessarily be reflective of a community’s daily speech. The tricky nature of the correlation between inscriptional evidence and actual conversational language usage cannot be simply assumed.

The argument for the Aramaic hypothesis banks on the production and use of targums. It has often been suggested that this was evidence either for the language of Jesus or for the necessity of Aramaic translations for synagogue congregations who were unfamiliar with the Hebrew language. To be sure, one rabbinic source indicates that Aramaic translations were needed in the synagogues “so that the rest of the people, and the women and children, will understand it” (*Soferim* 18.4). It has also been argued that

¹⁵⁹ Fitzmyer, “The Languages of Palestine,” 149–50.

¹⁶⁰ See Frey, *CIJ*, 2:113-39.

¹⁶¹ See Van der Horst, “Jewish Funerary Inscriptions,” 46.

¹⁶² Yadin, *Bar Kokhba*, 229.

the Palestinian Targums (esp. the Cairo Geniza fragments, Targum Neophyti, and the Fragment Targums) reflect a vernacular language in comparison to Targum *Onkelos* and Jonathan, which are clearly literary.¹⁶³ Those who have attempted to reconstruct the hypothetical Aramaic Gospels have also used these targums as their base text.¹⁶⁴

The problem of this theory, however, is the issue of how to handle this evidence, which apparently postdates the first-century C.E.¹⁶⁵ Shmuel Safrai points out that the practice of translating the Torah and the Prophets was first mentioned in ca. 140 CE, and sources from the Second Temple period and the subsequent period following the destruction of the Temple do not reflect this practice.¹⁶⁶ And as Poirier notes, “the regularity of the practice of translating Scripture into Aramaic may represent a more powerful argument that a large segment of the population could not understand Hebrew. But this argument is more at home when discussing the third-century CE situation, as the first century is largely devoid of targums.”¹⁶⁷ Guido Baltes state: “We know today that written Targums cannot be dated into pre-Christian times. However, for scholars of the nineteenth century [e.g., Dalman, Wellhausen, Zahn, and Delitzsch] they were the main point of reference not only for the identification of the dialects to choose, but for the general assumption that Hebrew was no longer spoken at the time of Jesus.”¹⁶⁸

¹⁶³ This was the finding of Kahle’s two-volume *Masoreten des Westens*. For a summative discussion, see Black, “Aramaic Studies,” 112–25; Black, “Recovery,” 305–13; Lund, “The Language of Jesus,” 147; and Stuckenbruck, “Semitic Influence on Greek,” 84–85.

¹⁶⁴ Millard, *Reading and Writing*, 145.

¹⁶⁵ In fact, Chilton and Fleisher, *The Targums*, chapter 9, arrive at a conclusion in their recent study that Onkelos/Proto-Onkelos originated between 50 and 150 CE and the Palestinian Targums between 150 and 450 CE.

¹⁶⁶ See Safrai, “Spoken and Literary,” 227–28.

¹⁶⁷ Poirier, “The Linguistic Situation,” 64.

¹⁶⁸ Baltes, “The Origins of the ‘Exclusive Aramaic Model’,” 32.

A fourth piece and last argument is that Aramaic, by virtue of the historical development of the language, became the dominant vernacular of Palestine, despite the conquest and Hellenization program of Alexander the Great and his successors. Christa Müller-Kessler, for instance, points out that later Western Aramaic dialects, including Galilean Aramaic, Samaritan, and Christian-Palestinian Aramaic (as she wishes to call them) reflect spoken vernaculars.¹⁶⁹ While it is true that various local Aramaic dialects emerged during this Middle Aramaic period (ca. 200 BCE–200 CE) within the textual record, Stuart Creason notes that many of these texts not only conform more closely to the Imperial or Official Aramaic of the preceding period (ca. 600–200 BCE), but that dialectal differences in terms of synchronic and diachronic distinctions in extant texts are not always easily detectable.¹⁷⁰ This argument, nevertheless, suggests that, even though Jesus knew Hebrew and Greek, he still spoke Aramaic as his primary language.¹⁷¹

There is good merit to this claim, but the proper question to ask is what one meant by “primary language.” Does it mean that Jesus predominantly spoke Aramaic in particular speech contexts, such as that when he was having conversations with his family, friends, and disciples in more private settings, or that he just spoke Aramaic in all kinds of speech contexts? If the *lingua franca* of the first-century Greco-Roman world was Greek,¹⁷² which most likely was the case, what language would Jesus have had used in public speech contexts? The Gospels preserve several Aramaic words and sayings of Jesus and others, but they do not actually reveal that Aramaic was the only known spoken

¹⁶⁹ Müller-Kessler, *Grammatik*, 3.

¹⁷⁰ See Creason, “Aramaic,” 391–92.

¹⁷¹ See, for example, Dalman, *Jesus-Jeshua*, 37.

¹⁷² Cf. Porter, “Jesus and the Use of Greek,” 124; and Porter, *Criteria*, 135.

language of Jesus. For most of the words and sayings of Jesus in the Gospels, they were in fact preserved in Greek.

Lining up all four arguments in support of the Aramaic theory,¹⁷³ we can see that the only strong evidence comes from the archaeological finds, such as the Aramaic literary documents and ossuary inscriptions found particularly in the vicinities of Qumran, which may confirm that the language was in fact spoken in Israel. As Loren Stuckenbruck remarks, “None of the targumic traditions [e.g., *Targum Onkelos*; the Aramaic portions of *Talmud Yerushalmi*; *Bereshit Rabba*] and other later sources, important as they were, could rival the significance of the Dead Sea Scrolls discoveries after World War II.”¹⁷⁴ The wealth of inscriptional and documentary evidence at hand may suggest that Aramaic was the principal vernacular of ancient Palestine. There is perhaps little doubt that most Jews in Palestine would have learned Aramaic as their first language and that Jesus’ native tongue was Aramaic.

The critical issue, however, is the extent to which Aramaic was used in the various geographical locations of ancient Palestine, as well as the various social contexts within that community which would necessitate the use of Greek, especially as it is now well recognized that the first language of the residents (incl. Jews) of the Western Diaspora (i.e., outside Palestine) was Greek and that there was definitely a regular mingling of these groups of people with the residents of Palestine.¹⁷⁵ Furthermore, a second critical issue is the question of whether Jesus was also a fluent Greek speaker as

¹⁷³ For a list of arguments for the Aramaic hypothesis, see Lund, “The Language of Jesus,” 145–49.

¹⁷⁴ Stuckenbruck, “Semitic Influence on Greek,” 85.

¹⁷⁵ See Tcherikover, *Hellenistic Civilization*, 348. Barr, “Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek,” 107, points out that the diaspora Jews wrote in their own native Greek dialect, that is, without Semitic interference.

he was an Aramaic speaker. And there are a good number of scholars who have argued that he was.

Greek

We have seen so far that, while there was the possibility of Hebrew being spoken in the first century CE and by Jesus, the Aramaic hypothesis has dominated most of the scholarly discussion, especially among historical Jesus scholars, during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Shortly before and at the turn of the twenty-first century, however, a growing number of scholars have argued for the case that Greek, instead of Aramaic, was the principal language of ancient Palestine.¹⁷⁶ Nevertheless, it is important to note that already in 1915, Max Radin argued that Greek had replaced Aramaic in the urban communities of ancient Palestine.¹⁷⁷

Insofar as the amount of work invested in this issue, there is no doubt that Porter has been the leading proponent of the Greek hypothesis at least in recent times.¹⁷⁸ Porter recognizes the multilingual nature of the society of ancient Palestine, arguing that Jesus probably would have been an active or fluent speaker of both Greek and Aramaic and a passive or receptive user of Hebrew and Latin, and he believes that Greek has replaced

¹⁷⁶ See, for example, Rosén, *Hebrew at the Crossroads*, 12; Gafni, “The World of the Talmud,” 234; and Carter, *Seven Events*, 11.

¹⁷⁷ Radin, *The Jews*, 119.

¹⁷⁸ Cf. Porter, “Role of Greek,” 361; and Poirier, “The Linguistic Situation,” 125 n. 194, although he does not really cite and explain Porter’s arguments. Virtually all supporters of the Greek theory recognize that ancient Palestine was a multilingual society. Aside from those I mentioned above that follow the path of Deissmann, Moulton, and Thumb, see Nock, “Greek in Jewish Palestine,” 223–27; Patterson, “What Language,” 65–67; Selby, “The Language in Which Jesus Taught,” 185–93; Selby, *Jesus, Aramaic and Greek*; Ross, “Jesus’s Knowledge of Greek,” 41–47; Voelz, “The Linguistic Milieu,” 81–97; Leclercq, “Note sur le grec,” 243–55; Hughes, “The Language Spoken,” 127–43; Meyers and Strange, *Archaeology*, esp. 78–88, 91; Smith, “Aramaic Studies,” 304–13; Radin, *The Jews*; Rosén, *Hebrew at the Crossroads*; Gafni, “The World of the Talmud,” 225–65; and Colpe, “Jüdische-hellenistische Literatur,” 2:1507–12. See also the list in Porter, “Scholarly Opinion,” 143–44 n. 17; and Porter, “The Greek of the Jews and Early Christians,” 350–64.

Aramaic as the *lingua franca* of the Eastern Mediterranean.¹⁷⁹ Porter marshals several arguments to support his theory:

The arguments for this position rest firmly on the role of Greek as the *lingua franca* of the Roman Empire, the linguistic fact that the New Testament has been transmitted in Greek from its earliest documents, a diversity of epigraphic evidence, significant literary evidence, and several significant contexts in the Gospels that give plausibility to this hypothesis.¹⁸⁰

Porter elaborates on each of these arguments and concludes that it is almost certain that Jesus would have had used Greek on various occasions during his ministry.¹⁸¹ Each of these arguments also provides strong evidence for the case that Greek not only was pervasively used in various social contexts but that it also was the prestige language in ancient Palestine.¹⁸² For this reason, I review these arguments, while adding other significant information to them.

First, the fact that Greek became the *lingua franca* and the “sole, official, technical and scientific language of the extensive Greek-speaking community of the Eastern Mediterranean”¹⁸³ during the time of Jesus cannot be understated.¹⁸⁴ If the strength of the Aramaic hypothesis lies in the linguistic circumstance that Jesus’ native

¹⁷⁹ See Porter, *Criteria*, 131–38. I refer readers to my bibliography for Porter’s published works on the Greek of the New Testament and the languages of Jesus, but the important ones to note are Porter, “Scholarly Opinion,” 139–71 (repr. from [with changes] “Did Jesus Ever Teach in Greek,” 199–235); Porter, “Jesus and the Use of Greek,” 123–54; Porter, “A Response to Maurice Casey,” 71–87; Porter, *Criteria*, 164–80; Porter, “The Role of Greek,” 361–404; and Porter, “The Language(s) Jesus Spoke,” 2455–71.

¹⁸⁰ Porter, “Scholarly Opinion,” 143; cf. Porter, “Role of Greek,” 374–76; Porter, *Criteria*, 140.

¹⁸¹ See Porter, “Scholarly Opinion,” 145–71 (many helpful sources can be mined in the footnotes).

¹⁸² Cf. Sevenster, *Do You Know Greek?* 138–42; and Van der Horst, *Ancient Jewish Epitaphs*, 22.

¹⁸³ Clackson and Horrocks, *History of the Latin Language*, 184.

¹⁸⁴ See Argyle, “Greek among the Jews,” 89; Voelz, “The Linguistic Milieu,” 81–83; Macfarlane, “Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin,” 234. Bright, *A History of Israel*, 82, even says that Palestine was influenced by the Greek culture and language long before the conquest of Alexander the Great. Moreover, Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, 1, notes that “by the time of Jesus, Palestine had already been under ‘Hellenistic’ rule and its resultant cultural influence for some 360 years.”

tongue was Aramaic, the Greek hypothesis banks on the fact that Greek was the *lingua franca* of ancient Palestine.¹⁸⁵ Werner Eck in fact points out that, because Rome did not impose Latin on the local residents, such that even Roman decrees composed in Latin were translated into Greek, this meant that Greek was the official language of communication between Rome and the people.¹⁸⁶ Porter says, however, that many New Testament scholars have not fully appreciated the significance of this linguistic scenario.¹⁸⁷ He further says that this lack of appreciation was probably a result of the failure to understand the historical development of the Greek language, especially in terms of how the language became the “common dialect” (Κοινή) during the Hellenistic Period (see above). This consequently made it the prestige language of the time as linguistic pressures from both the government and other sectors of society would have required people to communicate in Greek within the social structure.¹⁸⁸

There are a few factors to note that indicate that Greek would actually have been the prestige language during the time of Jesus. When the Roman client king, Herod the Great, built a Greek theater and hippodrome sometime during his reign in Judea (ca. 37–4 BCE), that was not only a sign of his identification with the Greco-Roman civilization, but it was also the opportune time when he made Greek, instead of Aramaic, the official language of his government. James S. Jeffers points out that the people could not help but be influenced by the Greek culture and,¹⁸⁹ as a consequence, they had to learn the Greek

¹⁸⁵ But Poirier, “The Linguistic Situation,” 112, notes, citing Overman, “The Diaspora,” 65–68, that “Scholarship is still coming to terms with the extent to which Greek was at home in Palestine.”

¹⁸⁶ Eck, “The Language of Power,” 123–24.

¹⁸⁷ Porter, “Scholarly Opinion,” 145.

¹⁸⁸ See Porter, “Scholarly Opinion,” 145–48.

¹⁸⁹ Jeffers, *Greco-Roman World*, 15.

language. Another important thing to note is that military conquest is not only about victory and defeat but also about cultural interaction and influence; and cultural interaction is a two-way street.¹⁹⁰ Cultural interaction, which would naturally last for several centuries, is inevitable after a military conquest. Such an interaction can be seen in the daily intermingling among foreigners and natives for their daily needs of food, clothing, shelter, and other supplies; local alliances, which happen in such societal institutions as education and intermarriages; and urban development, which is the establishment of centers of the Greek language, culture, and political structures especially in the major cities.¹⁹¹

One major Palestinian area that was heavily influenced by Greek culture and language during the time of Jesus was the “Galilee of the Gentiles” (i.e., lower Galilee; Matt 4:15),¹⁹² although scholars have debated whether this was actually the case (see chapter 3—Galilee). The region was not only surrounded by Hellenistic culture, but it also was a center for trade and commerce, having waterways that connected it with its adjacent regions, such as Sepphoris and Tiberias.¹⁹³ In its long history, we can see that the city had been a melting pot of diverse cultures because of the local residents’

¹⁹⁰ Carter, *Seven Events*, 8.

¹⁹¹ Carter, *Seven Events*, 8–10. Mussies, “Greek in Palestine and the Diaspora,” 1058, mentions the names of such Hellenistic cities as the coastal shore from Raphiah to Ptolemais, Decapolis, Gadara, Pella, Scythopolis/Beth Shean, Gerasa, Philadelphia, Phasaelis in Judea, Sepphoris and Tiberias in Galilee, Caesarea-Philippi and Bethsaida-Julias in Batanea, Heshbon and a second Julias in Peraea, and Sebaste in Samaria (cf. Mussies, “Greek as the Vehicle,” 358).

¹⁹² Neither the Hebrew Bible nor the New Testament provides such a division for the lower and upper parts of Galilee (but cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 5.63; 5.86; 5.92; 8.142; *J.W.* 3.35–39; Tob 1:2 and Jdt 1:7–8). For the border situation of Galilee, see Klein, *Eretz ha-Galil*, 139–46; and Avi-Yonah, *The Holy Land*, 106, 135–42 (Lower Galilee), and 97, 112, 133–35 (Upper Galilee). For historical information on Lower Galilee and Upper Galilee, see Horsley, *Archaeology*, 88–130; and Freyne, *Galilee*, 4–15.

¹⁹³ See Fitzmyer, “Languages of Palestine,” 134–35; Sevenster, *Do You Know Greek?* 96–97; Tcherikover, *Hellenistic Civilization*, 90–116; Meyers and Strange, *Archaeology*, 38–47; Edwards, “First Century Urban/Rural Relations,” 171; and Overman, “Who Were the First Urban Christians?” 161. For the history of Sepphoris and Tiberias, see Horsley, *Archaeology*, 43–65; and Meyers, ed., *Galilee*, 109–22, 145–237.

intermingling with foreigners. Richard A. Horsley describes Galilee as a “crossroad of empires,”¹⁹⁴ and Meyers labels the area as a “confluence of cultures.”¹⁹⁵ Jesus spent most of his childhood days in Nazareth of Galilee, a small city situated in a location that overlooked the Via Maris, one of the busiest trade routes in ancient Palestine. Jesus’ disciples, Peter, Andrew, James, and John, worked daily on the Sea of Galilee, selling fish to both local residents and visiting neighbors and foreigners. Porter claims that, “They almost assuredly would have needed to conduct in Greek much of their business of selling fish.”¹⁹⁶ Similarly, Horsley points out, “if Galilee was already well on its way to a cosmopolitan culture in the first century, then Christian scholars have a basis for imagining Jesus and his movement as solidly rooted in the more universal and individualistic spirit of Hellenism.”¹⁹⁷

Second, archaeological discoveries show that there is as much Greek inscriptional and documentary evidences as Aramaic. Sang-Il Lee has extensively discussed the argument for the widespread use of Greek on the basis of inscriptional, papyrological, and population geography evidence; Lee’s objective is to demonstrate that ancient Palestine was a bilingual (or better, multilingual) community.¹⁹⁸ While a detailed presentation of these epigraphic and literary evidences is warranted, it certainly is not possible to do so in the space I have here. However, it is nonetheless important to observe that the available evidence can be catalogued as stone, graffiti, and funerary inscriptions,

¹⁹⁴ See Horsley, *Archaeology*, 15–42.

¹⁹⁵ Meyers, ed., *Galilee*.

¹⁹⁶ Porter, “Scholarly Opinion,” 151; Argyle, “Greek among the Jews,” 88. Kee, “Early Christianity in Galilee,” 21, also points out that “for Jesus to have conversed with inhabitants of cities in the Galilee, and especially the cities of the Decapolis and the Phoenician region, he would have had to have known Greek, certainly at the conversational level.”

¹⁹⁷ Horsley, *Archaeology*, 67.

¹⁹⁸ Lee, *Jesus and Gospel Traditions*, 106–12.

numismatic inscriptions, papyri and literary texts, and other documents bearing Greek loan words and Greek names.¹⁹⁹

With reference to funerary and stone inscriptions, Beth She‘arim is considered as the most important cemetery of ancient Palestine from the period ca. 100 BCE–351 CE, since it produced a corpus of Jewish inscriptions that is larger than from any other single site, of which 80 percent of the inscriptions are in Greek.²⁰⁰ Gerard Mussies notes that there were 440 and 683 Jewish Greek inscriptions found in the areas of Palestine proper and outside Palestine, respectively.²⁰¹ In fact, in Jerusalem alone, the number of Greek epitaphs (40 percent) is proportionate to the number of epitaphs in Semitic languages.²⁰² The total estimated count of Palestinian Greek funerary inscriptions is between 55 to 60 percent.²⁰³ In Rome, Harry L. Leon, arguing that sepulchral inscriptions best represent the language of the people,²⁰⁴ says that

Of the 534 items which I think may legitimately be counted as Jewish inscriptions of Rome, 405 (76%) are Greek; of the rest, 123 (23%) are Latin, three are Hebrew, one Aramaic, one bilingual Greek and Latin, one bilingual Aramaic and Greek. From these figures it is quite apparent that the Roman-Jewish community, which existed from about 100 B.C., was Greek-speaking...the indications are that the Greek of the Jewish community in Rome was not materially different from the *koiné* Greek of the Mediterranean lands during the Graeco-Roman period.²⁰⁵

¹⁹⁹ Many of these inscriptions, including newly discovered ones can be conveniently accessed in the *Orientalis graeci inscriptiones selectae (OGIS)*, *Corpus Inscriptionum Judaicarum (CIS)*, and *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum (SEG)*. A summary of these kinds of evidence is also provided by Mussies, “Greek in Palestine and the Diaspora,” 1042–52; Mussies, “Greek as the Vehicle,” 358–62; and, especially, Porter, “Scholarly Opinion,” 151–60.

²⁰⁰ Meyers and Strange, *Archaeology*, 93, 101. Porter, “Scholarly Opinion,” 160, even points out that the catacombs from the first to second centuries CE were all in Greek.

²⁰¹ Mussies, “Greek in Palestine and the Diaspora,” 1042–43.

²⁰² See Avi-Yonah, *Encyclopedia*, 2:629–41; and Avigad, “Inscribed Ossuaries,” 1–12.

²⁰³ Van der Horst, *Ancient Jewish Epitaphs*, 23–24. See also Porter, “The Greek Language,” 112; and Porter, “Scholarly Opinion,” 160.

²⁰⁴ Leon, *The Jews of Ancient Palestine*, 75–76.

²⁰⁵ Leon, “The Greek Inscriptions,” 47–48.

Furthermore, Porter mentions five important Greek inscriptions that relate to Jewish religious practices.²⁰⁶ One is the Greek inscription forbidding non-Jews to enter the inner courts of the temple (see Josephus, *War* 5.5.2, 193–194; 6.2.4, 124–125; *Ant.* 15.11.5, 417).²⁰⁷ The second one is a Greek inscription that honors a man named Paris for his generosity in paying for a stone pavement somewhere in the vicinity of the temple, which was for the benefit of those who could read them in Jerusalem.²⁰⁸ The third one is the so-called Theodotus inscription (ca. before 70 CE) that commemorates a thoroughly Jewish priest and head of synagogue in Greek.²⁰⁹ The fourth one is a Caesar’s unilingual decree in Greek that forbade the violation of sepulchers. The fifth and last one is a Greek dedication inscription on a column in Capernaum.²¹⁰

This large number of Greek Jewish inscriptions indicates many social variables that composed the community of ancient Palestine. One is the obvious fact that Greek would have been the prestige language of the society,²¹¹ as even Jewish families seem to prefer to inscribe their tombstones in Greek. As Porter remarks, “At the most private and final moments when a loved one was finally to be laid to rest, in the majority of instances, Jews chose Greek as the language in which to memorialize their deceased.”²¹² A second one is that a huge sector or various sectors of the population of ancient Palestine would have been Greek speakers or, at the least, might have largely adopted the Hellenistic culture of the time. Even though Senzo Nagabuko has argued for the

²⁰⁶ See Porter, “Scholarly Opinion,” 157–59.

²⁰⁷ *OGIS* 2.598; *SEG* 8.169; *CIJ* 2.1400

²⁰⁸ See Hengel, *Hellenization*, 66 n. 34.

²⁰⁹ *SEG* 8.170; *CIJ* 2.1404. See Sevenster, *Do You Know Greek*, 131–32.

²¹⁰ *SEG* 8.4. See Fitzmyer, “Languages of Palestine,” 140.

²¹¹ Cf. Porter, “The Greek Language,” 108.

²¹² Porter, “Scholarly Opinion,” 160.

distinction between Jewish assimilation of the Hellenistic notions of after-life and Greek versions of Jewish notions in these funerary inscriptions,²¹³ the important fact is that the Greek language, in which these inscriptions were largely written, had truly penetrated the linguistic conventions of the community, regardless of however they were influenced by immigrant Jews from the Greek-speaking diaspora.²¹⁴ Poirier states, “Anyone who has observed how often Greek shows up in inscriptions must admit that somebody knew Greek.”²¹⁵ Third and last, at the very least, the presence of these Greek and bilingual (with Greek as one of the languages) inscriptions indicates that ancient Palestine was a multilingual community, in which Greek was widely spoken.

With reference to numismatic inscriptions, a huge portion of first-century coins were minted in the city of Tiberias in Galilee.²¹⁶ And under Herodian rule, including the reign of Herod Antipas (4 BCE–39 CE), they were minted exclusively in Greek (or in Greek and Latin under Agrippa II [50–100 CE]). That the rebels during the two Bar Kochba revolt did not use Greek in their coins suggests that they were indeed protesting against the general populace who had embraced the Greek language and culture.²¹⁷

Evidence of Greek coins has even been discovered in the outskirts of Palestine. The wife

²¹³ Nagabuko, “Investigations into Jewish Concepts of Afterlife,” 243–44.

²¹⁴ See Hengel, *Hellenization*, 14–15; and Alexander, “Hellenism and Hellenization,” 74–75.

²¹⁵ Poirier, “The Linguistic Situation,” 112–13. The more pressing issue, at least to some scholars, is whether these inscriptions can provide a reflection of the actual usage of Greek in the various sectors of the community, and some have been considerably pessimistic (see, for example, Smith, *Palestinian Parties*, 142–43; Alexander, “Hellenism and Hellenization,” 63–80, esp. 74; and Gerdmar, *Rethinking*, 267). Perhaps one of the sharpest critics against the usefulness of the written evidence of Greek is Feldman, “How Much Hellenism,” 301–2, who writes, “Do these inscriptions belong to a very tiny upper class? ...we must remark, the fact remains that we have a very, very small sample of what ordinary Jews in Palestine felt about the Greek language, let alone Greek culture.”

²¹⁶ Many other towns, such as Joppa, Neapolis, Nysa-Scythopolis, Sebaste, Caesarea-Maritima, Dora, the Decapolis, and Arabia-Petraea, also minted coins (see Mussies, “Greek in Palestine and the Diaspora,” 1044).

²¹⁷ See Porter, “Scholarly Opinion,” 152; Hengel, *Hellenization*, 8 and notes; Sevenster, *Do You Know Greek*, 122–26;

of King Juba II, who was the daughter of Mark Antony and Cleopatra, for instance, issued Greek coins in North Africa for use in the cult of Isis, indicating the extent of the role of Greek as the *lingua franca* of the empire.²¹⁸

With reference to papyri and literary texts, there are papyrus texts and fragments written in Greek by both Jews and non-Jews.²¹⁹ They can be classified into papyri of the Judean Desert sites and papyri of Qumran. There is evidence of Greek papyri from the Judean Desert sites which include a wide range of artifacts, such as commercial transactions, fiduciary notes, contracts of marriage, and fragments of philosophical and literary texts, among others. For example, one Greek fragment tells of a Jewish antique dealer who was dealing with taxes and tariffs to be paid for wares sold or imported by the citizens. The wares were measured in terms of, among other measurements, σάτα (a thirteen-liter measure; Matt 13:33).²²⁰ There are also many lead or stone weights that bear a Greek inscription, following a genitive absolute construction, ἀγορανόμου or ἀγορανομούντος (market/marketing laws).²²¹

On the other hand, the Qumran cache only has 3 percent of its total literary texts in Greek, and Emanuel Tov notes that of the 27 Greek writings found at Qumran (notably Caves 4 and 7), none of them, with one exception (4Q350=4QAccount gr), is documentary in nature.²²² The main point of the argument is that there is substantial difference in the Greek texts found in the Qumran cache from the other archives and that

²¹⁸ See Gsell, *Histoire ancienne*, 219, 236, 241–4.

²¹⁹ See Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, 83–88.

²²⁰ See Merker, “A Greek Tariff Inscription,” 238–44.

²²¹ See, for example, *SEG* 26 (1976–7), nr. 1665.

²²² See Tov, “The Nature of the Greek Texts,” 1–11; and Tov, “The Corpus of the Qumran Papyri,” 85–103. But, cf. Yardeni, “Appendix,” 283–317, who raises serious doubts on the provenance and nature of this document.

the scarcity of Greek texts there reflects the avoidance of the community in using Greek loanwords.²²³ Most importantly, however, the papyri from Egypt, the Judean Desert near the Euphrates, and Bostra demonstrate that many of these documents (so far), which were addressed to the Roman government by various local officials (e.g., a centurion, a prefect, a beneficiary), were all written in Greek.²²⁴ The same is true with decrees and announcements from the Roman government to her subjects—they are all in Greek.²²⁵ Evidence for the use of Greek in this range of correspondence between the government and the people is abundant. This was the job of the imperial secretary (*ab epistulis Graecis*).²²⁶

With reference to Greek names and loanwords, A.W. Argyle refers to the list of S. Krauss's *Griechische und lateinische Lehnwörter im Talmud, Midrasch und Targum*,²²⁷ and shows that the presence and use of many of these Greek transcriptions, especially those that relate to the carpentry business (e.g., ἐξέδρα [wooden bench], ἄσιλλα [wooden yoke to carry baskets and pails], γλύφω [to carve, cut with a chisel], ζυγόν [wooden yoke for animals], τράπεζα [table], πύξινον [a tablet made of boxwood]), provide possible evidence for the idea that Joseph and Jesus spoke Greek to converse with their customers, especially in Galilee of the Gentiles, where Jesus spent most of his

²²³ See Tov, "The Nature of the Greek Texts," 3; and Cotton, "Greek," 324.

²²⁴ See Feissel and Gascou, "Documents d'archives romains," 65–119; Cotton and Yardeni, *Aramaic, Hebrew, and Greek*, 158–279; and Lewis, *The Documents*.

²²⁵ So far more than sixty documents have been discovered. See Katzoff, "Sources of Law," 807–44.

²²⁶ See Millar, *The Emperor*, 83–109.

²²⁷ See Krauss, *Griechische und lateinische Lehnwörter*.

early years.²²⁸ Even more interesting is Jesus' use of the term ὑποκριτής (e.g., “play actor”; Matt 6:2, 5, 16; 23 *passim*), which, according to Argyle, is proof for Jesus speaking and teaching in Greek, especially when there is no Aramaic equivalent for the term and when theatrical play was forbidden among the Jews.²²⁹ These Greek loanwords cannot be taken for granted, for even though they might not necessarily imply knowledge of Greek, but they do indicate the pervasive use of Greek in ancient Palestine and thus suggest the presence of Greek-language users.

Third and last, other historical information also points to the widespread use of Greek in ancient Palestine. That the Greek New Testament was written and preserved in Κοινή or the spoken language of the common people, as shown in the pioneering works of Deissmann, Thumb, and Moulton on the Egyptian papyri (see above), further corroborates the Greek hypothesis.²³⁰ This argument extends to the early church fathers, who, based on evidence that has come down to us, were Greek speakers. Other Jewish literature, such as the Book of Daniel (the Greek and Catholic versions), which includes the Prayer of Azariah, the Song of the Three Children, Susanna, and Bel and the Dragon in its deuterocanonical form, the six additions to the book of Esther, and the two apocryphal books, 1 Esdras and 2 Maccabees, were all composed in Greek in Palestine.²³¹

²²⁸ See Argyle, “Greek among the Jews,” 87–88; Argyle, “Did Jesus Speak Greek,” 92–93, 383. Porter, “Scholarly Opinion,” 151 n. 47, notes, however, that apart from a literary context, it is difficult to determine the usage of Greek based on these Greek loan words and Greek names.

²²⁹ Argyle, “Greek among the Jews,” 89.

²³⁰ Cf. Porter, “Role of Greek,” 371–73.

²³¹ See Evans, *Noncanonical Writings*, 12–15; and Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, 98, 176. For further information on these kinds of Jewish literature in Greek, see Porter, “Scholarly Opinion,” 153–56.

The *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, especially the *Testament of Judah* and *Testament of Levi*, were also of Greek and Palestinian origin.²³²

Moreover, that the Gospel authors give no hint that their literary compositions were translations from Semitic sources should cause scholars to be circumspect in arguing for the theory that the Gospel texts came from a Semitic original.²³³ In fact, N. Turner notes such characteristically Greek phrases and constructions as the “*men...de*” expression, the use of the genitive absolute, which appears infrequently in the Septuagint, and the phrase “an honest and good heart” (Luke 8:15), as well as various instances of alliteration and wordplay are all evidence against a Semitic original.²³⁴ The historical information provided in the *Testimonium Flavianum* that Jesus καὶ πολλοὺς μὲν Ἰουδαίους, πολλοὺς δὲ καὶ τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ ἐπηγάγετο (Josephus, *Ant.* 18.3.3, 63) and sayings in the *Tosefta* and *Talmud*, such as “Permission was given to the House of Rabban Gamaliel to teach their children Greek” (Sota 15, 322.6) and “There was a thousand young men in my father’s house, five hundred of whom studied the Law, while the other five hundred studied Greek wisdom” (Sota 49b) also supports the theory that many Palestinian Jews actually knew or learned Greek.

Paul’s quotation from the Greek poet Menander in 1 Cor 15:33 further corroborates this point. If Paul had known Greek, it is not at all impossible that Jesus and his disciples would also have known the language, even if their Greek proficiency were

²³² See Slingerland, *The Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs*.

²³³ Roberts, *Greek*, 91.

²³⁴ See Turner, “The Language of Jesus,” 174-90.

not at a scribal level.²³⁵ Paul and Jesus and his disciples were contemporaries, and some of Paul's letters (e.g., 1 Cor 11:23–26; 15:3–7; Rom 8:15 and Gal 4:6 [cf. Mark 14:36]), which contain Jesus traditions, even probably predate the Gospels. As B.F. Westcott points out, the synoptic Gospels may well be the “the probable form of the first oral Gospel” and may indicate the last stage of the apostolic preaching.²³⁶ This consequently suggests that the written Greek Gospels may have originated from oral Greek traditions.

Latin

Though it remains disputed, the linguistic evidence for Latin indicates that the language was mostly used for official governmental functions.²³⁷ To be sure, Latin was the symbol for Rome and her representatives as the ruling power of the time—it “mirrored the power and extent of the Roman Empire,”²³⁸ even when Greek was the *lingua franca* of the empire.²³⁹ The body of evidence for Latin includes “dedicatory inscriptions on buildings and aqueducts, funerary inscriptions on tombstones of Roman legionnaires who died in Palestine, milestones of Roman roads with Latin inscriptions,

²³⁵ On the issue of Jesus' literacy level, see Keith, *Jesus' Literacy*, 85–88, who differentiates “literacy” (the ability to read and write at a literary or scribal level) and “textuality” (“the knowledge, usage, and appreciation of texts regardless of individual or majority ability to create or access them via literate skills” [87]).

²³⁶ Westcott, *Introduction*, 184, 209.

²³⁷ Cf. Millard, “Latin,” 451; Porter, “Latin,” 630. Schürer, *History*, 2:80, in fact states, “the spread of Latin in Palestine in the early period of the Roman rule did not extend far beyond official uses.” See also, Barr, “Which Language Did Jesus Speak?” 10.

²³⁸ Clackson, “Latin,” 789. Latin has a long history that dates back to the eighth century BCE or even earlier than that, although the earliest recognized stage in its philological development came only in 100 BCE, which language is known as the *Early* or *Old Latin*. This earliest stage immediately follows the *Pre-Classical Latin* stage from ca. 240–100 BCE (prior to this date, literary evidence for *Pre-literary Latin* is scant). The language of official inscriptions and literature is known as *Classical Latin* (ca. 100 BCE–14 CE). The next and third stage in the development is called the *Post-Classical* and *Late Latin* (sometimes also known as *Silver Latin*, a derogatory term denoting its inferiority from *Classical Latin*), although it is difficult to track the date of its genesis, except to say that by 400 CE, the difference between *Classical Latin* and *Late Latin* had become clear. The term *Vulgar Latin* does not denote a stage of development, but is rather used as a catch-all term denoting an informal vernacular spoken by the illiterate or uneducated (789–91).

²³⁹ See Eck, “Latein als Sprache,” 641–60; and Eck, “Ein Spiegel der Macht,” 47–70.

and the ubiquitous Roman terracotta tiles stamped with various abbreviations of the Tenth legion, the *Legio decima fretensis* (LX, LXF, LXFRE, LEXFR, LCXF, LEG X F).”²⁴⁰ Perhaps the common Latin text that we know of is the *titulus* on top of Jesus’ cross, which was written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin (John 19:20), and the bilingual inscription (in Greek and Latin) that Cornelius Gallus, the first prefect of Egypt, put up at Philae.²⁴¹

In the mid-twentieth century, Fitzmyer notes that such linguistic evidence is precious because it is not abundant.²⁴² The linguistic evidence he presented at that time only included two Latin inscriptions from Caesarea Maritima (an architrave inscription bearing the name of the Roman colony established by Vespasian and a dedicatory inscription on a building that Pilate erected in honor of Tiberius), the temple inscriptions forbidding non-Jews to enter the inner temple court from Josephus’s account (see above), a few Latin papyri fragments, and some funerary inscriptions.²⁴³

At the turn of the twenty-first century, however, there are approximately 190 Latin texts discovered at Caesarea Maritima, which is the location where we find the majority of them.²⁴⁴ Eck says that this number is a significant improvement from the

²⁴⁰ Fitzmyer, “The Languages of Palestine,” 129; and Safrai, “Spoken and Literary,” 225. For these types of linguistic artifacts, see Avi-Yonah, “Latin and Greek Inscriptions,” 89–102; Avi-Yonah, “Roman Road System,” 54–60; Avi-Yonah, “T. Mucius Clemens,” 258–64; and Avi-Yonah, “A New Dating,” 75–76.

²⁴¹ *CIL* III 14147, 5=*ILS* 8995.

²⁴² Fitzmyer, “The Languages of Palestine,” 133.

²⁴³ See Fitzmyer, “The Languages of Palestine,” 130–33; and Millard, “Latin,” 452. Pilate’s inscription has now been identified as an inscription on one of the lighthouses in the harbor of Caesarea (see Alföldy, “Pontius Pilatus,” 85–108; cf. Feldman, “Financing the Colosseum,” 20–31, 60–1).

²⁴⁴ See Lehmann and Holum, *Greek and Latin Inscriptions*, who survey the corpus up to 1992. For surveys since 1992, see Cotton and Eck, *Governors and Their Personnel*, 215–40; Cotton and Eck, “A New Inscription,” 375–91; and Eck, “An Inscription from Nahal Haggit,” forthcoming.

three inscriptions recorded in *CIL* III that covers material until 1902.²⁴⁵ And according to his estimation, there are now about 530 Latin texts gathered from the entire land of Israel, about 150 of which were milestones.²⁴⁶ Eck further says that the use of Latin in Palestine should not be taken for granted, especially since all the inscriptions dedicated to soldiers in the promontory-palace discovered from recent excavations in Caesarea (in the 1990s) and mosaics from the *praetorium* located on the opposite side of the Herodian circus were all in Latin.²⁴⁷ While it is true that most of the soldiers from the second and third century, who were recruited from the local population, all spoke either Greek or Aramaic as their native tongue, the impact of these Latin inscriptions on them as they go in and out of these places cannot be underestimated. As Millard asserts, even uneducated people who cannot read or write can always ask the educated ones for help,²⁴⁸ and consequently, through time they become familiar with some of the common words and expressions of the foreign language. Porter also asserts that Roman officials carried on much of their local business by using Latin when there are official circumstances that warranted it, but likewise notes that there is evidence for non-official uses of Latin in Palestine, some of which may even suggest that Jesus possibly spoke the language.²⁴⁹ This evidence includes those artifacts that I have mentioned here, as well “some documentary evidence,

²⁴⁵ Eck, “The Language of Power,” 126.

²⁴⁶ For a summary of the number of inscriptions from various sites outside of Caesarea Maritima, see Eck, “The Language of Power,” 126–31, who concludes from his brief synopsis that Latin inscriptions are commonly associated with the Roman government’s administrative activities.

²⁴⁷ See Eck, “The Language of Power,” 133–44. For discussions of these inscriptions, see Burrell, “Two Inscribed Columns,” 297–95; and Lehmann and Holum, *Greek and Latin Inscriptions*, esp. nos. 1, 2, 5, 8, 13–15, 16–18. Porter, “Greek Grammar from a Mosaic?” 29–41, studies a unique Greek mosaic found at Antioch-on-the-Orontes to demonstrate how we may be able to understand further the Greek tense-forms and their meanings.

²⁴⁸ Millard, *Reading and Writing*, 167.

²⁴⁹ Porter, “The Language(s) Jesus Spoke,” 2464, 2469–70.

such as a fragment of Vergil found at Masada and Latinisms in some Bar Kokhba letters.”²⁵⁰ As regards Jesus’ use of Latin, S.W. Patterson writes, “At Capernaum...the Master may have spoken...to smaller groups, such as soldiers, in virile, everyday Latin.”²⁵¹ As a matter of fact, Jesus’ rejoinder to Pilate “You have said so” in Matt 27:11 may have actually transpired in Latin (see chapter 5—Greek or Latin, Rule D2).²⁵²

Evidence for the use of Latin may also be found in imperial coins, such as the “tribute money” (*denarius*) in Matt 22:18–22, and a large number of inscribed potsherds. For instance, Millard conjectures that some of the servants, particularly the butlers, in Herod’s household would have had to know Latin in order to select the type of vintage wine Herod demanded. These amphorae bore the label: “C. SENTIO SATURNINO CONSULE PHILONIANUM DE L. LAENI FUNDO REGI HERODI IUDAICO ‘In the consulate of C. Sentius Saturninus, Philonian wine from the estate of L. Laenius, for Herod the Jewish king’.” Millard also points out that Masada, the place where these amphorae were discovered, was only one of Herod’s residences; thus, there could well be similar such supplies in Caesarea, Jerusalem, and Herodium.²⁵³

There are also Latin words that appear in the Greek text of the Gospels.²⁵⁴ Ten of the eighteen Latin words (e.g., *quadrans* [Mark 12:42]; *praetorium* [Mark 15:16]; *milia* [Matt 5:41]; *custodia* [Matt 27:65, 66; 28:11]; *modius* [Mark 4:21; Matt 5:15]; *census* [Mark 12:14; Matt 17:25; 22:17]; *flagellare* [Mark 15:15; Matt 27:26]; *sudarium* [Luke

²⁵⁰ Porter, “The Language(s) Jesus Spoke,” 2469.

²⁵¹ Patterson, “What Language,” 65. The Vienna Jesuit Inchofer (1648) also claims that Jesus spoke Latin (cited in Schweitzer, *The Quest*, 270).

²⁵² Ong, “Linguistic Analysis,” 130–31. Cf. Porter, “The Language(s) Jesus Spoke,” 2464, who also considers this possibility but says that the evidence is weak.

²⁵³ Millard, “Latin,” 453.

²⁵⁴ For a list of these lexical materials, see Blass and Debrunner, *A Greek Grammar*, 4–6; and Robertson, *Grammar*, 108–11.

19:20; John 11:4; 20:7; cf. Acts 19:19]; *flagellium* [John 2:15]; *lintheum* [John 13:4, 5] *libra* [John 12:3; 19:39]; *titulus* [John 19:19, 20]; and the common *denarius*) in the Gospels are found in Mark. As such, M. Hengel argues that this is evidence for the Roman provenance of the Gospel.²⁵⁵ It is interesting to observe that many of these Latin words only occur in the Gospels and that they relate to military and administrative activities.²⁵⁶ Millard points out that there are many Latin loanwords found in the Mishna and other rabbinic texts of the third-century CE, such as the words *porgal* and *flagellium* in the Tosefta and Mekilta and *sphiklator* in Sipre 91 and the *midrashim*.²⁵⁷

CONCLUSION

This survey has shown that scholars share different opinions regarding the linguistic situation and composition of ancient Palestine. Nevertheless, it seems fair to say that, regardless of the particular view one tends to support, it is actually hard to ignore the fact that ancient Palestine was a multilingual speech community. To be sure, there is linguistic evidence for the existence of all four languages—Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin—in ancient Palestine. In fact, even some of the scholars who study the Greek language of the New Testament on the basis of its history, philology, and grammar propose that there is either Aramaic or Hebrew interference in the type of Greek found in this body of literature. Consequently, it is logical to assume that any person who lived in that ancient multilingual community would have come to learn and speak these languages. The problem, however, lies in the difficulty of demonstrating how the multifarious sociolinguistic dynamics are played in the use of these languages.

²⁵⁵ Hengel, *Mark*, 28–29.

²⁵⁶ Millard, “Latin,” 456.

²⁵⁷ Millard, “Latin,” 457. See also Greenfield, “Languages of Palestine,” 152–53.

Specifically, how do we determine the functional distribution of these languages in the speech community? How do we also determine that a speaker, say, Jesus, was able to speak any of these languages? More recently, some scholars have invoked theories and tools from sociolinguistics to look at this subject matter as well as other subject areas in New Testament studies. The next chapter will survey and examine a number of these scholarly works and present the proposed sociolinguistic model that will be used in this study.

Chapter Two: Sociolinguistics and the New Testament

INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, I survey a number of studies that have dealt with the languages of ancient Palestine and of Jesus, including the concomitant topic of the Greek of the New Testament. The objective of that survey was to show the state of play and the diversity of scholarly opinions regarding our subject of interest. The survey indicates that previous studies have argued their case via mostly historical means and logical inferences. Whether which language or combination of languages forms the linguistic repertoire of Jesus and his contemporaries largely depends upon a particular proponent's explanation of the linguistic evidence. Some presuppositions about the historical setting of ancient Palestine or the sociocultural background of Jesus and his contemporaries often influence the views of various proponents. Many scholars find it hard to believe that Jesus and his contemporaries could have been multilingual speakers because they were Jewish natives whose mother tongue was Aramaic. This scenario generally characterizes much of the scholarship on the linguistic situation of ancient Palestine from the period of its inception until approximately the 1960s.

Scholarship on this subject has not been one-sided, however. Many scholars are now beginning to appreciate the multilingual nature of the society of ancient Palestine, especially shortly before and at the turn of the twenty-first century. The discovery of a plethora of multilingual artifacts in various locations near the Dead Sea can hardly be ignored in pointing to the fact that ancient Palestine was almost certainly a multilingual community. These scholars acknowledge that Jesus and his contemporaries would have been multilingual speakers, because the linguistic evidence for multilingualism is simply

undeniable. However, scholars until today are still concerned with how to best interpret the linguistic evidence. How do or can we show that Jesus and his contemporaries were indeed multilingual speakers? On what occasions and circumstances would Jesus speak Aramaic, Hebrew, Greek, or Latin?¹ Was Jesus able to use Aramaic in all speech situations in that ancient multilingual society? Scholarship since the 1960s, and especially in the 1970s, has begun to invoke and use sociolinguistics to solve these problems. In fact, sociolinguistics has been used to investigate not only the linguistic environment of ancient Palestine, but also other areas in New Testament studies. It is fair to say that most scholars now at least acknowledge the multilingual elements that composed the community of first-century Palestine, with some even using sociolinguistic theories to investigate the linguistic evidence. Nevertheless, it is important to note that none of these studies (so far as I know) has offered an adequate explanation for how the multilingual dynamics of communication are at play in that ancient community, let alone developed a systematic methodological framework to investigate the linguistic evidence. Scholarship has yet to see how various sociolinguistic theories can be combined and applied to our primary evidence—the New Testament and its related literature. And it is for this reason that I offer this present chapter.

This chapter has two major sections. The first section surveys previous sociolinguistic approaches to New Testament studies, which include studies on the linguistic situation of ancient Palestine, Bible translation, and biblical interpretation. The second section presents my proposed sociolinguistic approach to the multilingualism of ancient Palestine. The items discussed in this section encapsulate the research

¹ Porter, “The Language(s) Jesus Spoke,” 2459, asserts the possibility that Jesus may have come into contact with six languages—Palestinian Aramaic, Hebrew, Koine Greek, Latin, ancient Egyptian, and Nabatean.

methodology of this study. I first provide in this section an overview of the discipline by describing sociolinguistics, sketching its history and development, and stating some of its usefulness and limitations as a methodological tool. From this overview, I then present my proposed sociolinguistic model, articulating my approach to its utilization and application. My model combines various sociolinguistic theories that I develop into a multi-level and multi-dimensional framework, which I applied to the available linguistic evidence (chapters 3 and 4), notably the Gospel of Matthew (chapter 5).

Matthew's Gospel serves as a means by which I can tap into the linguistic milieu of the first-century community to study the various situational contexts of Jesus' speeches and actions. Of course, the recorded events in the Gospels, Matthew in my case, do not necessarily entail an exact replication of the actual events. It is possible that some details of the actual events were redacted to suit the Gospel author's purpose and goal. The question is whether these recorded events are historically reliable to the extent that they can represent the kinds of situational contexts that occurred in the first century CE. The answer to this question seems straightforward, since, undoubtedly, the Gospels are the only few available sources (but perhaps the best ones) that we have.

SOCIOLINGUISTIC APPROACHES TO THE NEW TESTAMENT—PREVIOUS STUDIES

Scholarship until the 1960s that uses historical means and logical inferences obviously cannot explain the multilingual dynamics at play in its origins. The absence of any live first-century Palestinian resident to whom we can address our questions makes us totally dependent upon the available information we can glean from the New Testament, which is probably our best historical source, and other related literature. For this reason, the best logical and plausible explanations that we provide for the linguistic

data will always remain highly speculative, without the use of an appropriate interpretive tool. Needless to say, such intuitive explanations appear to be weaker than those that derive from a clearly articulated theory and methodological framework. This scenario can be compared with that of trying to solve an algebraic equation using basic arithmetic tools, such that while one may be able to make sense of the constants in the equation, the variables will always remain unknown.

Sociolinguistics is able to account for the dynamic interplay of the three basic components of a community—people, language, and society—providing us with a framework through which we can organize and interpret the available linguistic data. Though still in its infancy stage, recent scholarship has attempted to use sociolinguistic theories to analyze the linguistic evidence.² The application of sociolinguistic theories has taken various forms. Some have merely defined sociolinguistics and its theories, without explaining how the theories can actually be applied to the linguistic evidence. Others, however, have articulated the theories that they employ and have applied them to the New Testament texts and other extra-canonical texts. In what follows, I survey a number of these works, before introducing my own approach in the subsequent section.

This section is divided into three sub-sections, each of which may represent a particular category under which we can place the work of scholars who have mentioned, utilized, or at least claimed to use sociolinguistic theories. Each sub-section also describes the kinds of sociolinguistic theories or approaches these scholars have used either in analyzing the linguistic situation of ancient Palestine or in employing them in other areas of New Testament studies. The first sub-section includes various

² Cf. Silva, “Bilingualism,” 213; and Lee, *Jesus and Gospel Traditions*, 77, 213, who says that a sociolinguistic approach to bilingualism “had not been taken seriously until the 1960s.”

sociolinguistic studies on the linguistic environment of ancient Palestine, the second on Bible translation, and the third on the relationship of sociolinguistics to biblical interpretation and to its application to the New Testament texts. Although my concern in this study is strictly with studying the linguistic situation of ancient Palestine, I also find it necessary to include other areas of studies that have utilized the theories of sociolinguistics. I wish to show that scholars have already long acknowledged the usefulness and relevance of sociolinguistics to many areas of New Testament studies.³

Sociolinguistics and the Linguistic Situation of Ancient Palestine

The first group of scholars represents those studies that have examined the linguistic situation of ancient Palestine. Most of these works barely utilize any specific theory of sociolinguistics in their investigation of the subject matter, except for two of them—Sang-Il Lee’s *Jesus and Gospel Traditions in Bilingual Context* and Michael Wise’s “Languages of Palestine”—both of which explicitly state and define their employment of sociolinguistics in their studies.

Sang-Il Lee

The most recent monograph-length treatment of this topic is arguably Lee’s *Jesus and Gospel Traditions in Bilingual Context*. Because Lee’s thesis is actually more directly related to the transmission of the Jesus and Gospel traditions, I will simply state and critique briefly his approach to sociolinguistics.⁴ Lee defines and employs various

³ I note that Old Testament scholars have also used sociolinguistic theories, but this subject area is beyond the scope of this study. For those interested in exploring this subject area in Old Testament studies, see Wilt, “A Sociolinguistic Analysis of NĀ’,” 237–55; Schniedewind, “Qumran Hebrew as an Antilanguage,” 235–52; Polak, “Sociolinguistics: A Key to the Typology and the Social Background of Biblical Hebrew,” 115–62; Gianto, “Variations in Biblical Hebrew,” 493–508; Portier-Young, “Languages of Identity and Obligation,” 98–115; Snell, “Why Is There Aramaic in the Bible?” 32–51; and Arnold, “The Use of Aramaic in the Hebrew Bible,” 1–16.

⁴ For fuller comments, see Ong, “Review of *Jesus and Gospel Traditions*,” 124–29. See also Ong “Ancient Palestine,” forthcoming.

multilingualism theories and attempts to show that first-century Palestine was in fact a multilingual society.⁵ He conjectures, on the basis of the available historical, archaeological, and linguistic material evidence, that the ancient Palestinian community was composed of “largely bilingual” residents (hence, the community is said to be bilingual but not diglossic), which implies that the populace was made up of competently fluent speakers of both the Aramaic and Greek languages.⁶ By characterizing ancient Palestine as largely bilingual, Lee’s intention is to assert that the linguistic transmission of the Jesus and Gospel traditions was not unidirectional (from Aramaic to Greek) but rather “interdirectional” (from Aramaic to Greek and vice versa).⁷ The problem with Lee’s sociolinguistic approach, however, is that the arguments and evidence he marshals do not derive from it. Specifically, he does not show how his defined sociolinguistic theories actually apply to the linguistic evidence and the Gospel texts. Instead, he analyzes the Gospel texts at the levels of syntax, phonology, and semantics,⁸ which, unfortunately, do not clearly correlate with the multilingualism theories that he purportedly wants to use, making his employment of a sociolinguistic approach rather superfluous.

Michael O. Wise

Another study that claims to use a sociolinguistic approach is Wise’s “Languages of Palestine.” Wise points out that usage of language can be analyzed through the sociolinguistic principles of social class, dialect geography, code-switching, and

⁵ See Lee, *Jesus and Gospel Traditions*, chapters 2–5.

⁶ Lee, *Jesus and Gospel Traditions*, 99. See Fishman, “Bilingualism with and without Diglossia,” 360, for the notion that a strictly or largely bilingual community implies that the languages used within a community are functionally undifferentiated.

⁷ Lee, *Jesus and Gospel Traditions*, 37, cf. 133, 173, 280, 393.

⁸ See Lee, *Jesus and Gospel Traditions*, chapters 6–8.

diglossia. To some extent, Wise's article has provided a good venue for the introduction of these important sociolinguistic principles to the analysis of this language situation, especially since this work appeared as an article in a dictionary. The problem, however, is that Wise does not provide a clear description of these theories or the procedure for their application to the linguistic data. In fact, Wise merely surveys evidence of the use of Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek from the period 200 BCE to 135 CE and adds at the end a "sociolinguistic analysis" based upon logical inferences from this body of evidence. In other words, like Lee's study, the correlation between use of these sociolinguistic principles and Wise's logical inference of the linguistic data remains unclear.⁹

Other Scholars

Aside from Lee and Wise, a number of studies also have indicated in one way or another the importance of sociolinguistics for the study of the languages of ancient Palestine. The sociolinguistic theories often mentioned are diglossia, bilingualism, and sociolinguistics in general. For the most part, I think that scholars (and I would even say those who have not used sociolinguistics) have generally recognized the functional distribution of at least three languages—Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek—that existed in ancient Palestine. This shows that scholars have actually invoked the concept of diglossia (or triglossia for that matter), even without being conscious or explicit about it, in analyzing the linguistic landscape of the community. Of course, the concept of diglossia can be understood and employed in many different ways, but in my opinion, its core concept should hinge upon the idea that usage of languages within a particular community is necessarily functionally distributed (see chapter 4—Diglossia).

⁹ See Wise, "Languages of Palestine," 434–44.

An early discussion of diglossia can be seen in the work of Pinchas Lapide, who, using Charles Ferguson's classic definition of diglossia, argues for an Aramaic-Hebrew diglossia, taking the two languages as two varieties of the same Semitic language.¹⁰ The discovery of various documents in the caves near Murabba'at, especially with several letters written in Greek and payment contracts and receipts in bilingual Aramaic-Greek, however, has caused Lapide to suggest in the end that triglossia is the more appropriate description of the multilingual milieu of Jesus.¹¹ Chaim Rabin, another early scholar who uses the concept of diglossia to characterize the linguistic milieu of ancient Palestine, argues along a similar vein for an Aramaic-Hebrew diglossia.¹² Bernard Spolsky is one other scholar who uses the term "triglossia" to describe the first-century linguistic milieu, incorporating Greek into the Aramaic-Hebrew mix.¹³ However, Stanley E. Porter notes that there are many significant limitations to Spolsky's study, one of which is especially his failure to provide both quantifiable comparative data and contextual evidence for the

¹⁰ Lapide, "Insights from Qumran," 485. Cf. Lund, "The Language of Jesus," 139.

¹¹ See Lapide, "Insights from Qumran," 492, 498.

¹² See Rabin, "Hebrew and Aramaic," 2:1007–39, esp. 1007–8, who also discusses bilingualism and *lingua franca*. Cf. Mussies, "Greek as the Vehicle," 362. Lee, *Jesus and Gospel Traditions*, 88–92, claims that, whereas Rabin provided a general framework of diglossia for future biblical scholars, Lapide had not gained considerable followers of his view. Whether Lee's assessment is accurate, I cannot be certain. But it appears that, aside from those mentioned by Lee (88–89 n. 24), Voelz has followed the analysis of Lapide's "outstanding study" (see "The Linguistic Milieu," 84); and Tresham, "The Languages Spoken by Jesus," 93 n. 129, has also cited Lapide in his survey of our subject of interest. More importantly, as I have shown and argued here, even though scholars have not used the term diglossia, they still have acknowledged the functional distribution of the various languages in ancient Palestine. See also the summary of diglossia studies in Watt, "The Current Landscape," 26–30, and most recently, Ruzer, "Hebrew versus Aramaic," 182–205, who tries to show in his study of Syriac authors that they did not reflect the modern belief of Jesus as an Aramaic and non-Hebrew speaker.

¹³ See Spolsky, "Triglossia," 95–109; Spolsky, "Jewish Multilingualism," 35–50; Spolsky, "Diglossia," 85–104; and most recently, Spolsky, *The Languages of the Jews*, esp. 35–62. One recent study that argues against the view that the Gospel of Mark was based upon an Aramaic original (on this, see Casey, *Aramaic Sources*; and Casey, *An Aramaic Approach*) and that attempts to identify and distinguish Hebrew and Aramaic influence within Greek documents is Buth, "Distinguishing Hebrew and Aramaic," 247–319.

ordering of the languages in terms of their frequency of use in ancient Palestine.¹⁴

Nevertheless, Spolsky proposes this functional distribution of the languages according to the geographical landscape of ancient Palestine (see Table A):¹⁵

Table A: Spolsky's Geographical Categorization of the Languages of Ancient Palestine

Jews in the Diaspora	
a. Egypt, Rome, Asia Minor	Greek
b. Babylon	Aramaic and Hebrew
Non-Jews in Palestine	
a. Government officials	Greek and some Latin
b. Coastal cities (Greek colonies)	Greek
c. Elsewhere	Aramaic
Jews in Palestine	
a. Judean village	Hebrew
b. Galilee	Aramaic, Hebrew, Greek
c. Coastal cities	Greek, Aramaic, Hebrew
d. Jerusalem i. upper class	Greek, Aramaic, Hebrew
ii. lower class	Aramaic, Hebrew, Greek

Other scholars have more broadly characterized the functional distribution of the languages of ancient Palestine. Jonas C. Greenfield, for example, says that “In all likelihood Hebrew was used in the villages of Judea during this period, Aramaic was used in the Jewish urban areas and in the Galilee, while Greek was used in the Hellenistic cities throughout the land and along the coast.”¹⁶ Similarly, James Voelz, following Lapide’s argument, agrees that Palestinian residents “spoke three languages, not interchangeably, but for discrete purposes—using Greek for political purposes and for converts, either with Gentiles or with Jews of the Diaspora; Hebrew for ‘religion,

¹⁴ See Porter, “The Functional Distribution of Koine,” 56–57. Cf. Lee, *Jesus and Gospel Traditions*, 92–94.

¹⁵ See Spolsky, “Jewish Multilingualism,” 41; and Spolsky, “Diglossia,” 95. Also cited in Smelik, *Targums*, 9.

¹⁶ Greenfield, “Languages of Palestine,” 149.

education, and other aspects of high culture’; and Aramaic, for ‘hearth, home, and livelihood.’”¹⁷

By contrast, instead of using the concept of diglossia, some scholars have highlighted the bilingual situation of ancient Palestine. Lee even contends that the linguistic landscape of ancient Palestine should be understood as bilingual but not diglossic (see above). There is great doubt of such an understanding, especially since the available linguistic evidence does not indicate that any of the languages in ancient Palestine could be selected for use in any type of situation. Not all scholars, however, have gone as far as Lee, and they have been concerned with other matters in discussing the bilingual situation of this ancient community.

On the one hand, Raymond G. Selby argues that there is sufficient linguistic evidence to demonstrate that Palestine during the first century was increasingly becoming a bilingual community by virtue of the continual interaction between diaspora Jews (since the third-century BCE), who adopted the Greek language, and native Jews, who lived in the homeland.¹⁸ For this reason, Selby claims that it is more sensible to think that the Greek of the New Testament “was written by a bilingual Palestinian Jew whose ‘home’ language was Aramaic,” than it is to assume a translation of the Greek from an Aramaic original.¹⁹ On the other hand, Moisés Silva addresses the relationship between bilingualism and the character of Palestinian Greek, rightly noting that the bilingualism of a specific locality (e.g., Alexandria, with its population composed of native Egyptians and Alexandrian Jews) cannot be simply assumed as the bilingualism of another locality

¹⁷ Voelz, “The Linguistic Milieu,” 84.

¹⁸ Selby, “The Language in Which Jesus Taught,” 188.

¹⁹ Selby, “The Language in Which Jesus Taught,” 187, cf. 192.

(e.g., Palestine, with its population composed of Palestinian Jews), and must therefore be studied separately.²⁰ Silva's objective was to distinguish between the study of *langue* (language system) and *parole* (speech instance). Overall, these studies that have in one way or another cited diglossia and bilingualism, which created an awareness that the linguistic milieu of ancient Palestine is far too complex than one can comprehend without using a proper tool for the investigation.

Sociolinguistics and Bible Translation

The second group includes a number of studies that apply sociolinguistic theory to Bible translation. There are two individuals and one group of scholars to note in this subject area. Most Bible translators use sociolinguistic theories, since Bible translation involves study of particular cultures and societies and their relationship with both target and receptor languages. This is not to say, however, that all Bible translation theories, even though they may examine how words and expressions in the target language can be best translated in the receptor language, are based upon sociolinguistic theories. In the history of Bible translation, the name Eugene A. Nida is often associated with sociolinguistics, because of his many insightful contributions to the discipline.²¹

Eugene A. Nida

Nida's sociolinguistic-oriented approach to Bible translation theory and his achievement in the Bible translation enterprise cannot be underestimated.²² Through his

²⁰ See Silva, "Bilingualism," 206–7, 220.

²¹ See, among his other works, Nida, *The Sociolinguistics of Interlingual Communication*; Nida, "Sociolinguistics and Translating," 1–49; Nida, "Translating Means Communicating, I," 101–7; and Nida, "Translating Means Communicating, II," 318–25. For a review of Nida's work in the field of sociolinguistics, see Watt, "The Contributions of Eugene A. Nida," 19–29.

²² Nida's name is often associated with the dynamic or functional theory of translation, which he articulates in three key works: Nida, *Toward a Science of Translating*; Nida and Taber, *The Theory and Practice of Translation*; and Nida and de Waard, *From One Language to Another*. For a synopsis of his life and career,

efforts in formulating his dynamic equivalence theory, Nida has made possible the translation of the Bible into hundreds of languages around the world and the sale of more than 200 million copies of the Good News Translation (GNT) and the Contemporary English Version (CEV).²³ With reference to sociolinguistics, Watt observes that Nida's contribution has been variegated and wide-ranging, which includes the creation of new concepts and terms (the *seminal* type of sociolinguistics), the further development of current collective databases and recognized phenomena of sociolinguistic data (the *auxiliary* type), the transformation of existing frameworks (the *reforming* type), and the synthesis of various theories by different theorists (the *integrative* type).²⁴ It is difficult to give a summary of Nida's work due to the wide-ranging nature of his numerous publications.²⁵

But it is perhaps accurate to say that Nida's outstanding contribution to sociolinguistics is in the area of and summarized by "Communication Roles of Languages in Multilingual Societies."²⁶ In this article, Nida, and his co-author, William L. Wonderly, shift the discussion of the classification of language roles and usage from the

see Stine, *Let the Words Be Written*, esp. 27–103, 119–52; W. Porter, "A Brief Look at the Life and Works of Eugene Albert Nida," 1–7; Porter, "Eugene Nida and Translation," 8–19; and, most recently, Porter and Ong, "Eugene A. Nida and Johannes P. Louw," forthcoming.

²³ See Stine, *Let the Words Be Written*, 80–3, 89–90.

²⁴ Watt, "The Contributions of Eugene A. Nida," 19.

²⁵ For a summative discussion and a bibliography of Nida's works, see Porter and Ong, "Eugene A. Nida and Johannes P. Louw," forthcoming.

²⁶ See also, Nida, "Translating Means Communicating, I," 101–7, where he explains that the "sociolinguistic theory of translation is translation as an act of communication" (104), noting that the five basic functions of language (expressive, informative, imperative, emotive, and phatic) are realized by the content and form as well as the paralinguistic features of the message or text; Nida, "Translating Means Communicating, II," 318–25, where he further explains that the features of language that accomplish its various functions can be divided into two principal categories—routine features (lexical and grammatical choices) and rhetorical features (literary devices and genres); and Wonderly, "Common Language and Popular Language," 401–5, who distinguishes between the technical terms "common language" and "popular language" in Bible translation, arguing that the former is a subset of the latter.

traditional treatment of it (i.e., studying language from the perspective of language) to a new paradigm that focuses upon “the communication needs of the society, with primary emphasis on the typical multilingual or multidialectal society.”²⁷ This new paradigm classifies languages according to three major communication roles—in-group language (used in one’s own community), out-group language (used outside of one’s own community), and language of specialized information (used in both in-group and out-group communities but often requiring higher learning or formal training to use it).²⁸

Nida and Wonderly note that this new paradigm does not only apply to a three-language structure community setting but also to two-language and one-language structures.

For instance, they point out that in many monolingual or one-language structure communities, such as the United States, one may speak a local regional dialect (e.g., southern U.S. or Liverpool English) as the language for in-group identification but Standard English as the language for out-group contacts and for specialized information.²⁹ In the remainder of the article, Nida and Wonderly discuss various factors to be considered by educators and policy makers in the development of national languages and in maximizing the use of other languages within a particular linguistic community, since languages are always “a prime element in the struggle for national unity.”³⁰

²⁷ Nida and Wonderly, “Communication Roles of Languages,” 20. Traditional classification of language usage (see “Communication Roles of Languages,” 19) is primarily based upon the function of language within different contexts (e.g., education, legal proceedings, governmental decrees, trade, religion, etc.); upon different levels of status (e.g., official, national, tribal); upon levels of usage (e.g., colloquial, literary, vulgar, slang); or upon differences of historical setting (e.g., ancient, traditional, archaic, obsolescent, and modern).

²⁸ See Nida and Wonderly, “Communication Roles of Languages,” 20–22.

²⁹ See Nida and Wonderly, “Communication Roles of Languages,” 22–28.

³⁰ See Nida and Wonderly, “Communication Roles of Languages,” 26–37.

David J. Clark

Another significant scholar who makes use of sociolinguistics to address Bible translation issues is David J. Clark. In three notable articles—“Vocative Displacement in the Gospels,” “Vocatives Displacement in Acts and Revelation,” and “Vocatives in the Epistles”—Clark argues that Hebrew and Greek vocatives are often difficult to render into a modern language. Clark writes, “a literal translation of a vocative term in Hebrew or Greek may produce sociolinguistic overtones in a receptor language which are completely out of place in the context. The classic case is Jn 2.4...*gunai*...as ‘woman’ sounds at the very least rude and uncouth.”³¹ Clark says that a vocative is said to be “displaced” if it deviates from its normal placement, which is at the beginning of a sentence. Whereas approximately 29% of the vocatives in the Gospels and 42% in Acts are displaced, the 94% of displaced vocatives in the book of Revelation, Clark continues, is striking.³²

In the New Testament letters, Clark distinguishes between virtual addressees (i.e., those who may or may not actually exist among the readership) and normal vocatives, and arrives at the number of 79% for displaced vocatives in both the Pauline and Catholic letters combined.³³ Clark points out that this deviation of these so-called displaced vocatives needs to be explained, and he attributes the explanation to two factors that influence their displacement in the sentence. One factor he says is caused by lexico-syntactic influences, such that a displaced vocative is employed to include adverbial phrases, fossilized imperatives, and interjections. A second factor is caused by

³¹ Clark, “Vocative Displacement in the Gospels,” 313.

³² See Clark, “Vocative Displacement in the Gospels,” 314; and Clark, “Vocative Displacement in Acts and Revelation,” 101.

³³ Clark, “Vocatives in the Epistles,” 36.

sociolinguistic influences, which are especially characterized by the increased social distance between interlocutors. Specifically, a “rebuke” or a “superior-inferior [and vice versa] relationship” between interlocutors can be a factor in vocative displacement.³⁴

The 1963 Symposium on Honorifics

One final group of scholars that has variously dealt with sociolinguistic theories in conjunction with Bible translation includes the several scholars who presented their papers at the 1963 Symposium on Honorifics that was sponsored by the United Bible Societies (UBS). Their various articles later appeared in *The Bible Translator* 14.4 (1963), dealing with politeness theories and use of linguistic honorifics in various countries.³⁵

Three other scholars who studied linguistic politeness and use of honorifics are Ji-Youn Cho, who wrote on “Politeness and Korean Addressee Honorifics in Jesus’ Reply...(Mark 14.62b),” Annie Del Corro, who raised the issue of the appropriateness of mixed language (i.e., code-switching) in church and Bible translation in her article “Linguistic Heterogeneity and Bible Translation: The Pinoy Version,” and Lourens De Vries, who researched on “Language and Bible Translation in Clan-Based Speech Communities.”³⁶

³⁴ See Clark, “Vocative Displacement in the Gospels,” 314–17; Clark, “Vocative Displacement in Acts and Revelation,” 103–5; and Clark, “Vocatives in the Epistles,” 36–38. Clark also notes that certain phrases and clauses that contain verbs of cognition and locution often displace vocatives in the epistles and that the high frequency of displaced vocatives in this type of genre may indicate that social distance between interlocutors was linguistically equated with geographical distance (see “Vocatives in the Epistles,” 38–43).

³⁵ The articles in the Symposium on Honorifics are Swellengrebel, “Translators’ Institute in the Philippines,” 147–58; Swellengrebel, “Politeness and Translation in Balinese,” 158–64; Kramers, “On Being Polite in Chinese,” 165–73; Takahashi, “Use of Honorifics in Japanese,” 174–77; Schelander, “Honorifics in India: In the Marathi New Testament,” 178–80; Thoburn, “Honorifics in India: In the Revised Hindi New Testament,” 180–83; Angus, “Honorifics in India: In the Bengali New Testament,” 183–85; Noorduyin, “Categories of Courtesy in Sundanese,” 186–91; Churchward, “Honorific Language in Tongan,” 192–96; and Vincent, “The Use of Honorifics in Burmese,” 196–97.

³⁶ See Cho, “Politeness and Korean Addressee Honorifics,” 26–38; Del Corro, “Linguistic Heterogeneity and Bible Translation,” 201–14; and De Vries, “Language and Bible Translation,” 121–36.

Sociolinguistics and Biblical Interpretation

The third group of scholars is those that explain the relationship between sociolinguistics and biblical interpretation, as well as how sociolinguistics can be applied to the text of the New Testament. There are nine key scholars to note, but only the last five scholars can perhaps be considered as the ones who have actually applied particular sociolinguistic theories to the New Testament or other related texts.³⁷

Bruce J. Malina

The first scholar is Bruce J. Malina, who is well-known for his work on social-scientific criticism of the New Testament.³⁸ In general, the use of a social-scientific approach to the text of the New Testament is aimed at the discovery and reconstruction of the world of the New Testament. The method is to establish a corollary linkage between models of contemporary cultures and those of the ancient world. Such an approach, however, evinces pronounced difficulties in trying to relate modern cultural models, which are used as lenses to comprehend the ancient biblical culture, to the biblical text (and other related literature for that matter), which is the only surviving evidence we have and the only means we can take in knowing about that ancient culture. This linkage between the extant biblical text and its historical context has been Malina's concern in two articles—"The Social Sciences and Biblical Interpretation" and "John's: The Maverick Christian Group: The Evidence of Sociolinguistics"—where he presented some sociolinguistic theories and their relationship and application to biblical interpretation.

³⁷ Sociolinguistics is a multi-disciplinary and eclectic discipline. In other words, the discipline not only draws its theories and principles from various other disciplines in the social sciences, but each theory or principle also comprises various concepts or views of different sociolinguists.

³⁸ For Bruce Malina's work on the application of social-scientific criticism to the Gospels, see especially, Malina, *The Social World of Jesus and the Gospels*; and Malina, *The Social Gospel of Jesus*.

Malina states, “biblical interpretation...will be based upon and derive from models of how the world of human being works (social sciences) and models of the nature and function of language (linguistics).”³⁹

Malina presents three types of social science models that can be used for understanding social interaction—the structural functionalist, the conflict, and the symbolic models—indicating that any of these three models may be appropriately used depending on the kinds of information one seeks to find.⁴⁰ Malina rightly points out that “models are question-specific or area-specific constructs.”⁴¹ He, however, was not able to indicate the criteria for linking these cultural models to the formal features of the New Testament texts. It remains unclear how effective a tool a social-scientific model is when applied to the text of the New Testament. Thus, several years later, in his second article, Malina attempts to explain his proposed theory more clearly, asking, “What social system or social meaning is being expressed in the textual wordings realized in the spellings of the biblical documents?”⁴² Malina then claims that “all ancient ‘texts,’ that is, all ancient wordings, once did realize meanings from a social system.”⁴³ This meaning is primarily derived from the mutual understanding between conversation partners sharing information through the communication process.

Malina’s goal is to demonstrate, first, that John’s Gospel is an instance of “communication,” and to argue, secondly, by way of the sociolinguistic concepts of

³⁹ Malina, “The Social Sciences,” 229.

⁴⁰ See Malina, “The Social Sciences,” 233–37; and Malina, “Rhetorical Criticism and Social-Scientific Criticism,” 73–82.

⁴¹ Malina, “The Social Sciences,” 237.

⁴² Malina, “John’s: The Maverick Christian Group,” 167. Malina here invokes the work of Halliday, *Language as Social Semiotic*, in order to discuss the three-level structure or aspect of language—phonology, morphology, and semantics.

⁴³ Malina, “John’s: The Maverick Christian Group,” 168.

speech accommodation theory and anti-language, that John's audience was a "Maverick Christian Group," one that displays a set of characteristic features that identify it as a unique social group.⁴⁴ These features are linguistic elements that are associated with the language of love or intimacy in John's Gospel,⁴⁵ which Malina situates within the idea of an author converging with (or accommodating) his audience and within the context of an anti-society that uses anti-language for interpersonal relationships and group unity.⁴⁶ To some extent, Malina's sociolinguistic model is a significant advancement in studies of the audiences of the Gospels, but the more linguistically based approach to audience-oriented studies can be seen two decades later in the work of Julia A. Snyder on the Acts of the Apostles, the Acts of John, and the Acts of Peter (see below).

Peter Cotterell

A second scholar to note is Peter Cotterell. Both of his articles—"The Nicodemus Conversation: A Fresh Appraisal" and "Sociolinguistics and Biblical Interpretation"—attempt to recreate the original context of the Nicodemus episode in John 3 so as to highlight sociolinguistics as an exegetical tool that can be usefully applied to the New Testament.⁴⁷ Cotterell emphasizes the importance of the study of semantics, noting that "meaning must be found not in the meaning of the word, nor in the aggregated meanings of sequences of words, but in the complex assembly of discourse, linguistic co-text and sociological context."⁴⁸ Thus, he provides five "relevant aspects of discourse analysis": (1) the distinction between a sentence and an utterance; (2) the imprecision of human

⁴⁴ See Malina, "John's: The Maverick Christian Group," 168–78.

⁴⁵ See Malina, "John's: The Maverick Christian Group," 178–81.

⁴⁶ Malina, "John's: The Maverick Christian Group," 178.

⁴⁷ See Cotterell, "Sociolinguistics and Biblical Interpretation," 63.

⁴⁸ Cotterell, "The Nicodemus Conversation," 237.

communication because of the concept of “ideo-culture” (the idiosyncrasies of an individual’s speech and behavior); (3) the underlying presuppositions behind all discourses; (4) the standard cultural rules and norms in conversations (e.g., the adjacency pair principle); and (5) the concept of dyadic relationships in social interaction.⁴⁹

From these discourse concepts, Cotterell discusses the discourse boundary, participants, occasion, and conversation of the Nicodemus episode, and notes that the conversation that took place was a kind of complex repartee between Jesus and Nicodemus based on a “presupposition pool” shared by both participants (i.e., the context of the discourse—where and who we are, what we are doing, when are we doing it; the co-text of the discourse—what we have said thus far; and the general knowledge of the experience and expertise the participants have of each other).⁵⁰ It is evident in Cotterell’s work that he wants to highlight the use of sociolinguistic theories for studying the functions of language in social contexts in general and for analyzing conversations in particular. Malina states, “The application of the insights particularly of sociolinguistics then enables us to re-create the original context from the fragmented cotext and to give to all of the evidence made available in the text meaning which is consistent with discourse theory.”⁵¹

Bob Zerhusen

A third scholar that uses a sociolinguistic approach, diglossia in particular, to examine the nature of the “other tongues or languages” (ἑτέρας γλώσσας) in Acts 2:4 is Bob Zerhusen. After briefly summarizing the common interpretation of Acts 2 (i.e., the

⁴⁹ Cotterell, “The Nicodemus Conversation,” 237–38.

⁵⁰ See Cotterell, “The Nicodemus Conversation,” 238–40.

⁵¹ Cotterell, “Sociolinguistics and Biblical Interpretation,” 74.

language miracle interpretation),⁵² Zerhusen discusses the composition of the crowd and its relation with the native languages of the diaspora Jews and concludes that Aramaic and Greek were the native languages of both the diaspora Jews and the crowd in Acts 2 (composed largely of Palestinian Jews).⁵³ This view contrasts the language miracle view (as well as the ecstatic utterance view), which does not take ἑτέροις γλώσσαις as referring to the native languages of the Jews (whether Palestinian or diaspora Jews), since ἑτέροις γλώσσαις would logically refer to some supernatural languages that the crowd of Acts 2 never learned.⁵⁴ Using the concept of diglossia and studies on the function of the Hebrew language in Judean culture,⁵⁵ Zerhusen notes that “Acts 2 is a thoroughly Judean setting; so we should attempt to view the meaning of the phrase ‘other tongues’ from a Judean perspective.”⁵⁶ Accordingly, Zerhusen argues that “Hebrew was the sacred language, and Aramaic and Greek were the everyday languages. The phrase ἑτέροις γλώσσαις refers to the lower languages spoken by the disciples and means simply ‘other than Hebrew.’”⁵⁷

Johannes P. Louw

The fourth scholar (or more accurately, study) to note in this section is Johannes P. Louw with his edited book *Sociolinguistics and Communication*. The essays in this

⁵² Two other views include the “ecstatic utterances” (ἑτέροις γλώσσαις are not real languages) and “hearing miracle” (the Holy Spirit converted the ecstatic utterances into the native languages of Acts 2) interpretations. See Zerhusen, “An Overlooked Judean *Diglossia* in Acts 2?” 122.

⁵³ See Zerhusen, “An Overlooked Judean *Diglossia* in Acts 2?” 118–22.

⁵⁴ Zerhusen, “An Overlooked Judean *Diglossia* in Acts 2?” 123.

⁵⁵ Zerhusen cites Kaplan, *Judaism as a Civilization*, 192; Birnbaum, *A Book of Jewish Concepts*, 316; and Wigdoer, “Hebrew,” 316, all of which points to Hebrew as *leshon hakodesh* (the holy tongue) or as the “language of worship” of Jewish residents of Judea.

⁵⁶ Zerhusen, “An Overlooked Judean *Diglossia* in Acts 2?” 123.

⁵⁷ Zerhusen, “An Overlooked Judean *Diglossia* in Acts 2?” 118, 128.

book were collected from papers delivered by several scholars, including Nida, V.N. Webb, B.C. Lategan, B.A. Müller, and Louw himself, at a conference held at the University of Stellenbosch, South Africa. The various essays in one way or another attempt to establish the connection between sociolinguistics and biblical studies by discussing the general nature of the field of sociolinguistics,⁵⁸ and treating such sociolinguistic theories as functional linguistics, social structures, linguistic variables, dialects, modes of communication, language varieties, register, speech-act theory, and the establishment of a semiotic framework through paralinguistic and extralinguistic features.⁵⁹ Like Malina's and Cotterell's studies, the contribution of this collection of essays is clearly seen in introducing the basic concepts and nature of sociolinguistics and its potential usefulness for biblical studies. But the elucidation of more sophisticated sociolinguistic theories and their explicit application to the biblical texts would have to be seen in the works of later scholars, to which I will now turn.

Julia A. Snyder

The fifth scholar is Julia A. Snyder who studies the relationship between speech patterns and their social contexts in the Acts of the Apostles, the Acts of John, and the Acts of Philip in *Language and Identity in Ancient Narratives*, a revised version of her 2013 dissertation. In exploring this relationship between speech patterns and their social contexts in these three corpuses, Snyder attempts to demonstrate that audience identity, along with other contextual or social factors, must be taken into account when examining “the significance of a word or expression in ancient literature.”⁶⁰ Snyder briefly discusses

⁵⁸ See especially, Nida, “Sociolinguistics and Translating,” 1–49.

⁵⁹ See Porter, “Review of *Sociolinguistics and Communication*,” 487–88.

⁶⁰ See Snyder, *Language and Identity*, 1–2, 16, 235–36.

some previous scholarly works that utilize “sociolinguistic insights” (although I am doubtful whether some of the scholarly works she mentions should actually be categorized under such nomenclature) and notes that, among the sociolinguistic items that these scholars investigate, her primary focus is upon audience identity.⁶¹ Specifically, she wants to explore “‘intra-speaker variation’ that takes place within the corpus of a single individual’s speech, or, in this case within the speech corpus of a set of individuals of similar social identity.”⁶²

In her sociolinguistic approach, she focuses analysis on the audience of a speech conversation, a theory championed by Allan Bell in “Language Style as Audience Design,”⁶³ but also considers other contextual factors (e.g., ways of speaking, addressees, bystanders, target, topic, setting, genre, motives, emotions, attitudes, purposes, key, voicing, stance, etc.) as affecting the significance of a writer’s choice of words. She also points out that the significance of a speaker or writer’s way of speaking or writing shapes the topics, structures, and identities of a conversation or text.⁶⁴ The ultimate goal behind her sociolinguistic approach is to argue that, before anyone can make a literary or theological claim on the basis of the relationship of speech patterns and their social context, they need to “substantiat[e] in a principled manner that ways of speaking do indeed co-vary with particular elements of social context as hypothesized.”⁶⁵

⁶¹ See Snyder, *Language and Identity*, 3–13.

⁶² Snyder, *Language and Identity*, 9.

⁶³ See Bell, “Language Style,” 145–204; Bell, “Back in Style,” 139–69, says that “speakers design their style primarily for and in response to their audience” (143).

⁶⁴ Snyder, *Language and Identity*, 15.

⁶⁵ Snyder, *Language and Identity*, 17–18.

There is much to commend to Snyder's sociolinguistic approach in terms of the recognition that various social factors, especially audience and addressee, affect the linguistic choices of speakers and writers. However, it is not altogether clear in her establishment of the linkage between linguistic variables and social factors whether she actually takes them to refer to the original conversation of events, or she simply refers to them as the style or way of writing of the specific author of each of the three corpuses she examines. This vagueness is especially evident when she wants to make a further linkage between the linguistic and theological significance of an author's words or expressions and the established correlation between the speech patterns of these words and expressions and their social contexts. Moreover, if she is reluctant to allow for the theory that the ways of speaking encountered in Acts of the Apostles, the Acts of John, and the Acts of Philip reflect and represent how the participants of the actual historical events actually spoke,⁶⁶ then the speech patterns in the three corpuses would seem to indicate only the style of the author for linking specific theological concepts with linguistic words and expressions. Put simply, what is the point of analyzing the co-variation and correlation between speech patterns and their social contexts if they do not reflect the actual conversations?⁶⁷

David A. Lamb

The sixth scholar is David A. Lamb who published a revised version of his doctoral thesis in *Text, Context and the Johannine Community: A Sociolinguistic Analysis*

⁶⁶ See Snyder, *Language and Identity*, 231.

⁶⁷ I note that Snyder does not define clearly many of the technical terms she uses in her work (e.g., "co-vary" and "correlate"; see p. 21) and that she does not give examples as she goes about explaining her theoretical framework.

of the *Johannine Writings*.⁶⁸ Lamb is to be commended for introducing a new interpretive lens, that is, sociolinguistics, to evaluate the Johannine Community hypothesis.⁶⁹ Specifically, Lamb is interested in establishing a linkage between the language and its social situation or the move from the text to the context of the Johannine writings.⁷⁰ For this reason, Lamb surveys some of the key works associated with the Johannine Community hypothesis and notes that there appears to be a paradigm shift from the rise of the hypothesis in the 1960s to its gradual decline since the 1980s.⁷¹ He also critiques in one of his chapters the work of scholars who use the sociolinguistic concept of antilanguage or antisociety in constructing their sectarian model of the Johannine community, a model largely influenced by Wayne Meeks's seminal essay "The Man from Heaven in Johannine Sectarianism."⁷² Lamb argues that not only is there "no sociolinguistic support for modelling the JComm as an antisociety," but also that studies that use that concept have sometimes misused the Hallidayan concept of antilanguage, and the concept has taken its own course in Johannine studies.⁷³

Regarding his own sociolinguistic approach, Lamb attempts to analyze the "tenor" component of register analysis in the Johannine writings. He adopts the Hallidayan model of register analysis of Suzanne Eggins, which focuses on three

⁶⁸ For a recent bibliographical survey of the Johannine writings, see Porter and Gabriel, eds., *Johannine Writings*, esp. 23–237.

⁶⁹ Lamb, *Text, Context and the Johannine Community*, 198, calls it a paradigm, pointing out the general acceptance of the hypothesis within Johannine scholarship.

⁷⁰ Lamb was dissatisfied with previous works that claim to start their analysis with the text and move toward the context of the Johannine writings, but which in reality have already assumed the context in their paradigm, fitting the text of John into that paradigm (see Lamb, *Text, Context and the Johannine Community*, 3–4, cf. 5, 28; and chapter 4, for these kinds of studies to which John referred).

⁷¹ See Lamb, *Text, Context and the Johannine Community*, chapters 1 and 2.

⁷² See Meeks, "The Man from Heaven," 44–72.

⁷³ Lamb, *Text, Context and the Johannine Community*, 104, 137–38.

components—power, contact, and affective involvement—in analyzing a specific context of situation.⁷⁴ These three components, according to Eggins, determine the formality or informality of a context of situation. Whereas unequal power, infrequent contact, and low affective involvement of the participants would suggest a more formal context of situation, the reverse of each of these would indicate an opposite context of situation. Lamb considers such linguistic features as the lexico-grammatical and discourse choices of the Johannine corpus to determine the tenor of participant relationships in the so-called Johannine “narrative asides” (John 2:21–22; 12:16; 19:35–37; 20:30–31; 21:23–25) and 1 John 2:7–17, 2 John, and 3 John.⁷⁵ He concludes from his analysis that the interpersonal relationship between the author and his readers in John’s Gospel, 1 John, and 2 John is formal, whereas it is less formal in 3 John.⁷⁶

While to some degree Lamb is to be commended for his use of the theory of sociolinguistic register analysis, especially in attempting to define some of the relevant theories associated with it as well as in presenting Porter’s work on register analysis (see below), it is doubtful whether his attention to the tenor component of register analysis is sufficient to address his thesis. To be specific, it is doubtful whether the interpersonal dynamics of participants, which is identified as simply “formal” or “informal,” can actually indicate the totality of the social dynamics of a community. One needs to show that the “context of culture” of the Johannine community is actually similar to that of the synoptic Gospels, for instance, so as to argue that the Johannine community is not a

⁷⁴ See Eggins, *Introduction*, esp. 85–140, who, according to Lamb, draws on the work of Poynton, *Language and Gender*, for the three components of power, contact, and affective involvement (Lamb, *Text, Context and the Johannine Community*, 95).

⁷⁵ See Lamb, *Text, Context and the Johannine Community*, esp. 95–102, for his research methodology.

⁷⁶ See Lamb, *Text, Context and the Johannine Community*, 200–5.

“clearly defined social group.”⁷⁷ And in order to do so based on the Hallidayan register analysis framework, it is imperative that all three components—field, tenor, and mode—be considered in the analysis, since collectively they configure and determine a particular context of situation. In other words, one can only identify a particular context of situation, which is to be interpreted against the larger background of the context of culture, if these three components of a social context are taken into account.⁷⁸

Todd Klutz

The seventh scholar is Todd Klutz, who is David Lamb’s doctoral thesis supervisor. Klutz’s dissertation monograph, *The Exorcism Stories in Luke-Acts*, published in 2004, seeks to address a particular issue in studies of the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts, that is, the lack of interest in the distinctively Lucan rendition of the exorcism stories. More specifically, Klutz wants to address “the abiding scholarly tendency to read the exorcism stories in Luke’s Gospel chiefly as units of Synoptic tradition rather than as integral parts of the two-volume narrative Luke-Acts.”⁷⁹ Klutz believes that previous scholarship has undermined the co-textual and structural impact of book of Acts in its relationship with the Gospel of Luke, especially with reference to the exorcism stories. To be sure, he says that some New Testament scholars have even reinforced this lack of interest by relegating these exorcism stories to the “outer margins of New Testament

⁷⁷ Lamb, *Text, Context and the Johannine Community*, 4.

⁷⁸ To be sure, Halliday, *Language as Social Semiotic*, 46, writes, “The context of situation, however, is only the immediate environment. There is also a broader background against which the text has to be interpreted: its context of culture. Any actual context of situation, the particular configuration of field, tenor, and mode that has brought a text into being, is not just a random jumble of features but a totality—a package, so to speak, of things that typically go together in the culture. People do these things on these occasions and attach these meanings and values to them; this is what a culture is.”

⁷⁹ Klutz, *Exorcism Stories*, 3.

theology.”⁸⁰ For example, Klutz argues that, even though the exorcism stories do not occupy the central concern of Luke 9:37–43 and Acts 16:16–18, they nevertheless contribute to an understanding of the “Jesus-Paul parallels” realized by Acts 16:16–18 (and 19:11–20) and thus should not be relegated to the periphery in Luke-Acts studies.⁸¹

Klutz employs sociostylistic theory as a means to achieve his objective. Sociostylistic theory analyzes linguistic styles in conversations or texts with the recognition that language use is a situationally conditioned choice of speakers and writers in conversations or texts. It also views all forms of conversation as social discourse, which interprets texts in relation to their social, cultural, and situational contexts.⁸² The foundation of Klutz’s sociostylistic theory is adapted from systemic functional linguistics (SFL).⁸³ Klutz breaks down M.A.K. Halliday’s three abstract linguistic metafunctions into a set of less abstract types of phenomena, which includes cohesion, story structure, repetition, iconicity, thematic organization and information structure (for the textual metafunction), lexis, transitivity, verbal aspect (for the ideational metafunction), presupposition, implicature, and intertextuality (for the interpersonal metafunction), all of which function as the elements that need to be examined in the exorcism stories of Luke-Acts.⁸⁴

In many ways, Klutz’s linguistically informed theoretical framework provides a comprehensive treatment of the analysis and interpretation of New Testament texts.

⁸⁰ Klutz, *Exorcism Stories*, 13.

⁸¹ See Klutz, *Exorcism Stories*, 13–14, 152–264.

⁸² On the definition of linguistic style, Klutz follows Enkvist, “What Ever Happened to Stylistics,” 12–15, who presupposes formal and semantic properties of texts (conditioned by situational and extralinguistic factors) that affect the production and reception of texts (see Klutz, *Exorcism Stories*, 8, 15–21).

⁸³ See Klutz, *Exorcism Stories*, 26–29.

⁸⁴ See Klutz, *Exorcism Stories*, 29–57.

However, I have my reservation as to how literary analysis categories may be incorporated into the Hallidayan triad of metafunctions. While such an exercise may perhaps be an intuitive one, there is the question of the aspects of the text, upon which literary analysis and linguistic analysis focus. Whereas literary analysis is interested in the aesthetic aspect, such as surface features, categorization, stylistic patterns, and structure of a text, linguistic analysis, especially in Hallidayan terms, is interested in the sociolinguistic linkage between a text and its context of situation. Moreover, literary analysis, or stylistic analysis for this matter, seems to be language-user-focused, an attempt at identifying both similar and different ways of speaking of people. The focus of Hallidayan linguistics, however, is in the formulation of a theoretical framework that attempts to describe and theorize language, viewing it as a system of potential behind people's use of language. Thus, Hallidayan linguistics is most useful when used according to its own terms. To be sure, a purely and full-fledged Hallidayan systemic functional linguistic approach to the study of the New Testament will have to be seen in the works of Stanley E. Porter.

Stanley E. Porter

I mentioned in the previous chapter that, in many ways, Porter could arguably be seen today as one of the leading proponents of the view that Greek was the *lingua franca* as well as the prestige language of ancient Palestine. His numerous works on the Greek of the New Testament and the languages of ancient Palestine and of Jesus will attest to this assessment.⁸⁵ In most of these works, Porter employs the sociolinguistic approach

⁸⁵ Some of these include: Porter, "Introduction," 11–38; Porter, "Greek of the New Testament," 427–35; Porter, "The Greek Language," 99–130; Porter, "Did Jesus Ever Teach in Greek?" 199–235; Porter, "Jesus and the Use of Greek," 123–54; Porter, "Scholarly Opinion," 139–71; Porter, "Latin," 630–1; Porter, "Jesus and the Use of Greek," 71–87; Porter, *Verbal Aspect*, 110–56; Porter, "Tense Terminology and Greek

developed by M.A.K. Halliday, known as Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL).⁸⁶ This is not the place to discuss Hallidayan SFL, but this English and Australian model of linguistic and discourse analysis that originated from the London school of linguistics is increasingly becoming popular in New Testament studies, particularly among students of Porter, especially at McMaster Divinity College in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.⁸⁷

Generally, the overarching goal of SFL is to relate language to its social context. More specifically, one of its central concerns (and also its major achievement) is with the development of ways and means to link the various functions of language with its context of situation, which is instantiated in either actual speech situations or written texts. Each context of situation unfolds within a particular cultural context, such that the aggregate number of various contexts of situations provides the material for the creation and

Language Study,” 77–86; Porter, *Criteria*, 17–25, 89–99, 126–80; Porter, “Criteria for Authenticity Revisited,” 201–24; Porter, “The Criterion of Greek Language,” 69–74; Porter, “Role of Greek,” 361–404; Porter, “Greek Grammar and Syntax,” 76–103; Porter and O’Donnell, “The Greek Verbal Network,” 3–41; Porter, “Dialect and Register,” 190–208; Porter, “Register in the Greek of the New Testament,” 209–29; Porter, “The Greek Papyri,” 293–311; Porter, “Why So Many Holes in the Papyrological Evidence,” 167–86; Porter, “Studying Ancient Languages,” 147–72; Porter and Pitts, “New Testament Greek Language and Linguistics,” 214–55; Porter and Pitts, “The Language of the New Testament and Its History,” 1–6; Porter, “The Greek of the Jews and Early Christians,” 350–64; Porter, *How We Got the New Testament*; and Porter, “The Greek of the Septuagint,” forthcoming.

⁸⁶ The bibliography here is large. For a good overview of SFL, see Thompson, *Introducing Functional Grammar*. For a quick list of the Hallidayan bibliography, see Halliday, *Explorations in the Functions of Language*; Halliday, *Language as Social Semiotic*; Halliday, *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*; Halliday and Hasan, *Language, Context, and Text*; and Halliday, *Language and Society*. See also, Hasan, *Language, Society and Consciousness*.

⁸⁷ See, for example, the following (but not without the combination of other theories from other schools of linguistics for some of them), Westfall, *A Discourse Analysis of the Letter to the Hebrews*; Westfall, “Blessed Be the Ties that Bind,” 199–216; Westfall, “A Method for the Analysis of Prominence,” 75–94; Westfall, “A Discourse Analysis of Romans 7.7-25,” 146–58; Reed, *A Discourse Analysis of Philippians*, esp. 53–57; Reed, “Language of Change and the Changing of Language,” 121–53; Martín-Asensio, *Transitivity-Based Foregrounding in the Acts of the Apostles*; Martín-Asensio, “Procedural Register in the Olivet Discourse,” 457–83; O’Donnell, “Designing and Compiling a Register-Balanced Corpus of Hellenistic Greek,” 255–97; O’Donnell and Smith, “A Discourse Analysis of 3 John,” 127–45; Varner, *The Book of James*; Lee, *Toward a Peak(s) of Paul’s Gospel in Romans*; Peters, *The Greek Article*; Fewster, *Creation Language in Romans 8*; Cirafesi, *Verbal Aspect in Synoptic Parallels*; and Land, “The Integrity of 2 Corinthians From a Linguistic Perspective.” See also the collected-essays in Porter, Land, and Fewster, eds., *Modeling Biblical Languages*, forthcoming.

description of a general system of linguistic patterns that is observable in or that can be gleaned from every instance of speech or text. Thus, every instance of speech or text is understood and analyzed as a set of meaning potentials expressed in a coordinated spectrum of three metafunctions (i.e., the various functions that languages, or better, linguistic forms have evolved to serve)—the ideational metafunction, which looks at the topic, setting, and goals of the speech or textual instance, the interpersonal metafunction, which looks at the roles, attitudes, relations, and negotiations of the participants involved in the speech or textual instance, and the textual metafunction, which looks at the information structure, instrumentalities, and channel of conveyance of the speech or textual instance. This spectrum of metafunctions directly corresponds to the semantic components (represented by the lexicogrammatical forms) of a speech or textual instance, which, in turn, are activated or determined by the features or elements of the context of situation.⁸⁸ It follows then that each context of situation enters into a specific configuration of contextual features or elements that can be defined by the concept of register.⁸⁹ In short, to use Halliday's language, "[the context of situation] is *which* kinds of situational factor determine *which* kinds of selection in the linguistic system."⁹⁰ Hence,

⁸⁸ In other words, according to Halliday, *Language and Society*, 193, "There is thus a systematic correspondence between the semiotic structure of the situation type and the functional organization of the semantic system. Each of the main areas of meaning potential tends to be determined or activated by one particular aspect of the situation:

Semantic components		Situational Elements
Ideational	systems activated by features of	Field
Interpersonal	systems activated by features of	Tenor
Textual	systems activated by features of	Mode" (emphasis original).

⁸⁹ Halliday distinguishes between "dialect," which he defines as a text variety according to the language user, and "register," which is a text variety defined according to language use. The term "register," however, was first used in the sense of a text variety by Reid, "Linguistics, Structuralism, Philology," 28–37, which concept was later on developed by Ure and Ellis, "Register in Descriptive Linguistics and Linguistic Sociology," 197–243, and interpreted by Halliday, McIntosh, and Strevens, *The Linguistic Sciences and Language Teaching*. See also, Porter, "Dialect and Register," 197.

⁹⁰ Halliday, *Language as Social Semiotic*, 32.

“A register can be defined as the configuration of semantic resources that the member of a culture typically associates with a situation type.”⁹¹ To perform a register analysis, then, is to configure a particular context of situation into three dimensions that “represent in systematic form the type of activity in which the text has significant function (field), the status and role relationships involved (tenor) and the symbolic mode and rhetorical channels that are adopted (mode).”⁹²

With reference to Porter’s work, his utilization of the theories of SFL is earliest and perhaps most prominently seen in his analysis of the verbal aspectual system of the Greek of the New Testament.⁹³ But it can be argued that register analysis has been at the forefront of Porter’s applied sociolinguistic approaches to the Greek of the New Testament. For instance, after differentiating between dialect and register as the two types of language varieties and explaining the concept of register in a Hallidayan sociolinguistic context,⁹⁴ Porter analyzes the context of situation of the Gospel of Mark in terms of register analysis.⁹⁵ His conclusion is that the Gospel of Mark was a written text

⁹¹ Halliday, *Language and Society*, 182.

⁹² Halliday, *Language and Society*, 196. Porter, “Register in the Greek of the New Testament,” 209, notes, “Register does not directly determine the specific lexico-grammatical realizations that can be used in a given utterance, but it constrains a number of semantic or functional components. These constraints do not constitute the text, but they determine it.”

⁹³ See, in particular, Porter, *Verbal Aspect*; Porter, *Idioms*, esp. 20–49; Porter, “Greek Grammar and Syntax,” esp. 89–92; Porter, “Verbal Aspect in NT Greek and Bible Translation,” 1–3; Porter, “In Defense of Verbal Aspect,” 26–45; Porter, “Aspect Theory and Lexicography,” 207–22; Porter, “Three Arguments Regarding Aspect and Temporality,” forthcoming; and Porter, “The Perfect Isn’t Perfect, It’s Stative,” forthcoming. See also, Porter and Pitts, “New Testament Greek Language and Linguistics,” 218–21. Porter treats “aspectuality” as one (the other is “finiteness”) of the two major systems of the Greek verbal network; he defines it as “a synthetic semantic category (realized in the forms of verbs) used of meaningful oppositions in a network of tense systems to grammaticalize the author’s reasoned subjective choice of conception of a process” (*Verbal Aspect*, 88). For a history of the discussion of the Greek verbal structure, especially with reference to time-based, *Aktionsart*, and aspect theories, see Porter, *Studies in the Greek New Testament*, 14–17.

⁹⁴ See Porter, “Dialect and Register,” 190–208.

⁹⁵ See Porter, “Register in the Greek of the New Testament,” 209–29.

(in the form of a chronologically-arranged narrative composed of units of actions and dialogue) that is meant to be read (mode of discourse), that it evinces complex role relationships between Jesus and his followers and adversaries that is often expressed in a third-person perspective (tenor of discourse), and that the entire Gospel is about “the Gospel of Jesus Christ [the Son of God]” (Mark 1:1), a topic established at two critical junctures in the narrative (Mark 1:15; 15:39).

Porter also employs register analysis to develop a new linguistic criterion for historical-Jesus research, arguing, on the basis of a register analysis of Mark 13, that discourse types within a book may be differentiated through the concept of register.⁹⁶ More recently, Porter applies register analysis to the book of Romans, profiling the context of situation of this major Pauline letter. Porter notes that Paul uses various discursive styles, such as analogies, metaphors, semantic chains, chained-like words and phrases, parallelism, alliteration, repetition, etc., as a way of organizing the topics and concepts he discusses in the letter (mode of discourse), that Paul clearly uses the diatribe or dialogical technique (question-and-answer) of conversation with either his real or his fictitious conversation partners in the letter to get his message across to his audience (tenor of discourse), and that Paul’s use of the diatribe and various discursive styles was to talk about sets of progressively developing theological concepts (e.g., the human condition, justification, reconciliation, etc.) throughout the letter (field of discourse).⁹⁷ Additionally, Porter further discusses the concept of register within the context of

⁹⁶ This is the third of the three Greek linguistic criteria that Porter developed—the criterion of Greek language and its context, the criterion of Greek textual variance, and the criterion of discourse features. See Porter, *Criteria*, 126–37.

⁹⁷ See Porter, *Romans*, forthcoming; and Porter and O’Donnell, “Semantic Patterns of Argumentation in the Book of Romans,” 154–204.

discussion of diglossia to analyze the Pauline letters—Romans, 1 Corinthians, Philippians, and the Pastorals—with the goal of quantifying various registers of Greek usage. The idea is that analyzing several texts by the same author may provide the possibility of describing their differences in context of situation.⁹⁸

Aside from aspectual study of the Greek verbal system and register analysis, Porter has also dealt with, with reference to sociolinguistics, diglossia, historical sociolinguistics, and critical discourse analysis.⁹⁹ In virtually all these works, Porter has called attention to the importance of analyzing the entire communicative context of a particular text of the New Testament, the multilingual nature and environment of the context of situation and culture of the world of the New Testament, the appreciation of a functional analysis of texts within a sociolinguistic framework,⁹⁹ and the recognition that a functional linguistic and sociolinguistic model does provide an integrative framework for the inclusion of other interpretive tools, such as historical and sociological approaches that can be used in biblical studies.¹⁰⁰

Jonathan M. Watt

The application of multilingualism theories to biblical studies can be seen in Jonathan Watt's work.¹⁰¹ His most important contributions to New Testament studies are

⁹⁸ See Porter, "The Functional Distribution of Koine," 53–78. In this study, Porter adopts the register criteria of Biber, *Variation across Speech and Writing*, 101–69 (see also, Biber, *Dimensions of Register Variation*), "who identified a number of textual dimensions, indicated by sets of linguistic features that co-occur in texts" (Porter, "The Functional Distribution of Koine," 67).

⁹⁹ See, for example, Porter, ed., *Diglossia*; Porter, "The Greek of the Jews and Early Christians," 350–64; and Porter, "Is Critical Discourse Analysis Critical?" 47–70.

¹⁰⁰ See also, Lee, *Jesus and Gospel Traditions*, 55–58, who summarizes Porter's work but grossly misconstrues Porter's arguments concerning the multilingual situation of ancient Palestine, and how it specifically relates to the Greek language criterion in historical Jesus research.

¹⁰¹ For his key works on the application of sociolinguistic theories, see Watt, *Code-switching*; Watt, "Some Implications of Bilingualism," 9–27; Watt, "A Brief History of Ancient Greek, 225–41; Watt, "The Current Landscape," 18–36; Watt, "Of Gutturals and Galileans," 107–20; Watt, "The Contributions of Eugene A.

his explanation of the concepts of diglossia and bilingualism and how they apply to the linguistic situation of ancient Palestine, and his application of the theory of code-switching to Luke-Acts. Watt believes that scientific inquiry and modern theory and fieldwork—the foundations of sociolinguistics—may shed much light on our understanding of the language, style, and meaning of the Bible. Based on the so-called uniformitarian principle, Watt assumes, and rightly in my opinion, that the cognitive mechanisms of modern language users also operate in a similar manner to those of ancient speakers and writers.¹⁰² There are three important studies to mention in Watt's work. The first one is *Code-switching in Luke and Acts*. Watt points out at the outset of this study that the numerous multilingual situations in the biblical accounts (e.g., Gen 11:1-9; 2 Kgs 18:26–28; Matt 26:73; John 19:20) suggest that the biblical world was a multilingual society. Evidence of the widespread use of Koine Greek (e.g., the LXX and ancient mosaic floors of the synagogues that were painted in Greek depicting Old Testament scenes) and Aramaic in this ancient Mediterranean world further supports the existence of these multilingual situations.¹⁰³ From these assumptions, Watt is concerned with detecting Semitic idioms in the text of Luke and Acts. He argues that language variation can be attributed to some independent social variables (e.g., geographical location, presence of Aramaic and Greek speakers, Old Testament passages, etc.),¹⁰⁴ since an author typically exploits available linguistic choices given the social situations before him. In other words, various social factors influence the linguistic choices

Nida to Sociolinguistics,” 19–29; Watt, “L1 Interference in Written L2,” 103–15; Watt, “Diminutive Suffixes in the New Testament,” 29–74; Watt, “Talking with the Dead,” 11–24; and Watt and Paulston, “Language Policy and Religion,” 335–50.

¹⁰² See Watt, *Code-switching*, 3, 91.

¹⁰³ Watt, *Code-switching*, 6.

¹⁰⁴ Watt, *Code-switching*, 41.

speakers make from their linguistic repertoire that directly relate to the setting and purpose of a speech event. With reference to Luke-Acts, the absence of “Semitic” social factors would by default point to the use of Greek.¹⁰⁵ The end result of Watt’s study is the identification of a total of 106 sub-sections (51 in Luke and 55 in Acts) that are

marked to show whether Jewish themes predominated in the material (tagged “J”) or were absent from it (tagged “H” for Hellenistic), or whether both Jewish and Hellenistic themes are present (tagged “M” for Mixed)...This tagging of Hellenistic, Semitic, and Mixed social factors formats the independent variables for this study, since they are the suspected prompting for any code-switching that may appear in Lk and Ac.¹⁰⁶

The second significant study of Watt relate to the concepts of diglossia and bilingualism and how they apply to the linguistic situation of ancient Palestine. In “The Current Landscape of Diglossia Studies,” Watt first compares between Charles Ferguson’s classic and Joshua Fishman’s expanded (neo-diglossia, in Watt’s terms) definitions of diglossia and subsequently says from his assessment of these two definitions that diglossia, in order to be useful, must address three areas—the genetic relationship on some level between languages, the accuracy of assessing the linguistic repertoire of a community, and the functional distribution of the languages used within a community.¹⁰⁷ He also reviews some of the existing experimental paradigms for Palestinian diglossia proposed by C. Rabin,¹⁰⁸ E. Meyers,¹⁰⁹ G. Rendsburg,¹¹⁰ B.

¹⁰⁵ Watt, *Code-switching*, 51.

¹⁰⁶ Watt, *Code-switching*, 53.

¹⁰⁷ Watt, “The Current Landscape,” 24.

¹⁰⁸ See Rabin, “Hebrew and Aramaic,” 1007–39.

¹⁰⁹ See Meyers, “Galilean Regionalism,” 115–31.

¹¹⁰ See Rendsburg, *Diglossia in Ancient Hebrew*; Rendsburg, “The Strata of Biblical Hebrew,” 81–99; and Rendsburg, “Linguistic Variation and the ‘Foreign’ Factor in the Hebrew Bible,” 177–90.

Spolsky,¹¹¹ B. Zerhusen,¹¹² and D.C. Fredericks,¹¹³ acknowledging that four languages—Greek, Aramaic, Hebrew, and Latin—enter into the picture of the linguistic landscape of ancient Palestine. Watt, however, points out that Greek and Aramaic would have been assigned the first- and second-language positions in the speech repertoire of the community and that Aramaic-Greek bilingualism would likely have been widespread in that ancient community.¹¹⁴ After noting some of the problems which he thinks will continue to exist in future studies on diglossia, and asserting that diglossia must be applied to the linguistic repertoire of the community as a whole, he assigns the following language positions:¹¹⁵

Table B: Watt's Functional Categorization of the Languages of Ancient Palestine

- High 1 = biblical Hebrew (written)
- High 2 = mishnaic Hebrew (spoken, written)
- Low 1 = Judean Aramaic (spoken, written)
- Low 2 = Galilean Aramaic (distinguishable in speech only)
- Tertiary 1 = Koine Greek (spoken, written)
- Tertiary 2 = Latin (spoken, written)

Watt's suggestion of a tertiary language seems to be a good way to introduce and categorize Greek and Latin into the diglossic continuum of the ancient Palestine's linguistic repertoire. He states,

The use of a T (tertiary category) is vital for isolating the specifically diglossic relationship of the genetically related (sister) languages, Hebrew and Aramaic. For if Greek is directly entered into the diglossic feature (as the low form), not only would the situation be nothing more than generic bilingualism, but it would

¹¹¹ See Spolsky, "Triglossia and Literacy," 95–109; and Spolsky, "Diglossia in the Late Second Temple Period," 85–104.

¹¹² See Zerhusen, "An Overlooked Judean *Diglossia* in Acts 2," 118–30.

¹¹³ See Fredericks, "Diglossia," 189–99.

¹¹⁴ Watt, "The Current Landscape," 26, says that even though this is the case, it does not follow that all speakers were bilingual.

¹¹⁵ See Watt, "The Current Landscape," 33–34.

fail to allow for the multiple roles of Greek that do not parallel those of the Semitic languages. Strictly speaking, diglossia can apply only to the Semitic languages (or theoretically, to Greek alone), but not to Hebrew (or Aramaic) *and* Greek simultaneously.¹¹⁶

However, the advantage of such a categorization perhaps can only be helpful as far as viewing the general linguistic repertoire of the community. In actual speech situations, the social variables that factor into the linguistic equation are far too complex for this kind of concept of diglossia to account for the specific functions of each language used in the community. Moreover, Watt's work is narrowly focused on the text of Luke-Acts, employing a quantitative analysis of his identified three independent variables. Such an analysis, in my opinion, may be too constricted to account for the general linguistic landscape of ancient Palestine.¹¹⁷

The third significant study of Watt is in "Some Implications of Bilingualism for New Testament Exegesis." Watt surveys concepts or categories that frequently appear in general studies on bilingualism, and these concepts constitute the major, intricately related elements that need to be considered in any study of bilingualism.¹¹⁸ It is apparent that these concepts are also closely related to the concepts of language contact, diglossia, and language varieties (e.g., prestige codes) for bilingualism at the societal level, and to the concepts of linguistic competence and performance, linguistic repertoire, and code-switching for bilingualism at the individual level. Watt next discusses the social motivations and cognitive processes of bilingualism, enumerating some implications of

¹¹⁶ Watt, "The Current Landscape," 32.

¹¹⁷ Cf. Lee, *Jesus and Gospel Traditions*, 94–96, who appears to have misconstrued Watt's arguments. Watt was concerned with surveying the current landscape of diglossia studies, trying to figure out how the concept of diglossia might best be used to describe the linguistic situation of ancient Palestine, but without necessarily neglecting the bilingualism of that community.

¹¹⁸ See Watt, "Some Implications of Bilingualism," 11–19.

bilingualism for New Testament exegesis. He notes that bilingualism “is vital for our understanding of the dynamics of communication at play in its origins.”¹¹⁹ He also notes that the two starting points of studies of the bilingualism of the New Testament—that is, its text (the ancient data) and its context (universals of observable human interaction)—may actually complement each other in the end.¹²⁰ As a case study, Watt analyzes Matt 5:22 and asks the question: “Why was the obvious Greek equivalent, κενός (empty), not employed instead of the more problematic μωρέ? And why did the writer alternate between two languages at this particular point in the account?”¹²¹ His objective was to highlight the idea that both Jesus and the Gospel writer were multilingual speakers, who can alternate between languages. When words are only transliterated but not translated, they retain their rhetorical impact, without necessarily losing their meaning, on the bilingual listeners and readers.¹²²

This survey has demonstrated that there is still room for improvement with regard to the methodological route we take in examining the linguistic environment of first-century Palestine. A more robust methodology can enable us to handle the linguistic evidence properly and to paint a more accurate portrait of that linguistic environment. Developing this robust methodology is the task that will not turn to in this next section.

¹¹⁹ Watt, “Some Implications of Bilingualism,” 21.

¹²⁰ Watt, “Some Implications of Bilingualism,” 21–22.

¹²¹ Watt, “Some Implications of Bilingualism,” 25.

¹²² See Watt, “Some Implications of Bilingualism,” 26–27, who cites Jeremias, “Ρακά,” 974, stating that “Matthew is writing for readers who, though they speak Greek, can understand an oriental term of abuse” (26).

A SOCIOLINGUISTIC APPROACH TO THE MULTILINGUALISM OF ANCIENT PALESTINE—NEW PROPOSAL

My objective in this section is to develop a methodological theory and framework that is capable of both analyzing the various types of available historical, sociological, and textual data and painting a more comprehensive portrait of the linguistic environment of first-century Palestine. This section is divided into six sub-sections. The first four sub-sections provide the theoretical foundation of my proposed model, and the last two sections explain the utilization and application of the formulated methodological framework. I begin with the question, “What Is Sociolinguistics?”

What Is Sociolinguistics?

Sociolinguistics is a discipline in its own right, yet it is by nature a wide-ranging discipline in that it encompasses several academic disciplines, particularly linguistics (the study of language and its structure and use), sociology (the study of human society and its development, structure, and functions), and anthropology (the study of humans and their sociocultural values and behavior).¹²³ The eclectic nature of the discipline inevitably makes it a highly complex discipline for study, with many recognized sociolinguists not reaching any consensus on a particular theory or principle. This is not to say that there are no universally accepted theories within the field of sociolinguistics, however. On the contrary, as we will see shortly, sociolinguists of diverse types have actually been able to formulate some widely accepted principles. The issue of complexity is more concerned with the minute details involved in one particular sociolinguist’s study, which consequently affect their definitions, interpretations, and uses of a particular

¹²³ For a discussion of the various disciplinary ancestries and cross-disciplinary dilemma of sociolinguistics, see Shuy, “Brief History,” 11–32.

sociolinguistic theory. The concept of diglossia is a classic example. While it is generally accepted that diglossia refers to the functional distribution of languages or linguistic codes used in a community, sociolinguists continue to vary in their application of the term. This is largely due to the fact that use of the concept depends upon the kind of linguistic community they investigate—for instance, whether the community is monolingual or multilingual. As such, it is therefore very difficult to decide on the starting point for discussion of sociolinguistics and its theories, needles to say the application of its theories and principles. Nevertheless, we still need a starting point for this study and, as I explain below, there are at least two avenues to explore in introducing the discussion. But before I address that matter, I wish to describe first in broad strokes the discipline of sociolinguistics, including its history of development and its usefulness and limitations, by which my approach to sociolinguistics is constrained.

History and Development of Sociolinguistics

Sociolinguists typically define their field of study as the relationship between language and society. This definition became normative through the labor of Joshua A. Fishman and Charles A. Ferguson who both, in the 1960s, provided leadership in the organization of meetings and committees, as well as in the founding of journals, making sociolinguistics a distinct discipline in its own right.¹²⁴ We definitely can appreciate the pioneering work of Ferguson and Fishman, but the entire field of sociolinguistics was

¹²⁴ Spolsky, “Ferguson and Fishman,” 12–15. Two notable journals, which are highly recognized for their interdisciplinary approach and international readership, are the *International Journal of the Sociology of Language (IJSL)*, edited by Joshua A. Fishman and Ofelia Garcia Orthegey, and *Language in Society*, founded by Dell H. Hymes. In addition, there were also many institutional supporters of the emerging field of sociolinguistics during its inception in the mid-twentieth century, which include the Center for Applied Linguistics, the Center for International Education—U.S. Department of Education, the Ford Foundation, the International Centre for Research on Bilingualism, and the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL). For a discussion of how the field of sociolinguistics came to be, see Paulston and Tucker, eds., *The Early Days of Sociolinguistics*, 237–84.

certainly defined and developed beyond the influence of both of these scholars. The compiled essays in *The Early Days of Sociolinguistics: Memories and Reflections* by the so-called “pioneers” of sociolinguistics (i.e., first-generation sociolinguists who had taken part in the creation of the discipline)¹²⁵ should indicate that many other scholars were involved in the development and creation of the discipline.¹²⁶ It is true that Ferguson and Fishman may have been the ones responsible for the development of macro-sociolinguistic theories, attending to issues of language planning, diglossia, and bilingualism.

However, the credit for the development of the other theoretical themes of sociolinguistics clearly belongs to other scholars, who have pioneered their own fields of research. Many of these sociolinguistic themes are associated with the names of particular scholars in the 1960s—William Labov (linguist) and variation sociolinguistics, Basil Bernstein (sociologist) and code theory, John J. Gumperz (anthropological linguist) and interactional sociolinguistics, and Dell H. Hymes (anthropologist) and the ethnography of communication—who pioneered their own research fields, which were continued by later scholars.¹²⁷ Nevertheless, it is fair to say that the scholars who explored the nature of the discipline and explained why sociolinguistics is sometimes

¹²⁵ See Paulston, “Introduction,” 4–5.

¹²⁶ Aside from Ferguson and Fishman, see the numerous essays in Paulston and Tucker, eds., *The Early Days of Sociolinguistics*, 35–233. Paulston, “Introduction,” 8–9, notes the omission of the works of two pioneers of sociolinguistics, William Labov and M.A.K. Halliday in this essay collection. For a survey of sociolinguistic work from other parts of the world, see Ball, ed., *Sociolinguistics around the World*.

¹²⁷ See Wodak, Johnstone, and Kerswill, eds., *The Sage Handbook*, 1–4. Hymes, “History and Development of Sociolinguistics,” 123–24, states, “But ‘sociolinguistics’ came to involve a spectrum of *social* interests in language, and some of the individuals being psychologists (Sue Ervin-Tripp), some anthropologists (myself), some linguists with anthropological connections (Gumperz).”

called the sociology of language were Ferguson and Fishman,¹²⁸ with the former later pointing out that sociolinguistics is an ambiguous label for any phenomenon relating to the relationship between language and society.¹²⁹ Ferguson was correct. Thirty years later, in the 2008 Sociolinguistics Symposium, the more than 300 papers delivered during the symposium reflected divergent emphases on which side of the spectrum, language or society, sociolinguists study.¹³⁰ In fact, Peter Trudgill notes that sociolinguistics means many different things to many people. Some have worked on the sociological end, while others have remained on the linguistic side, with a middle group traversing both ends of the continuum.¹³¹ This lack of consensus extends from a debate over the meaning of sociolinguistics to a disagreement about the exact origin of the term.¹³²

In many ways, one could also argue that sociolinguistics emerged out of the general climate of the time, when some scholars began to react against Chomsky's linguistic theory, which states that speakers and hearers have the innate ability to produce idealized sentences, driving towards the notion of universal grammar or even a universalized language.¹³³ There is also a lack of women representation during the early

¹²⁸ See Paulston, "Introduction," 4; and Kjolseth, "Making Sense," 50–76. Others eventually tried to make a clear distinction between both terms. See Grimshaw, "Sociolinguistics vs. Sociology of Language," 9–15, esp. 10, who notes the differences in data, concepts, methods, and areas of concern between these two disciplines; Ervin-Tripp, "Two Decades of Council Activity," 1–4; Koerner, "Towards a History of Modern Sociolinguistics," 57–70; and Ammon, Dittmar, and Mattheier, "History of Sociolinguistics," 379–69.

¹²⁹ Ferguson, "History of Sociolinguistics," 78.

¹³⁰ Among those, to name a few, who wanted to highlight sociology, discourse in social structures, and communicative competence are Fishman, Gumperz and Hymes. Labov stands out as one of the pioneers who wished to make linguistics more relevant. See Spolsky, "Ferguson and Fishman," 17.

¹³¹ Trudgill, ed., *Sociolinguistic Patterns*, 1–2.

¹³² Paulston and Tucker, *Sociolinguistics*, 1, say that Eugene A. Nida was the first linguist to use the term in 1949 (see Nida, *Morphology*, 152), but Huebner, "Introduction," 4, points out that the term can at least be traced back to a paper delivered by Haver C. Currie in 1949 (see Currie, "A Projection of Sociolinguistics," 28–37).

¹³³ For Chomsky's theory, see Chomsky, *Syntactic Structures*; and Chomsky, *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*. For the opposite view proposed by sociolinguists, who point out that Chomsky does not consider

days of sociolinguistics. Christina Bratt Paulston, however, notes that this scenario was rectified with the proliferation of gender and language studies today.¹³⁴ To be sure, Hymes says that among the members of his editorial board in *Language in Society*, he “found women among the most reliable and helpful to authors” in evaluating manuscripts for publication.¹³⁵ This snapshot of the history of sociolinguistics suggests that any utilization or application of sociolinguistic theories and principles is a complex business, since the object of study of linguists, sociologists, social psychologists, anthropologists, to name a few, varies considerably. In other words, both the focus of study and the goal of investigation of these academic disciplines run the spectrum with language on one side and society on the other.

Consequently, some define sociolinguistics as the study of language in relation to society, while others take it as the study of society in relation to language. This becomes even more complicated when the subject matter being investigated is narrowed down, as is often the case, to the linguistic variable, the language user, and the uses or functions of language (i.e., the concerns of micro-sociolinguistics). This being the case, sociolinguistics can no longer simply be defined as the relationship between language and society, for the specific type of relationship that is contingent upon the goal of investigation or object of study must be spelled out clearly. It is imperative then that analysts first define sociolinguistics according to their own terms, and then formulate a

actual conversations and social interactions being governed by sociocultural rules and norms, see the essays in Panagl and Wodak, *Text und Context*; Van Dijk, *Discourse and Context*; and Van Dijk, *Society and Discourse*. See also Habermas, *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns*; and Hymes, “History and Development of Sociolinguistics,” 122–24.

¹³⁴ Paulston, “Introduction,” 5. One of the prominent studies on gender language use and stereotypes has been that of Robin Lakoff who suggests that the language women use (e.g., hedging and boosting devices) and the language used about them are indicative of their subordinate social status in American society (see Lakoff, *Language and Woman's Place*).

¹³⁵ Hymes, “Language in Society,” 244.

sociolinguistic framework that can handle and achieve the goal of investigation. The formulation of this framework entails the combining of various theories and principles into a logical, workable framework, which I will address in the rest of this chapter. After I outline this sociolinguistic framework (see below), I will provide my own definition of sociolinguistics. At this point, a general description of sociolinguistics, one stated by Janet Holmes and accepted by most sociolinguists (I would say), can be tentatively provided.

Sociolinguists study the relationship between language and society. They are interested in explaining why we speak differently in different social contexts, and they are concerned with identifying the social functions of language and the ways it is used to convey social meaning. Examining the way people use language in different social contexts provides a wealth of information about the way language works, as well as about the social relationships in a community, and the way people signal aspects of their social identity through their language.¹³⁶

Usefulness of a Sociolinguistic Model

Any model adopted or formulated for application to New Testament texts will have its usefulness and its limitations. The usefulness of a model is more appropriately appraised in terms of the degree to which it can better elucidate the meaning of a text under examination. This is especially true when we are attempting to investigate an ancient text, where we do not have sufficient extant evidence to support it, and where the temporal and sociolinguistic gap is not less than a few thousand years. And so a sociolinguistic model is no exception to that matter, even though it definitely has advantages over historical and social-scientific approaches. I will mention three. First, a sociolinguistic model pays close attention to the text under examination and its underlying situational context. It establishes a clear and logical theoretical connection

¹³⁶ Holmes, *Introduction*, 1.

between the text and its context. For instance, when Jesus teaches his disciples to pray the Lord's Prayer (Matt 6:9–13), such components as the participants, the setting, the topic of conversation, the genre or type of event, emotional tone, message form and content, act sequence, etc., of the communicative event may be taken into account in the investigation when using a sociolinguistic model.¹³⁷ Furthermore, a sociolinguistic model, using multilingualism theories, can provide a “natural” explanation as to why the vocative, Αββα (Mark 14:36), if it is actually the case, was uttered in Aramaic (and not in Greek or in Hebrew) by Jesus in his private prayers to God.¹³⁸ Contrary to most previous studies on the word Αββα that try to determine whether it was an address of intimate language on Jesus' lips on the basis of the etymology of the word,¹³⁹ the use of a sociolinguistic model would prompt one to discuss this issue of intimate language in terms of the social context of its occurrence rather than in terms of the semantics or etymology of the term itself.

Secondly, perhaps only a sociolinguistic model can provide a more robust explanation for why people behave and speak in particular ways in a particular culture. The use of language is governed by social norms and by its social context and not simply by rules of grammar. While a social science model does address the cultural norms and practices of the ancient world, it does not have the means to link its theories and models

¹³⁷ For example, see Ong, “Lord's Prayer,” esp. 101–17; and Ong, “Discussing Oral Traditions,” forthcoming.

¹³⁸ Ong, “Aramaic and Greek Language Criteria,” 50–1. For an overview of various positions on the study of Αββα, see Evans, *Mark 8:27–16:20*, 412–13. There is the issue of whether the term Αββα is being used as a vocative or a title for God, since it is necessary in many languages to indicate explicitly this distinction by supplying a pronominal reference, such as “my father” or “our father” (see Louw and Nida, *Lexicon*, 1:139). That Jesus was calling out to his father in this particular instance may suggest that Αββα in this instance is being used as a vocative, even though Aramaic does not have a vocative case (but see Muraoka, “Notes on the Syntax of Biblical Aramaic,” 151–67).

¹³⁹ See, for example, Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 61–68. Cf. Barr, “Abba Isn't Daddy,” 28–47.

to the language of that community. Similarly, a purely linguistic model is narrowly focused on the language itself, making it overly dependent upon the linguistic structure and grammar of the language, as well as the various abstract functions the linguistic codes of the language represent or perform. In treating bilingual texts, for example, it will be extremely difficult to analyze the meaning of the text in its situated context without the use of multilingualism theories, since mixed languages and code-switching, both of which are relevant to the treatment of bilingual texts, are socially motivated linguistic phenomena. Assuredly, a bilingual will use a particular language in writing a text or in uttering a speech for specific contextual reasons, such as for linguistic or social accommodation, for maintenance of social identity, or for aesthetic and stylistic purposes. In fact, “grammatical categories such as tense, aspect, and gender encode aspects of reality differently in different languages.”¹⁴⁰ To use Richard A. Hudson’s example, consider the English word “sidewalk.” A linguistic model is able to deduce that, phonologically, “sidewalk” is pronounced as [sɪd wɔlk/] semantically, it refers to the British pavement, and grammatically, it is a common noun that may serve as either the subject or object of a sentence. Yet few perhaps would notice that the word is (at least originally) used by Americans but not by Brits. This distinguishes a purely linguistic concept from a sociolinguistic one.¹⁴¹

Thirdly and lastly, a sociolinguistic model establishes a better linkage between the three sociolinguistic elements that compose a speech community—language, culture, and cognition. Sociolinguistics examines how language is being used in a particular context

¹⁴⁰ Holmes, *Introduction*, 338.

¹⁴¹ Hudson, *Sociolinguistics*, 245–47, provides several reasons why this sociolinguistic concept is significant.

of situation within a particular culture, and it simultaneously studies the cognitive motivations and reasons why a language user would use that language in that particular context of situation. A sociolinguistic investigation is thus interested in the concrete facts of life being actualized in the real world of experience—facts about specific instances of language use in a particular speech community by a particular individual. Hudson notes that this is the strength of sociolinguistics; it is firmly grounded upon concrete facts.¹⁴² For example, in Jesus' address to Judas as "Friend" (Matt 26:50), sociolinguistics is not only concerned with the meaning of the address in that communicative event but also with Jesus' cognitive and social motivations. We can see that sociolinguistics as an interpretive tool has a lot to offer in analyzing the text of the New Testament, especially in investigating the linguistic situation of ancient Palestine. Despite these advantages, however, as there is no such thing as a perfect model, the following are some of the limitations of a sociolinguistic model.

Limitations of a Sociolinguistic Model

As mentioned above, there is no consensus as to the exact meaning and origin of sociolinguistics. As such, this may appear to be one of its major pitfalls. As Hudson also points out, "we badly need a general framework of ideas to integrate the facts into a whole."¹⁴³ This may also mean that, since linguistic structures, universals, and rules vary from culture to culture, it is therefore difficult to formulate sociolinguistic theories and principles that can be universally applied to diverse speech communities. However, it is important to understand that sociolinguists, as Holmes points out, "search for

¹⁴² Hudson, *Sociolinguistics*, 228.

¹⁴³ Hudson, *Sociolinguistics*, 228.

generalisations that reveal common human response to particular social influences.”¹⁴⁴

Because sociolinguistic studies of various speech communities and related studies from different academic disciplines often arrive at comparable results and reach similar conclusions, there is no reason to see why some sociolinguistic universals cannot be formulated.¹⁴⁵ Moreover, multiple synchronic studies of different speech communities can be diachronically combined for the formulation of theoretical principles that can be universally applicable. Linguistic politeness, for instance, though it varies among cultures, is still assessed by the so-called social or dimension scales (i.e., solidarity, status, formality, and function) that have been universally recognized as the fundamental social dimensions in sociolinguistic analysis.

Secondly, the issue is also raised that sociolinguistic research is for the most part engaged in fieldwork, lab experiments (e.g., match-guise technique, psycholinguistic analysis of code-switching), and participant interviews of actual conversations. More specifically, sociolinguistic research entails two primary activities of data analysis. The first, data collection, includes such activities as gaining access into informants’ daily lives in a specific community, understanding different data types that one needs to gather (e.g., naturally occurring data, interview data, questionnaire data, and experimental data), learning sampling techniques to collect the data (e.g., random sampling, stratified random sampling, ethnographic research, and social networks sampling), creating sample designs from the samples collected, and considering the ethical issues involved in data

¹⁴⁴ Holmes, *Introduction*, 431.

¹⁴⁵ See, for instance, Fasold, *The Sociolinguistics of Society*, 180–212; and Holmes, *Introduction*, 442–45, for a list and discussion of some sociolinguistic universals.

collection.¹⁴⁶ The second, data interpretation, involves such activities as analyzing sociolinguistic variables, transcribing recorded speech, coding and extracting data for quantitative analysis, interpreting the data, and writing up the research findings.¹⁴⁷ For this reason, some say that it is not always feasible to apply the theories generated from oral communications to a written text. There is undoubtedly some merit to this claim, but sociolinguists have been able to devise a way to supplement their theories by using the tools of discourse analysis to deal with specific items or levels of a written discourse for the application of sociolinguistic theories. Most importantly, as I have already noted above, the interpreted data collected from many of these sociolinguistic research works done by specialists and practitioners from various disciplines can be usefully combined for the formulation of universal sociolinguistic principles. In other words, prescriptive theories that derive from research and experiments of live communities using descriptive categories are reliable tools one can confidently use for the investigation of written texts.

Thirdly and lastly, another common objection to the use of any modern analytic tool concerns the compatibility of modern cultures with ancient ones. In short, modern norms and practices may not necessarily apply to the ancient world. Sociolinguists, however, have often responded that this kind of negative argument is weak, using the so-called uniformitarian principle¹⁴⁸ or sociolinguistic uniformitarianism¹⁴⁹ or the principle

¹⁴⁶ One of the important ethical issues involved relates to the manner of collecting the data. Schleeff and Meyerhoff, "Sociolinguistic Methods," 9, write, "First of all, never record covertly! It is deceptive and high-handed, and it shows scant regard for other people's wants, and for their right to privacy. In some places, it is quite simply illegal."

¹⁴⁷ See especially Schleeff and Meyerhoff, "Sociolinguistic Methods," 1–26, for theories and exercises of sociolinguistic research. See also Milroy and Gordon, *Sociolinguistics*; Tagliamonte, *Analysing Sociolinguistic Variation*; and Walker, *Variation in Linguistic Systems*.

¹⁴⁸ See Nevalainen, "Historical Sociolinguistics," 280–1; and Watt, *Code-Switching*, 3.

¹⁴⁹ Mullen, "Introduction," 5.

of uniformity.¹⁵⁰ This principle basically argues that what can be observed in the present is analogous and thus can be applied to the past.¹⁵¹ Assuredly, while cultural practices and traditions change through time, this is not so much with the way and purpose people use language.¹⁵² Because language is a tool or medium for human communication, its social and cognitive functions, regardless of time and culture, remain highly constant and uniform. One example derives from a realization of and a reflection on my own sociolinguistic background. While the customs and traditions of my family have significantly changed from my grandparents' and parents' generations, it has not been so in the default language we speak at home, which is our native tongue, although, of course, our migration to another country has disrupted this scenario. The point is that the choice of a particular language for conversation is usually determined by the sociolinguistic elements that compose and affect the speech situation, such that with family members and close friends, for example, one would naturally speak informally (i.e., not having to worry about linguistic politeness or social identity) using the language with which one is most comfortable and fluent.

Defining Sociolinguistics and Approaching Its Utilization and Application

Implicit in the typical definition of sociolinguistics (see above) found in most introductions to sociolinguistics is the element of people, who concurrently act both as

¹⁵⁰ Bergs, "The Uniformitarian Principle," 80.

¹⁵¹ See, in particular, Labov, *Sociolinguistic Patterns*, 275, and Romaine, "Historical Sociolinguistics," 1454, for the definition of this principle. But Langslow, "Approaching Bilingualism," 50–1, provides a caveat regarding the extent to which this principle is justified or to which sociolinguistic universals can be formulated. He cautions: "if we are to think of basing socio-linguistic reconstruction on modern typology, we must tread very carefully."

¹⁵² Bergs, "The Uniformitarian Principle," 80–96, notes that "some of the fundamental claims of modern (socio-) linguistics do seem to follow the UP. These include the fact that language must always have been variable, that different social groups and genders had different ways of speaking, and that people have always been aware of these differences, though they may not have evaluated them as we do today."

users of language and as members of society. Where there is no language user, there is no relationship between language and society. This fact engenders a more nuanced definition of sociolinguistics, which is the interdependent and transdisciplinary relationship between language, society, and people.¹⁵³ In the abstract, this has been variously referred to, for instance, as the interrelationship between language, culture, and thought (Hudson),¹⁵⁴ or language, consciousness, and society (Ruqaiya Hasan).¹⁵⁵ As noted above, the question of which of these components is emphasized in a sociolinguistic investigation varies considerably, depending upon one's goal of investigation. This concern mitigates our seeing a simplistic and straightforward relationship between these three sociolinguistic elements that can seemingly be investigated simultaneously. It is often the case that even experts in the field are only able to deal with any two of the three sociolinguistic elements concurrently. On the one hand, when the investigation is focused on the uses and functions of language in a society, the two more relevant elements studied are language and society. On the other hand, when the investigation is focused on the users of language, the complementary elements usually studied are either (1) the individual or group and society to determine their social motivations and reasons for using specific linguistic codes, or (2) the individual and language to identify types of linguistic codes individuals use in particular social contexts.

For this reason, I propose that in order for a methodological framework to take into account these three elements in the investigation, it is necessary to employ a multi-

¹⁵³ In Hymes, *Foundations*, vii–viii, one of the three themes that is fundamental to sociolinguistics is that the study of language is multidisciplinary, of which linguistics and other social science and academic disciplines, including education, folklore, and poetics are essential components.

¹⁵⁴ Hudson, *Sociolinguistics*, 70–105, esp. 78–81.

¹⁵⁵ Hasan, *Language, Society and Consciousness*, 3–16.

level approach in analyzing the linguistic situation of a particular community. At the macro-level, one needs to map out the general linguistic landscape of the community. What are the various linguistic codes found and used in the community, what is the geographical distribution of each of the linguistic codes used in the community, what is the prestige language and *lingua franca* of the community, and what is the type of community being investigated constitute some of the questions to be answered at this level. At the micro-level, one looks at the various social domains in which different linguistic codes are used as well as the individuals and groups participating in them. Included in this micro-level of analysis is the identification of the social network of Jesus and an assessment of his (multi-) linguistic proficiency. The objective is to demonstrate that, as a member of the speech community of ancient Palestine, Jesus actually interacted with people in various social domains, and he would therefore have spoken other languages aside from his native language, Aramaic. When both these macro- and micro-levels of analyses are combined, one is able to establish a relationship between the three sociolinguistic elements of a community, from which a more accurate portrait of its linguistic situation can be painted.

In a macro- and micro-sociolinguistic study, there are at least two ways to proceed with the investigation. One approach is to pick particular key thinkers or major theorists, adopt their sociolinguistic models, and use the theories as one sees them to be pertinent to their investigation. Key thinkers and major theorists can be classified as either macro-sociolinguists, as they deal with such matters as language planning, diglossia and multilingualism, intercultural communication, language contact and policies, etc., or micro-sociolinguists, as they focus upon conversations, narratives, linguistic variables,

etc. This first approach is a more straightforward way of utilizing a sociolinguistic theory. In other words, the use of a sociolinguistic theory is strictly confined to the particular model of that particular thinker or theorist. One can simply pick and choose a particular definition or model of multilingualism and use it as a lens or framework to analyze the linguistic situation of a community. The study of Sang-Il Lee on the multilingualism of first-century Palestine is one such example. While Lee, following William Mackey, defines and proposes a theory of multilingualism, the four points he marshals to argue for a multilingual phenomenon largely depend upon previous (mostly historical) works that deal with the linguistic situation of Palestine.¹⁵⁶ Thus, Lee was not able to demonstrate the dynamic interplay of the various sociolinguistic components of the multilingual community of ancient Palestine. It is clear that this first approach does not take into consideration other similar theories and is thus constricted in the formulation or use of a methodological framework. This approach can neglect many other factors that are relevant to the goal of investigation, because sociolinguistics, as noted above, is by nature interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary.

There is, however, a better approach, one that utilizes various sociolinguistic theories and assembles them into a workable methodological framework. This second approach contrasts with the former approach in that it takes a particular sociolinguistic theory, instead of a particular sociolinguist, as its starting point. For instance, because I am investigating the multilingualism of ancient Palestine, I am looking at this

¹⁵⁶ These four points are: (a) that the characteristics (e.g., standardization) of the four languages of ancient Palestine require the model of multilingualism, (b) that recent “language preference” theories correspond to multilingualism and not diglossia, which, according to Lee, cannot explain code-switching, (c) that “regional multilingualism and personal multilingualism support maximalism,” and (d) that the existence of Aramaic literature suggests that the populace was biliterate. See Lee, *Jesus and Gospel Traditions*, 77 n. 2, 101–2, 216.

multilingual phenomenon from the perspective of the society in general (macro-perspective) as well as from the perspective of the individual and social groups in particular (micro-perspective). Each perspective will have its own set of sociolinguistic theories to be considered in the investigative process, all of which is consolidated into a logical framework. That framework can then enable us to paint a more accurate picture of the linguistic situation of ancient Palestine. By mapping out the sociolinguistic landscape of the community and by tracing the social networks of an individual or social group (Jesus, in my case) living in that community, I am able to create not only a picture of the linguistic setting of the community, but also, more importantly, the sociolinguistic constraints for analyzing the episodes in Matthew's Gospel. With this approach to sociolinguistics, I define sociolinguistics accordingly as:

The interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary study of the three basic components of a society—language, culture, and people—in actual speech communities constrained by a specific goal of investigation, with the aim of understanding the multifarious ways these basic components are interrelated and interdependent for the formulation of theories and principles that are universally recognizable by diverse cultural communities and that are simultaneously applicable to the analysis of written texts.

Based on this definition, I will hereon use the modifier “sociolinguistic” to refer to the interrelationship of the three basic components of a speech community like ancient Palestine, instead of using the usual term “linguistic.” It should be apparent that what can be gleaned from these two levels of sociolinguistic analysis is merely the general sociolinguistic situation of ancient Palestine, that is, how people are likely to interact and use specific linguistic codes in various social situations. Ultimately, however, a sociolinguistic investigation must begin or end with an examination of the text, as it is the only evidence we have at hand to study and evaluate the hypothesized actual scenario.

And it is only when we scrutinize the purportedly actual conversations of an individual (Jesus) or social group (Jesus and his disciples), for instance, that we are able to identify the actual, or better, probable linguistic codes used by them in that ancient community. This is where textual analysis plays its role in my methodological framework. The conclusions reached from the textual analysis will, in turn, verify the accuracy of the hypothesized sociolinguistic situation of ancient Palestine. In short, in analyzing ancient documents like the New Testament, it is in the first instance essential to understand the broader sociolinguistic context out of which the New Testament was written, followed by an analysis of the written text.

Analysis of written texts requires the use of discourse analytic tools.¹⁵⁷ There are many types of these tools that sociolinguists use, and each type typically focuses on any of these four interdependent factors—(1) by focusing on individuals or social agents operating in groups (e.g., the language and social psychology approaches, such as social identity theory and communication accommodation theory; discursive psychology approach); (2) by approaching it in social terms as a form of interpersonal behavior, in the first instance, and then in semiotic terms as an exchange of meaning or of knowledge (e.g., Systemic Functional Linguistics); (3) by observing it as an instance (whether spoken, written, or signed text) unfolding in a particular context (e.g., conversational analysis; critical discourse analysis; interactional sociolinguistics; ethnography of communication); and (4) by describing and theorizing it as a system or potential (e.g.,

¹⁵⁷ For a discussion of various discourse analytic tools sociolinguists use, see the essays in Fitch and Sanders, eds., *Handbook of Language and Social Interaction*, 17–404; Wodak, Johnstone, and Kerswill, eds., *The Sage Handbook*, 313–442; and Holmes, *Introduction*, 355–404.

language pragmatics; speech act theory; conversational implicature).¹⁵⁸ Sociolinguists use discourse analysis primarily as a tool for studying how norms and rules of talk in a particular community are used and matched with different conversational and institutional contexts, in order to describe and explain the meanings in a social interaction.¹⁵⁹ In the remainder of this section, therefore, I would like to address a few pertinent issues that will clarify my theory of discourse analysis.

First, the reason I place textual analysis at the very end of my theoretical framework is not a matter of haphazard choice. An accurate interpretation of the text cannot be achieved if background and contextual information are lacking. The more information of these sorts we can gather, the more are we able to analyze more accurately a particular discourse or episode in Matthew's Gospel. Let us take the German telephone etiquette and mailing address as examples. German telephone protocol requires both the person answering the phone and the caller to give their names, and to say *auf Wiederhören* instead of *auf Wiedersehen* before hanging up the phone. Both idioms mean the same thing, that is, "goodbye," in English. But each one is used in a different type of context. The writing of a German mailing address, in contrast to the North American way of writing it, starts with the name of the street followed by the house number (e.g., Zennerstraße 17). My point here is that use of specific linguistic codes necessarily correlates with specific types of contexts. In the case of writing a German mailing address, the context involves the specific way of writing of a particular cultural group of people. Along the same line, Alex Mullen points out that to reconstruct the story behind

¹⁵⁸ See Matthiessen and Slade, "Analyzing Conversation," 378–80; and Edwards, "Discursive Psychology," 257–58.

¹⁵⁹ Holmes, *Introduction*, 356.

the Regina tombstone, it is necessary to study not only the written content of the stone, but also the “broader linguistic context of the [Greco-Roman] Empire and the possible negotiations of multiple identities within it.”¹⁶⁰ Similarly, the general sociolinguistic landscape of the community of ancient Palestine needs to be mapped out first, before the language choice of a particular speech context can be accurately determined.

Secondly, a textual analysis must proceed with a theory on how to approach the text. In New Testament studies, discourse analysis has been one of the most effective means of analyzing and understanding the meaning of a text, though it is unfortunate that many scholars are still hesitant to explore and use this interpretive tool.¹⁶¹ Practitioners of various academic disciplines, nevertheless, have employed this tool. For my purposes, I will limit my discussion of discourse analysis to the field of sociolinguistics.

Sociolinguists have used discourse analysis, as it “provides a tool for sociolinguists to identify the norms of talk among different social and cultural groups in different conversational and institutional contexts, and to describe the discursive resources people use in constructing different social identities in interaction.”¹⁶² Whereas Kristine L. Fitch points out that early developments of discourse analysis deal with such linguistic devices as grammatical cohesion devices, topical markers, and semantic principles to connect parts (e.g., words, sentences) into wholes (e.g., paragraphs), and later theories look into such institutional frameworks as culture and ideology,¹⁶³ there is actually a range of

¹⁶⁰ Mullen, “Introduction,” 2–5.

¹⁶¹ See Porter, “Discourse Analysis,” 21–24; and Porter, “Greek Grammar and Syntax,” 96–102.

¹⁶² Holmes, *Introduction*, 356.

¹⁶³ Fitch, “Discourse Analysis,” 253. See also Fairclough, *Discourse and Social Change*, esp. 12–36; and Stubbs, *Discourse Analysis*, esp. 1–12.

different but fairly related works that make use of the term “discourse analysis.”¹⁶⁴ Here I simply define a discourse as any stretches of oral or written language beyond the sentence,¹⁶⁵ of which the New Testament can be seen as one such complex type of written discourse with underlying oral discourses. Discourse analysis, then, is by necessity concerned with the development of a coherent model of interpretation (a sociolinguistic model of interpretation, in my case), integrating three basic areas of linguistic analysis: semantics (meaning), syntax (structure), and pragmatics (function or use in context), all of which are grounded upon and analyzed on the basis of the linguistic form from the smallest units (e.g., morphemes, words) to the larger (e.g., word groups, clauses, sentences, paragraphs) and largest (e.g., sub-sections, entire section) units of a textual or oral discourse.¹⁶⁶

Thirdly and lastly, a complex type of written discourse requires a complex analysis that cannot simply be handled by any type of discourse analytic model. In other words, it is necessary to use the appropriate tool for the right job, in order to arrive at a more accurate interpretation of the text. Some texts are of the narrative type, others resemble actual spoken conversations, but the discourses in the Gospels appear to be a combination of both discourse types. For my purposes, because I am concerned with determining the specific language in a particular episode, I employ an ethnographic approach to analyze the various conversational episodes in the Gospel of Matthew. Specifically, using Hymes’s ethnography of communication, I aim at describing the

¹⁶⁴ See, for example, Edwards, “Discursive Psychology,” 257–73; Blum-Kulka, “Rethinking Genre,” 275–300; and Tracy, “Reconstructing Communicative Practices,” 301–19.

¹⁶⁵ Cf. Holmes, *Introduction*, 356; Fairclough, *Discourse and Social Change*, 3; and Stubbs, *Discourse Analysis*, 1.

¹⁶⁶ Porter, “Discourse Analysis,” 18–19.

sociolinguistic elements of a conversational episode and determine the specific type of language that would have been used in that particular instance. I will now turn to elaborate my sociolinguistic approach to the analysis of the sociolinguistic situation of ancient Palestine.

A Multi-level and Multi-dimensional Sociolinguistic Framework—The Proposed Model

This section outlines the proposed sociolinguistic model that I will use in analyzing the sociolinguistic situation of ancient Palestine. It introduces the various sociolinguistic theories and the discourse analytic tool (i.e., ethnography of communication) that will be employed in this study. These sociolinguistic theories are integrated according to the parameters and procedure I have just discussed in the preceding section. I note again that definitions and applications of the theories of sociolinguistics vary from one author or practitioner to another, since use of the theories is highly contingent upon one's object of study. On my part, I have mostly tried to approach and integrate these theories according to how they can be most appropriately and suitably employed for the analysis of my subject of interest.

There are three levels of analysis, and discussion at each level indicates the objectives of the analysis, defines the relevant sociolinguistic theories that will be used, and explains how use of these theories can achieve the objectives. Because the detailed explanation of these various sociolinguistic theories requires a large amount of space, I consider it more practical and beneficial to discuss them in the respective chapters where they are employed and applied. This approach brings what is necessary to bear at the right time. Here I introduce my overall theoretical framework composed of three levels of analysis—macro, micro, and textual—explaining my approach to handling the linguistic

evidence. I then expand each level of analysis in the individual chapters where they are utilized—chapter 3 (macro analysis), chapter 4 (micro analysis), and chapter 5 (textual analysis). A detailed procedure for the application of each of the sets of sociolinguistic theories under each level of analysis is also provided and explained in their respective chapters.

A Macro-level Analysis Using Theories of Societal Multilingualism

This first level of analysis will attempt to map out the sociolinguistic landscape of ancient Palestine using theories of societal multilingualism. The focus of analysis is upon the general relationship between language and society, with two objectives in mind. The first objective is to show that ancient Palestine was indeed a multilingual speech community from both historical and geographical standpoints, and the second one is to establish the most likely fact that Greek was the *lingua franca* and prestige language of the speech community. There are two sets of sociolinguistic concepts that will be used, and both of which are subsumed under societal multilingualism. The first set includes language contact, language maintenance and shifts, language decline, and language death. The second set comprises dialect geography, language boundary, and isogloss. These two sets of societal multilingualism concepts are applied to a set of historical and geographical data that altogether demonstrate why ancient Palestine was a multilingual community and why Greek was most likely its *lingua franca* and prestige language.

Multilingualism is generally understood as a sociolinguistic phenomenon that may refer either to speakers' capabilities and competence along a linguistic cline in using multiple languages (individual or personal multilingualism), or to the alternate use of two

or more languages within a community (societal multilingualism).¹⁶⁷ With reference to individual multilingualism, the number and types of language varieties an individual speaks constitute their linguistic repertoire. Individual multilingualism is closely linked to code-switching, since the linguistic repertoire of an individual serves as the available linguistic resources they can draw upon and use. Societal multilingualism, on the other hand, can further be divided into multilingualism at the state level, which focuses on multilingual states (e.g., regions, provinces, cities), and multilingualism at the community level, which studies how social groups practice multilingualism.¹⁶⁸ Even though multilingualism at the community level, strictly speaking, is still classified under societal multilingualism, I have included it in my micro-analysis of Jesus' sociolinguistic environment in chapter 4, since the selection of a particular language within a conversation in a speech community is ultimately still the choice of the language user. Moreover, as sociolinguists define it, multilingualism at the community level is a study of how individuals and social groups practice multilingualism.

The study of societal multilingualism includes the important topics of language contact, language maintenance and shift, language decline, and language death. When two different ethnic groups interact, language contact happens, and this happens in a speech community (see chapter 3—Ancient Palestine as a Multilingual Speech Community). Over time, one language would tend to dominate the other and would be

¹⁶⁷ Hamers and Blanc, *Bilinguality and Bilingualism*, 6, distinguish between bilinguality, a person's ability to use more than one language, and bilingualism, the presence of two languages within one speech community. The former is a subject usually studied by psychologists and linguists, while the latter by sociologists (see Hezser, *Jewish Literacy*, 237). Watt, "Some Implications of Bilingualism," 9–27, lists eight concepts or categories of multilingualism as found in general studies of the phenomenon.

¹⁶⁸ See Sebba, "Societal Bilingualism," 445–57. For helpful overviews on the topic of multilingualism, see Baker and Jones, *Encyclopedia of Bilingualism*; Auer and Wei, eds., *Handbook of Multilingualism*; Verhoeven and Stromqvist, eds., *Narrative Development*; and Hakuta, *Mirror of Language*.

use as the *lingua franca*, which, in turn, also often serves as the prestige language of the speech community.¹⁶⁹ This linguistic phenomenon is known as language maintenance and shift, as it implies that one ethnic group has decided to forego the use of its own native language in some social contexts, especially in public settings, and has decided to learn and speak the language of the other ethnic group, except in more private settings, such as in the home or with friends, where they may decide to keep the use of their native language.¹⁷⁰ The more dominant ethnic group, however, does not necessarily need to learn and speak the native language of the other ethnic group. When an ethnic group or speech community totally abandons its native language, such that everyone becomes speakers of the new language, language death occurs, but in the process, language decline or language endangerment, which actually means the decline in the number of speakers of the old language, will precede it. Causes of language endangerment can be divided into four categories: (1) natural catastrophes, famine, and disease; (2) war and genocide; (3) overt repression; and (4) cultural, political, and economic dominance.¹⁷¹ Of these, the clearest cause for the language shifts that happened in ancient Palestine is the fourth category (see chapter 3—Imperialism and the Acquisition of New Languages). Applying these societal multilingualism concepts to the available historical information on ancient Palestine’s series of military conquests by consecutive foreign superpowers provides us with an explanation as to the existence of the four languages—Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin—and how they came to be spoken by the people of first-century Palestine.

¹⁶⁹ Baker and Jones, *Encyclopedia of Bilingualism*, 52, refers to the “majority language” as the higher status language (i.e., prestige language) with a more “fashionable image.”

¹⁷⁰ For an overview, see Ferguson, “Religious Factors in Language Spread,” 63–67.

¹⁷¹ See Sallabank, “Language Endangerment,” 501–2.

A speech community's multilingual situation can also be studied geographically through the concepts of dialect geography, language boundary, and isogloss. Sociolinguists use these three interrelated concepts to study the various dialects or languages of a particular speech community. Whereas dialect geography is a term that refers to the geographical provenance of a particular dialect or language, and isogloss is a term that indicates the actual boundary line between different geographical regions shown in a geographical map, language boundary is a term used to distinguish between different dialects or languages of various geographical regions that are demarcated by isoglosses. Examining the geography, demography, population, and inhabitants of the various regions of ancient Palestine using these three concepts helps us to see the correlation between these social elements and the linguistic distribution of the speech community.¹⁷² More specifically, it gives us a general idea and picture of which language or combination of languages was spoken in various geographical regions of the speech community, rather than simply stating the obvious fact that the Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin languages were used in ancient Palestine.

A Micro-level Analysis Using Theories of Community-level Bilingualism and Individual Bilingualism

This second level of analysis aims at studying the sociolinguistic environment of Jesus, using community-level and individual multilingualism theories to determine the functions and uses of the languages of ancient Palestine in typical social contexts, to outline the social network of Jesus, and to identify the type and to measure the degree of Jesus' multilingual proficiency. There are three objectives to this end. Viewing language

¹⁷² These concepts belong to the broader categories of regional and social dialects (see Wardhaugh, *Introduction*, 43–49; Holmes, *Introduction*, 127–56; Hudson, *Sociolinguistics*, 38–45).

from a functional perspective, the first objective of this level of analysis is to demonstrate that Jesus must have been a multilingual speaker as a member of the multilingual speech community of ancient Palestine. When language is viewed from a functional perspective, we are looking at the particular kinds of social or situational contexts languages are deployed for use. The correlation between use of a specific language and the social contexts where it is used can be examined through the concepts of social/language domains and diglossia. After determining the functional distribution of languages in various social contexts, the second objective of this micro-level of analysis is to examine the community members' participation or involvement in these social contexts through the concept of social network. As an example, I attempt to map out the social network of Jesus to show the idea that he actually (and frequently) interacted with these various social contexts in the speech community of ancient Palestine. Ultimately, however, the selection of a particular language for use still depends upon the language user and upon whether they are able to speak that language. For this reason, the third objective of this micro-sociolinguistic analysis is to look at Jesus' multilingual proficiency using individual bilingualism proficiency theories, while noting that it is perhaps impossible to determine accurately his actual literacy aptitude.

In describing the language choice of individuals or social groups in a large community, it is helpful to begin with the concept of social or language domains. There are five typical domains that are found in virtually all communities—family, friendship, religion, education, and government.¹⁷³ Social or language domains are easily

¹⁷³ Cf. Fishman, "Micro- and Macro-Sociolinguistics," 22, who provides a similar list (i.e., family, friendship, religion, education, and employment). A more elaborate list of typical social domains (i.e., sermon in church or mosque; instructions to servants, waiters, workmen, clerks; personal letter; speech in parliament, political speech; university lecture; conversation with family, friends, colleagues; news

recognizable, since they comprise a constant set of participants regularly interacting with each other, a familiar social setting, and a fairly identified set of topics often brought up for discussion. Theoretically, a social or language domain draws on these three important factors for the choice of a linguistic code. The so-called “social dimension scales,” such as the social-solidarity, status, formality, and functional scales, assess the salience of each of these factors. Applying this social or language domain concept allows us to capture a general portrait of the sociolinguistic composition of the social institutions of a speech community, especially the norms for language selection, against which other less typical or variable social domains (a domain where the ideal configuration of a fixed or standard domain is altered or a domain formed by the combination of two or more fixed or standard domains; see chapter 5—Variable Social Domains) may be compared and analyzed.¹⁷⁴ The domain concept is linked to the concept of diglossia.

Diglossia refers to the functional distribution of languages or language varieties (e.g., languages, dialects, linguistic codes) within a speech community. The idea is that the speech community’s use of each language or language variety is linked to a particular social function (e.g., oral or written, formal or informal, private or public, etc.) within a particular social domain (e.g., family, friends, church, marketplace, etc.).¹⁷⁵ The relationship between diglossia and multilingualism, however, is both complex and elusive,

broadcast; radio “soap opera”; newspaper editorial, news story, caption on picture; caption on political cartoon; poetry; folk literature) is found in Ferguson, “Diglossia,” 28.

¹⁷⁴ With reference to the linguistic situation of ancient Palestine, see also the discussion of these situational factors affecting language choice in Porter, *Criteria*, 144–57; and Hezser, *Jewish Literacy*, 243–47.

¹⁷⁵ For a good introduction to the concept of diglossia, see Fasold, *The Sociolinguistics of Society*, 34–60. Three classic essays, Ferguson, “Diglossia,” 25–39, Fishman, “Bilingualism with and without Diglossia,” 74–81, and Fishman, “Who Speaks What Language,” 82–100, are still the most helpful in introducing the concepts of diglossia and language domains. In New Testament studies, diglossia has been discussed in Porter, ed., *Diglossia*, esp. 18–89, and Watt, *Code-Switching*, esp. 41–51. For comments on the inapplicability of the concept of diglossia to the linguistic situation of ancient Palestine, see Lee, *Jesus and Gospel Traditions*, 86–103, esp. 86 n. 3; and Paulston, “Some Comments,” 79–89.

since the sociolinguistic situation of an actual speech community or social group can be classified into at least four types—diglossic and multilingual, multilingual but not diglossic, diglossic but not multilingual, and neither diglossic nor multilingual.¹⁷⁶ As such, many biblical scholars as we have seen from the previous chapter have disagreed and have been confused over the definition of diglossia and its conceptual application to the linguistic situation of ancient Palestine. Part of the reason for the confusion is the lack of flexibility in allowing for the full range of possible conceptualizations under which diglossia can be used, as well as the failure to appreciate the fundamental utility of the concept—the functional distribution of the use of linguistic codes in a speech community. It is practically impossible for multilinguals to select a particular linguistic code for use simply as they wish to do so without reference to other situational, contextual factors, such as audience, social setting, and topic of conversation. The choice of a linguistic code is almost always, if not always, contextually induced.¹⁷⁷ Holmes rightly notes that in a multilingual speech community “there is a division of labor between the languages.”¹⁷⁸ Diglossia understood in this manner is a powerful concept, as it allows for a categorization of linguistic codes according to its usage in various linguistic contexts regardless of whether the community under study is multilingual or monolingual.

¹⁷⁶ Fishman, “Bilingualism with and without Diglossia,” 75. Langslow, “Approaching Bilingualism,” 26–27, notes that Fishman’s model “was criticized on the grounds *inter alia* that three of the four postulated types are in the real world rare or transitional, only [+D +B] being commonly attested and stable.” He also notes that in [+D –B] cases, that is, monolingual communities, the gender-specific language variety is often overlooked. That [+D +B] is the most common linguistic phenomenon in most real communities should tell us that Lee’s proposal of a [+B –D] case for ancient Palestine is highly unlikely (see above for Lee’s proposal, and especially Ong, “Review of *Jesus and Gospel Traditions*,” 124–29).

¹⁷⁷ Halliday, *Language and Society*, 8, points out that even ambilinguals or near-ambilinguals “rarely perform all language activities in both ... there is always some difference between the actual situations in which he uses the one and those in which he uses the other, namely that each of the two is associated with a different group of participants.”

¹⁷⁸ Holmes, *Introduction*, 31.

After looking at the various social domains and functional distribution of the languages of ancient Palestine, it becomes our next objective to determine how its people interact with those social domains and appropriate their available linguistic repertoire. Using social network theory, along with the attendant concepts of social identity, public face, and speech accommodation can help us achieve this objective. Lesley Milroy and Li Wei state, “A social network may be seen as a boundless web of ties which reaches out through a whole society, linking people to one another, however remotely. However, for practical reasons, social networks are generally ‘anchored’ to individuals, and analysis is effectively limited to between twenty and fifty individuals.”¹⁷⁹ An individual’s social network may be determined by measuring the density and plexity of his social interactions. Density refers to the degree or frequency a person is in contact with a particular individual or social group, and plexity (characterized in terms of uniplex and multiplex relationships) refers to the range of different types of an individual’s social interaction or transactions with various individuals or social groups.¹⁸⁰ Social network theory, moreover, is also related to the concepts of social identity (incl. public face) and speech accommodation, as people are not just members of a social class, caste, age, or gender groupings in a community, but they interact meaningfully in an orderly manner and structured ways with their conversation partners.

In actual social interaction, people often either consciously or unconsciously try to project a “public face” and maintain their social identity, as well as accommodate their

¹⁷⁹ Milroy and Wei, “A Social Network Approach,” 138.

¹⁸⁰ For the concept of social network, see Milroy, *Language and Social Networks*, 1–172; Milroy and Milroy, “Linguistic Change, Social Network and Speaker Innovation,” 339–84; Milroy and Wei, “A Social Network Approach to Code-switching,” 136–57; Vetter, “Social Network,” 208–18; Hudson, *Sociolinguistics*, 234–37; and Holmes, *Introduction*, 193–200.

speech and behavior to that of others. A “public face” is the public image a speaker presents to the world. Through both verbal and non-verbal speech behaviors, a speaker presents an “abstract face” that becomes the prototype defined by typical circumstances.¹⁸¹ People may, for instance, project one particular public image to their family and close friends and another one to their not-so-familiar acquaintances. The maintenance of social identity refers to the degree to which a speaker wants to preserve their public face by showing solidarity with their audience or by accommodating their speech to that of others. Henri Tajfel defines it as “that part of the individual’s self-concept which derives from their knowledge of their membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership.”¹⁸² Social identity theory, therefore, is primarily concerned with how a person wants to project himself to others or how he wants others to view him as reflected by his speech and behavior.¹⁸³ Generally speaking, people prefer a positive to a negative self-image.¹⁸⁴

The concept of social identity naturally leads to the concept of speech accommodation. People will instinctively accommodate to the expectations and needs of their audience, either because they want to project a public face, create or maintain social identity, or conform to the social norm of the community.¹⁸⁵ Speech/Communication

¹⁸¹ Hudson, *Sociolinguistics*, 230–1.

¹⁸² Tajfel, *Social Identity*, 2.

¹⁸³ This observation is gleaned from what sociolinguists call *matched-guise* experiments, where a totally undisclosed bilingual person A who speaks languages X and Y is judged twice by the same judge(s) with reference to person A’s X-speaking and Y-speaking instances. See Wardhaugh, *Introduction*, 112–113; and Giles and Coupland, *Language*, 32–58.

¹⁸⁴ Tajfel, *Human Groups and Social Categories*, 45.

¹⁸⁵ See Finlayson and Slabbert, “I’ll Meet You Half-Way with Language,” 381–421.

Accommodation Theory (SAT/CAT), accordingly, comes in two basic types—convergence and divergence. Depending on what they want to achieve in a social situation, speakers either converge or diverge their speech, respectively, to and from their audience.¹⁸⁶ As such, accommodation can be a “way of explaining how individuals and groups may be seen to relate to each other.”¹⁸⁷ These three sociolinguistic concepts—public face, social identity, and accommodation—indicate that an individual builds a “mental community” of his surrounding social world. And according to Hudson, the mental community people build is based upon their social networks.¹⁸⁸

It is one thing to establish the fact that the first-century people would have known their community’s linguistic repertoire in order to interact with its various social domains, but it is another to demonstrate that its people, Jesus and his disciples, for example, are actually able to speak, write, or understand the languages. Thus, it is imperative in this study to measure Jesus’ multilingual proficiency. Included under measuring individual bilingualism proficiency are four concepts that can more or less evaluate the linguistic proficiency of a multilingual individual. The first concept, types of bilinguals, provides us with a description of the different types of multilingual individuals available (e.g., balanced bilingual, early bilingual, late bilingual), while indicating the fact that this is not a rigid but a flexible categorization, as the actual multilingual proficiency of individuals

¹⁸⁶ Giles and Coupland, *Language*, 60–1.

¹⁸⁷ Wardhaugh, *Introduction*, 114.

¹⁸⁸ Hudson, *Sociolinguistics*, 234, 237, 239, points out that “we tend to organise our knowledge of society in terms of social stereotypes, which for simplicity we can call simply ‘types’—general types of people, such as ‘coalminer’, ‘yuppy’, ‘Londoner’, ‘rough’, ‘Burnout’, ‘male’. Each of these abstractions allows as to generalise across a range of people, including people we have never met...Each of the links between the speaker and a social type is part of the speaker’s face...In this sense, speaking is an act of identity which locates the speaker in a ‘multi-dimensional’ social space...One part is concerned with the interpersonal relationship between the speaker and the person addressed, while the other part is concerned with the social classification of the speaker alone.”

varies according to degree and not according to type. The second concept is known as code-switching. This concept refers to the ability of multilingual speakers to switch between linguistic codes or languages during a conversation for various social reasons, such as for the maintenance of social identity, for speech accommodation, or for the projection of a public face (see above). The third concept, one that is closely related to the first concept, is a classification of types of bilingual families or childhood bilingualism. The multilingual background of a child reveals their first and early exposure to the different languages that will often consequently affect their multilingual proficiency as an adult. The fourth and last concept is the typical categories used for measuring bilingual proficiency. There are four categories with eight dimensional elements—oracy (speaking and listening), literacy (reading and writing), receptivity (listening and reading), and productivity (speaking and writing)—that assess the language skills and multilingual proficiency of an individual.

A Text-level Analysis Using Ethnography of Communication Theory

This third and final level of (textual) analysis embarks on analyzing the episodes in Matthew's Gospel with reference to Jesus' speeches and activities, using ethnography of communication theory. The ultimate objective is to determine the specific language Jesus would have used in each of the episodes. The analysis here is informed and constrained by the data gleaned from the first two levels of analysis. My overarching theory, it should be recalled, is that in analyzing the situational context behind a textual discourse, the analyst is required to possess a substantial amount of background information of the community's rules and norms that characterize its sociolinguistic composition and interaction.

I note again that, even though I take the various speech episodes in Matthew's Gospel to be the historical accounts of the actual events, I am only using them in such a manner to show the kinds of speech situations that would have taken place in the first-century CE context,¹⁸⁹ supplemented by the historical and sociolinguistic data I have provided in both my macro- and micro-analyses of the speech community of ancient Palestine. To be more specific, they at least reflect or serve as a representation of the actual historical events of the speech situations and events in which Jesus and his contemporaries participated. Thus, the language selection in a particular speech episode in Matthew's Gospel could mirror the same language selection in a similar type of speech situation or event in the first century CE.

Ethnography of communication theory is used to describe speech events or situations.¹⁹⁰ Developed by Hymes, ethnography of communication sees actual conversations as situated and purposive, thus extending the scope of linguistic analysis "from an isolated sentence-generating single norm to the structure of speaking as a whole."¹⁹¹ Hymes wants to create a robust theory that can adequately describe people's conscious or unconscious use of language in social interactions. Consequently, ethnography of communication aims at specifying the technical concepts required for

¹⁸⁹ Contra Snyder, *Language and Identity*, 231, who argues otherwise.

¹⁹⁰ Holmes, *Introduction*, 372.

¹⁹¹ Hymes, *Foundations*, esp. 45–66, 83–117, here 106. Philipsen and Coutu, "The Ethnography of Speaking," 357, helpfully points out the two interdependent functions of Hymes's model: "The mission of the ethnography of speaking is manifold, but it can be simplified in terms of two overarching functions: descriptive and theoretical. The descriptive function is concerned with producing ethnographies of speaking, that is, field reports of ways of speaking in particular groups, communities, or milieus. The theoretical function concerns what can be learned from studies of ways of speaking in particular speech communities that might help students of Language and Social Interaction to think more generally about the conduct of speaking in social life."

such description and at characterizing the forms of that description.¹⁹² In other words, ethnography of communication is “a theoretical description of speech as a system of cultural behavior concerned with the organization of diversity.”¹⁹³ This descriptive framework that Hymes developed includes eight major components (setting, participants, ends, act sequence, key, instrumentalities, norms, and genre) for the analysis of a particular speech event.¹⁹⁴ Each of these components is explained in chapter 5, where I commence my textual analysis of Matthew’s Gospel. Janet Holmes lists several advantages of Hymes’s ethnography of communication as used in sociolinguistics. First, it explicitly identifies the components (and their interrelationship) of a speech event that is useful for describing social interaction of unfamiliar cultures. Secondly, it highlights the complex roles that participants play and the different rules, especially unnoticed ones, of social interactions. Thirdly, it can detect the mismatch between the various components of the communicative event. Finally, it may also provide a way for defining the concept of speech community, i.e., a group of people who share the same rules of speaking.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹² Hymes, *Foundations*, 45, 65-66.

¹⁹³ Hymes, *Foundations*, 89, 90. Many sociolinguists as well as literary (and social media) scholars have implemented Hymes’s approach. See, for example, Bauman and Sherzer, “The Ethnography of Speaking,” 95–119; Duranti, “The Ethnography of Speaking,” 210–28; Finnegan, *Oral Traditions and the Verbal Arts*, 25–52; Fitch and Philipsen, “Ethnography of Speaking,” 263–69; and Murray, “The Context of Oral and Written Language,” 351–73.

¹⁹⁴ See Hymes, *Foundations*, 53–62, cf. 9–24. Holmes, *Introduction*, 365–66 (cf. Philipsen and Coutu, “The Ethnography of Speaking,” 355–79), expands this eight components into eleven more specific components, which include genre (type of event), topic (what people are talking about), purpose or function (the reasons for the talk), setting (where the talk takes place), key (emotional tone), participants (characteristics of those present and their relationship), message form (code and/or channel), message content (specific details of what the communication is all about), act sequence (ordering of speech acts), rules for interaction (prescribed orders of speaking), and norms for interpretation (of what is going on).

¹⁹⁵ Holmes, *Introduction*, 366–71.

CONCLUSION

This chapter discusses three important components that are relevant to this study. The first is the survey of previous sociolinguistic approaches. The survey shows that there is still opportunity for the development and employment of a more robust methodological tool for examining the sociolinguistic environment of ancient Palestine and of Jesus. The second component introduces the discipline of sociolinguistics as well as highlights its major strengths and weaknesses as an interpretive tool. In my discussion of sociolinguistics, I tried to define the discipline in my own terms, with the intention that my definition will provide a more adequate and proper description of sociolinguistics. The third component outlines the research methodology that I use in this study. My research methodology derives from various sociolinguistic theories that I combined into a workable theoretical framework via three levels of analysis—macro, micro, and textual. Each level of analysis is elaborated in the next three chapters and is applied to various sets of historical and textual data, including the Gospel of Matthew.

Chapter Three: The Sociolinguistic Landscape of Ancient Palestine

INTRODUCTION

This chapter attempts to demonstrate that ancient Palestine was a multilingual speech community and that Greek was its prestige language and *lingua franca*. It is important to establish this prestige language and *lingua franca*, as it points to the default language the general populace, including Jesus and his disciples, would have used to communicate with those from outside their own family and ethnic groups and with those who were not able to speak their own native language. This prestige language and *lingua franca* also functions as the default language the first-century people would have used in more public settings where speech accommodation is required for the benefit of various social and ethnic groups that are present in a speech event, as well as in some social settings where use of the *lingua franca* seems most appropriate.¹

I have taken two approaches to achieve this objective. The two major sections of this chapter expound on these approaches by way of analyzing two sets of data. The first set of data deals with the history of ancient Palestine's successive military conquests, while the second one examines the geography, inhabitants, and population of the land. The theory behind the analysis of these two sets of data derives from the first of the three levels of analyses of the sociolinguistic model outlined in the previous chapter. My sociolinguistic model, it should be recalled, attempts to investigate three levels or areas of my subject of interest: (1) the sociolinguistic landscape of ancient Palestine; (2) the

¹ Most scholars who study the linguistic situation of ancient Palestine agree that Greek was the language of the politically and economically dominant groups, although some have questioned whether the language was actually the "dominant" one during the first-century (see, for example, Hezser, *Jewish Literacy*, 240). As this chapter will make clear, however, from the perspective of an entire speech community, there needs to be a "dominant" (and prestige) language that would function as the *lingua franca* of various ethnic groups and individuals (although linguistic proficiency will of course vary between individuals) that interact within a speech community.

sociolinguistic environment and network of Jesus and his multilingual proficiency; and (3) the languages of Jesus in various sociolinguistic contexts in the Gospel of Matthew. This chapter will thus map out the sociolinguistic landscape of ancient Palestine. The sociolinguistic concepts involved fall under the topic of societal multilingualism.

The first section below shows the language shifts of the speech community from a historical standpoint, using the concepts of language contact, language maintenance and shift, and language decline and language death. Language shifts do not always or necessarily entail the total abandonment of a particular language, but they do reveal how each of the four languages—Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin—came to be spoken at various time periods in the history of ancient Palestine under different military regimes.² These linguistic shifts highlight the process ancient Palestine has undergone from being a monolingual speech community during the united monarchy period to being a multilingual speech community during the time of Jesus. It should be noted that my interest in these “language shifts” is focused upon the broader historical development of the entire ancient Palestinian community and not upon any particular geographical region within it, such as Judea, Samaria, Galilee, etc.³ Nonetheless, I have treated the major geographical areas (eight in total) individually in the following section, but my interest there is in the area’s geography, inhabitants, and population, and their correlation with the languages spoken in those communities.

² Cf. Porter, “The Language(s) Jesus Spoke,” 2462, who notes these language shifts as an “indirect evidence...of the diachronic linguistic developments of the Jewish people.”

³ Some studies treat individual settlements and villages within a geographical region. See, for example, Chancey, *Myth*, 63–119, on the inland settlements of Galilee; Root, *First Century Galilee*; and Lewin, *Archaeology*, 44–177, on various cities of Palestine.

The second section, therefore, uses the concepts of dialects, language boundaries, and isogloss to examine the geography, population, and inhabitants of the major provinces and cities of Palestine, showing geographically what the multilingualism of the entire Palestinian community would have looked like. I summarize my findings and conclusions and provide a table of the various languages spoken in each geographical area at the end of the chapter. Before turning to the first section, I discuss first the concept of speech community, as I view the geographical land of ancient Palestine (and the various regions within it) as a “speech community.”

ANCIENT PALESTINE AS A MULTILINGUAL SPEECH COMMUNITY

What is a multilingual speech community? This question immediately direct us into the three basic components—language, people, and society—that we need to consider in discussing the multilingualism of ancient Palestine. The term “multilingual” implies the presence of multilingual speakers and the use of multiple languages. The term “speech community” suggests the composition of various sociolinguistic elements, such as language users, types of languages, and societal memberships. In his discussion of speech communities, Richard Hudson asks, “‘Where is language?’ Is it ‘in’ the community or ‘in’ the individual?”⁴ Language is ‘in’ both individual and community, since any of these sociolinguistic elements cannot exist in reality without the other. How can we really talk about the existence of language users without dealing with their language repertoire and social membership in the community? Language (or the linguistic situation of ancient Palestine for that matter), therefore, must be studied in

⁴ Whereas Hudson, *Sociolinguistics*, 29, claims that language must be found in the individual, Labov, “Exact Description,” 52, asserts that, “Language is not a property of the individual, but of the community.” Such a question of course can only be answered once we have determined the goals and interests of our research investigation and the methodological tools we want to use to achieve them; moreover, answers will vary from one researcher or sociolinguist to another.

relation both to its users and to the particular society that uses it. Language is situated within its own unique speech community. Thus, with reference to the languages of ancient Palestine, we are not dealing with just its languages per se. Rather, we are addressing the languages used in various social contexts or for specified functions and purposes.⁵

First-century Palestine was certainly not just a conventional, monolingual speech community. It rather was a complex, multilingual speech community. Many sociolinguists would speak of speech communities as coterminous with any group of speakers that shares the same language, dialect, or linguistic behavior.⁶ Some sociolinguists, however, have allowed for a more flexible notion of speech communities and have reformulated the meaning of the term. John Gumperz states that a speech community is

a social group which may be either monolingual or multilingual, held together by frequency of social interaction patterns and set off from the surrounding areas by weaknesses in the lines of communication. Linguistic communities may consist of small groups bound together by face-to-face contact or may cover large regions, depending on the level of abstraction we wish to achieve.⁷

Accordingly, a speech community can be either monolingual or multilingual. Susanne Romaine also holds this same view, pointing out that “a speech community is a group of people who do not necessary [*sic*] share the same language, but shares a set of norms and

⁵ See Hymes, *Foundations*, 47–51.

⁶ See, for example, Lyons, *New Horizons*, 326: “speech community: all the people who use a given language (or dialect)”; and Hockett, *Modern Linguistics*, 8: “each language defines a speech community: the whole set of people who communicate with each other, either directly or indirectly, via the common language.” On various definitions of “speech community,” see Hudson, *Sociolinguistics*, 24–27.

⁷ Gumperz, “Types of Linguistic Communities,” 463; see also Gumperz, *Language and Social Identity*, 24. Gumperz associates the term “linguistic community” with the term “linguistic area” (see Emeneau, “India,” 3-16).

rules for the use of language.”⁸ Similarly, William Labov notes, “The speech community is not defined by any marked agreement in the use of language elements so much as by the participation in a set of shared norms.”⁹

This new, alternate definition of a speech community certainly applies to the community of ancient Palestine, especially with the existence of Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin languages in that time period (see chapter 1). Moreover, as we will see shortly, the governance of ancient Palestine under several military regimes (Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome) engendered the development and formation of multilingual groups within its speech communities, an inevitable linguistic phenomenon that naturally arises in events of imperialism.¹⁰ Based on the above definition of John Gumperz, speech communities can also refer to both small, local communities and large, regional and national communities. Gumperz’s definition consequently implies that linguistic distribution in terms of social groups and geographical areas is described in terms of speech communities.¹¹ In other words, language contact, which will naturally result in the employment of a *lingua franca*, also means the interaction between two monolingual speech communities (or the members of the communities) that will eventually evolve into a single multilingual speech community.

In events of military conquests, for instance, the natives of a conquered territory will inevitably come into all kinds of social contacts with the people of the imperial nation (e.g., local alliances, intermarriages, urbanization, internal migration, and people

⁸ Romaine, *Introduction*, 22.

⁹ Labov, *Sociolinguistic Patterns*, 120.

¹⁰ Fasold, *The Sociolinguistics of Society*, 9–14, lists imperialism as one of the typical historical patterns (incl. migration, federation, and border area multilingualism) that engenders the development of multilingual nations.

¹¹ Bloomfield, *Language*, 42.

presence). Over time, when the harsh political climate is tempered with the ensuing period of (or at least the quest for) amity and economic recovery and stability, and social institutions are established, both the local residents and the new inhabitants from the imperial nation would be forced to communicate with each other by way of the more prestigious language or a *lingua franca*, which too often would be the language of the imperial nation.¹² To be sure, Mark Sebba observes that “Many of today’s bilingual societies have come about through expansion or conquest, which has resulted in an indigenous population having to add a new language to their repertoire—frequently, though not always, through imposition from a more powerful group.”¹³ In linguistic terms, the in-group language will co-exist with the superposed, superior language.¹⁴ This linguistic scenario applies to colonized and annexed communities by an imperial nation.

In the case of ancient Palestine, the existence of the four languages—Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin—is an indicator of this linguistic scenario, such that at various times of military regimes, the local residents had to learn and adopt the language of the imperial power either out of the practical necessity for daily subsistence or by the imposition of the imperial nation for its governance and administration.¹⁵ The entire speech community of ancient Palestine is composed of several smaller speech communities, such as the regions of Judea, Samaria, Galilee, Decapolis, Phoenicia, Idumea, Perea, Nabatea, etc. (see Appendix 1 for map of ancient Palestine). These speech communities certainly communicated with each other, and to do so, it was necessary that

¹² Use of the “language of power” in a society can avoid social disruption and eradicate impediment to economic progress on the part of the imperial nation. Cf. Fasold, *The Sociolinguistics of Society*, 10; and Holmes, *Introduction*, 101.

¹³ Sebba, “Societal Bilingualism,” 448.

¹⁴ Gumperz, “Types of Linguistic Communities,” 468.

¹⁵ See the discussion of Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, 6–106.

they find a *lingua franca*, which, as mentioned, typically derives from the language of the dominant ruling nation, making it at the same time the prestige language of the community.¹⁶ Unless each of these communities existed as an isolated or insulated community, something that extremely rarely or perhaps never happens in the real world, many of the residents of ancient Palestine would necessarily have been multilingual speakers.

LANGUAGE CONTACT, LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE AND SHIFTS, LANGUAGE DECLINE, AND LANGUAGE DEATH IN ANCIENT PALESTINE

During the fourth century CE, Latin became the prestigious language of the Roman Empire, co-existing with other languages of lower status.¹⁷ The linguistic situation of the empire during that time was multilingual and diglossic, and the scenario could largely be attributed to the spread of Christianity,¹⁸ establishing “Latin in most European countries as the language of religion, education, and culture.”¹⁹ That Latin had achieved such a status in the fourth century CE of course did not happen overnight. Prior to Constantine in the fourth century CE, the zenith of Christianity under Roman rule, or even several centuries earlier during the Roman conquest by Pompey in 63 BCE, the inhabitants of Judea (not to be confused with the geographical region located between

¹⁶ A member of the subordinate group is more likely to learn the dominant group’s language than it is the other way around (see Hamers and Blanc, *Bilinguality and Bilingualism*, 77; and Hezser, *Jewish Literacy*, 238).

¹⁷ That multilingualism was a widespread phenomenon before and during the Roman Empire is well documented in literature on the political, demographic, and cultural developments of classical antiquity. On multilingualism in the Roman Empire, see Adams, *Bilingualism and the Latin Language*; and the essays in Adams, Janse, and Swain, eds., *Bilingualism in Ancient Society*.

¹⁸ Hatina, “Rome,” 557, writes, “Rome’s infrastructure, political and social policies, and military created the ideal conditions for early Christian missions.... The broad use of Greek in the eastern part of the empire and the use of Latin in the west were the means through which the faith was understood and communicated.”

¹⁹ Schendl, “Multilingualism,” 521. For a thorough overview of the history, geography, and languages of the Roman Empire, see Millar, *The Roman Near East*, 80–532.

Samaria and Idumea; see below), the cradle of Christianity, were most likely already active speakers of the Aramaic and Greek languages.

Their ancestors, however, were originally speakers of the Hebrew language (at least on the basis of the biblical account that traces back to Genesis 12, the call of Abram, and the generally recognized linguistic unity during the united monarchy period, preceding the Assyrian conquest in 722 BCE).²⁰ In the Hebrew Bible (Tanakh), the Hebrew language is called either the “language of Judah (יְהוּדִית)” (2 Kgs 18:26, 28; 2 Chr 32:18; Neh 13:24; Isa 36:11, 13) or the “language of Canaan (כְּנַעֲנִי)” (Isa 19:18), both of which refer to the language of the Israelites.²¹ In the New Testament, Ἑβραϊστίς (Acts 21:40; 22:2; 26:14) and Ἑβραϊστί (John 5:2: 19:13, 17, 20; 20:16; Rev 9:11; 16:16) were the terms used (cf. Josephus, *Ant.* I, 1:2; 10.8), although whether Ἑβραϊστίς refers to the Hebrew language or to Hebrew-speaking Jews and whether Ἑβραϊστί refers to the Hebrew language or the Aramaic language are matters of dispute.

Apparently, therefore, ancient Palestine was in the earliest times (during the united and divided monarchy periods) a monolingual nation (i.e., speakers of the Hebrew language) that eventually became a multilingual speech community during the time of Jesus in the first century CE, or even at least a century or so prior to that time period. The account in Matthew 1 traces the messianic genealogy from Abraham to David then to

²⁰ See Fellman, “A Sociolinguistic Perspective,” 27–34. There is much debate concerning the origins and early history of Israel. Many scholars have questioned the historicity of the patriarchal narratives, and even though the scholarly consensus until the 1980s was that the nation had its earliest beginnings at the time of the united monarchy under Saul, David, and Solomon, later scholarship through the influential collection of essays by G. Garbini (see Garbini, *History and Ideology*, esp. 21–32) has attacked some of the fundamental consensus of traditional Old Testament scholarship. For a summary of this debate, see Grabbe, *Ancient Israel*, 30–35; and Grabbe, *Second Temple Judaism*, 1–2. Abram (later Abraham; Gen 17:5) is considered as the biological progenitor of the Jews, and he thus was the first Jew (see Levenson, *Inheriting Abraham*, 3).

²¹ Sáenz-Badillos, *History of the Hebrew Language*, 1.

Jesus, a total of forty-two generations. Particularly in between the second and third chronologies from David to the Babylonian captivity, and from the Babylonian captivity to the time of Jesus (Matt 1:17), Matthew records some of the Jewish generations at various points in history, who were affected by consecutive language shifts when Judea or Judah was annexed by four successive superpowers. The Jews of ancient Palestine were descendants of the Israelite nation that originally spoke Hebrew as its native language. Jesus was thus in every way a Jew; he had a purely Jewish lineage (Matt 1:1).²² Nevertheless, because the nation of Israel or ancient Palestine suffered blows from many military conquests, it was unable to preserve its own native language as exclusive—it had to learn and adopt the language of the current reigning imperial power at various points in the course of its history as a speech community.

Imperialism and the Acquisition of New Languages

There are four critical imperial regimes—Babylonian (597–539 BCE), Persian (539–331 BCE), Greek (334/331–63 BCE), and Roman (63 BCE–476/480 CE)²³—to note with reference to the language shifts that happened in the history of ancient Israel.²⁴ The causes of language shifts are directly correlated with the causes of language

²² Most commentators take Matt 1:1 as a heading or title for Matt 1:1–17, the genealogy of Jesus, or Matthew 1–2, as “an account of the origins of Jesus” (Βίβλος γενέσεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ). For a summary discussion, see Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 70–72; and Blomberg, *Matthew*, 52–53.

²³ 4 September 476 CE is the traditionally accepted date for the end of the Western Roman Empire under its last emperor, Romulus Augustus, who was deposed by the Germanic king Odoacer. However, the empire did continue under the rule of Julius Nepos, who was the recognized western emperor by the eastern emperor Zeno, until his death in 480 CE.

²⁴ The history of ancient Israel and of Palestine is well documented. See, in particular, Grabbe, “Jewish History: Greek Period,” 570–74; Grabbe, “Jewish History: Persian Period,” 574–76; Grabbe, “Jewish History: Roman Period,” 576–80; Grabbe, *Second Temple Judaism*; Grabbe *Judaism from Cyprus to Hadrian*; Grabbe, *History of the Jews*, vols. 1 and 2; and Grabbe, *Ancient Israel*. On Jewish history from the Persian to the Roman era, see Levine, *Jerusalem*, 3–186; from the Hellenistic to the Roman era, see Kasher, *Jews and Hellenistic Cities*, 14–312; Kasher, *Jews, Idumaeans, and Ancient Arabs*, 15–205. On history of the Diaspora Jews, see Leany, *Jewish and Christian World*, 7–142. On New Testament chronology, see Porter, “Chronology,” 201–8.

endangerment, the most common of which is cultural, political, and economic dominance in military imperialism.²⁵ This best explains why and how ancient Palestine became a multilingual speech community. Imperialism naturally results in the language contact between the local and the foreign languages. As such, an inherent power struggle often arises between the two prevailing languages. On the one hand, there is a natural tendency for the local residents to preserve their native tongue (language maintenance) often as a symbol of nationalism.²⁶ Joshua Fishman remarks, “The mother tongue is an aspect of the soul.”²⁷ At the same time, on the other hand, there is also the pragmatic necessity for the imperial ruler to impose its own language, especially for purposes of governance and administration.²⁸

Within a short period of time, societal bilingualism, the most fundamental criterion for language shifts, will occur, as the local residents become bilingual in the foreign language.²⁹ Over a longer period of time and through intergenerational language switching, the proportion of bilinguals in the speech community will inevitably be exposed to the risk of abandoning one of the languages, eventually leading to the death of that language.³⁰ Language death happens, because younger generations increasingly use

²⁵ Such causes include industrialization, urbanization, economic pressures, and educational concerns. See Holmes, *Introduction*, 54–55, 60–64; cf. Baker and Jones, *Encyclopedia of Bilingualism*, 153. Many sociolinguists have studied the causes of language shifts. See Dorian, “Language Shift,” 85–94; Dressler and Wodak-Leodolter, “Language Preservation,” 31–44; Tabouret-Keller, “Language Maintenance,” 365–76; Timm, “Bilingualism,” 29–42; and especially, Gal, *Language Shift*.

²⁶ Nationism and nationalism are both social and psychological factors that affect language choice (see Ong, “Language Choice,” 68–70, 88).

²⁷ Fishman, *Language and Nationalism*, 46.

²⁸ See Holmes, *Introduction*, 55–57.

²⁹ Fasold, *The Sociolinguistics of Society*, 216.

³⁰ See Lieberman, “Bilingualism in Montreal,” 231–54, esp. 242; and Lieberman, “Procedures,” 11–27. Cf. Nevalainen, “Historical Sociolinguistics,” 281, 293 n. 3. An example of language death is the Aramaic language, which by the seventh century CE was nearing extinction due to the Islamic conquest (see Myhill, *Language*, 111–14), and today has become a virtually dead language (see Sabar, “Aramaic,” 222–34). Most

the new language as the preferred means of communication for various social functions or language domains, gradually losing fluency in their native language.³¹ Before a language can reach total extinction, however, it first undergoes a “decline.” Language decline usually happens gradually over a period of decades.³² There are three typical factors that contribute to language decline: (1) a decrease in the social functions of a language or its use in different social domains; (2) a decrease in the population of speakers within a speech community; and (3) a decrease in the fluency of speakers.³³ Language contact, language maintenance and shifts, language decline, and language death are typical sociolinguistic phenomena that happen in events of imperialism.³⁴

To be sure, the social contexts in which people are situated, and the power relations between local residents and imperial immigrants, are both linked to the relative status of the languages involved.³⁵ The status of a particular language is directly related

scholars also recognize that everyday, spoken Hebrew became a dead language in 200 CE (see Fellman, “A Sociolinguistic Perspective,” 29), although some still think that the language already ceased to exist during the return of the exile from Babylon in 537/536 BCE, as it was replaced by Aramaic (see Spolsky, “Jewish Multilingualism,” 35–36; and Dubnow, *History*, 379).

³¹ Baker and Jones, *Encyclopedia of Bilingualism*, 151. This has been the case with my family since our migration to Canada in 2007.

³² In extreme cases, language shift and decline could take two or three generations, since large migrant communities have both the tendency and the power to hold on to their language longer. Baker and Jones, *Encyclopedia of Bilingualism*, 153. Cf. Holmes, *Introduction*, 53.

³³ See Baker and Jones, *Encyclopedia of Bilingualism*, 153–55.

³⁴ These subjects are sub-topics of historical sociolinguistics. For recent studies on historical sociolinguistics, see Hernández-Campoy and Conde-Silverstre, eds., *Handbook*, esp. chapters 20–35. See also Thomason, *Language Contact*, esp. 66–75, for a discussion of the various social factors that affect and produce the kind of multilingualism produced by occasions of language contacts.

³⁵ Schendl, “Multilingualism,” 522, notes that for ancient multilingual societies, language choice can generally only be studied through qualitative methods, as there are often not enough written corpora where quantitative diachronic analyses can be performed. With more recent multilingual communities, however, quantitative analyses of specific text-types can be done to complement qualitative analyses (see, for example, Fisher, “Chancery,” 870–99; and Schendl, “Code Choice,” 247–62).

to the social status of its speakers.³⁶ Under imperial governance, the less politically and socially powerful local people would generally give in and accommodate to the foreign superpower for various practical reasons, in particular, for procuring and securing a better social and economic livelihood.³⁷

Linguistic adaptation, and eventually language shift, thus naturally follows social, economic, and political accommodation. The linguistic shift typically goes in the direction from the language of the local residents to the language of the colonial superpower. The new language then becomes the prestige and/or the *lingua franca* of the speech community. Typically, use of the *lingua franca* is especially confined to public social settings, while use of the prestige language to official and formal functions. For the most part, the maintenance of the local language could only be done in more private settings, such as when people speak with their own family in the home and with friends in secluded places. There is every reason to think that ancient Palestine also experienced these sociolinguistic phenomena, during the times when the speech community was annexed by a series of superpowers—Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome from 587/586 BCE to 63 BCE. This is just how language functions in society.

³⁶ Basil Bernstein's "code theory" explains this correlation of the relative status of a particular language to the social status of its users. Bernstein argues that power is socially structured, such that people in power exercise greater control than others over discourses (see Bernstein, *Class, Codes, and Control*, esp. 2:170–74). Bernstein's code theory led to the formulation of the so-called "deficit theory," which suggests that minority groups or the lower classes of society use a somewhat "inferior" linguistic code (a common example is the African American Vernacular English in comparison with Standard English), a theory that was later disproved by William Labov's seminal research on linguistic variation in New York City, published in 1966 (see Labov, *Social Stratification*). Labov's work in this area was a manifestation of another concept known as the "difference theory" (see Wodak, Johnstone, and Kerswill, *Introduction*, 2–3).

³⁷ The hierarchical distribution of ancient Palestine's economic scale tends to indicate that ancient Palestine was a multilingual community (see Ong, "Language Choice," 70, 91; cf. Batibo, "Poverty," 23–36).

The Formation of a Multilingual Community under the Babylonian Captivity

In 597 BCE, following Nebuchadnezzar's first invasion of Judea (or Judah), a population of Jews that belonged to the higher echelon of society was deported to Babylon (2 Kgs 23:36—24:17; 2 Chr 36:5–10). To this population was added the group of Jews who were deported at the end of the First Temple period in 587/586 BCE, after Nebuchadnezzar's second invasion of Judea (2 Kgs 25:1–21; 2 Chr 36:17–20; Jer 52:4–27). Since that time, and throughout most of the exilic period some fifty years later, this population of Jews propagated and became a significant community in the land of Babylon.³⁸ The several decades this Jewish population spent in that foreign land enabled them to become accustomed to life in their new homeland and its language and culture. It also provided their children and grandchildren the occasion to learn and educate themselves of the native language of Babylon, so that they could communicate with the local people and thrive in their new homeland. This is especially true, if the traditional argument that sixth-century Judea's population was virtually decimated by the Babylonians.³⁹ It seems unlikely that the subsequent younger generations of Jews would have insulated themselves from mingling with the local people, although assuredly the older generations and the leaders of the people would have passed down to them their Jewish religion and reminded them that they were still the people of God (Deut 6:4–9; 11:19–20; Ezra 1—3; 7—10; Nehemiah 8—13).

³⁸ The Neo-Babylonian kings, Amel-Marduk and Nabodinus, succeeded Nebuchadnezzar's rule during the exilic period.

³⁹ Archaeological studies in the last two decades have challenged this traditional argument. Recently, however, Faust, *Judah*, 149–207, argues that, “The destruction of Judah was not “a ‘myth of empty land’ ...created by biblical writers...There was indeed a huge demographic and economic decline in the sixth century throughout the region” (180).

Akkadian, or more accurately, Late Babylonian Akkadian (ca. 600 BCE–100 CE),⁴⁰ was probably the native tongue of the Babylonians. However, the language was already in decline during the Neo-Assyrian period (ca. 934–609 BCE), being marginalized by Aramaic.⁴¹ It is likely, then, that the Babylonians were bilingual speakers of Akkadian and Aramaic during the exilic period.⁴² Whatever the case may be, the Jews in exile would have learned either of the two languages and have become multilingual speakers of Hebrew, Aramaic, and possibly Akkadian to some degree. The same case is true with the peasant Jews who remained in Judea (2 Kgs 25:12), except perhaps during the brief period of Zedekiah’s reign (ca. 597–587/586 BCE; 2 Kgs 24:18—25:2), when they were still under a Judean king. This linguistic situation becomes clearer during the Persian rule or the Achaemenid Empire (550–330 BCE).

The Establishment of Aramaic as the Native Language under the Persian Rule

Aramaic (or Official/Imperial Aramaic) was the written language of communication as well as the *lingua franca* during the Persian dynasty under Darius I (522–486 BCE).⁴³ This was the linguistic situation of the ancient Near East less than two decades after Cyrus the Great defeated the Babylonians in October 539 BCE. As early as 700 BCE, Aramaic was the scribal language of the successive Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian empires, as evidenced by inscriptions and other texts, until it was gradually and

⁴⁰ Caplice, *Akkadian*, 5.

⁴¹ See Geller, “Last Wedge,” 43–95; and Adkins, *Empires of the Plain*, 47.

⁴² Parpola, “National and Ethnic Identity,” 9, 11–12, says that, by the seventh century BCE, the Mesopotamian inhabitants were largely, if not entirely, bilingual people with Aramaic as their primary language of communication.

⁴³ Aramaic was already the *lingua franca* of the Near East since the eighth century BCE. Beyer, *Aramaic*, 14–21, notes that the Aramaic texts found in Ezra 4:8—6:18; 7:12–26 (ca. fourth-century BCE), Dan 2:4b—7:28 (ca. 168 BCE), Gen 31:47, and Jer 10:11 were also based upon Imperial Aramaic, which later had developed into Hasmonean Aramaic (142–37 BCE), the written language of Judea and Jerusalem.

steadily superseded by Greek, following Alexander's conquest in 334 BCE, which, in turn, was eventually replaced by Arabic in 706 CE as the language for social and civil services.⁴⁴ The use of the Aramaic language as the language for governance and administration clearly contributed to the success of the Persian dynasty in keeping its widespread territories together for nearly two centuries.⁴⁵ And in this 200-year timespan, it is almost certain that the language of the Jews would have been Aramaic (incl. local Aramaic dialects).⁴⁶

Moreover, the Jews under the Persian regime during Nehemiah and Ezra's time seem to have enjoyed a quiet and peaceful life, especially as they were permitted to return and rebuild the walls and the temple in Jerusalem (completed in 516/515 BCE). In fact, some scholars say that this exilic return marks the beginning of what is known as Second Temple Judaism.⁴⁷ This historical event suggests that the Jews might already have assimilated to the language and culture of the Persians for all kinds of practical and economic reasons until things would need and begin to change again in the subsequent imperial regime. Nevertheless, this nearly two-centuries reign of Persia allowed for the establishment of the Aramaic language as the native tongue of the Jews. Concerning the Aramaic language at this point in time, David Taylor writes,

This [Aramaic] was employed for diplomatic and administrative purposes as well as for literary texts such as the story of Ahiqar and, from its final phase, the

⁴⁴ Taylor, "Bilingualism," 301–2. Correspondences between government officials of two different nations can attest to this linguistic situation (see Beyer, *Aramaic*, 14). There were also Aramaic documents from a Jewish community on the island of the Elephantine, an example of which is a document concerning the community's appeal to the high priest for assistance, when their temple was destroyed in 410 BCE by local Egyptians who worshipped the god Chnum (see Grabbe, *Second Temple Judaism*, 4–5).

⁴⁵ Shaked, "Aramaic," 251.

⁴⁶ Forms of Aramaic dialects include Palmyrene, Hatran, Syriac, Christian Palestinian, and Samaritan (see Taylor, "Bilingualism," 302–3).

⁴⁷ Hatina, "Palestine," 475.

Aramaic portions of the biblical books of Daniel and Ezra. Thus Official Aramaic was a High variety which completely replaced other Aramaic dialects (the L varieties) as a written form—although they continued to be spoken and occasionally exercised some influence on Official Aramaic—until it was itself steadily replaced by Greek, following the conquests of Alexander and the subsequent establishment of Greek cities.⁴⁸

The Transition from Aramaic into Greek under the Greek Administration

Life under consecutive imperial regimes is tantamount to frequent migration to different geographical locations; minority groups live under the auspices of dominant groups. This was the kind of life the Jews would experience again, when Alexander the Great led his military campaign through Asia and Northeast Africa, and finally, through Palestine, defeating Darius III in 334 BCE. They had to accommodate the new imperial government, assimilate to its culture, adopt its language, and adjust to the new society all over again. Darius III was ultimately defeated in 331 BCE, and all the provinces of Syria surrendered to the Greeks. The Greek regime lasted for almost another two centuries under three major dynasties—the Ptolemies (301–200 BCE), the Seleucids (200–140 BCE), and the Hasmoneans (140–63 BCE). The Ptolemies and the Seleucids did not get along well, and throughout the entire third century BCE, they fought against each other to take control of Palestine and Syria, which originally was assigned by Alexander to the Seleucid empire in 301 BCE. The Seleucids finally took control of Palestine, when Antiochus III (or Antiochus the Great) defeated Ptolemy V in 200 BCE. The Jews seemed to like the Seleucids, as they opened the gates of Jerusalem to Antiochus, displaying acceptance of Hellenization with open arms. Lester Grabbe points out, however, that the question of Hellenization is a complex one, as it was

⁴⁸ Taylor, “Bilingualism,” 301.

a centuries-long process of synthesis and diversification. It was not the simple imposition of Greek culture on the natives; indeed, the Greeks on the whole did not impose their culture but rather jealously preserved their 'superior' political and cultural position in Near Eastern society. It was mainly the natives who sought to gain status and advantage by learning Greek and adopting Greek customs...[In fact,] The lower section of the administration was mainly composed of native peoples, and much of the work of the bureaucracy was carried on in bilingual mode...In time Greek identity became more a matter of language and education than of ethnic origin, but this took many decades.⁴⁹

It is unclear to me what Grabbe actually means when he says that, "the Greeks on the whole did not impose their culture but rather jealously preserved their 'superior' political and cultural position"; the two ideas appear to be one and the same thing. The important thing to observe, however, is the accommodation and assimilation of the Jews to the ruling power's culture and language, as well as the close linguistic interaction between the two ethnic groups at least within the lower section of administration (cf. Acts 22:28).⁵⁰ To be sure, during this time, Jason, the brother of the high priest Onias III, bribed Antiochus III to turn Jerusalem into a Greek city (1 Macc 1:11), drawing up an "ephebate" (potential citizens list) through a process of formal initiation, and building a gymnasium to establish the city as a Greek foundation. Grabbe writes, "All indications are that the people of Jerusalem as a whole supported his 'Hellenistic reform' [see 2 Maccabees 4]... We have no indication of any active opposition whatsoever to the

⁴⁹ Grabbe, *Second Temple Judaism*, 10–11. Hengel, *Jews, Greek and Barbarians*, 60–61, explains the concept of "Hellenization" as including "first, close professional contacts; secondly, the physical mixing of populations caused by mixed marriages; thirdly, the adoption of Greek language and culture by orientals; and fourthly, the complete assimilation of 'orientalized' Greeks and 'Hellenized' orientals." Cf. Goldstein, "Jewish Acceptance," 64–87, 318–26, who lists six characteristics of Hellenization, one of which is that in a Hellenized society, there must be some knowledge and use of the Greek language. The term "Hellenism" could refer to the whole span of Greek history or to ancient Greek language and culture (see Stanton, "Hellenism," 464–72).

⁵⁰ Cf. Hengel, *Jews, Greeks and Barbarians*, 53, who writes, "A more thorough 'Hellenization,' which included the lower classes, only became a complete reality in Syria and Palestine under the protection of Rome, which here could come forward as the 'saviour' of the Greek cultural heritage"; and Seaman, "Judea," 622.

Hellenistic reform.”⁵¹ What actually triggered the Maccabean Revolt (168–165 BCE), which instigated the beginning of the Hasmonean rule (140–63 BCE), therefore, was not the pressure to assimilate to Greek culture and society, but it was rather the defilement of the Jerusalem temple with the cult of Zeus Olympios (2 Macc 6:1–2) sometime in December 168 BCE, when Antiochus tried to tighten his governance of Judea because of rumors of Jewish rebellion.

This interpretation of the historical events is important, since it highlights the fact that the issue at hand among the Jews then was not the Hellenistic reform of Jason but was that concerning Jewish religion.⁵² One could speak of the Hasmonean dynasty as a period when Judea reclaimed its independence at least until the community fell under the Roman yoke in the following century.⁵³ Nevertheless, at this transitional time in the first century BCE, the majority of the Jewish population would have had Aramaic as their native language and Greek as their second language, with a very high likelihood of the younger generations having Greek as their primary language.⁵⁴

The Use of Greek as the *Lingua Franca* and Prestige Language under the Roman Regime

History, for the Jews, would repeat itself again, soon after Pompey’s conquest of Judea in 63 BCE. The Romans were as much Greek as they were Romans, having been heavily influenced by the Greek culture in the Italian peninsula. Upon their arrival, it was

⁵¹ Grabbe, *Second Temple Judaism*, 11–12.

⁵² See Grabbe, *Second Temple Judaism*, 13–17. Cf. Hatina, “Palestine,” 475–76; Meyers and Chancey, *Alexander to Constantine*, 23–25.

⁵³ See Grabbe, *Second Temple Judaism*, 17–20; and Hatina, “Palestine,” 476. For a more comprehensive survey of the rise and fall of the Hasmonean dynasty, see Kasher, *Jews, Idumaeans, and Ancient Arabs*, 25–125; Kasher, *Jews and Hellenistic Cities*, 55–191; and Meyer and Chancey, *Alexander to Constantine*, 37–49.

⁵⁴ Jeffers, *The Greco-Roman World*, 35, notes that, “even those who knew only Greek, could expect to be understood in any city of the empire.”

not difficult for them to use Greek as the language of administration and enforce use of the language as the *lingua franca*. Penelope Fewster notes that “As elsewhere in the Eastern Empire, it [Greek] was the language of administration and hence of ambition. It had been introduced on a large scale by the Macedonian conquerors of Egypt and was by the time of the Roman annexation in 30 BC well entrenched.”⁵⁵

During this time, the high priest and former king Hyrcanus (135–104 BCE), and his counselor, Antipater, both became loyal puppets of Rome and were rewarded with Roman citizenship. Whereas Hyrcanus was appointed *ethnarch* of the Jews, Antipater was able to position his two sons as governors of Judea (Phasael) and Galilee (Herod the Great). Herod the Great (ca. 74–4 BCE) was a wise and able ruler, and he was made king of Judea sometime in the early years of his reign, as he promised to help Antony and Octavian drive out the Parthians who invaded Syria-Palestine in 40 BCE. His status as a client king of Rome not only gave him autonomy in his own territory, but also the backing of Rome. Whether the Jews during Herod’s reign were supportive of the Roman regime as they had been to the Seleucid’s dynasty is uncertain. What we do know is that ancient Palestine during Herod’s time was economically secure. The many building projects, including the establishment of Caesarea Maritima, the reconstruction of old Samaria, and notably, the building of the Herodian Temple were a sign that the community had a stable economy.⁵⁶

Therefore, one can infer that the progressive economy of the community was not only brought about by the political submission of the Jews (through Herod) to the Roman

⁵⁵ Fewster, “Bilingualism,” 224.

⁵⁶ See Grabbe, *Second Temple Judaism*, 23–24; Hatina, “Palestine,” 478–79; and Meyer and Chancey, *Alexander to Constantine*, 113.

Empire, but also (again) by their voluntary, willing assimilation to the new society's culture and language.⁵⁷ Pliny the Elder describes the Jerusalem of this period as "the most illustrious city in the East" (*Nat. Hist.* 5.70).⁵⁸ The Gospels also attest to this generally peaceful situation of the society during Jesus' time in the first century CE. In fact, we hear only of sporadic Christian persecutions (e.g., see Pliny the Younger, *Letters* 10.96) during the Roman regime but do not hear of cultural or linguistic persecutions.⁵⁹ The Jews apparently did not think that it was wrong to become a "Roman-Jew" or a "Greco-Roman Jew" (cf. Matt 22:21//Mark 12:17//Luke 20:25; 1 Tim 2:1–3). The Jewish historian, Josephus, allegedly reached a high level of Greek education, and he believed that a Greek education could be combined with the Torah and did not interfere with his Jewish identity (see *Ant.* 20.12.1, 263).⁶⁰ As such, it is likely that any Roman-Jew in Jesus' time would have been an active speaker of Aramaic and Greek,⁶¹ in order to communicate with various social groups of varying ethnicity and ages, and would have also known a few Latin words or expressions here and there.⁶² This can be a possible linguistic scenario, especially when we see that Latin had eventually become the language of the empire in the fourth century CE. Over a period of less than a millennium (ca. sixth-century BCE—fourth-century CE), the linguistic shift of ancient Palestine's

⁵⁷ Contra those who think that Jews during the Roman Empire were forced to assimilate to the new society and culture (see, for example, Jeffers, *The Greco-Roman World*, 216).

⁵⁸ See the discussion of the growth and expansion of Jerusalem in Meyer and Chancey, *Alexander to Constantine*, 131–35.

⁵⁹ Cf. Jeffers, *The Greco-Roman World*, 106–9.

⁶⁰ Schwartz, "Language, Power and Identity," 13; and Hezser, *Jewish Literacy*, 240, both note that Aramaic was not an essential component for the preservation of Jewish identity.

⁶¹ See, in particular, Porter, *Criteria*, 127–41. Hezser, *Jewish Literacy*, 241, states, "For them, it [Greek] was just another language, whose knowledge was advantageous in certain everyday life situations, and especially if one wanted to advance socially and economically."

⁶² Cf. Porter, *Criteria*, 133–34.

lingua franca went in the direction from Hebrew to Aramaic, from Aramaic to Greek, and from Greek to Latin. The history of the Jews within this timespan provides a clear attestation to these language shifts, and the available linguistic and archaeological evidence of these languages in this same time period confirms this reality.

After Herod's death in 4 BCE, his territory was divided among his sons— Archelaus acquired Judea, Samaria, and Idumea; Antipas received Galilee and Perea,⁶³ and Philip inherited the regions to the north and east of Galilee. During the short reign of Archelaus (4 BCE–6 CE; *J.W.* 2.111–17; *Ant.* 17.342–44), he turned Judea into a Roman province again, and in 26–36 CE, it was under the governorship of Pontius Pilate. Herod's grandson Agrippa, however, was a friend of Caligula and was consequently made king of Judea (38–44 CE). Caligula granted him virtually all the territories previously ruled by his grandfather. Unfortunately, after his death in 44 CE, Judea became once again a Roman province, and the community drifted toward multiple conflicts with the Roman government that escalated into the two major Jewish revolts in 66–70 CE (the Fall of Jerusalem) and 132–35 CE (the Bar-Kokhba Revolt), with an intervening minor revolt in 115–117 CE (the Jewish revolts in Egypt and Mesopotamia).⁶⁴

During this period of recurrent social unrest, as well as the previous periods of military regimes in ancient Palestine, frequent in-land migration among the residents of ancient Palestine seems inevitable. And in-land migration naturally involves the social intermingling and linguistic interaction among residents of various communities,

⁶³ On Antipas's reign, see Hoehner, *Herod Antipas*, 18–109. For a survey of scholarship, including Josephus, written sources, and archaeological and numismatic evidence on Antipas, see Jensen, *Herod Antipas*, esp. 53–217.

⁶⁴ See Grabbe, "Jewish Wars," 584–88; Reinhold, *Diaspora*, 132–55; and Guelich and Evans, "Destruction of Jerusalem," 273–78.

including foreign visitors to Palestine. Josephus reports an event in 6 CE perhaps immediately after the death of Archelaus regarding a sociopolitical gathering of armed Jews from Galilee, Idumea, Jericho, Perea, and Judea (*J.W.* 2.43). This sociopolitical situation during that time would certainly have also affected the sociolinguistic situation of the various speech communities.

It seems very likely on the basis of our historical-linguistic reconstruction that most of the inhabitants of ancient Palestine during this time period would have had Greek as their primary language (not necessarily their native language), that is, their *lingua franca* (at the same time, the prestige language for government and administration and public and formal social functions),⁶⁵ and would have had either Aramaic (for the Jews; e.g., Jesus) or Latin (for the Romans; e.g. Pilate) as their native language.⁶⁶ If Hebrew were still used at that time, it would have mostly been confined to specific social and religious contexts and geographical locations, where the Jews would have deemed it necessary to use the language. This linguistic scenario will become clearer when we investigate the geography, population, and inhabitants of the multilingual community.

⁶⁵ Even as early as in the third quarter of the nineteenth century, scholars have already argued for this (see Roberts, “That Christ Spoke Greek,” 81–96, 161–76, 285–99, 307–83; Roberts, “That Christ Spoke Greek—A Reply,” 278–95; Roberts, *Greek*; and Roberts, *A Short Proof*). Contra this view, see Feldman, “How Much Hellenism,” 83–111, who vehemently argues against the pervasive influence of Hellenism in first-century Palestine, challenging Martin Hengel’s thesis on two fronts—that ancient Palestine was not actually heavily Hellenized in the middle of the third century CE and onwards and that Palestinian Judaism and Diaspora Judaism can be neatly distinguished.

⁶⁶ Spolsky, “Jewish Multilingualism,” 40, believes that “until the end of the Bar Kokhba revolt in 135 CE, the Jews of Palestine were multilingual, using Aramaic, Hebrew and Greek for different purposes and in different parts of the country.”

DIALECT GEOGRAPHY, LANGUAGE BOUNDARY, AND ISOGLOSS WITH REFERENCE TO THE GEOGRAPHY AND INHABITANTS OF ANCIENT PALESTINE

We have seen that language contact between speech communities speaking different languages gives rise to multilingualism.⁶⁷ Over longer periods of time, the more “dominant” language can replace the language of a particular speech community. The causes are attributed to various social, cultural, and political factors that affect the residents of a speech community, especially in events of military imperialism; “When a dominant or colonizing power promotes or enforces its language on conquered territories, it facilitates the spread of its own culture and political, social and sometimes religious ideologies.”⁶⁸ We have also seen that this was probably what happened to ancient Palestine when the land was annexed by four consecutive military regimes. Jesus walked in the land of ancient Palestine during the reign of the Roman Empire in the first century CE, the last of the four military regimes. At that time, I have argued above the prestige language and *lingua franca* of the speech community would have been Greek, noting that the majority of the population would have been multilingual in Greek and Aramaic, with a small number of the population in Greek and Latin. Similarly, James Clackson points out that bi- or multilingualism was the norm in Syria-Palestine and Egypt, two areas of the Roman Empire where we find the largest extant evidence of vernacular languages (e.g., Coptic), being used alongside Latin or Greek in the countryside, in towns, and in situations of stable bilingualism.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Cf. Janse, “Aspects of Bilingualism,” 332; and Baker and Jones, *Encyclopedia of Bilingualism*, 133.

⁶⁸ Baker and Jones, *Encyclopedia of Bilingualism*, 319.

⁶⁹ Clackson, “Language Maintenance and Language Shift,” 47–50.

This multilingual scenario is well supported by various types of linguistic evidence discovered by archaeology (see chapter 1).⁷⁰ Nevertheless, without a proper tool or lens by which the linguistic evidence is interpreted, any interpretation is arguably conjectural, even if the conclusions may be correct. There are ways to remedy this, however. I have shown in the first section of this chapter via the sociolinguistics concepts of language contact and language maintenance and shift how ancient Palestine became a multilingual speech community after four subsequent military regimes from the sixth century BCE to the first century CE. In this section, my objective is to identify the geographical linguistic boundaries of ancient Palestine to further complement and to clarify previous interpretations of the linguistic evidence.⁷¹

As noted above, people frequently migrate from one location to another when there is sociopolitical unrest, primarily for security and socioeconomic reasons, that is, for peace and economic recovery after a war. But there is another reason for migrating for socioeconomic reasons. This relates to the continued scholarly discussion concerning the socioeconomic impact of the urbanization of Galilee and the resultant nature of the urban-rural relations between Tiberias and the other Galilean cities (e.g., Sepphoris) during Antipas's reign.⁷² Hence, urbanization could also be seen as one of the causes for inland migration, at least within the Galilean region, or perhaps also within the Judean

⁷⁰ See the essays in Adams, Janse, and Swain, eds., *Bilingualism in Ancient Society*, esp. chapters 4, 5, 9, 12, 13.

⁷¹ See an overview of the geography of ancient Israel (with illustration) in Rogerson, *Chronicles of the Bible Lands*, 58–224. For geography of ancient Palestine in the book of Acts, see Bauckham, *Book of Acts*, 27–78.

⁷² For a summary discussion, see Edwards, “First Century Urban/Rural Relations,” 169–82. Surprisingly, the consensus regarding the effect of Antipas's urbanization with respect to religion and culture is that “Galilee was largely Jewish; Antipas added only a Greco-Roman urban veneer to the cities; and extensive Roman-style urbanization did not occur until after the Bar Kokhba Revolt” (Reed, “Instability in Jesus' Galilee,” 343, and note 2; see esp. my discussion of Galilee below).

and Samaritan regions on account of the building projects of Herod the Great, especially the Jerusalem temple and the city of Sebaste (see below).⁷³ At other times, however, the Galilean inhabitants also migrated for health and safety reasons. Jonathan Reed argues that death caused by malaria fueled considerable internal migration in the region,⁷⁴ and there is evidence to confirm that this was actually the case.⁷⁵ My point is that inland migration was a part of life in the community of ancient Palestine and that migrants eventually typically settled in one geographical location, excluding of course some few nomadic and non-migrant settlers. Jesus' family, for instance, traveled from Bethlehem in Judea (Matt 2:1–6) to the land of Egypt (Matt 2:13–14) and to the city of Nazareth in Galilee (Matt 2:22–23), but the family (or just Jesus) eventually settled down (κατοικέω) in Capernaum (Matt 4:13).⁷⁶ Pontius Pilate had his headquarters in Caesarea Maritima and therefore would have stayed there most of the time, unless the need arose for him to travel with his troops to Jerusalem.⁷⁷

When we look at the geographic map of ancient Palestine (see Appendix 1), we can picture the concentration of the population and inhabitants of each of the provinces in

⁷³ Millar, *The Roman Near East*, 45, points out that the temple became a prominent place in Jerusalem, as it was a meeting place for Jewish national sentiments.

⁷⁴ See Reed, "Instability in Jesus' Galilee," esp. 356–57.

⁷⁵ See Scheidel, *Death on the Nile*, 16–19, 82–89; Sallares, *Malaria and Rome*, 160–64; and Sallares, "Ecology," 21–25. Part of the argument here is that the frequent mention of fevers by the rabbis (see Reed, "Instability in Jesus' Galilee," 357 n. 53) as well as in the Gospels (Mark 1:30–31; Luke 4:38; John 4:52) is attributed to the symptoms of malaria.

⁷⁶ The use of κατοικέω typically means "to live or dwell in a place in an established manner" (see Louw and Nida, *Lexicon*, 1:730). Scholars continue to debate the historicity of the events surrounding Jesus' birth narratives in the Gospels, especially in Matthew's Gospel. In W.D. Davies and D.C. Allison's words, they "are not the stuff out of which history is made" (Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 252). For a summary of the issues involved, see Elliott, *Questioning Christian Origins*, 3–17; and for a recent discussion of the issue, see Jones, "Jewish Folklore," 14–23, who argues that the background of Matthew's infancy narrative draws upon Jewish *haggadah* (i.e., folk tales, legends, parables, illustrations, anecdotes, and aphorisms) found in Josephus and rabbinic literature.

⁷⁷ Hatina, "Palestine," 477.

that ancient speech community and correlate it with the geographical distribution of the Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin languages. The idea is that the identity or geographical membership of individuals influences the choice of their linguistic codes⁷⁸ or that one's native language correlates directly with their ethnicity—Jews will speak Aramaic, non-Jews will speak Greek, and Romans will speak Latin. This idea to some extent also correlates with the concept of linguistic vitality, which refers to the existence of a living community of speakers using a particular language, a criterion that can be used to show that a particular language actually exists.⁷⁹ Ideally, if a community were to be inhabited by just Roman citizens, whose native language is Latin, then there is no way that any other language would co-exist with it.

This of course can only be said in general terms, especially when I have argued that the primary language of the majority of the population of ancient Palestine was Greek and that they were also multilingual in either Aramaic or Latin. But my objective in this chapter, however, is simply to map out the general linguistic terrain of ancient Palestine. Thus, it is necessary that we also determine the kind of multilingualism (e.g., Greek-Aramaic or Greek-Latin) that existed in the major regional communities of ancient Palestine, while keeping in mind that the majority of the population would have spoken Greek as their primary language.⁸⁰ The sociolinguistic concepts of dialect geography, language boundary, and isogloss can assist us with this job.

⁷⁸ On the relationship between speakers' group membership and their language, see Hudson, *Sociolinguistics*, 184–90. See also Holmes, *Introduction*, 127–56, who discusses regional dialects, caste dialects, social dialects, and social class dialects as indices of linguistic codes; and Trudgill, *Sociolinguistics*, chapters 2, 3, 7, 8; and Trudgill, *On Dialect*, chapters 2, 3.

⁷⁹ Bell, *Sociolinguistics*, 147–57, lists linguistic vitality as one of the seven criteria for distinguishing one language from others.

⁸⁰ A survey of the regions and communities of ancient Palestine from the first-century CE onwards can be found in Millar, *The Roman Near East*, 225–488.

Dialect Geography, Language Boundary, and Isogloss

Dialect geography (or linguistic geography or geolinguistics) is a branch of the discipline called dialectology that studies the geographical distribution of linguistic items, such as phonetic (accent differences), lexical (vocabulary differences), and grammatical variables (syntactic differences).⁸¹ The results of such studies are plotted on a map, showing which particular linguistic items are found in which geographical area(s). The boundary line drawn on the map between areas where one linguistic item is found versus other linguistic items found in other areas is called an isogloss (*iso*—“same” and *gloss*—“tongue”).⁸² People living closer to the language border (or isogloss on a map) would tend to be more multilingual than those living at the center of the speech community.

Therefore, the language boundaries of a particular speech community or region can be visibly seen on a geographic map, once these isoglosses are drawn. It should be noted that, for our purposes, isoglosses are only a means for broadly identifying concentrations of languages spoken in various speech communities. In reality, however, isoglosses are non-contiguous but intersecting lines, as adjacent communities frequently cross borders and interact with each other.⁸³ One example is a map of England, showing various dialect words (spell, spelk, speel, spool, spile, shiver, sliver) that are used for the Standard English word “splinter” (a thin piece of wood that you can get stuck in a finger).⁸⁴ Another example is provided by Janet Holmes. She writes,

⁸¹ Cf. Wardhaugh, *Introduction*, 45. Hudson, *Sociolinguistics*, 45, notes that syntax is the marker of cohesion in society, vocabulary a marker of divisions in society, and pronunciation a marker of homogeneous social groups.

⁸² Hudson, *Sociolinguistics*, 38; Holmes, *Introduction*, 132.

⁸³ See Trudgill, *On Dialect*, 46–51, esp. 48.

⁸⁴ Trudgill, *Dialects*, 23. See the isogloss map (Map 5.1) on p. 24. The map is also reproduced in Holmes, *Introduction*, 133,

In the USA, too, dialectologists can identify distinguishing features of the speech people from different regions. Northern, Midland and Southern are the main divisions, and within those three areas a number of further divisions can be made. Different towns and parts of towns can be distinguished. Within the midland area, for example, the Eastern States can be distinguished; and within those the Boston dialect is different from that of New York City; and within New York City, Brooklynese is quite distinctive. Again, pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary distinguish these dialects.⁸⁵

As we can see, however, dialectologists employ these theories for the purpose of distinguishing between dialects of various speech communities within a demarcated geographic area, using a particular linguistic item as basis. And it is relatively easy for them to do this, since they are able to observe and study existing communities and interview live participants. We are dealing with non-existing, ancient communities, however. All we can do is to appropriate and apply these theories to some extant ancient texts, for these texts are all we have that can inform us of the things concerning those ancient communities. Accordingly, for these theories to be profitable for our use, we need both historical and geographical data, particularly data on the population and inhabitants of the major provinces and cities of ancient Palestine, to which these theories can be applied.

Another issue to consider is that we are dealing here with distinct languages and not with any specific dialects or linguistic variables. Nonetheless, it goes without saying that to distinguish between languages is definitely easier than it is to distinguish between dialects (e.g., British, American, and Australian English) and much easier than it is to distinguish between varieties of dialects (e.g., Cockney and Texas English).⁸⁶ Moreover,

⁸⁵ Holmes, *Introduction*, 131.

⁸⁶ See Wardhaugh, *Introduction*, 45–46.

the distinction between these terms, that is, language and dialect, is often vague, and most dialectologists would say that they cannot be clearly defined in linguistic terms.⁸⁷

Colin Baker and Sylvia Prys Jones, for instance, say that, “when we try to define what a language is, as opposed to a dialect, and the relationship between dialects and language, we find that it is impossible to achieve a linguistic definition. We discover that the concept of separate languages has more to do with cultural, social, historical and political realities than with linguistic boundaries.”⁸⁸ They further say that, “As we look more closely at how boundaries between languages are established, we see that they are often the result of historical processes, and conscious decisions based on ethnicity and nationalism...boundaries between languages may change over time, as the history of peoples changes.”⁸⁹ Historical and demographic data of the speech communities that live adjacent to the language borders, therefore, can delineate more or less the native languages of the various geographical territories of ancient Palestine.

There are many geographical areas that we can locate on the map of Palestine, which include provinces (Judea, Samaria, Galilee, the Decapolis, Idumea, Phoenicia, Perea, Nabatea, etc.), cities (Jerusalem, Sebaste, Sepphoris, Tiberias, Tyre, Sidon, etc.), fortresses (Jerusalem, Masada, Alexandrium, Hyrcania, Herodium, etc.), mountains (Mt. Olives, Mt. Hermon, Mt. Lebanon, Mt. Gerizim, etc.), rivers (Jordan, Euphrates, Kidron, etc.), lakes and seas (Sea of Galilee, the Dead Sea, etc.), and valleys and plains (Kidron,

⁸⁷ See Hudson, *Sociolinguistics*, 30–36.

⁸⁸ Baker and Jones, *Encyclopedia of Bilingualism*, 136. See also Haugen, “Dialect, Nation, Language,” 922–35, who says that language and dialect are ambiguous terms and cites as an example the ancient Greek language, which he argues as actually consisting of a group of distinct local varieties (Ionic, Doric, and Attic); and a thorough discussion of language and dialect in Wardhaugh, *Introduction*, 27–57. People typically understand “dialect” as a low status form of language in contrast with the “standard” language, or as a local variety of a national language. But for dialectologists, this understanding does not apply.

⁸⁹ Baker and Jones, *Encyclopedia of Bilingualism*, 137–38.

Genessaret, Arabah, Sharon, etc.). These geographical areas may affect the degree of linguistic interference of another language on one's native language. When two provinces or cities are bordered by a mountain or river, for instance, that kind of border could decrease the frequency of social contact between them because of the terrain or the distance one needs to travel to get to the other side of the border.⁹⁰

While these kinds of issues are important, however, my interest in this section is simply in gaining an idea of what the linguistic terrain of ancient Palestine would have looked like, when we glance at its geographic map. Spolsky provides a geographical categorization of the four languages of first-century Palestine (see Table A, chapter 2), but his categorization is, for the most part, aside from the inscriptional evidence he provides, simply asserted on the basis of his own logical deduction.⁹¹ For instance, he does not actually provide data for the population and inhabitants of the Judean villages but simply says that the province is composed of Hebrew speakers, although he nonetheless recognizes that there are “necessary conditions” for choices of language use in ancient Palestine.⁹² There are eight major geographical areas to survey, and these include the provinces of Nabatea, Idumea, Judea, Samaria, Galilee, the Decapolis, Perea, and Phoenicia.⁹³ These eight regions more or less constitute the geographical land called Palestine during the time of Jesus.

⁹⁰ Cf. Trudgill, *Sociolinguistics*, 172.

⁹¹ See Spolsky, “Jewish Multilingualism,” 35–49, esp. 41.

⁹² See Spolsky, “Jewish Multilingualism,” 44–46.

⁹³ I note here that Josephus remains to be our main source in secondary literature, and there has been scholarly discussion concerning the reliability of Josephus's accounts in *Jewish War* (*J.W.*), *Antiquities* (*Ant.*), and *Life* (*Vita*). For an overview, see Mason, “Josephus,” 596–600; Feldman, “Josephus,” 590–96; and Grabbe, *Second Temple Judaism*.

Nabatea

Nabatea is situated between Judea to the north and Egypt to the southwest. Its earliest settlements can be found in between the Sinai Peninsula and the Arabian Peninsula. The Nabateans are said to have descended from Nebaioth, the first-born son of Ishmael (Gen 25:12–16; 28:9; 36:2; 1 Chr 1:29–31).⁹⁴ As such, it is likely that they originated from an Arab ethnic identity.⁹⁵ When Paul traveled to Ἀραβία (Gal 1:17), it is possible that he entered into the land of the Nabateans (Gal 4:25).⁹⁶ Archaeological discoveries indicate that there are at least a thousand sites in the Near East for evidence of Nabatean contact and occupation,⁹⁷ and numerous traces of Nabatean presence were also sighted in the Decapolis.⁹⁸ The Nabateans were in the fourth-century BCE “masters of all the South-country, commercial overlords of over a thousand sites, agricultural experts unrivalled for centuries, and their capital city [Petra] became one of the ancient (and modern) wonders of the Near East.” Our available inscriptional record suggests the date 169 BCE as the beginning of their monarchy at the time of the Egyptian campaign of Antiochus IV, which ended, after a succession of eleven kings, in 106 CE, when Nabatea

⁹⁴ See Robinson, *Sarcophagus*, 376; and Murray, *Petra*, 91. Cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 1.12. But Hammond, *The Nabateans*, 10, notes that the Nabateans, by the Old Testament reckoning, may not actually refer to the same ethnic group; and Graf, *Rome and the Arabian Frontier*, 1:45, points out that this view is now generally discarded.

⁹⁵ Our main sources for the history and culture of the Nabateans include 1 and 2 Maccabees (e.g., 1 Macc 5:4; 9:36, 66), the book of Malachi, Diodorus Siculus, Hieronymus of Cardia, Strabo, Josephus, and some Nabatean inscriptional data. While the Arab ancestry of the Nabateans is not typically questioned, the location of their original homeland, whether they came from South Arabia or North Arabia, is debated. For a summary of the debate, see Graf, *Rome and the Arabian Frontier*, 1:45–68, esp. 45–54, 59; Hammond, *The Nabateans*, 11–13; and Kasher, *Jews, Idumaeans, and Ancient Arabs*, 7–8.

⁹⁶ Louw and Nida, *Lexicon*, 1:832, point out that Ἀραβία probably refers to the Sinai Peninsula. For reasons of Paul’s travel to Arabia, see Wright, “Paul, Arabia, and Elijah,” 683–92.

⁹⁷ See Hammond, *The Nabateans*, 64, for a list and description of these sites.

⁹⁸ Graf, *Rome and the Arabian Frontier*, ix, esp. 2:785–96.

was annexed by Rome.⁹⁹ They were at first nomadic dwellers that became urban settlers (see Diod. Sic., XIX, 94; cf. II.48),¹⁰⁰ and their being permanent settlers eventually catapulted them to leadership among the Arab tribes, establishing tribal federation.¹⁰¹

There is evidence that the Nabateans primarily spoke Aramaic (i.e., an Aramaic variety) on the basis of the fact that Aramaic was the *lingua franca* of the Near East during that period (see Diod. Sic., 19, 94–100),¹⁰² as well as the excavated Aramaic inscriptions and coinage in the region.¹⁰³ Philip Hammond points out that the choice of that language would only have been used for diplomatic and commercial needs,¹⁰⁴ whereas David Graf argues that it would have been used for literary and monumental purposes.¹⁰⁵ That the language was used for literary and monumental purposes has also been argued by Werner Diem, who says that the Arabic orthography in the Nabateans' onomasticon emerged in an Aramaic context—Arabic names written in Aramaic script (e.g., the Arabic name *Geshem* appeared as גֶשֶׁם in Neh 6:6).¹⁰⁶ Hundreds of carved inscriptions on the cliffs of Southern Sinai, particularly in Wadi Mukattab (which is Arabic for “the canyon of inscriptions”), have been discovered, and it has been concluded

⁹⁹ Hammond, *The Nabateans*, 9, 15, cf. 61. For the names of these kings, see Kasher, *Jews, Idumaeans, and Ancient Arabs*, 212.

¹⁰⁰ Hammond, *The Nabateans*, 12; Graf, *Rome and the Arabian Frontier*, 1:51.

¹⁰¹ Kasher, *Jews, Idumaeans, and Ancient Arabs*, 3, 9.

¹⁰² Porter, “The Language(s) Jesus Spoke,” 2459, notes that after the influence of the Persian Empire was curtailed in the fourth century BCE, many regional varieties would have had developed, among which are Palestinian Aramaic spoken in Palestine, and Nabatean Aramaic spoken in Nabatea (see also Stuckenbruck, “An Approach to the New Testament,” 3–29; and Bowersock, *Roman Arabia*, 12–27, 59–75, 90–109).

¹⁰³ See Cross, “The Oldest Manuscripts,” 147–72, esp. 161; and Kasher, *Jews, Idumaeans, and Ancient Arabs*, 6, who notes that, based on Aramaic inscriptions and coinage excavated in Nabatea, some scholars think of Nabatea as from an Aramaic origin.

¹⁰⁴ Hammond, *The Nabateans*, 11; Kasher, *Jews, Idumaeans, and Ancient Arabs*, 6–7.

¹⁰⁵ Graf, *Rome and the Arabian Frontier*, 1:56.

¹⁰⁶ See Diem, “Die nabatäische Inschriften,” 227–37; and Kasher, *Jews, Idumaeans, and Ancient Arabs*, 7. Also cited in Graf, *Rome and the Arabian Frontier*, 1:55. Cf. Millar, *The Roman Near East*, 402–5.

from these discoveries that large communities of Nabateans lived in the Negev and Sinai during the second and third century CE.¹⁰⁷ It is hard to estimate how big the entire Nabatean population was from the little information we have, but it is generally known that its capital city of Petra had a population of about 20,000 during this period.

Nevertheless, it is accurate to say that the Nabateans would probably have been bilingual speakers of Nabatean Arabic (or a form of Early or Old Arabic)¹⁰⁸ and Aramaic (the *lingua franca* of the Near East) during the first century BCE to the first century CE.¹⁰⁹ And if we take the idea of language shift into account, it is possible that Aramaic would have been the *lingua franca* of the Nabateans. The encroachment of the Greek language on the Nabatean border would have been minimal,¹¹⁰ since Greece was not able to extend its territorial occupation to Nabatea even until the first-century BCE, and Rome was only able to annex it in 106 CE.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁷ Itzhaq, "Fifteen Years in Sinai," 27–54, esp. 53–54.

¹⁰⁸ Study of the historical development of the Arabic language is a tricky business, as historians and linguists typically associate its beginnings either with the death of the prophet Muhammad of Islam in 632 CE, which consequently brought the Arabic language to the attention of the world through the Islamic religion (see Versteegh, *Arabic Language*, 1), or with the earliest Arabic inscriptions that date back to the 6th century CE (see Bateson, *Arabic Language Handbook*, 54). Upon close examination, however, especially considering the fact that the origin of a language would have to come from its users (i.e., the Arabs), "the language that we call Arabic was developed in this process of nomadisation or Bedouinisation" (Versteegh, *Arabic Language*, 27). "Bedouinization" coincides with the emergence of the Arabs in history, when camel breeding in the Arabian Peninsula became known in 1200 BCE. Their language, which is known as proto-Arabic or Early or Old Arabic, is the earliest form of the Arabic language that is closely related to what we now know as Classical Arabic. Four groups of inscriptions—Tamūdic (ca. sixth century BCE–fourth century CE), Lihyānitic (ca. second half of the first millennium BCE), Safā'itic (ca. first century BCE–third century CE), and Hasā'itic (ca. fifth–second centuries BCE)—that seem to resemble this early stage of the Arabic language were discovered in the nineteenth century (see Versteegh, *Arabic Language*, 28–31).

¹⁰⁹ Cf. Millar, *The Roman Near East*, 405, who says that "both before and after 106, witnesses are found writing their attestations in Nabataean or Aramaic...these were therefore languages in which at least a portion of the population were to some degree literate."

¹¹⁰ Porter, "Role of Greek," 395, notes, however, that the Babatha archive contains a document dated in the late first century CE that illustrates a woman conducting business in Greek through the Roman legal process to protect her property (see also, Porter, "The Greek Papyri," 313).

¹¹¹ Josephus (*J.W.* 1.86–90) notes that the Nabatean king Obodas I (96–85 BCE) ambushed the Greek forces near Golan in 90 BCE, after learning that they would attack his territory.

Idumea

The linguistic situation of Idumea is not far off from that of Nabatea. Aryeh Kasher writes, “Continuity of the use of Aramaic language, from the time it took root in the Land of Edom in the 8th century BCE and inclusive of the Nabataean era, also indicates continuity of Aramaic-Idumaeen culture, which eventually the Nabataeans themselves also came to adopt and accept.”¹¹² There are two different opinions as to the origin of the Idumeans. The first view is that the Edomites, as the Idumaeans were originally called, were a Semitic-speaking nation who invaded (together with the Moabites, Ammonites, and Amorites of Gilead) the region of the Transjordan in the fourteenth-century BCE. They expanded to the west, to the regions south of Judea, in around the eighth century BCE, when their territorial control of the Transjordan weakened due to massive intrusions of the Arabian Desert nomads headed by the Nabateans. Their penetration to southern Judea gained strength during the decline of the kingdom of Judea, following the Assyrian and Babylonian conquests. Since then, there was gradual to large-scale Edomite migration to southern Judea and to the northern Negev (a region north of Idumea with Beersheba as its capital) from the years 587–582 BCE. The Edomites eventually settled as a community in the region south of Judea with the Nabateans as their neighbor to the east and were then, eventually, called the “Idumeans” during Hellenistic times.

The second view, however, argues that this migration was simply a homecoming of the Edomites from the east, in order to join their existing ethnic and political community in the southern slopes of the Hebron Mountains and in the northern Negev.

¹¹² Kasher, *Jews, Idumaeans, and Ancient Arabs*, 2.

They wanted to be established as an independent ethno-political entity.¹¹³ From a biblical perspective, the Edomites were the descendants of Esau (Gen 25:19–34; 26:34—27:46; Obad 8–21; Mal 1:2–5), and it appears that both portions of Isaac’s “blessing” to Esau in Gen 27:39–40 were fulfilled, for not only did they lose commercial control of the Transjordan to the Arabs, but also their incursions to southern Judea made them become a symbol of evil for the Jews.¹¹⁴ That Idumea was a menace to the Jews might have been true, but only as far as their political and territorial incursions into Judea are concerned. Ethnically speaking they were as much Jewish as the Judeans. Aryeh Kasher says that archaeological finds indicate that the population of Idumea was quite mixed, although he also notes that the ethnic mixing was not the same in every location.¹¹⁵

In the Judean border, that is, the areas lying between Beth-Zur and Beersheba, an Idumean-Jewish ethnic mixing was prominent, whereas in the areas south of Beersheba, that is the central and southern Idumean part of the region, the Idumean-Arab character was noticeable.¹¹⁶ It is therefore fair to say that the central and southern inhabitants of the land would mostly have been bilingual Aramaic-Old Arabic speakers with Aramaic perhaps as their primary language by virtue of its status as the *lingua franca* until shortly before the Hellenistic times. Until we are able to determine the ethnic mixing in southern Judea (see below), it is perhaps difficult for us to know the multilingualism of the northern regions of Idumea. What seems to be clear is that they were definitely speakers

¹¹³ On the history and origin of the Idumaeans, see Kasher, *Jews, Idumaeans, and Ancient Arabs*, 1–4; and Assis, “Why Edom?” 1–20.

¹¹⁴ See Hoffman, “Edom,” 76–89.

¹¹⁵ See Kasher, *Jews, Idumaeans, and Ancient Arabs*, 4.

¹¹⁶ See Kasher, *Jews, Idumaeans, and Ancient Arabs*, 5–6.

of Aramaic, perhaps as a result of the Babylonian and Persian conquests during the sixth and fifth century BCE.

Judea

Judea is a well-known geographical region of ancient Palestine in the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Mediterranean Sea to the west, the Dead Sea to the east, Idumea to the south, and Samaria to the north bordered the region.¹¹⁷ This region, however, is different from the larger Judean region, which comprises Idumea, Samaria, and Galilee, under the rule of the Roman governor stationed at Caesaria Maritima. Herod the Great built Caesarea Maritima (not to be confused with Caesarea Philippi,¹¹⁸ which is a city 25 miles north of the Sea of Galilee) on the design of Roman cities in the Mediterranean coast, and during New Testament times, many Jews and Syrians (*Ant.* 20.8.1, 162–63),¹¹⁹ as well as a strong population of Samaritans, lived in the city.¹²⁰ The praetorium complex in Caesarea (e.g., Acts 10:1) served as the base of the Roman government from the first century to the middle of the third century CE.¹²¹

One would think that there was language contact between Aramaic and Latin or Greek (the Romans could speak both Greek and Latin) in the city, but the critical issue concerns how the Romans were able to communicate with the local residents, when both ethnic groups spoke different languages, and especially when there is no evidence of such Aramaic-Latin or Aramaic-Greek dialect or pidgin that emerged in history (see chapter

¹¹⁷ See Carter, *Yehud*, 91–98; and Finkelstein, “Yehud/Judea,” esp. 43–44.

¹¹⁸ On Caesarea Philippi, see McRay, “Caesarea Philippi,” 178–79.

¹¹⁹ Syria also became a Roman province under Pompey in 63 BCE. After the Bar-Kokhba Revolt, it was merged with Judea, establishing what is known as Syria-Palaestina.

¹²⁰ Pummer, “Samaritanism,” 181–202.

¹²¹ See McRay, “Caesarea Maritima,” 176–78.

1—The Greek Language of the New Testament). One would then think that Greek would naturally have been employed as the *lingua franca* of the city, a language that is familiar to both the Romans and the local residents. Whether there were a substantial number of Romans in Judea, however, is a moot point. C. Seeman states, “most striking about the first century is the minimal extent of Roman military-administrative presence in Judea outside of Caesarea and the degree to which Rome relied upon influential high priests and laity to maintain the peace.”¹²² Seeman’s statement may not be necessarily accurate, and even if it were, there is always the need to evaluate how much Roman presence Judea would need with its population number in the first century CE (see below). Nevertheless, by contrast, Joachim Jeremias states,

After 6 CE, Judea was a Roman province with a Roman governor (e.g., Pontius Pilate), Roman troops, and Roman officials...Before this we hear of journeys made to Rome by Herod and his son and later the two Agrippas, of embassies to Rome (*Ant.* 20.193ff.; *Vita* 13ff. *et passim*) and of Romans coming to Jerusalem, mostly in an official capacity...Acts 28.21 assumes that there was regular correspondence and personal contact between the Jews in Rome and the Jewish supreme authority in Jerusalem, the Sanhedrin.¹²³

When Judea was under the Persian rule, Cyrus in 539 BCE permitted a population of Jews to return to their homeland. The number of returnees according to the biblical accounts (Ezra 2:1–67; Neh 7:5–69) was about 42,000, although scholars say that this number is way above the actual number of returnees, which is estimated to be about eleven thousand.¹²⁴ The total population of Judea during this period according to Joel Weinberg, based on interpretation of literary sources, numbered about 150,000,¹²⁵ but

¹²² Seeman, “Judea,” 622.

¹²³ Jeremias, *Jerusalem*, 63–64.

¹²⁴ Seeman, “Judea,” 617.

¹²⁵ Weinberg, *The Citizen-Temple Community*, 132.

more realistic estimates would be between 20,000 and 30,000.¹²⁶ Israel Finkelstein thinks, however, that these latter figures are still highly inflated, and he estimates, based on the density coefficient of the number of inhabitants per built-up square-hectare area (a total of 61 built-up hectares), that the number would only have been about 12,000.¹²⁷ This estimate would bring the number of inhabitants in Jerusalem to a few hundred people during the Persian period.¹²⁸ The 61 built-up hectares of area in the Persian period rose to a conservative estimate of 210 built-up hectares in the early Hellenistic period, and Finkelstein translated this to a population number of about 42,000.¹²⁹ In approximately 140 CE, the Judean territory may already have included Lod, Ephraim (Apheraema) and Ramathaim (1 Macc 11:34), the area of Ekron (1 Macc 10:89), and possibly Perea in the Transjordan, and eventually, Gezer and Joppa (1 Macc 13:43, 48; 14:5), which would bring the population at the turn of the first century BCE to about 100,000,¹³⁰ give and take 10,000 to 50,000. I cannot say whether this overly conservative estimate is accurate.¹³¹ I only use this estimate, because the numbers given by biblical scholars regarding the entire population of ancient Palestine in the first century CE ranges from 500,000 to 2.5

¹²⁶ See Carter, *Yehud*, 195–205; and Lipschits, “Demographic Changes,” 364.

¹²⁷ The development of a density coefficient to estimate the number of people who could live within a geographical area is one of the three methods scholars use to count the population of ancient Palestine. Another method is to calculate the amount of food consumption by a number of people in a geographical location (see below). A third approach is to determine the regional concentration of social ethnic communities in a given geographical area on the basis of religious sites and other social institutions (see Goodblatt, “Population Structure,” 102–17).

¹²⁸ Finkelstein, “Yehud/Judea,” 44–46.

¹²⁹ See Finkelstein, “Yehud/Judea,” 46–51. Finkelstein’s estimate is way below the numbers provided by Avi-Yonah, “The Hasmonean Revolt,” 163; Bar-Kochva, *Judas Maccabeus*, 57; and Horsley, “Hasmonean Rule,” 134. These scholars propose population numbers ranging from about 100,000 to 400,000. For a survey of surveys on the number of settlements in ancient Palestine covering the Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine periods, see Jensen, “Rural Galilee,” 51–55.

¹³⁰ See Finkelstein, “Yehud/Judea,” 51–54.

¹³¹ Goodblatt, “Population Structure,” 104, notes that the scholarly consensus today is that Josephus’s numbers are merely symbolic figures that are “indicative of a certain order of magnitude and deployed to lend colour or emphasis to the author’s exposition.”

million, although C.C. McCown nonetheless points out that the division of this number between Jews and non-Jews is difficult to determine.¹³² Jean Juster's estimate of 5 million is probably overstated,¹³³ and most scholars now reject the even more overstated numbers of 10 to 12 million by some scholars who draw upon Josephus's accounts (*Vita* 45.235; *J.W.* III, 3, 2.43).¹³⁴

Following our conservative estimate of a population between 100,000 and 120,000 at the turn of the first century BCE, it is possible that the population of Judea in the first century CE would have reached a number between 200,000 and 300,000 (from the 42,000 estimate in the early Hellenistic period; cf. Rev 11:13).¹³⁵ To this number of course should be added the seasonal influx of visitors (perhaps mostly Jews) from all over the world in Jerusalem, especially during the Passover festival (cf. Acts 2:9–11).¹³⁶ We cannot know for sure or even estimate the number of these diaspora pilgrims, but we do know that the requirement for food to feed them was enormous, since the animals killed for sacrifice was reported to be in many thousands (see *J.W.* 6.422–27).¹³⁷

¹³² For a summary discussion, see McCown, "Density," 425–36.

¹³³ Juster, *Le Juifs dans l'Empire Romain*, 1:209.

¹³⁴ See McCown, "Density," 425–26; and Byatt, "Josephus," 51–60, esp. 51–52, who lists various estimates of scholars on the population of ancient Palestine, noting that Josephus's accounts would only have meant something like "there were literally thousands of people there," and is therefore not a gross exaggeration of facts as most scholars think (51, 60).

¹³⁵ The conclusion of McCown, "Density," 436, tallies with the lower range of this figure. Cf. the figures of Levine, *Jerusalem*, 340–43. Byatt, "Josephus," 52, notes that the authorities' consensus on the population of ancient Palestine is that the first century CE "saw the highest number of people living within its borders in the entire history of Palestine."

¹³⁶ But Byatt's estimate of the total population of Judea (i.e., Lydda, Emmaus, Gophna, Thamnia, northern Judea, Jericho, the Jordan Valley, and Jerusalem and the surrounding towns, such as Bethpage and Bethany) at 580,000 also includes visitors to Judea, which doubles my upper range estimate of 300,000 (see Byatt, "Josephus," 54, 56).

¹³⁷ The estimated number of paschal lambs slaughtered numbered 255,600, which was multiplied by ten (the average number of persons who shared a lamb), yielding a population of 2.556 million for the pilgrimage in Jerusalem, although such a number is perhaps grossly inaccurate, considering the size and the

Judea assuredly was a busy place, especially Jerusalem, the holy city and the site of Herod Temple.¹³⁸ The large population estimate may suggest against the common belief of many scholars that Judea was mainly composed of Jewish population, from which it often consequently follows that the language spoken there would primarily have been Aramaic. This is partly true in that Judea was the “residence of the Jews.” However, there are three important reasons to note that mitigate following this Aramaic language hypothesis. The first reason is that, based on my argument regarding the language shift of ancient Palestine, the primary language of the Jews would already have been Greek. The influence of the Greek language on Palestine would have gone from the north then southwards following the direction of the military campaign of Alexander the Great (see above). In other words, the farther we move to the south, we approach the Aramaic-Old Arabic language territory of the Idumeans. Moreover, the evidence for foreign trade in Jerusalem is simply hard to ignore:

Bearing in mind that Jerusalem was of predominant importance in Judea, we shall understand that the powerful influence of Hellenistic culture, as far as the period up to AD 70 is concerned, was concentrated mainly in Jerusalem; it had been introduced there chiefly through the court of Herod the Great. We can quote specific examples of trade with Greece. At the time of Hyrcanus II (76–67 and 63–40 BC) there were Greek merchants from Athens in Jerusalem: this is doubtless the meaning of the statement that Athenians were in Jerusalem on private business as well as official. There must have been constant connections and considerable traffic between the two places...¹³⁹

The second reason is that there were many foreign visitors (from Gaul, Rome, Greece, Cyprus, Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, Parthia, Syria, Arabia, Egypt, Cyrene, and

geographical conditions of the city of Jerusalem at that time (Cf. Jeremias, *Jerusalem*, 57; and Goodblatt, “Population Structure,” 104–106).

¹³⁸ On the history, structure, and layout of the city, see Batey, “Jerusalem,” 559–61; and Lewin, *Archaeology*, 44–65. On the urban configuration of the city, see Levine, *Jerusalem*, 313–50.

¹³⁹ Jeremias, *Jerusalem*, 36, cf. 64.

Ethiopia) in Jerusalem as well.¹⁴⁰ It is unlikely that in the market places, temple vicinity areas (esp. the Gentile court), and other public areas (e.g., the hippodrome)¹⁴¹ that all people would have communicated in Aramaic. For the most part, they would have communicated in Greek. This brings us back to our question earlier regarding the language of the Idumeans who lived in the areas bordering southern Judea. It is possible that some of the Idumean population who lived in those areas would have been acquainted with or spoken Greek and would thus have been multilingual speakers of Aramaic, Greek, and possibly, Old Arabic. For the southern Judeans, they would at least have been bilingual speakers of Aramaic and Greek. The third and last reason is that Aramaic would have been spoken in more private social settings (at home and with friends), a subject I will address in the next section, but it is questionable if that actually was the language of the temple and synagogue, as Hebrew might well have been the alternative language.

Samaria

The New Testament mentions the name Samaria a number of times, but provides very little information about the geographical region (Matt 10:5–6; Luke 9:51–56; 10:25–37; 17:11–19; John 3:22–30; 4:4–43; 8:48; 11:54; Acts 1:8; 8:4–25; 9:31; 15:3). The reference in John 3:22 to Aenon near Salim points to a location near the Jordan River bank northeast of Sebaste, Samaria. Of these references, only John 4:1–43 and Acts 8:4–25 give us a glimpse of the region. In Acts 8:4–25, we learned about Peter and John entering the region of Samaria, after hearing that the Samaritans had received the good news through the preaching of the apostle Philip. Earlier in Acts 6:1–5, we are told that

¹⁴⁰ Jeremias, *Jerusalem*, 58–84, provides and discusses the evidence for foreign visitors in Jerusalem.

¹⁴¹ See Levine, *Jerusalem*, 320–21.

Philip was one of the seven Hellenistic Jews who was appointed to serve tables in their assembly in Jerusalem and who later became a missionary preacher to Samaria (Acts 8:12–13, 40; cf. Paul and Barnabas in Acts 15:3). The geographical setting of Acts 8:4–25 was the pagan city of Sebaste (generically, Samaria), which is the only extant city in Jesus' time and the capital city of Samaria.¹⁴² Popular Christian tradition indicates that the remains of John the Baptist were buried in the city,¹⁴³ an important indication that archaeological evidence of ossuaries and graveyard sites do not always directly correlate with the linguistic situation of a particular geographical area. In other words, if John, who spoke Aramaic, did not actually live and spend his lifetime in Sebaste, we cannot argue, based on his graveyard inscription, that Aramaic was spoken in the land.

In John 4:1–43, we learned about Jesus passing through Samaria from Judea to enter Galilee. Along the way, he stopped by the rural village of Sychar, where Jacob's well was, and encountered the Samaritan woman. Sychar provides an evidence for early Jewish missionary contacts with Samaritans, such as Jesus, his disciples, and the Johannine community.¹⁴⁴ We also hear about Mt. Gerizim (near the town of Shechem) as the worship place of the Samaritans (John 4:19).¹⁴⁵ Mt. Gerizim could be a place that is frequently visited by various religious groups.¹⁴⁶ It is therefore likely that there were at least some contacts between Jews, Samaritans, and pagans, although we find in John 4:9

¹⁴² There were only three places that can officially be called "cities" of Samaria. In Jesus' time both the Hellenistic temple on Mt. Gerizim and the Neapolis were non-existent; the former was long destroyed, and the latter was not yet built. See Zangenberg, "Simon Magus," 520–25, and Zangenberg, "Between Jerusalem and the Galilee," 419–30. See Lewin, *Archaeology*, 100–9, on Sebaste and the Neapolis.

¹⁴³ On this issue, see Zangenberg, *Frühes Christentum*, 82–86.

¹⁴⁴ On Sychar, see Campbell, *Shechem II*, 21–23.

¹⁴⁵ On Mt. Gerizim, see Anderson, "Gerizim (Mount)," 99–103.

¹⁴⁶ Zangenberg, "Between Jerusalem and the Galilee," 426.

the phrase “for Jews do not associate with Samaritans” (οὐ γὰρ συγχρῶνται Ἰουδαῖοι Σαμαρίταις).¹⁴⁷ However, some scholars interpret συγχρῶνται in John 4:9 as referring to use of the same dishes or utensils, consequently suggesting that the expression should be translated “Jews do not use dishes together with Samaritans.”¹⁴⁸ Whatever the case may be, John’s Gospel tells us that, when Jesus left for Galilee after staying there for two days, many of the Samaritans became believers (John 4:39–43).¹⁴⁹ In fact, Jesus did not seem to bypass Samaria in his journeys to Jerusalem (Luke 9:51–56). These recorded accounts in the New Testament may indicate that the Jews during Jesus’ time visited Samaria, and may even frequently have passed through the region as they traveled back and forth between Judea and Galilee. The transregional roadway on the ridge of the Samaritan hill country may have provided this easy access between the north-south route, connecting Beersheba and Jerusalem (to the south) and Galilee and southern Syria (to the north).¹⁵⁰ There were many transregional roads connecting Judea, Samaria, and Galilee, which may indicate the frequent contact between the inhabitants of these three regions, with which Samaria was socioeconomically and politically, though probably not

¹⁴⁷ The animosity between Jews and Samaritans is also well documented by Josephus, perhaps primarily because of the fact that the Samaritans were enemies of Judah (Ezra 4:1; cf. 2 Kings 17), and that they were “pro-Greek” (see *Ant.* 11.4.3, 11.5.8, 12.5.5, 12.7.1), an issue I discussed above that needs to be re-evaluated with reference to Jewish-Greek relations of the time.

¹⁴⁸ See Louw and Nida, *Lexicon*, 1:445.

¹⁴⁹ For detailed discussion of Samaria in the New Testament, see Zangenberg, “Between Jerusalem and the Galilee,” 393–98. See also Williamson and Evans, “Samaritans,” 1056–61, with discussion of Samaritan sources and the problems of using these sources; and Anderson, “Samaritan Literature,” 1052–56.

¹⁵⁰ Cf. Zangenberg, “Between Jerusalem and the Galilee,” 401–2; and Williamson and Evans, “Samaritans,” 1060.

religiously, united.¹⁵¹ G.A. Smith says that the easy access for travelers from north to south and from east to west in Samaria is a prominent feature of the region.¹⁵²

Geographically, Samaria lies between Judea (the Jerusalem mountains) and Galilee (Jezreel Valley) along the longitudinal hemisphere, and the Plain of Sharon and the Carmel Ridge along the Mediterranean coastline to the west and the Jordan Rift Valley to the east, border the region. Josephus describes Samaria as a fertile land and a densely populated region (*J.W.* 3.49–50).¹⁵³ Finkelstein depicts Samaria as a “region of many cultures.”¹⁵⁴ This is true, since many of the products, especially wine, oil, and grain, that were shipped away from the harbors in Caesarea and Joppa came from the Samarian hills. Such lucrative and busy trade and commerce suggest that the western foothills of Samaria had a highly mixed population.¹⁵⁵ To be sure, a brief history of some selected settlements in the region would corroborate this idea of a mixed population of ethnic groups. As early as 720 BCE (1 Kgs 17:24–41), there was already a settlement of Mesopotamians, and later, during the Greek period, a garrison of Macedonians and a colony of Sidonian merchants (*Ant.* 11.340–346) in Samaria.¹⁵⁶ From the Persian period to Hellenistic times, Samaria displayed itself as a community highly influenced by Greek culture. Fragments of Greek-painted pottery as well as documents concerning property

¹⁵¹ On the lateral and local roads of Judea, Samaria, and Galilee, see Dorsey, *Roads and Highways*, 152–207.

¹⁵² Smith, *Historical Geography*, 219.

¹⁵³ While Josephus at times is accused of gross exaggeration by scholars, Zangenberg, “Between Jerusalem and the Galilee,” 398; and Safrai, “The Description of the Land,” 295–324, think otherwise.

¹⁵⁴ Cited in Zangenberg, “Between Jerusalem and the Galilee,” 398.

¹⁵⁵ Zangenberg, “Between Jerusalem and the Galilee,” 400–1.

¹⁵⁶ See Stern, *Archaeology*, 51; Younger, “The Fall of Samaria,” 461–82; Hays and Kuan, “The Final Years,” 153–81; and Kuhnen, *Palästina*, 43.

and land, sale and loan contracts, and manumission of slaves dated from the fourth century BCE to the sixth century CE were discovered in the area.¹⁵⁷

Samaria during the Roman period under the regime of Herod the Great was considered a Hellenized city. Herod developed a special relationship with Samaria and made the city as his military supply base, when he fought against Hyrcanus II (*Ant.* 14.408; *J.W.* 1.299; Appianus, *Civil War* 5.75) sometime in the middle of the first century BCE. In 27 BCE, Herod began a massive building project, the city of Sebaste, which was completed in 12 BCE, as a tribute of the city, conveying their loyalty to him during the war. The 6,000 war veterans and colonists that Herod settled in the city comprised Samaritans, Jews, and pagans—“Herod’s activities, which clearly presuppose the pagan character of the city, certainly represent the apex of Hellenistic culture in Sebaste.”¹⁵⁸ At that time, it was difficult to distinguish clearly which geographical sites were Samaritan or Jewish.¹⁵⁹ At the death of Herod, however, things changed—the residents of Caesarea and Sebaste disliked King Agrippa I, celebrating his death with sarcastic mock processions (*Ant.* 19.356–361).¹⁶⁰

Despite this flourishing history of Samaria, the city also faced two events that almost obliterated it on the geographical map of ancient Palestine. One event was the destruction of the urban centers of Samaria by Hyrcanus I during the Hasmonean period, between 128 and 107 BCE, that resulted in the “internal consolidation of central elements in Samaritan religiosity and fostered an alienation between Samaritans and Jews.”¹⁶¹ The

¹⁵⁷ See Stern, *Archaeology*, 422–28; and Gropp, “Samaria (Papyri),” 931–32.

¹⁵⁸ Zangenberg, “Between Jerusalem and the Galilee,” 428.

¹⁵⁹ See L. Disegni, “The Samaritans,” 51–66; and Pummer, “Samaritan Material Remains,” 135–77.

¹⁶⁰ Zangenberg, “Between Jerusalem and the Galilee,” 406.

¹⁶¹ Zangenberg, “Between Jerusalem and the Galilee,” 404, cf. 427–29.

other event was the Jewish Revolt in 66–70 CE, which caused a massive incursion of foreigners, centering on the newly founded city of Neapolis (*J.W.* 5.449–50; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* 5.69), after Samaria was occupied by the Roman army. Vespasian in 72/73 CE founded Neapolis after the First Jewish Revolt, and he annexed Samaria to Judea (called Aelia Capitolina since then). All these events show that Samaria was from the earliest of time a heavy-traffic area, not only because of the travelers that visited the city but also because of its economically strategic location (cf. Luke 9:52).

We do not have much information concerning the population that inhabited the region of Samaria, except for the estimate provided by Anthony Byatt, which totals about 500,000. This figure includes the inhabitants of Caesarea Maritima, Joppa, the Coastal Region, Sebaste, and the rest of Samaria. Excluding such areas as Lydda, Emmaus, Gophna, Thamnia, and northern Judea, which have a total estimated population of 280,000, the population of Samaria, in Byatt's estimate, is almost double the size of central Judea, which has an estimated population of only 300,000 (see above).¹⁶² That Samaria was a hodgepodge of many ethnic groups and cultures from the Assyrian takeover in 722 BCE to the time of Jesus suggests that its native residents during the first century CE would have been speakers of multiple languages. Unlike the population of Judea, the “residence of the Jews,” where one will have some reservation to think whether the local residents actually spoke other languages besides Aramaic, the majority of the Samaritan residents would seem to have been fluent speakers of the Greek language, and some groups (especially those involved in trade and commerce) might even have been productive (or at least passive) speakers of the Latin language. The

¹⁶² See Byatt, “Josephus,” 56.

Samaritans during the first century CE were pro-Roman. A number of the residents of Sebaste were soldiers of the Roman army (Josephus, *Ant.* 19.356, 364–366). This is one of the main reasons the Jewish rebels destroyed Sebaste during the First Jewish Revolt (Josephus, *J.W.* 2.458–460).

The multifarious culture of the city, the frequent religious gatherings at the summit of their worship mountain, and the rich trade and commerce in the western foothills of the region would seem to have required the inhabitants to be speakers of the Greek (and possibly Latin for some) language. The sociolinguistic scenario of Samaria, therefore, would even have been more multicultural and multilingual, especially with the presence of many pagan religions and incursion of various ancient philosophies in Samaria. Justin Martyr, who was born in Neapolis in the second-century CE, in fact, came into contact not with Christianity but with Platonism (*Dialogus* 2.6), indicating the high degree of paganism in the city.¹⁶³ Whether the local residents could speak Hebrew is difficult to determine, especially since the Samaritans have a totally different worship venue, Mt. Gerizim, which would have not required the use of Hebrew.¹⁶⁴ Jewish residents in Samaria would have known and used Aramaic in private settings. This further shows that geographical location, together with the people that inhabit it, is actually an important correlative of language choice. Whereas local residents of Judea

¹⁶³ Zangenberg, “Between Jerusalem and the Galilee,” 430.

¹⁶⁴ The final revision of the Samaritan Pentateuch dates to the latter part of the second century BCE, and it is questionable whether the Samaritans during Jesus’ time still use it in their worship, especially since the literature has several thousands of variants when compared to the Masoretic Text, some of which involve semantic changes. Anderson, “Samaritan Literature,” 1053–54, even says that the Samaritan Pentateuch “may not have been unique to the Samaritans (for example, it shares many readings with the Septuagint),” which may suggest that the Samaritans might have already been using the Septuagint during Jesus’ time, which, in turn, suggests that Greek would consequently have been at least the most commonly known language of their residents. Even if the Samaritan Pentateuch was still used, it would probably have been restricted to limited religious settings.

may generally have been multilingual speakers of Greek, Aramaic, and Hebrew (to some degree as a “religious” language), the natives of Samaria would largely have been multilingual speakers of Greek and Latin, with those who lived close to the Judean border knowing Aramaic as well. What now of the residents of Galilee?

Galilee

No geographical region of ancient Palestine has received so much attention from biblical scholars as Galilee, and it appears that scholarly studies will continue to proliferate in the years to come.¹⁶⁵ One of the main reasons for this is the clear fact that it was in this region that Jesus spent most of his private life and public ministry.¹⁶⁶ There were of course other reasons. These include the scholarly interests in the history of Galilee since the independence of the Israelite tribes,¹⁶⁷ the regionalism of Galilee,¹⁶⁸ the urbanization of the region, particularly Sepphoris and Tiberias during Antipas’s reign,¹⁶⁹ the political and social economy of the region,¹⁷⁰ and, of course, its geography,

¹⁶⁵ See Freyne, “Galilean Studies,” 13–29; and Sanders, “Jesus’ Galilee,” 3–41, esp. 3–4, n. 6.

¹⁶⁶ On Jesus’ routes around the Sea of Galilee, see Pixner, *Paths of the Messiah*, 53–76.

¹⁶⁷ See Meyers, ed., *Galilee*.

¹⁶⁸ Josephus (*J.W.* 1.22; 3.35–40; cf. Tob 1:2; Jdt 1:7–8) divides (topographically) Galilee into an upper and lower region, and rabbinic tradition divides the lower region further into the western region and the region around the Sea of Galilee (e.g., Tiberias). The entire region of Galilee has a total of 204 cities and villages (*Vita* 235). On the regionalism of Galilee, see Meyers, “Galilean Regionalism,” 93–101; Meyers, “Galilean Regionalism: A Reappraisal,” 115–31; Ben David, “Were there 204 Settlements,” 21–36; Horsley, *Archaeology*, 88–130; Chancey, *Myth*, 69–119, who discusses the settlements in both Upper and Lower Galilee.

¹⁶⁹ On Antipas’s urbanization of Galilee, see Meyers, “Jesus in His Galilean Context,” 57–66; Reed, *Archaeology*, 93–96; Freyne, “Galileans, Phoenicians, and Itureans,” 184–217; Chancey, *Greco-Roman Culture*, 82–94; Horsley, *Archaeology*, 43–65; and especially, Edwards, “First Century Urban/Rural Relations,” 169–82.

¹⁷⁰ On these topics, see Horsley, *Archaeology*, 66–87; Horsley, *Galilee*, chapter 9; Chancey, *Greco-Roman Culture*, 166–92; Reed, *Archaeology*, 170–96; Reed, “Instability in Jesus’ Galilee,” 343–65; Freyne, “Herodian Economics in Galilee,” 23–46; Jensen, *Herod Antipas*, 187–220; Fiensy, *The Social History of Palestine*, 77–90; and Oakman, *Jesus and the Economic Questions*.

inhabitants, and population.¹⁷¹ On this last point, scholars who hold the traditional opinion suggest that the Galilee of the first century CE had a high degree of Jewish-Gentile interaction, a mixed Galilean population, numerous Gentile neighbors, and a strong Gentile community with only the thinnest of Jewish veneers.¹⁷² The typical argument that Galilee had a predominantly Gentile population also meant that it was a pagan territory, at least according to Mark Chancey.¹⁷³ Recent discussions concerning the ethnic composition and mixing of the inhabitants of Galilee, however, has challenged this traditional opinion that a pagan (hence, Gentile) population largely occupied the region or that the region was truly the “Galilee of the Gentiles” (Matt 4:15; cf. 1 Macc 5:15) or the “Galilee of the nations” (Isa 9:1; הַגּוֹיִם לְגַלִּילָה [8:23]). One of the major proponents of the new, alternate view is Mark Chancey.¹⁷⁴

Chancey notes the lack of sophistication in the methods employed by previous works, which are dependent upon either literary and textual sources or archaeological evidence.¹⁷⁵ He expresses his dissatisfaction in using these methods individually, saying that “None of these previous studies has attempted to provide a synthesis of both the data found in dig reports of a variety of Galilean sites and the information found in ancient

¹⁷¹ On the population of Galilee, see McCown, “Density,” 425–36; Byatt, “Josephus,” 51–60; Chancey, *Myth*, 61–62; and Hoehner, *Herod Antipas*, 52–53.

¹⁷² For a summary of the typical arguments, see Chancey, *Myth*, 1–4, 14–22. Chancey notes that archaeological influence has produced two chronological waves of studies—regionalism of Galilee and urbanization of Galilee—that have supported traditional views (e.g., Eric Meyers [his earlier works; e.g., “Galilean Regionalism,” 93–101; and “Galilean Regionalism: A Reappraisal,” 115–31], J.A. Overman, James Strange, Howard Kee, Richard Batey, and Anthony Saldarini).

¹⁷³ Chancey, *Myth*, 5–6, states, “I am arguing that, in light of the ample evidence in Galilee for Judaism and the minimal evidence of paganism, discussions of the region in New Testament scholarship should always reflect the Jewish identities of the overwhelming majority of inhabitants.”

¹⁷⁴ See Chancey, *Myth*, 22–26, who notes other proponents of Jewish Galilee, including Geza Vermes, Martin Goodman, Sean Freyne, Richard Horsley, Eric Meyers [his later works; e.g., “Jesus and His Galilean Context,” 57–66] and E.P. Sanders (cf. Dunn, “Did Jesus Attend the Synagogue?” 207–12).

¹⁷⁵ See Chancey, *Myth*, 4. Moreland, “The Inhabitants of Galilee,” 133, also notes, “we do ourselves great disservice when we simply use the archaeological material to illustrate text-based historical reconstructions.”

literary sources.”¹⁷⁶ Thus, in his investigation of Galilee’s population, he attempts to “bridge the gap between textual studies and archaeology” and concludes that, “contrary to the perceptions of many New Testament scholars, the overwhelming majority of first-century Galileans were Jews.”¹⁷⁷ Chancey banks on the theory that, because the population was composed mostly of Jews, it follows that Aramaic was their common language. On this, Chancey and Martin Hengel would apparently agree: “An ancient community could exhibit a strongly Hellenized atmosphere, characterized by the widespread use of the Greek language, the presence of Greek architectural forms and artistic motifs, and awareness (at least among the educated elite) of Greek thought, without having a large number of Gentiles. Such a community could be entirely Jewish, in light of Martin Hengel’s work on Hellenism and Judaism.”¹⁷⁸

Recently, in a revised, updated, and expanded version of his dissertation, Bradley Root in his *First Century Galilee* (2014) follows Chancey’s proposal, arguing that the limited epigraphic evidence found in the region should mitigate from using it as a reliable barometer for understanding its linguistic environment. Instead, he continues, “the best evidence for Galilee’s common language(s) comes from the literary sources [i.e., Josephus’s *Vita*, the Gospel of Mark, and the Gospel of John].”¹⁷⁹ However, there are two problems with Root’s proposal. The first is his method and procedure in handling the

¹⁷⁶ Chancey, *Myth*, 4.

¹⁷⁷ Chancey, *Myth*, i, 4, 182. I cannot comment on the accuracy of Chancey’s statement, nor do I intend to do so, as I have not investigated the matter in-depth myself. My study is focused on the languages of the Galileans, using its inhabitants and population as the two correlatives. In fact, I have already argued earlier that even Judeans would have known and spoken Greek.

¹⁷⁸ Chancey, *Myth*, 7.

¹⁷⁹ Root, *First Century Galilee*, 174; cf. Chancey, *Myth*, 78. The literary sources that he investigates include Josephus, the four Gospels and the Gospel of Thomas, and archeological sources, including Galilee’s population size and settlements, human and animal remains, potteries, numismatics, and architecture.

available linguistic evidence. Root's historical inquiry takes the advice of Jacob Neusner and Steve Mason, both of whom, according to him, "stressed the need to address the 'literary questions' (i.e., to interpret each source by itself without recourse to outside information) before engaging in historical reconstruction."¹⁸⁰ There are certainly some benefits to such an approach, especially since Root has a doctoral degree in ancient Jewish history and since he has already taken into consideration the subjectivity of the approach: "a culture's material remains do not speak for themselves. Like literary documents, archeological finds must be interpreted before they yield information. Since many elements of archeological interpretation are subjective, archaeologists may draw radically different conclusions from the same data set."¹⁸¹ However, as noted in chapter 2, it is precisely because of the subjectivity of this kind of approach that I have conducted this study. Any interpretation can be posited, without the use of a scientific approach to investigate the historical and archaeological data, as Root has pointed out himself. Thus, the second problem concerns the interpretation he generates concerning the linguistic evidence found in Galilee. While Root acknowledges that virtually all the epigraphy in the region was written in Greek, he maintains that this fact only indicates that the administrative language of the region was Greek. He states:

Aramaic would have been the common language for most Galilean Jews (and perhaps for some Galilean Gentiles as well). However, since interregional trade would have brought many Galilean merchants and artisans in contact with Greek-speakers, a significant portion of the population would probably have known at least little Greek. Greek would have been used most frequently in urban centers, by government officials, among the wealthiest Galileans, and in the settlements by the Sea of Galilee, where Jewish communities sometimes had significant Gentile minority populations.¹⁸²

¹⁸⁰ Root, *First Century Galilee*, 4.

¹⁸¹ Root, *First Century Galilee*, 98, see also 5.

¹⁸² Root, *First Century Galilee*, 174.

There are at least two immediate comments that can be given on Root's statement. One is that we cannot actually deduce from those Greek epigraphic evidence that they only indicate the administrative language of the region. For all we know, they could both be the administrative language and the primary language of the residents. A second comment is that we also cannot know from the interregional trades in the region whether the "significant portion" of the residents knows "little" or "much" Greek. Depending on the level, period of time, and generation of the Galilean merchants and artisans who traded with Greek speakers, Root's theory would even suggest that it should go the opposite way.

Not all scholars will agree with Chancey and Root's proposal, however. The excellent essay of Milton Moreland, for instance, has, in my opinion, disproved Chancey's theory. Moreland writes, "the archaeological and literary data point to a diverse population that lived in the region from the Persian to the Early Roman period...the existence of Jewish ethnic markers in the region...does not mandate a Judean origin for the majority of its inhabitants during the ER period."¹⁸³

The fact that scholarly opinions are divided between a Gentile Galilee and a Jewish Galilee does not constitute a barrier in determining the linguistic landscape of the Galilean community.¹⁸⁴ For one, even those who propose a Jewish Galilee like Chancey still believe that the region was heavily influenced by Greek culture and thought. It appears that the farther we move up to the northern regions of ancient Palestine, the stronger we see the influence of Hellenism. This of course is directly related to the

¹⁸³ Moreland, "The Inhabitants of Galilee," 133–34.

¹⁸⁴ For a summary of the debate, see Moreland, "The Inhabitants of Galilee," 137–42.

direction of Alexander's invasion of the land in the late fourth century BCE, such that Hellenization penetrated the region from the northern regions to the southern regions. Most importantly, however, a quick perusal of the geography, inhabitants, and population of ancient Palestine also indicate the strong influence of Greek on the community; hence, it is almost certain that Greek would have been the primary language of the inhabitants there, at least in more public places and social settings. Josephus (*J.W.* 3.35–40) says

Galilee, with its two divisions known as Upper and Lower Galilee, is enveloped by Phoenicia and Syria. Its western frontiers are the outlying territory of Ptolemais and Carmel, a mountain once belonging to Galilee, and now to Tyre; adjacent to Carmel is Gaba the "city of Cavalry," so called from the cavalry who, on their discharge by King Herod settled in this town. On the south the country is bounded by Samaria and the territory of Scythopolis up to the waters of the Jordan; on the east by the territory of Hippos, Gadara, and Gaulanitis, the frontier-line of Agrippa's kingdom; on the north Tyre and its dependent district mark its limits. Lower Galilee extends in length from Tiberias to Chabulon, which is not far from Ptolemais on the coast; in breadth, from a village in the Great Plain called Xaloth to Bersabe. At this point begins Upper Galilee, which extends in breadth to the village of Baca, the frontier of Tyrian territory; in length it reaches from the village of Thella, near the Jordan to Meroth.

Like Samaria, there are at least three reasons to suggest that this geographical location of Galilee was a prominent, multicultural center of ancient Palestine. The first reason is that the region seems to be a strategic location for foreign visits and international trade and commerce. Richard Horsley writes, "A Galilee characterized by active trading...would have provided the network of interaction...and the network of international relations by which they communicated with the diaspora and the Roman empire at large."¹⁸⁵ Scholars usually mention evidence of two major types of trades in the region, coin minting and pottery manufacturing. Phoenician Tyre was a city coast known for minting coins. Because the villagers of Upper Galilee were exporting olive oil and

¹⁸⁵ Horsley, *Archaeology*, 67.

other products to that city, the excavated Tyrian coins in the Galilean villages were thought to have been the money (i.e., the excavated coins) the villagers received in return. Thus, some scholars argue that the economy of Galilee was in one way or another dependent upon Phoenicia.¹⁸⁶ The incidence of these excavated Tyrian coins, however, does not necessarily indicate trade with that city, especially since “Tyrian coinage was the most frequently used currency throughout the Eastern Mediterranean, including nearly everywhere in Palestine.”¹⁸⁷

An international, widespread pottery trade between Upper Galilee and the northeastern cities and villages in the Golan region is also subject to question. Not only does archaeological evidence show that common cooking ware used in Galilee originated from Kefar Hanania, a village between Upper and Lower Galilee, but also literary evidence indicates that pottery was not marketed internationally.¹⁸⁸ The argument here is that manufacture and trade in the ancient economy was primarily local; there was no need for an import and export industry.¹⁸⁹ The discovery of 6,000 fragmentary glass (or pottery) vessels at Tel Anafa, a small village in the Hula (or Huleh) valley north of Galilee not far from the Sea of Galilee, however, has provided us with some insight as to the glassmaking industry during the period ca. 150 BCE to 20 CE, which helps us determine ethnic affinities in various regions of the empire by comparing the origins and development of the potteries produced from one region to another.¹⁹⁰ Indeed,

¹⁸⁶ On this, see Meyers, “The Cultural Setting of Galilee,” 700; Meyers, “Galilean Regionalism: A Reappraisal, 123; Hanson, *Tyrian Influence*, 53–54; and Meyers, Strange, and Meyers, *Excavations*, 157–58.

¹⁸⁷ Horsley, *Archaeology*, 69.

¹⁸⁸ See Horsley, *Archaeology*, 70–6.

¹⁸⁹ Adan-Bayewitz, *Common Pottery*, 19.

¹⁹⁰ Herbert et al., *Final Report*, 1–2.

international trade between Upper Galilee and Tel Anafa, therefore, was not impossible.¹⁹¹ If this were the case, trade between Galilee and Tyre would also have been possible, since Phoenician citizens of Tyre controlled the areas around Tel Anafa. And if, according to Chancey's view, the Galilean population were primarily Jewish, they would still have had some degree of social interaction with Phoenicians, Tyrians, and other residents in the northern regions. Moreover, Phoenicia and the areas around Tel Anafa were very familiar with Greek culture.¹⁹² One of the reasons why Galileans have also been familiar with Greek culture and language, as Chancey also recognizes, may have come from the social and business intermingling with their northern neighbors.¹⁹³

My quibble then with Chancey's theory is that he, by using historical, archaeological, and textual evidence, does not allow for the possibility that the Galileans may actually have been composed of a highly mixed population like Samaria.¹⁹⁴ Without even saying that these three types of evidences require interpretation (and thus the need of a methodological tool as a lens to interpret them), as Chancey also acknowledges,¹⁹⁵ there are serious problems with seeing Galilee's population as primarily Jewish. First, the

¹⁹¹ On Upper Galilee, including its geography, demography, topography, settlement sites, and pottery and other finds, see Frankel et al., *Settlement Dynamics*, 1–140.

¹⁹² See Herbert et al., *Final Report*, 2. Cf. Millar, *The Roman Near East*, 57; and Chancey, *Myth*, 62.

¹⁹³ See especially the discussion of Moreland, "The Inhabitants of Galilee," 143–57.

¹⁹⁴ Chancey, *Myth*, 61, 119–20, writes, "Galilee's historical development does not demonstrate that Early Roman Galilee had a mixed population; in fact, it suggests the opposite case. In the first century CE, its inhabitants seem to have been primarily Jewish, with only a few pagans. Not until the second century CE do we have strong evidence of large numbers of gentiles in Galilee, and these are Roman soldiers and their accompanying entourage... Thus, nothing in Josephus or the Gospels suggests that Galilee was primarily gentile, or even that its population contained a large gentile minority amongst a Jewish majority. The impression they give is ambiguous: in the first century CE, Galilee's population was overwhelmingly Jewish. Archaeological evidence does nothing to disconfirm this view... Josephus described Galilee as a region "encircled by foreign nations" [*J.W.* 3.41]. Many scholars have regarded this encirclement as a defining factor in Galilee's cultural milieu... In addition, traders and travelers from more distant lands passed through on the major highways of the day... Are such claims accurate?"

¹⁹⁵ Chancey, *Myth*, 8.

Gospels do refer to some Gentile population (e.g., Matt 8:15//Luke 7:1–2; Matt 15:24–28//Mark 7:24–30), and the reference to Γαλιλαία τῶν ἔθνῶν (Galilee of the Gentiles) in Matt 4:15 is a significant indicator of the peculiarity of the ethnic composition of the land. Whether we take τῶν ἔθνῶν to mean “the largest unit into which the people of the world are divided on the basis of their constituting a socio-political community [so nation, people],”¹⁹⁶ or “those who do not belong to the Jewish or Christian faith [so heathen, pagans],”¹⁹⁷ the question is why was Galilee (and not other regions) labeled as such.¹⁹⁸ It seems more likely to think that the first-century CE inhabitants knew better about the population of the region and therefore labeled Galilee as the “Galilee of the nations or Gentiles.”

And second, it seems very unlikely to see Galilee as inhabited by Jews with its surrounding territories like Samaria, the Decapolis, Phoenicia, and the Golan regions as inhabited by mixed populations. A Jewish Galilee leaves us with the notion of also seeing Galilee, like Judea, as the “residence of the Jews.” But is this, geographically speaking, a plausible case? When Jesus prevented his disciples from going to the Gentiles and Samaritans and instructed them to go instead to the lost sheep of Israel (Matt 10:5–6), his instruction suggests that there were actually Gentile populations in both Judea and Galilee, two regions in which he and his disciples had spent most of their time. Additionally, it seems that the Gentile populations in those two regions were so intermixed with the Jewish population. The sociolinguistic concepts of isogloss and

¹⁹⁶ Louw and Nida, *Lexicon*, 1:129.

¹⁹⁷ Louw and Nida, *Lexicon*, 1:126.

¹⁹⁸ Contra Chancey’s explanation of the Γαλιλαία τῶν ἔθνῶν; Chancey, *Myth*, 170–74, argues that the nomenclature reflects Matthew’s theme of the unfolding mission of the Gentiles and the social realities of Isaiah’s time (Matthew quotes Isa 9:1 [8:23]).

language border make it clear that there is fluidity in the intermingling of border and adjacent territories. Whereas Upper Galilee transacted business with the northern and western regions, Lower Galilee was exposed to visitors from the Decapolis, Samaria, Caesarea Maritima, Judea, and other regions (see Matt 4:25; Mark 3:7–8; Luke 6:17–18).¹⁹⁹ Moreland remarks, “Far from being an isolated population that was surrounded by large, oppositional pagan cities, Galileans interacted throughout the Hellenistic and Roman periods with their coastal neighbors.”²⁰⁰

The second reason, therefore, is that the close proximity and easy access of visitors from the south, such as from the Decapolis and Samaria, would necessarily allow for a richer cultural diversity in the cities of Lower Galilee, especially Sepphoris and Tiberias.²⁰¹ Sepphoris was a city standing 285 meters above sea level in a fertile area halfway between the Mediterranean Sea and the Sea of Galilee. Archaeological artifacts found in the city include the two statuettes representing Prometheus and Pan, glass industry sites bearing Christian symbols, a first-century CE theater that could seat forty-two hundred people, and pig skeletons, all of which may indicate that the city was inhabited by Gentiles.²⁰² Horsley says that, “Sepphoris probably used Greek as its official

¹⁹⁹ On the surrounding areas of Galilee, see Chancey, *Myth*, 120–66.

²⁰⁰ Moreland, “The Inhabitants of Galilee,” 146.

²⁰¹ Dunn, “Did Jesus Attend the Synagogue,” 216, says that “if the population as a whole was less Hellenized and more Jewish than has often been claimed, there would be less reason for devout Jewish villagers to bypass or avoid it [i.e., Sepphoris].”

²⁰² See Lewin, *Archaeology*, 80–6. For an overview of Sepphoris (and Tiberias), see Jensen, *Herod Antipas*, 149–62; Horsley, *Archaeology*, 43–65; and especially the essays in Nagy et al., *Sepphoris in Galilee*, 15–142. The essays represent the debate between a Greco-Roman Sepphoris versus a Jewish Sepphoris, but ultimately highlight the fact that the city was a “crosscurrents of culture.” For Josephus’s account of Sepphoris, see Hoehner, *Herod Antipas*, 84–86. Meyers, “Cultural Setting of Galilee,” 697–98, claims that Sepphoris and other areas of Lower Galilee were linked with “the pagan, and hence Greek-speaking west, with its more cosmopolitan atmosphere and multilingual population.” Though Meyers has later changed his view, arguing for a Jewish-populated Sepphoris in light of more recent excavations, there is still reason to think that his earlier view is more accurate. Cf. Chancey, *Myth*, 69–84, esp. 79–81, 83.

administrative language at the time of Jesus.”²⁰³ Tiberias is mentioned three times in the Gospel of John (John 6:1, 23; 21:1), and two (6:1, 23) of these three instances indicate that there were large crowds of various social groups that gathered to seek for healing by Jesus. Tiberias was located on the western side of the Sea of Galilee. Herod Antipas in 20 CE founded Tiberias, and it replaced Sepphoris as the capital city of Galilee, when the city was destroyed in 39/38 BCE. J.R. McRay notes that, on the basis of excavated construction tombs that made the city unclean for religious Jews, Antipas may have populated the city with both Jews and Gentiles, although Michael Avi-Yonah notes that the population was largely composed of Jews.²⁰⁴ By the third century CE, the estimated population in Tiberias was less than 40,000.²⁰⁵ Ariel Lewin writes, “Tiberias was founded as a Greek polis, with a civic assembly, a council, and magistracies of a Hellenistic type, and it was laid out like a Graeco-Roman city.”²⁰⁶ Although less excavated than Sepphoris,²⁰⁷ discoveries from Tiberias include a theater, public baths, a covered agora, a semicircular exedra (an ancient Greco-Roman room, portico, or arcade with benches or seats), and a Roman basilica.²⁰⁸ That Galilee was a Jewish region seems to be a hard case to establish based on these archaeological facts. In addition, we also need to consider the sociolinguistic dynamics of the region with its border communities, especially Samaria (see above) and the Decapolis (see below).

²⁰³ Horsley, *Archaeology*, 59.

²⁰⁴ McRay, “Tiberias,” 1236; and Avi-Yonah, “The Foundation of Tiberias,” 163. Cf. Chancey, *Myth*, 88–95.

²⁰⁵ Avi-Yonah, “The Foundation of Tiberias,” 164–65.

²⁰⁶ Lewin, *Archaeology*, 76.

²⁰⁷ Chancey, *Myth*, 89.

²⁰⁸ Lewin, *Archaeology*, 76.

The third and final reason is that Galilee was under the territorial control of Herod the Great at the turn of the first century CE. Herod the Great was a benefactor of many projects as an ally of Rome. We have already seen his major projects in Judea, Samaria, and Caesarea Maritima. In Sepphoris, he apparently built a royal palace and a Roman arsenal (*Ant.* 17.271; *J.W.* 2.56). Chancey points out, however, that “Galilee does not seem to have been the beneficiary of such massive building projects...Herod built no pagan temples or gymnasia [which] suggests that the region’s inhabitants were probably for the most part Jews.”²⁰⁹ The absence of pagan temples and gymnasia, nevertheless, does not necessarily correlate with the largely Jewish population that Chancey wished to assert. We have seen that there were other Greco-Roman structures and architecture in both Sepphoris and Tiberias, and most importantly, the finances of Herod may have simply been concentrated on the Jerusalem temple, Sebaste, and Caesarea Maritima. The fact that Galilee was influenced by Greco-Roman culture as much as Samaria and the Decapolis and that Herod ruled Galilee should prevent us from thinking that Galilee was dominated by a Jewish population.

Josephus lists Sepphoris and Tiberias as the largest cities (*Vita* 65.346), with Tiberias having a city council consisting of 600 members (*J.W.* 2.21.9). Josephus’s estimate of 3 million Galileans seems overstated (*J.W.* 3.43; *Vita* 235), and Anthony Byatt approximates the population of the entire 204 settlements and villages in Galilee to be about 630,000.²¹⁰ Based on Byatt’s estimate, the Galilean population appears to be higher than that of Samaria and Judea. If the majority of this population were Jews, it seems very unlikely that the Galilean region would have a Greco-Roman ambience as

²⁰⁹ Chancey, *Myth*, 50.

²¹⁰ See Byatt, “Josephus,” 55.

was actually the case, unless we are willing to acknowledge that the Jews during the first century CE were already as much Greek as they were Jews. And if they were, then we also have to reckon with the difference between Galilean Jews and Judean Jews in terms of their spoken languages (Matt 26:73). Whatever the case may be, it is clear from our survey that the Galileans would predominantly have been speakers of the Greek language. Whether the population was primarily composed of Jews who believed in Judaism does not really matter with reference to their sociolinguistic milieu as well as their primary language of communication. Like Samaria, the multilingual Jewish population there would have only used Aramaic in selected private settings. This was most likely also the sociolinguistic situation of the Decapolis, a region southeast of Galilee.

The Decapolis

The term “Decapolis” literally means and is collectively used to designate “ten (Hellenistic) cities” (Damascus, Philadelphia, Raphana, Scythopolis, Gadara, Hippos, Dion, Pella, Galasa [or Gerasa], and Canatha; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* 5.16.74), but sources reveal that this league of cities comprised more than ten cities.²¹¹ There is debate whether the Decapolis was actually a confederated region,²¹² especially when the only evidence for their joint enterprise was the single petition they collectively made to Vespasian, requesting him for action against Justus of Tiberias (*Vita* 65.341–342, 74.410), when the latter attempted to take control of their region. Scholars say that Alexander or one of his generals established the Decapolis cities.²¹³

²¹¹ Ptolemy (*Geography* 5.14.22), a second-century CE writer, excludes Raphana and includes nine more cities—Heliopolis, Abila, Saana, Hina, Lysanius, Capitolias, Edrei, Gadara, and Samulis (cf. the lists of Eusebius, *Onomasticon* 1.16; and Stephanus of Byzantium, *Ethnika*).

²¹² See Smith, *Historical Geography*, 596; Millar, *The Roman Near East*, 409–10; and Parker, “The Decapolis Reviewed,” 437–38.

²¹³ See Parker, “Decapolis,” 128; and Rey-Coquais, “Decapolis,” 117–18.

Much numismatic evidences were found in the Decapolis, bearing the date of Pompey's arrival to the city in 63 BCE. This was a sign of the cities' gratitude to Pompey's liberating them from the Hasmoneans.²¹⁴ Many of the cities also minted their own coins, notably Gadara, which manufactured the oldest coinage in the region.²¹⁵ Archaeological excavation has shed light on several cities of the Decapolis, but it has not shown any signs of the confederation of these cities.²¹⁶ Thus, it is more likely that the Decapolis was composed of independent cities rather than a league of cities, although "the cities were all apparently Greco-Roman culturally and probably shared a common religious and cultural identity."²¹⁷ If there is any truth to this theological opinion, "Jesus' visits to the territory anticipate the church's ministry among Gentiles and reveal the boundless nature of his messianic authority."²¹⁸

There are three cities—Scythopolis, Hippos, and Gadara—that deserve discussion, since these cities border the eastern and southern regions of Lower Galilee from the Decapolis, and they are positioned in close proximity to its cities (e.g., cities of the western side of the Sea of Galilee, Nain, and Nazareth). These areas have also been considerably excavated to the same degree as Sepphoris and Tiberias.²¹⁹

²¹⁴ See Chancey, *Myth*, 131–32; Parker, "The Decapolis Reviewed," 439–40.

²¹⁵ Chancey, *Myth*, 137–38.

²¹⁶ Parker, "The Decapolis Reviewed," 439. For an overview of the city, see Ciampa, "Decapolis," 266–68; and especially, Graf, *Rome and the Arabian Frontier*, 4:1–48. The cities of the Decapolis, which include Hippos, Abila, Gerasa, Gadara, Pella, and Scythopolis, are discussed in Chancey, *Myth*, 130–43.

²¹⁷ Parker, "The Decapolis Reviewed," 440–41; cf. Ciampa, "Decapolis," 266–67.

²¹⁸ Ciampa, "Decapolis," 266.

²¹⁹ Jensen, *Herod Antipas*, 179; Millar, *The Roman Near East*, 411. Cf. Chancey, *Myth*, 133, 138, who shares a different opinion. It is interesting to note that elsewhere in his book, Chancey would indicate the scarcity of archaeological evidence for Greco-Roman elements in particular geographical regions to support his case for a Jewish Galilee.

Scythopolis was perhaps the largest city of the Decapolis and the only city located west of the Jordan valley (*J.W.* 3.9.7, 446). It was a well-recognized Greek polis in the first century CE, featuring “a large theatre, large bathhouses, a[t] least five temples, wide colonnaded streets with an abundance of shops, a main street (the ‘Palladius’ Street) featuring a semi-circular plaza in the middle, a *nymphaeum*, and an amphitheatre.”²²⁰ There were a number of inscriptions found at a monumental first-century CE temple located on a mound, which suggests that the temple was dedicated to Zeus Akraios.²²¹ But the most abundant Greek inscriptions pertain to Olympian cults (e.g., Zeus Bacchus, Tyche, Nike, and Hermes).²²²

The second notable city is Hippos, which is situated opposite of Tiberias on the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee. The city was also recognized as a Greek polis since the Hellenistic era, possessing a temple and a minting factory. Excavators have discovered a temple foundation with the label “The Hellenistic Compound” dated to the second century BCE,²²³ and an inscription referring to the Nabatean god Dushara dated to the second or third century CE,²²⁴ both of which suggest the presence of a mixed population in the city. Josephus (*Vita* 42, 153, 349) speaks of the city lights in Tiberias being visible from Hippos and of the direct interaction between the two cities.

The third and last significant city is Gadara located about ten kilometers southeast of the Sea of Galilee. The history of the city boasts of its famous philosophers and poets in Hellenistic times and of its being one of the capitals of Aulus Gabinius’s (a prominent

²²⁰ Jensen, *Herod Antipas*, 181.

²²¹ Tsafir, “Further Evidence,” 76–78.

²²² See Chancey, *Myth*, 141.

²²³ Jensen, *Herod Antipas*, 180.

²²⁴ Ovadiah, “Dushara-Dusares,” 101–4.

Roman statesman and general of Pompey) confederacy in the first century BCE.²²⁵ The city also boasts of “two theaters, monumental gates, elaborate tomb complexes, a basilica, a long colonnaded cardo, public baths and a stadium...[and]...a temple complex going back to the second century BCE.”²²⁶ The Gospel of Matthew (8:28) mentions Jesus arriving at the region of Gadara (Γάδαρα) in contrast to Mark’s (5:1) and Luke’s (8:26) accounts, where they mention Jesus crossing across the Sea of Galilee to the region of Gerasa (Γέρασα). Gerasa is a city of Perea, east of the Jordan River.²²⁷ Many scholars think that Gergesa, a village on the east side of the Sea of Galilee above Hippos, would have been the location Mark and Luke was referring to, since Gerasa seems far remote from the Sea of Galilee, and especially since there are textual traditions of the Gospels that attest to Gergesa as the site.²²⁸ Gergesa, however, appears to be a lesser-known site in the first century CE, and the text in both Mark 5:1 and Luke 8:28 reads: Jesus and his disciples sailed across the lake εἰς τὴν χώραν τῶν Γερασηνῶν (into the region of the Gerasenes). In any case, the exorcism event of two demon-possessed persons in Matthew’s Gadara is a totally different one from that of Mark and Luke.

The total population of the cities of the Decapolis, excluding the region of Perea, in Anthony Byatt’s estimate is about 190,000.²²⁹ Though much smaller in population size than Galilee and Samaria, the cities of the Decapolis appears to have had more Gentile residents than Jewish residents as these archaeological discoveries indicate. Virtually all

²²⁵ See Jensen, *Herod Antipas*, 180; and Chancey, *Myth*, 137.

²²⁶ Jensen, *Herod Antipas*, 180.

²²⁷ Cf. Louw and Nida, *Lexicon*, 1:834.

²²⁸ Cf. Chancey, *Myth*, 134 n. 108; and Ciampa, “Decapolis,” 268.

²²⁹ Byatt, “Josephus,” 56.

of the temples excavated in these cities were pagan ones, and we know from its history and from the excavated numismatic evidence that the region only became prominent after Pompey's reign in the first century BCE. Nevertheless, the population would definitely have included some Jews.²³⁰ It is therefore most likely that Greek would have been the primary language and the *lingua franca* of the inhabitants of these cities. Because of the proximity of the Decapolis's cities to both Samaria and Galilee, it would have been inevitable for the residents in these three regions to cross paths on occasions whether for business or for leisure. And when they did, Greek would naturally have been their *lingua franca*. It is inconceivable that Aramaic would still have been used in most social contexts, except of course in Galilee, though only in special private settings, if indeed more Jewish residents lived there.

Perea

We do not have much secondary literature on Perea, one of the two districts (the other one being Galilee) ruled by Herod Antipas, aside from the accounts of Josephus. Geographically, three rivers—Jabbok (north), Jordan (west), and Arnon (south)—and the Transjordan valley (east) border the district of Perea. The region is situated opposite of Judea across the Jordan River and southeast of Galilee adjoined by the Decapolis. The geographical origin of Perea traces back to the former territories of Reuben, Gad, and the southern part of Mannaseh (Josh 12:6| 13:8–28; 18:7; 20:8; 22:1–4, 9; 1 Sam 13:7). But its history fades into silence after the Assyrians' invasion of the eastern part of the region (1 Kgs 15:29; 1 Chr 5:26; *Ant.* 9.235).

²³⁰ See Ciampa, "Decapolis," 267; and Chancey, *Myth*, 132.

During Hellenistic times, many Greek settlers migrated into the towns of Pella and Dion in the Decapolis, and during the Maccabean period, Perea was a Gentile territory.²³¹ According to Josephus (*Ant.* 20.2; *J.W.* 4.419–439), sometime in the first century BCE until the First Jewish Revolt, Perea became a Jewish territory.²³² This came about through the campaigns of Alexander Jannaeus (*J.W.* 1.156), who destroyed the two capital cities of Perea—Amathus (*Ant.* 17.277) and Betharamatha (*J.W.* 2.59).

Scholars, however, are uncertain about which of these two cities is the actual capital city of Perea. Adam Porter argues, on the basis of several pieces of evidence, that Betharamatha was the capital city. The reconstruction and use of the city of Betharamatha as an administrative center for the Herodian and Roman governments may indicate that it was indeed Perea's capital city.²³³ Furthermore, Amathus is located on the opposite side of the Jabbok River, which is beyond the border territory of Perea.²³⁴ In any case, the most important thing to note is that excavations have found potsherd patterns in both cities that indicate the occupation of the region by Greeks, Romans, and Arabs at various time periods.²³⁵ The geographical setting of Matthew 19 (cf. Mark 10) was probably somewhere in the region of Perea. There is thus evidence that some Jews (e.g., the Pharisees) and rich people visited or lived in that region, especially considering the close proximity of the region to Judea.

²³¹ Hoehner, *Herod Antipas*, 55.

²³² Cf. Porter, "Amathus," 223, 229, who thinks otherwise.

²³³ See Porter, "Amathus," 223–29; and Meyers and Chancey, *Alexander to Constantine*, 120.

²³⁴ Cf. Hoehner, *Herod Antipas*, 47, who refers to the Jabesh River (probably the Jabbok River) as the northern boundary of Perea.

²³⁵ See Khouri, *Antiquities*, 47.

Unlike its sister district, Galilee, Perea probably was a less Hellenized region. Even though its northern border neighbor is the Decapolis, its short distance away from the east side of Judea may have brought its population into frequent contacts with Jews from Judea.²³⁶ No wonder Josephus's record shows that Perea seemed to have a predominantly Jewish population. In fact, the Mishnah indicates that most inhabitants of Perea were Jews (*Shebiith* 9.2; *Ketuboth* 9.10; *Baba Bathra* 9.2). That this was in fact the case, however, does not mean that the population did not have the same level of interaction with the inhabitants of the southern part of the Decapolis. And since we have archaeological evidence of Arab occupation, there may also be small Arab settlements in the region adjacent to the Transjordan.

It is of course difficult to know whether these hypothetical inferences are true, because of the lack of available historical and material evidence. Nevertheless, it is likely that the languages spoken in Perea would have been predominantly Greek and Aramaic, depending upon the population settlements in the region. For those settlements close to the Transjordan and the Nabatean region, Aramaic would probably have been widely spoken. For those settlements close to Judea, Greek and Aramaic would have been the languages used. And for those settlements close to the Decapolis, Greek would have been their primary language.

Phoenicia

Turning now to the region northwest of Galilee, we find the coastal district of Phoenicia. The district had a long, rich history, especially as to the role it played as a

²³⁶ Byatt, "Josephus," 56, estimates the population of Perea, including Philadelphia and Gerasa to be about 60,000. If Gerasa (Jerash) had a population between 13,000 and 18,000 (see Harding, *Antiquities*, 80), however, this would bring the total population of Perea to somewhere between 30,000 and 40,000, discounting the population of Philadelphia.

Greco-Roman society in the Near East.²³⁷ Unlike the other regions of ancient Palestine, it is not necessary to delve into the intricate demographic details of this region to prove that it was indeed a purely Greco-Roman society.²³⁸ But I wish to highlight here both the impact and influence this coastal region would have had upon Galilee, namely, the degree to which its residents were Hellenized because of the geographical proximity of these two regions. Fergus Millar notes that “both in ‘real’ history and in legend the Phoenicians had had an integral part in Greek culture from the beginning...[especially] the derivation of the Greek alphabet.”²³⁹ The Phoenician port of Dor, for instance, had coins that depict Zeus, Tyche-Astarte, Doros, and Nike, and at least two temples existed there from the Hellenistic period to the Roman era.²⁴⁰ I mentioned earlier that the Galileans were probably engaged in the pottery trade business with Tel Anafa, a village controlled by some residents of Tyre. Jesus’ ministry also went as far as Tyre and Sidon (Matt 15:21–28; Mark 7:24–30). Upon his arrival at Tyre, a Syro-Phoenician (Greek) woman greeted him and begged for healing of her demon-possessed daughter (Matt 15:21; Mark 7:26).

There is dispute about which of these two cities —Tyre or Sidon—has the right to the title “the metropolis of the Phoenicians” (Strabo, *Geography* 16.2.22). In any case, what is important to note is that both cities clearly represented Greco-Roman culture and society. Sidon, for instance, stretched its territory as far as Damascus to the east and Mt. Hermon to the south, both of which were Greek territories. The coins minted in both cities had inscriptions in Greek (e.g., “of Sidon [or Tyre] the sacred and inviolate”),

²³⁷ On this, see the discussion of Phoenicia by Millar, *The Roman Near East*, 264–95; and Kasher, *Jews and Hellenistic Cities*, 26–29. Cf. Bauckham, *Book of Acts*, 51–58.

²³⁸ See Chancey, *Myth*, 143–53.

²³⁹ Millar, *The Roman Near East*, 264.

²⁴⁰ See Stern, “Dor,” 1:357–68.

although numismatic evidence does not necessarily imply that the inhabitants spoke Greek. The more significant fact, however, was the local culture and the temple worship in the Sidonian territory, which had no means of expression other than Greek.²⁴¹ Tyre, on the other hand, enjoyed a distinctive historical identity with the Roman Empire. In the second century CE, a statue with an inscription in Latin and Greek was set up at Tyre personifying Leptis Magna in Tripolitania, the native city of Septimius Severus.²⁴² Tyre also boasted of a 60,000-seater hippodrome, a 170-meter-long colonnaded street, an arched entry gate, an aqueduct, and a necropolis.²⁴³ These historical facts highlight the civic identity of both these cities, displaying a fusion of Phoenician, Greek, and Latin cultural elements.

The same is true with Acco Ptolemais, a city harbor located west and near Galilee and the only city that acquired a Hellenistic dynastic name, Ptolemais. Acco was the main seaport for Galilee (*J.W.* 2.188–191). Josephus (*J.W.* 2.185) reports that the city had both Greek and Jewish residents, and to this mix of population were added Latin-speaking veterans, when Acco became a Roman colony in the first century CE.²⁴⁴ The city also served as a military lodging base for the soldiers of Vespasian and Titus during the Jewish revolts (*J.W.* 2.458–460, 477–480). In sum, like Caesarea Maritima, the coastal cities of Phoenicia were clearly highly Hellenized as well as being Romanized areas, perhaps because of their nature as busy sea harbors that interconnected with the western seaports of the Mediterranean Sea. It is noticeable that Hellenized cities in ancient

²⁴¹ Millar, *The Roman Near East*, 286–87.

²⁴² Millar, *The Roman Near East*, 292.

²⁴³ Chancey, *Myth*, 150.

²⁴⁴ See Meshorer, *City-Coins*, 12; Chancey, *Myth*, 143, 149; Millar, *The Roman Near East*, 23–26, 268.

Palestine would have such Greco-Roman structures and facilities installed for the use and amusement of the residents. And compared to the central regions of the land, such as Judea, Perea, Samaria, and even Galilee, the coastal cities appear more highly Hellenized and Romanized. As such, it is very possible that travelers and visitors to these seaports would at least have known Greek in order to communicate or transact business in these regions, with Latin as a concomitant language that would also have been spoken to some degree.

CONCLUSION

There is linguistic evidence for Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin as the languages being spoken in ancient Palestine during the time of Jesus. Whether a particular language functioned as the prestige language and *lingua franca* of the speech community has always been a moot point.²⁴⁵ Scholars have typically argued for Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek as the primary language of the first-century residents, including Jesus and his contemporaries. Only a few so far have talked about Latin as being one of the spoken languages. Scholars generally recognize it as the language of the Roman imperial government. However, I have argued and showed in this chapter that Latin would have at least been spoken in some of the coastal city areas of Samaria and Phoenicia not only by Romans but also by a good number of the general populace. That Latin became the established *lingua franca* in the fourth century CE should give us some palpable signal that languages actually shift through time, especially during events of imperialism, with its attendant socioeconomic, sociopolitical, and sociolinguistic consequences.

²⁴⁵ Scholarly treatments of this highly debated issue often involve correlating language with culture, such that Aramaic or Hebrew relates to Judaism and Jewishness, and Greek is associated with Hellenism, cosmopolitanism, and philosophy (see Horsley, *Archaeology*, 154). Bowersock, *Hellenism*, 7, has challenged this view more recently, saying that Greek language is a “useless barometer of Greek culture.”

It seems clear that with first-century Palestine, in the course of its history under four successive military conquests from the sixth century BCE to the fourth century CE, the speech community in general has acquired three additional languages, namely, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin, converting the nation from a monolingual speech community (i.e., Hebrew-speaking) during the united monarchy period to a multilingual speech community at the time of Jesus. The direction of the language shift goes from Hebrew to Aramaic to Greek and to Latin. Nevertheless, because language shifts do not just happen overnight, the use of multiple languages at one particular time period almost always happens. This is why we find archaeological and literary evidences for the four languages in the centuries before and after the time of Jesus. While there is perhaps no means for us to determine exactly which of the four languages was the dominant one during Jesus' time, the use of sociolinguistic concepts has enabled us to identify with reasonable accuracy and justification that Greek, being the language with which the Roman imperial government was familiar, would have been the dominant one. And this hypothesis is certainly validated by the consecutive linguistic shifts in the history of ancient Palestine.

Furthermore, this Greek hypothesis is also well supported by the geographical distribution of the four languages in the various provinces and cities of ancient Palestine. By analyzing the geographical structure, inhabitants, and population of these geographical areas, using the sociolinguistic concepts of dialect geography, language border, and isogloss, this study was able to arrive at the following language distribution of the speech community (see Table C below). This linguistic distribution highlights the fact that first-century Palestine was indeed a multilingual speech community and that its prestige language and *lingua franca* would have been Greek. In all the provinces and

cities surveyed, Greek turns out to be the most widely spoken language, which consequently indicates that most of the inhabitants of the Palestinian speech community would have known and used that language. Nevertheless, the results of this chapter can only give us an idea of the general sociolinguistic landscape of the speech community from a geographical standpoint. But linguistic distribution must also be measured in functional terms from both the societal and individual standpoints, as language use is ultimately an activity of the language user in the various social contexts of a speech community, a subject that I will turn to in the next chapter.

Table C: The Geographical Distribution of Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin in Ancient Palestine

Geographical Area		Languages Spoken
Nabatea		Native language: Nabatean (Old) Arabic
		Primary: Aramaic
Idumea	southern and central parts	Primary: Aramaic, Old Arabic
	northern part	Primary: Aramaic, Old Arabic, or Greek
Judea	southern part	Primary: Aramaic or Greek; Arabic (minimal)
	the rest of Judea	Primary: Greek and Aramaic Restricted contexts: Hebrew
Samaria	coastal area (esp. Caesarea Maritima)	Primary: Greek and Latin Restricted contexts: Aramaic
	Sebaste and other areas	Primary: Greek Restricted contexts: Latin and Aramaic
Galilee	Upper Galilee	Primary: Greek Restricted contexts: Aramaic and Hebrew
	Lower Galilee	Primary: Greek and Aramaic (Jews) Restricted contexts: Hebrew
Decapolis		Primary: Greek Restricted contexts: Aramaic (Jews)
Perea	settlements close to the Transjordan region and Nabatea	Primary: Aramaic Restricted contexts: Greek
	settlements close to Judea	Primary: Greek and Aramaic
	settlements close to the Decapolis	Primary: Greek Restricted contexts: Aramaic
Phoenicia	coastal area (Tyre, Sidon, Acco Ptolemais)	Primary: Greek Restricted contexts: Latin

Chapter Four: The Sociolinguistic World of Jesus

INTRODUCTION

This chapter will address three major topics that relate to the sociolinguistic world or environment of Jesus. Each of these topics corresponds to the three main sections of this chapter. The first topic identifies the use of Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin in the “typical” social contexts of ancient Palestine. I call these social contexts “fixed” social or language domains, as they refer to those social or situational contexts that sociolinguists consider as “standard” domains, and as they are social contexts that can be identified in every speech community. The second topic deals with the social network of Jesus within his sociolinguistic world.¹ Identifying the people and social groups with whom Jesus interacted allows us to determine the kinds of social relationships he established within the community and the frequency and degree of his interaction with each of them. The third and last topic focuses on the multilingual proficiency of Jesus. This topic helps us understand the complex elements involved in Jesus’ language acquisitions as well as the degree to which he was able to speak the languages.

My objective therefore in this chapter is to look at the sociolinguistic situation of ancient Palestine from a micro perspective, in order to show from this micro perspective that Jesus, as a member of that ancient society, must have been a multilingual speaker. We have already seen what the macro sociolinguistic situation of ancient Palestine might have looked like from a historical and geographical point of view (see chapter 3). But because the use of languages is ultimately a choice made by their users, it is also important to view them from a functional perspective. We know from the available

¹ This study of Jesus’ social network is different from the Gospel studies on the audiences or communities of the Gospel writers. On these, see the essays in Klink, ed., *Audiences*; and Bauckham, *Gospels*. See also Klink, “Gospel Community Debate,” 60–85; and Barton, “Communal Dimension,” 399–427.

linguistic evidence and archaeological remains that Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin were spoken in the first century, but we still do not know in which particular kinds of social or situational contexts they were used. There are two questions to ask when examining language from a functional perspective. One is, in what typical situational contexts or fixed domains would each of these four languages be employed for use by the first-century people? And the other one is, would a particular individual, such as Jesus, be able to speak that particular language in that particular social domain? The idea here is that a default language is employed in each of these fixed domains and that examining Jesus' social network can give us clues and evidence regarding Jesus' multilingualism. Whereas Jesus' social interaction within a specific fixed domain could tell us about his familiarity with the default language of that social domain, the frequency and/or level of his interaction with that social domain could indicate his linguistic proficiency in the default language of that domain.

THE FIXED (STANDARD) SOCIAL DOMAINS OF ANCIENT PALESTINE AND THEIR CORRESPONDING "DEFAULT" LANGUAGES

This section explains the multilingualism concepts of language choice, social domains, and diglossia. These concepts are subsequently linked to the six basic social institutions or units (i.e., family, friendship, government, transaction, religion, and education) of the speech community of ancient Palestine. The goal is to determine the "default" language that would have been used in each of these social units. I begin with the concept of language choice.

Language Choice

It is helpful to begin with the concept of language choice in the discussion of the concept of social (or language) domains.² The concept of domains is a topic that can fall under either societal multilingualism or individual multilingualism, but it is nevertheless usually discussed under the topic of language choice.³ The identification of various fixed or standard domains that are found in most speech communities may be said to be a subject matter of societal multilingualism, but these domains and their concomitant default languages are determined based on analyzed, collected data gleaned from surveys, samples, and statistics of language users' behavior under controlled experimental conditions or uncontrolled "participant observation."⁴ Hence, I have placed the discussion of fixed domains under community-level and individual multilingualism, especially since I wish to highlight the fact that the use of a particular language is ultimately the choice of its users.

When Jesus is tempted by the devil in the wilderness (Matt 4:1–11//Luke 4:1–13; cf. Mark 1:12–13),⁵ for instance, the language in which he quotes the Old Testament scripture (vv. 4, 7, 10) is entirely a matter of his own language selection, even though there was certainly a set of sociolinguistic factors that affected that language selection.

² There are at least three reasons to see language choice as the norm in a multilingual community: (1) a multilingual community is composed of various ethnic groups; (2) language selection is a linguistic tool of communication used by multilingual speakers; and (3) social interaction in a multilingual community cannot happen without language selection (see Ong, "Linguistic Analysis," 114–17).

³ See, for example, Baker and Jones, *Encyclopedia of Bilingualism*, 51–54; Holmes, *Introduction*, 21–23; and Fasold, *Sociolinguistics of Society*, 183–86.

⁴ Fasold, *Sociolinguistics of Society*, 192.

⁵ Rudolf Bultmann (see Bultmann, *Synoptic Tradition*, 254, 256) has, in the mid-twentieth century, already suggested that the temptation narratives in the Gospels reflect the first-century CE exegetical practice of the Jewish *haggadah*, and later scholars, on the basis of the Old Testament quotations in the narrative, have classified them as a type of Christian midrash (for a summative discussion, see Stegner, "The Temptation Narrative," 5–17).

The concept of domains becomes a helpful tool in examining an individual's language selection within a particular social situation. Abdelâli Bentahila explains this multilingualism scenario well, when he describes the daily language use of a Moroccan university lecturer:

A Moroccan bilingual is constantly, though usually unconsciously, making choices as to which language to use in a particular situation. In many situations he also has the possibility of using what has been called Codeswitching, in which he switches back and forth between, say, Arabic and French in the course of a single conversation, often mixing the two within the same sentence. This variety too seems to have its own rules and its own function, being associated with casual, relaxed kind of atmosphere. I myself, for instance, will find myself, in the course of a single day, using Moroccan Arabic when shopping, French when chatting to colleagues, a mixture of French and Arabic to my brothers, and English to my wife or my students. Similarly, during the day I may write a report in Classical Arabic and a letter to a friend in French, read newspapers in both these languages and watch a film in English. Such factors as the nature of one's addressee, the topic under discussion and the kind of setting or place one finds oneself in all seem to have an effect on which language is chosen.⁶

Social or Language Domains

Domains are certain institutionalized contexts that involve "typical interactions between typical participants in typical settings."⁷ Thus, it should be recalled (from chapter 2) that a fixed set or configuration of three sociolinguistic elements—participants, setting, and topic of conversation—identify and define these fixed domains.⁸ Examples of typical, fixed domains include family, friendship (or neighborhood), government,

⁶ Bentahila, "Morocco," 1–2. I have to say that, being a multilingual myself, this is an accurate depiction of the everyday language use of multilingual speakers, unless one would consciously make an effort or choice to speak a non-default language in a domain for some practical purposes.

⁷ Holmes, *Introduction*, 21.

⁸ Some scholars, however, define these domains in terms of a set of similar social situations on the basis of research and experimental surveys. Parasher, "Mother-tongue-English Diglossia," 154, for instance, identifies six social situations for the "transaction" domain—bargaining at shops, addressing strangers, ordering food in restaurants, consultation with doctors, making inquiries in public places, and asking for directions in a new city (see other sets of situations for other domains on pp. 153–56).

transaction (or commerce and trade and employment), religion, and education.⁹ It is interesting to note that these fixed domains also closely resemble the various components that make up the Greek city (πόλις).¹⁰ The alteration of one of these three sociolinguistic elements or the combination of two or more fixed domains within a specific situational context engenders a variable social domain, a subject that I will address in the next chapter. For now, our focus will only be on these commonly recognized fixed or standard domains. The “family” domain, for instance, would be composed exclusively of participants who are considered as “family members” (e.g., father, mother, and children) and located in the setting of a home or a secluded private place. The topics of conversation would be those that pertain to family activities and related matters, which typically could only be discussed among members of the family. An example of a family domain could be seen in the events of Joseph and his family’s (Mary and Jesus) departure to Egypt and return to Nazareth (Matt 2:13–15, 19–23).¹¹ After the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and gave him instructions concerning his family’s safety, whatever he told Mary was assuredly a matter that would only have been shared between the two of them (or among family members). By contrast, Jesus’ disciples’ private conversation with him (προσελθόντες οἱ μαθηταὶ τῷ Ἰησοῦ κατ’ ἰδίαν εἶπον) in Matt 17:19–20 (cf. Mark 9:28–29)¹² concerning their inability to drive out a demon because of insufficient faith would be an example of a friendship domain. Both domains

⁹ See Fishman, “Micro- and Macro-Sociolinguistics,” 15–32, esp. 22; Greenfield, “Situational Measures,” 17–35; Parasher, “Mother-tongue-English Diglossia,” 151–68; and Laosa, “Bilingualism,” 617–27.

¹⁰ See Moore, “Civic and Voluntary Associations,” 151.

¹¹ On the issue of the historicity of this flight to Egypt narrative, see chapter four, *ad loc.*

¹² κατ’ ἰδίαν (privately or in private) is an idiom that is used to refer to a private social setting or to something kept from the knowledge of the general public (cf. κατ’ ἰδίαν δὲ τοῖς δοκοῦσιν; Gal 2:2). See Louw and Nida, *Lexicon*, 1:342.

seem to deal with sensitive topics that could only be discussed privately among familiar members.

Diglossia

The concept of domains is related to the concept of diglossia. Sociolinguists determine the “default” language of a particular domain through the concept of diglossia. The idea that there is a functional distribution, or a division of labor, to use Holmes’ language, among the languages spoken in a given speech community, best explains the concept of diglossia.¹³ The application of the concept of diglossia to the languages spoken in ancient Palestine would result in a categorization or distribution of the Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin languages among the various fixed domains of the speech community. Generally speaking, the L-variety (i.e., the minority, native, or less prestigious language) is restricted to more private and intimate settings, while the H-variety (i.e., the majority, dominant, powerful, and more prestigious language) is typically used as the default language for public, informal, and formal domains. The family, friendship, and neighborhood domains are considered intimate and private social settings, whereas the various situational contexts involved in transaction, employment, and entertainment domains are generally recognized as public and informal social settings. The more formal social settings include various social situations in the

¹³ The original definition of diglossia by Charles Ferguson understands the concept as the co-existence of two varieties (high and low) of a particular language, with each having a definite role to play (see Ferguson, “Diglossia,” 25–39). Fishman, “Societal Bilingualism,” 92, extends this definition to the co-existence of two distinct languages within a speech community. It is critical that we understand the basic concept and utility of diglossia as a tool to study the use of languages or dialects in a speech community in the original sense of the term, that is, that there are two distinct linguistic codes (H and L) that exist and complement each other while being used for different functions, and that the H-variety is confined to more formal conversations (cf. Holmes, *Introduction*, 27).

government and religion domains.¹⁴ With reference to ancient Palestine, the low linguistic varieties would then be the native languages of the groups of ethnic residents that lived in that speech community. Thus, among the general populace of ancient Palestine, Aramaic would have been the L-language for the Jews, Latin or Greek for the Romans, and Greek for non-Jews and the Gentiles. The H-language, as we have seen from the previous chapter, would have undoubtedly been Greek, serving as the *lingua franca* and the prestige language of the entire speech community, with the possibility of Latin being used also as a H-language in some government settings where there is a significant presence of Roman officials.¹⁵

When both domain and diglossia concepts are combined and applied to the sociolinguistic situation of a speech community, we can clearly see the relationship between language and its function and use in various social institutions within a speech community. Each social institution or fixed domain or basic unit of society would comprise a fixed set or configuration of participants (speaker and addressee), settings, and topics of conversation (and purpose), which makes it distinctive from other fixed domains. These configurations of sociolinguistic elements for each fixed domain may be determined by examining the social structure of the various social institutions that exist in that first-century speech community and the social processes and elements involved within that social structure. In the absence of such a first-century speech community,

¹⁴ Most sociolinguists generally recognize such categorizations of social domains into private and public and formal and informal settings, and many studies from sociology, social psychology, and anthropology use such categorizations.

¹⁵ A comparison in modern-day linguistic setting can be made between Latin and Greek as H-languages and French and English as the official languages in Canada. At the federal level, the Canadian government offers their services in both English and French. But below the federal level, we find that only a few of the ten provinces in Canada are bilingual in French and English (e.g., New Brunswick and Quebec), with some few exceptions of course, especially with reference to services accessed online and by phone (cf. Sebba, "Societal Multilingualism," 446).

from which we can glean our much-needed information, we can resort to some available historical and socio-cultural information to derive and establish the sets of domain configurations that we are looking for. And once we have sifted through the data, we can have reasonable confidence that the domains we are studying are those of ancient Palestine and not those of our modern communities. Most importantly, we can now provide a standard set of configurations for each domain, against which to study and assess other (variable) domains. This endeavor is important, since any alteration of the fixed set of configuration within a fixed domain could convert it to a variable domain and would consequently signal a code-switch or change in the language used in that domain. I note again that the concept of social domains is only useful for categorizing various situational contexts that can be observed in most speech communities.

The Family Domain

We can distinguish four types of families or family structures in the first-century society. The first type is the Roman family. Contrary to western, modern family structures, the Roman household (*familia*) was typically composed of husband, wife, unmarried children, slaves, freedmen, and clients (a Roman citizen with less power and status than a Roman patron).¹⁶ This Roman nuclear family was ruled by a male head (the *paterfamilias*), who had absolute power (*patria potestas*), including the power of life and death, over all the members of his extended family regardless of whether they lived under his or a different roof.¹⁷ The Roman family did not usually have grandparents as

¹⁶ Cf. Ferguson, *Backgrounds*, 72; and Cohick, “Women, Children, and Families,” 179.

¹⁷ Cicero, a first-century BCE orator, says that the Roman family unit was composed of parents and children, but siblings and cousins also formed as extended families, having their own households and living in colonies in their parents’ household complex (*De officiis* 1.53).

members, as life expectancy was considerably shorter in ancient times.¹⁸ The second type is the Hellenistic household (οἶκος). The οἶκος typically consists of three generations of a family living under the same roof, which included blood- and marriage-related family members, slaves, animals, and fixed properties (e.g., land, house, and household items). Similar to the *paterfamilias*, though with less authority and power over the household, the husband is the one in charged of the government of the οἶκος. Both the Roman *familia* and the Hellenistic οἶκος did not practice polygamy. The Jewish household, the third type, however, allowed polygamy;¹⁹ “This may be because adultery for men applied only to affairs with married women (γυνή)²⁰ in their social class (Matt 19:9//Mark 10:11//Luke 16:18).”²¹ The Jewish household normally adopted the cultural practice of the larger society. Therefore, a typical Jewish family would comprise two or three generations of immediate families related by blood and marriage, although it is important to note that the family structure would not, for the most part, have included slaves.²² The fourth and last type is the Christian family. The first-century Christians were either first- or second-generation converts, and their families would have resembled that of Jewish or Hellenistic families—a husband and wife with two or three children. The *Haustafeln* or household codes found in the New Testament (Eph 5:21—6:9; Col 3:18—4:1; 1 Pet 3:1—

¹⁸ Jeffers, *Greco-Roman World*, 239.

¹⁹ But the common type of marriage in Jewish, Greek, and Roman society was still monogamy (Ferguson, *Backgrounds*, 75).

²⁰ Whether γυνή refers to any woman or a wife is disputed.

²¹ Jeffers, *Greco-Roman World*, 245.

²² Reinhartz, “Parents and Children,” 87.

7; Tit 2:4–9; cf. 1 Tim 5:1–16) indicate that the patriarchal system (or authoritarianism) was probably less practiced or discouraged in the Christian family.²³

Most Greco-Roman cities (including Palestine) were lined with single-story houses, although multiple-stories house complexes were also found in heavily populated cities (Acts 20:9). The average Jewish family lived in a small, flat-roofed house with rooms opening to a garden or courtyard and a wall with a gate door that separates it from the street (see Acts 12:13).²⁴ In very small towns, poor families lived in single-room houses, with beddings made only of cloaks, mats (κράβαττος), or cots (κλίνη), and owned only a few household items (Luke 8:16; John 5:8–12). Some well-to-do families may have resided in larger houses with guestrooms (Phlm 22). A few large houses could even have accommodated an entire assembly (τῆς ὅλης ἐκκλησίας) of Christians (Rom 16:23). Families with small shops (*tabernae*) lived in the so-called apartment buildings (*insulae*), which normally had a back room and a mezzanine above the main room, offering a bit of privacy for the family.²⁵ Rich Roman families lived in deluxe apartments with multiple rooms and servants' quarters. Slaves usually stayed in their master's home. Those who had their own family were given separate quarters or separate houses near the master's home. Unlike our present society, many first-century families would at least have a few hired servants (Mark 1:20; Luke 15:11–32; cf. Matt 20:1–8; 21:33–41). Jeffrey Jeffers writes, "It seems clear that the majority of Jews and Christians in the cities

²³ Jewish law even allows women to take legal actions and to own and control legal properties without the assistance of their husbands (see Verner, *The Household of God*, 45–46).

²⁴ See Stambaugh and Balch, *New Testament*, 107–10.

²⁵ Jeffers, *Greco-Roman World*, 55, 59.

would have lived in tiny apartments, in the homes of their masters or former masters, or at the back of their ground-floor shops.”²⁶

A number of the social practices and activities of first-century families could give us clues to the kinds of conversations that transpired in the home. A common topic of conversation within the first-century households concerns matters relating to prearranged marriages, especially when the minimum marriage age is fourteen (for boys) and twelve (for girls) under Roman law.²⁷ It is typical for Roman, Jewish, and Christian families to find citizens of equal socioeconomic status as prospective spouses for their children. Marriage ideals for Roman and Jewish marriages were different, however. Whereas the Romans aspire for a happy, harmonious, and loving marriage (Ovid, *Metamorphosis* 8.708), the Jews prioritize a good reputation, religious piety, and devotion to family members.²⁸ All marriages nevertheless see procreation as one of the purposes of marriage.²⁹

From these ideals of the first-century households, we can assume that another common topic in their daily conversations would have been lessons on how to raise a virtuous family, in which divorce would have been one of the often-discussed topics (see Matt 5:31–32; 19:3–12; Mark 10:1–12; Luke 16:18; Rom 7:2–3; 1 Cor 7:1–16). In both

²⁶ Jeffers, *Greco-Roman World*, 56.

²⁷ See Saller, “Men’s Age at Marriage,” 21–34; and Hopkins, “The Age of Roman Girls,” 309–27, who argues for the age range between twelve and fifteen (cf. Shaw, “The Age of Roman Girls,” 30–46).

²⁸ Yarbrough, “Parents and Children,” 41. Cf. Philo, *On the Special Laws* 1.200–201. Plutarch, *Advice on Marriage* 139A; 140C–F; 142C, D), however, notes that, even though the virtuous household would find the husband and wife coming to a consensus in their decision-making, the wife must still submit to the husband’s governance. Cohick, “Women, Children, and Families,” 179, points out that every family member considered the social status and prestige of the family as of equal or greater importance than their personal happiness.

²⁹ First-century marriage and divorce is a widely discussed topic. For a summary of discussion, which includes the legal institutions of marriage, demographics of marriage and divorce, and marriage customs and rituals, see Satlow, “Marriage and Divorce,” 344–61.

Roman and Jewish cultures, the provision of food, clothing, shelter, health care, and education was the primary duty of fathers (Seneca, *De providentia* 2.5; Philo, *On the Special Laws* 2.233, 29, 36; cf. 1 *Clement* 21:6–8).³⁰ Fathers were responsible to teach their children (especially sons) a means to make a living. That Matthew became a tax collector (Matt 10:3), Peter and Andrew and James and John fishermen (Matt 4:18, 21), Simon a tanner (Acts 9:43), and Lydia a purple-seller (Acts 16:14), was most likely a result of their apprenticeship with their fathers. Thus, boys usually spent their adolescent days with their fathers, learning a trade through an apprenticeship or continuing their father’s job—e.g., Jesus the carpenter was a carpenter’s son (Matt 13:55; Mark 6:3).

The main duty of mothers, on the other hand, was to teach and inculcate moral values and responsibilities, especially the honoring (*pietas*) of both God and parents, to their children (Exod 20:12; Deut 5:16; Prov 1:8; 6:20; Eph 6:1–3; Col 3:20).³¹ Mothers usually spent more time with their children especially when they were still young, because they were the homemakers and caretakers of the family. They were therefore more emotionally attached to their children (see 2 Tim 1:5) than were fathers (πατήρ).³² To be sure, mothers had corresponding duties and responsibilities in the home, as fathers would have assumed the financial and governmental responsibility for their family (see Prov 31:10–31). We can therefore see a contrast between “responsibility and control” (the enacted role of fathers) and “actual performance of work” (the true role of mothers)

³⁰ The obligations of a father to a son were “to teach him the Torah and to teach him a craft” (Tos. Kiddushin 1:11).

³¹ Cf. Yarbrough, “Parents and Children,” 53–54.

³² Cf. Dixon, *The Roman Mother*, 233–35. Paul commands fathers to take on the responsibility of teaching and training their children (see Gen 18:19; Deut 6:7; Prov 13:24; 22:6).

in the home.³³ There were certainly many other kinds of topics in which any first-century family would have been interested, but it is safe to assume that mundane, simple topics would have revolved around how to raise a virtuous family, to make a living, and to care for family members, which of course included extended family members.³⁴

The Friendship Domain

Identification of the friendship domain in first-century Palestine is a bit elusive, but its participants should perhaps exclude extended family members, for they were considered family members. Thus, friendship would have to be confined to such casual, occasional, and familiar relationships as courtyard or street neighbors, business associates (between market traders and customers), religious members of a synagogue, and other public or social acquaintances that frequently meet together. First-time acquaintances and the casual conversations or any kind of exchanges between them can also be categorized under the friendship domain. Everett Ferguson says that “friendship was the ideal social relationship.”³⁵ For this reason, without underlining the meaning of the term “friendship,” a broad set of situational contexts can be categorized under the friendship domain.

Jesus and his disciples can be considered as a familiar group of friends that frequently traveled and spent time together (see John 15:15). Jesus and Mary, Martha, and Lazarus were familiar and close friends (φίλος; see John 11:1–44; 12:1–3).³⁶ Jesus was also a friend of some tax collectors (Matt 11:19; Luke 7:34). Herod Antipas and

³³ On this, see Westfall, “Reciprocity in the Ephesians Household Code,” esp. 567–72.

³⁴ Ferguson, *Backgrounds*, 72, notes that, “The family was united by common religious observances...as well as by economic interdependence.” For a summary of the roles and duties of fathers, wives, mothers, and children in the Greco-Roman world, see Cohick, “Women, Children, and Families,” 179–87.

³⁵ Ferguson, *Backgrounds*, 68.

³⁶ The related term ἑταῖρος (Matt 11:16; 20:13; 26:50) is used to denote an associated acquaintance or companion but not necessarily a φίλος.

Pilate became friends at one point (Luke 23:12). Apparently, friendship in ancient times can entail sacrificing one's own interests (Phil 2:3–5), comfort (John 11:5–8), and life (John 15:13; cf. Rom 5:6–8) for the benefit of one's friends. To be sure, for Aristotle (*Nicomachean Ethics* 9.8, 1169a18–25), friendship was an important social obligation:

But it is also true the virtuous man's conduct is often guided by the interests of his friends and of his country, and that he will if necessary lay down his life in their behalf...And this is doubtless the case with those who give their lives for others; thus they choose great nobility for themselves.³⁷

Neighboring friends may frequently gossip with each other out in the courtyard or courtyard window, shop owners may sometimes chat with their regular customers in their shop or with the shopkeeper next door, business associates may recline for lunch at a restaurant or tavern to drink wine and chat, and other social groups of familiar acquaintances may meet at marketplaces (agora/forum), schools, entertainment establishments (e.g., bathhouses, theaters, hippodromes, amphitheaters, gymnasiums, etc.), and temples and synagogues.³⁸ While these social establishments are not specifically made and designed as “meeting venues” for friends, they nonetheless are places conducive for such purposes. The bathhouses, for instance, became a social arena, where the elites mingled with people of the lower strata of society. As such, bathhouses became a favorite rendezvous for people from all walks of life to relax and chat.³⁹ Friends also seem to meet often in banquets and other festive celebrations (Luke 14:12; 15:29; cf. Matt 22:2–14), especially when invited to a friend's home (Luke 19:5–6; John 12:1–3).

³⁷ Cf. Plato, *Symposium* 179B, 208 D; and Lucian, *Toxaris* 36.

³⁸ See Jeffers, *Greco-Roman World*, 31; Weiss, “Theatres, Hippodromes, Amphitheatres,” 623–40; and Zangenberg and van de Zande, “Urbanization,” 169–72. Leisure-time and entertainment activities are of extreme cultural significance to both ancient and modern societies (see Schwartz, “Play and Games,” 641). As such, they may actually constitute as a social domain in its own right (so entertainment domain).

³⁹ See Eliav, “Bathhouses,” 606–7, 614–16; and Fagan, *Bathing in Public*, 189–219, esp. 206–19.

Unlike in the family domain, the kinds of social venues in which friends would gather together and chat could actually be at any public locations in a city or village, although it is fair to say that friends' conversations would have occurred in more private settings, that is, with only a few to a group of familiar people present and in more relaxed, less formal, and socio-politically neutral places.

The topics of conversations in the friendship domain in ancient times may have been very similar to the usual topics of our present-day conversations between friends. It is likely that friends in ancient Palestine talked and gossiped about various topics, shared life stories and experiences, and provided one another advice on various life issues, all of which may be considered as "casual" conversation topics. The ancient people, however, took friendship more seriously than do modern people. Their conversations were largely motivated by a true love and a mutual affection for each other. They could share each other's problems, exhort, encourage, and comfort each other, and openly correct each other's mistakes. Thus, question-and-answer dialogues and short exchanges between friends and acquaintances concerning mundane life issues are typical in this domain. Jesus' conversation with Mary regarding Lazarus's death was motivated by such kind of mutual love and affection (John 11:32–36), and so was his love for his disciples (John 17:15). Friendship in ancient times might also have been motivated by the enjoyment and pleasure that come from the ideal of establishing a society of good friends.⁴⁰ Speaking honestly to a friend was considered a symbol of true friendship: "Frankness of speech, by common report and belief, is the language of friendship" (Plutarch, *How to Tell a*

⁴⁰ Ferguson, *Backgrounds*, 377.

Flatterer from a Friend 50F–51D; 51F).⁴¹ When Cephas acted in hypocrisy, Paul corrected and opposed him to his face (Gal 2:11–14). It is very likely that the Christian communities also apply this friendship ideal to their mutual relationships in their social gatherings.⁴²

The Government Domain

Ancient Palestine was an annexed territory of the Roman Empire, and it was therefore governed by the Roman system of administration.⁴³ To understand the Roman system of administration, it is important that we first understand both the political structure and the process through which the Roman government selected its administrators of the empire. Senatorial and imperial provinces defined the political boundaries of the empire,⁴⁴ and cities or municipalities constituted the smallest political units of each province. Military administrators, which came from the top echelons of the society, ran the civilian government of the provinces.⁴⁵ The emperor (or Caesar) functioned as the chief commanding officer of the entire military, and the senate (300 to

⁴¹ See Glad, *Paul and Philodemus*, 23–30, esp. 28.

⁴² See White, “Morality between Two Worlds,” 201–15.

⁴³ For an overview of the Roman administration in the first-century, see Ferguson, *Backgrounds*, 40–66; Jeffers, *Greco-Roman World*, 110–41; Hatina, “Rome,” 557–70.

⁴⁴ See Jones and Sidwell, *World of Rome*, 84–110.

⁴⁵ The traditional view, following the Finleyan “primitivist” reading of ancient economy (see Finley, *Ancient Economy*, esp. 17–34), suggests that there is no middle-class group in the first-century Roman Empire as we have it now. The top 1 to 2 percent of the population included the rich, influential senatorial families, equestrians (or knights), decurions, and plebians, while the rest, those without power and prestige, were considered to belong to the lower strata of the society (see Jeffers, *Greco-Roman World*, 180–89, esp. 182). More recent work on the economic condition of the Greco-Roman Empire, however, have studied the relationship between economic performance and other such factors as financial resources, education, healthcare, food supply, etc. (see the essays in Scheidel et al., eds., *Cambridge Economic History*), and thus have measured the ancient economy in terms of a multi-tiered poverty scale (see, for example, Friesen, “Poverty in Pauline Studies,” 323–61). They conclude that in the Greco-Roman society, “a middling sector of somewhere around 6–12 percent of the population, defined by a real income of between 2.4 and 10 times ‘bare bones’ subsistence or 1 to 4 times ‘respectable’ consumption levels, would have occupied a fairly narrow middle ground between an elite segment of perhaps 1.5 percent of the population and a vast majority close to subsistence level of around 90 percent” (see Scheidel and Friesen, “Economy,” 84–85).

600 members),⁴⁶ the highest ruling council of the empire, conferred on him the divine title *divi filius* (son of a god).⁴⁷ Members of the senate occupied one of the three principal magistracies of Rome—quaestor, praetor, or consul. Quaestors were financial officers, and they were typically assigned to a province. Praetors were involved in judicial work, and they often assumed the offices of a provincial governor, legionary commanders, or judges. Only a few men reached the position of a consul, and consuls were rewarded governorship of a major province. Next to the senate is the equestrian order. Equestrians (10,000 to 20,000 members) came from wealthy, educated families,⁴⁸ and they often held military (as a legionary tribune or an auxiliary commander), financial (procurators), or provincial bureaucratic and administrative (prefects) posts. Under the equestrians were the decurions or members of the municipal councils (*concilia*).⁴⁹ The decurions were often benefactors of construction projects (e.g., temples, fountains, baths, theaters, etc.), food storage for emergency use, and the entertainment industry. The decurions in the eastern Mediterranean were composed of Greeks and the Hellenistic upper classes (incl. the Herodians and the priestly caste). Dionysius, a member of the Athenian Areopagus (a judicial council; Acts 17:34), and Erastus, the Corinthian city treasurer (Rom 16:23), were Christian decurions.

Other military administrators were in charge of the defense troops stationed at strategic provinces of the empire. The largest army regiment was called a legion, which

⁴⁶ Cf. Ferguson, *Backgrounds*, 56; and Jeffers, *Greco-Roman World*, 182.

⁴⁷ See Ando, *Imperial Ideology*, 206–70.

⁴⁸ MacMullen, *Roman Social Relations*, 89.

⁴⁹ The Ἀσιάρχης (local official or provincial authority) in Acts 19:31 may have been equivalent to members of the municipal councils.

comprised about 6,000 soldiers.⁵⁰ During Tiberius's reign (14–37 CE), there were twenty-five legions scattered all over the empire (see Tacitus, *Annals* 4.5), four of which were stationed in Syria. The nominal strength of the Roman army during Jesus' time would therefore have been composed of about 125,000 soldiers, with an additional 125,000 auxiliary soldiers recruited from native populations (i.e., non-Roman citizens). A prefect directed the *auxilia* (or auxiliary troops), and an auxiliary cohort consisted of between five hundred and one thousand men of cavalry, slingers, and archers. A legate (of senatorial rank) and six tribunes (of equestrian rank) commanded a legion, and ten cohorts (σπεῖρα; Matt 27:27; Mark 15:16; John 18:3, 12; Acts 10:1; 21:31; 27:1) of six centuries (one hundred men) compose each legion. Six centurions managed a cohort, and they were considered the tactical and professional officers in the army. Each centurion commanded a hundred legionaries, who performed various civil service functions when they are not in war. Their duties included patrolling the region, guarding territories (state assets, mines and grain supplies, roads and highways), maintaining peace and order, constructing roads and other infrastructures, and collecting taxes.⁵¹

Such was the military and administrative system of the Roman government. Military tribunes (χιλίαρχος) and centurions (ἑκατοντάρχη) often appear in the Gospels and the book of Acts, and it is accurate to say that they were strategically positioned in all provinces and cities. In Acts 21:31–33, we see that Paul's arrest in the temple was led by a χιλίαρχος who was accompanied by some ἑκατοντάρχη. It is likely that the same χιλίαρχος accompanied Paul before Felix, Festus, and Agrippa (see

⁵⁰ The term "legion" (λεγιών) is used in the New Testament, but it only refers to demons (Mark 5:9, 15; Luke 8:30) or to angels (Matt 26:53).

⁵¹ See Campbell, *Roman Army*, 28–45; and Goldsworthy, *Roman Army*, 68–107, 119–41.

Acts 21:31–33, 37; 22:24, 26–29; 23:10, 15, 17–19, 22; 24:7, 22; 25:23). It may even be possible that the same χιλιάρχος was responsible for leading the detachment of soldiers that arrested Jesus in Gethsemane (John 18:12), given the fact that both Paul’s and Jesus’ arrest took place in Jerusalem and that Judea was considered a “smaller” province.⁵²

When Herod Antipas celebrated his birthday at one point, he invited his courtiers, some χιλιάρχους, and the leading men of Galilee (Mark 6:21).⁵³ Jesus encountered a centurion at Capernaum (Matt 8:5; Luke 7:2–3), and another one at the cross at Golgotha (Matt 27:54; Mark 15:39; Luke 23:47). Both Cornelius, whom Paul met at Caesarea, and Julius, who accompanied him on his way to Italy, were centurions (Acts 10:1; 27:1). These are some of the social settings where the general populace would have encountered government officials in the city.

However, the residences of government officials, which included the praetorium (πραιτώριον; Matt 27:27; Mark 15:16; John 18:28, 33; 19:19; Phil 1:13), may have served as the primary, established civil institutions of the community. Whenever a need arose, the general population would visit these government officials, as the Sanhedrin did, when they delivered Jesus to Pilate (Matt 27:2; Mark 15:1). The government officials of these residences would primarily have included procurators, prefects, and decurions. Judea, for example, became an imperial province in 6 BCE and was governed by procurators and prefects and by legates.⁵⁴ Pontius Pilate (Matt 27:27–31; Mark 15:16–20;

⁵² Josephus (*J.W.* 5.238–44) notes that an auxiliary cohort was stationed in the Antonia tower next to the temple in Jerusalem during Jesus’ time. Ferguson, *Backgrounds*, 54, claims that an *ala* (cavalry regiment) of cavalry and five cohorts of infantry were stationed in Judea.

⁵³ Herod Antipas’s main residence and headquarter was in Sepphoris, Galilee, until he built Tiberias in ca. 18–20 CE.

⁵⁴ See Ando, *Imperial Ideology*, 336–405.

Luke 23:4, 7, 14, 22; John 18:39; 19:11, 15, 19–22), who was subordinate to the legate of Syria, became its prefect in 26–36 CE.⁵⁵ Judea was also a client kingdom of Rome at various times (e.g., during Herod Agrippa’s reign in 41–44 CE), however.⁵⁶ Rome sometimes allowed their “friends” and “allies,” called client kings, to govern their own province. Herod the Great (Matt 2:1) and his children (Acts 12:1; 25:14) were such client kings who promoted and protected Rome’s interests and ruled at its pleasure.⁵⁷ The tax collectors (τελώνης) mentioned in the New Testament, such as Levi/Matthew (Matt 9:9–11; Mark 2:14–16; Luke 5:27) and Zacchaeus (Luke 19:2), may have worked under the auspices of procurators. Their “place of toll” was usually located by city gates, on public roads and bridges, or on important trade routes (e.g., Sea of Galilee).⁵⁸ All these may suggest that the government institutions in ancient Palestine were situated mostly in government officials’ residences (incl. Herod’s palace; Acts 23:35) and military bases and stations, although people would also have encountered government officials in other social settings—“places of toll” (i.e., tax collectors’ stands), places where social unrest occurred, and places where military men patrolled.⁵⁹

During such encounters, whether in a government official’s residence or in a public social setting, the usual topics of conversations between government officials and the people would have involved civic issues that were related to taxation, finance, law,

⁵⁵ See Vardaman, “A New Inscription,” 70–71.

⁵⁶ But by 105 CE, all client kingdoms has been incorporated into Roman provinces (see Jones, *Cities*, 256, 260). See also Jeffers, *Greco-Roman World*, 128–40, for a history of the governorship of Judea.

⁵⁷ See Braund, *Rome*, 75–85.

⁵⁸ See Jeffers, *Greco-Roman World*, 146.

⁵⁹ Hatina, “Rome,” 563, writes, “Palestine (esp. Galilee) was a hotbed of revolutionary activity from 4 BC to AD 66.”

and justice (e.g., crime and punishment [Matt 5:25–26; Luke 12:58–59], religious laws).⁶⁰ In addition to these, conversations regarding construction projects, economic policy and law making (e.g., census, coinage), collection of taxes, and military development and deployment would frequently occur among government officials themselves. Political sedition campaigns may also have been part of the conversations of some kingly aspirants or insurrectionists, notably among the senatorial ranks.⁶¹ Military men had to pledge their loyalty to the emperor, and their oaths were often reinforced through ceremonies. Allegiance to the emperor among non-Roman citizens, however, had not always been secured.⁶² In fact, Jesus was put to death because of the charge of insurrection (στάσις), even though he never committed such a crime; he was crucified with the inscription: “King of the Jews” (ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων; see Matt 27:37; cf. Mark 15:26; Luke 23:38; John 19:19). Similarly, Paul also was accused of insurrection (Acts 16:20; 21:38; 24:5–8). In sum, conversations in the government domain would have usually been serious and important in nature, as they involved daily matters that affect the economic stability and political security of the Roman Empire and the physical safety of its inhabitants.

⁶⁰ See Jeffers, *Greco-Roman World*, chapter 7. On Roman coinage and taxation, see Ferguson, *Backgrounds*, 90–96; and Downs, “Economics,” 162–66, who discusses tithes (Matt 23:23; Luke 18:12), tributes and taxes (Matt 22:15–22//Mark 12:13–17//Luke 20:20–26); tolls (frequently in the New Testament; e.g., Matt 5:46), and temple tax (e.g. Matt 17:24–27). On Roman courts and its judicial system, see Harries, “Courts,” 85–101.

⁶¹ See Goodman, *Rome and Jerusalem*, 379–423.

⁶² See Starr, *Roman Empire*, 111–16.

The Transaction Domain

The transaction domain includes two basic social institutions in a community, namely, commerce and trade and employment.⁶³ The social transactions within these institutions may be characterized as a social interaction or relationship between business owners and clients (commerce and trade) and between business owners and workers (employment). The traditional industries in ancient times included ceramics and blown glass (the glass industry at Tel Anafa and in Phoenicia is well known; see chapter 3), mining (e.g., lead, silver, and iron), textiles (notably, wool and silk), and small handicrafts.⁶⁴ Palestine, however, was not so much engaged in such industries; the region was primarily agricultural (Josephus, *Ag. Ap.* 1.60).⁶⁵ Its chief products included olives, wines (grapes), dates, and cereals (wheat and barley). Transactions of these agricultural products, which also included fineware, pickled fish, opobalsamum (or the balm of Gilead), and asphalt,⁶⁶ consisted of regional, interregional, and international trades.⁶⁷ Sheep and goat (but not so much with cattle) husbandry as well as fishing was a common occupation of a majority of the population.⁶⁸ There were also leatherworkers (Acts 18:2–3)⁶⁹ and tanners (Acts 9:43; 10:6, 32), blacksmiths, silversmiths (Acts 17:29),

⁶³ Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 43–62, says that commerce and trade in the Roman Empire, with an estimated population of between 60 and 70 million, was extensive. There is debate over the character of ancient trade and commerce. The two views involved—the primitivist and the modernist—basically debate over whether to understand ancient trade and commerce as resembling the modern economy (for a summary discussion, see Pastor, “Trade,” 297–99; and Downs, “Economics,” 156–60).

⁶⁴ Ferguson, *Backgrounds*, 82–83.

⁶⁵ Cf. Downs, “Economics,” 160–61.

⁶⁶ See Safrai, *Economy*, 132, 187, 384–85; and Lapin, *Economy*, 18, 124.

⁶⁷ Pastor, “Trade,” 301.

⁶⁸ Ferguson, *Backgrounds*, 86.

⁶⁹ Paul, along with Priscilla and Aquila, as tentmakers, may have been leatherworkers (see Hock, *Social Context*, 32–33).

coppersmiths (2 Tim 4:14), carpenters (Matt 13:25; Mark 6:3), sculptors, dry cleaners (see Matt 9:16; Mark 2:21; 9:3), purple dyers (Acts 16:14, 40), and other skilled workers and craftspeople that made up a good portion of the population.⁷⁰ Traders (Matt 25:14–16), moneylenders (Matt 21:12; 18:23–34; Mark 11:15; Luke 19:45), and bankers (Matt 25:27; Luke 19:23) also formed part of the community.⁷¹

Commerce and trade of such industries and businesses concentrated on two geographical sites—the coastal ports and the marketplace or *agora*. Rome’s economic prosperity relied on its efficient sea transportation system, which, according to some scholars, was unrivalled in Europe until the eighteenth century.⁷² Mediterranean life was centered on the city’s marketplace, however. The marketplace was a site not only for economic activities but also for social interaction and conversation among itinerant merchants (see Matt 13:45; Acts 17:17),⁷³ shop owners, innkeepers, government officials, tax collectors, and all types of people. The parables and teachings of Jesus point to the daily life of the people of ancient Palestine—e.g., the parable of the sower (Matt 13:1–15//Mark 4:1–12//Luke 8:4–10), the parable of the weeds (Matt 13:24–30), the parable of the mustard seed (Matt 13:31–32//Mark 4:30–31//Luke 13:18–19), the parable of the net (Matt 13:47–52), and the teaching on the sheep and goats (Matt 25:31–46). A majority of the population, however, seems to have lived in the rural areas and villages of the provinces. Jeffrey Jeffers claims that about “90 percent of the Empire’s workers were

⁷⁰ Jeffers, *Greco-Roman World*, 26–29.

⁷¹ Crook, *Law and Life*, 232–33, says that women were not allowed to participate in banking.

⁷² See Casson, *Everyday Life*, 109–15; and Garnsey, Hopkins, and Whittaker, eds., *Trade*, 36–50.

⁷³ Itinerant merchants also carried and sold cosmetics, tiny items such as tools for spinning wool, and medicines (see Lapin, *Economy*, 136–37).

engaged in farming and herding.”⁷⁴ This claim may be accurate, since it is possible that wealthy, tightfisted landowners (see Jas 5:4) not only hired laborers but also collected rents and taxes from tenant farmers—e.g., see the parable of the tenants (Matt 21:33–46//Mark 12:1–12//Luke 20:9–19) and the parable of the vineyard workers (Matt 20:1–15).⁷⁵ Similarly, many livestock and herd owners hired workers to tend their flocks (John 10:12–13).⁷⁶ It is safe to assume that the coastal areas, agoras, and villages were the primary “transaction places” in ancient Palestine. And while many wealthy traders, merchants, and landowners had lucrative businesses in the cities, the majority of the professional, skilled, and manual labor (incl. farmers, herders, and fishermen) population survived at or below the poverty level.

For this reason, conversations between wealthy businessmen and their workers would have been highly status-oriented, that is, the latter would often have to work under the mercy of the former (see Matt 18:26). To be sure, Gerhard Lenski offers a macrosociological perspective of the Palestinian community, which many New Testament scholars have tried to use and have consequently labeled ancient Palestine as an “advanced agrarian society.”⁷⁷ Such a label implies a multi-level social stratification within an advanced agrarian society, in which the wealthy rulers and the governing class kept peasants or the lower classes under endless demands and obligations and in

⁷⁴ Jeffers, *Greco-Roman World*, 20.

⁷⁵ The wealthy population not only paid cheap labor wages, but it also exploited jobs through the use of slaves (see Alston, *Roman History*, 227–45). Hatina, “Rome,” 564, points out that elite overlords would have required tenant farmers to pay a tax of up to 40 percent of his crop!

⁷⁶ The New Testament extensively uses this shepherding metaphor (e.g., John 10:4, 11–16; Heb 13:20; 1 Pet 2:25; 5:4; cf. 1 Chron 11:2).

⁷⁷ Lenski, *Power and Privilege*, 210.

perennial debt.⁷⁸ Nevertheless, in the marketplaces and coastal areas, the daily conversations among traders, merchants, and businessmen would usually have concerned professional and commercial transactions and would therefore have transpired at a highly formal and professional level, except of course in some cases, where familiarity would have bred friendship between them. In such cases, familiarly acquainted people would at times have transacted business in a home, restaurant, or tavern (see friendship domain above).

The Religion Domain

The people of Roman Palestine took religion very seriously for two significant reasons. First, they believed that the state was inseparable from religion, and secondly, they viewed religion as a means for earning favor from their gods, with the intention of gaining blessing for their crops and business. Two typical expressions of communication with their gods were ritual and sacrifice, and worship and prayer. Pliny the Elder (*Nat. Hist.* 23.10) wrote about the degree of seriousness to which the ancients took their religion: “The highest officials pray in fixed forms of words, and to make sure that not a word is omitted or spoken in the wrong place.” By contrast, however, the early Christians avoided this kind of repetitious prayer of pagans (Matt 6:7; cf. 1 Kgs 18:26). Before it marched out to war, the Roman army sought the will of their gods. Similarly, the *paterfamilias* performed diligently the religious duties (*pietas*) of his family, with the understanding that this was his obligation to the gods, the state, and the authorities.⁷⁹ For the Greeks, most of their gods were of agricultural origins (e.g., Zeus—the god of sky/rain; Demeter—the god of earth/grain; and local demigods of river, trees, and woods).

⁷⁸ Hanson and Oakman, *Palestine*, 111.

⁷⁹ Jeffers, *Greco-Roman World*, 92.

Many of these Greek gods and goddesses have their Roman gods and goddesses counterpart.⁸⁰ Both the Romans and Greeks, therefore, were a polytheistic people. The New Testament is familiar with many of these gods and goddesses (e.g., Acts 14:12–13; 17:16–28; 19:23–40), but the early Christians nonetheless treated them as mere idols or demons (e.g., 1 Cor 10:20–21; Rev 16:14; 18:2). Aside from these state religions, the Greeks and Romans also believed in mystery religions, which is common to all the nations of the Mediterranean world.⁸¹ Whereas state gods and goddesses provided safety and prosperity, mystery religions offered salvation and personal connection with a deity.⁸² These mystery religions also taught about redemption (i.e., the divine absorption of the initiate) and highlighted a death-resurrection motif, dramatized from the decay and survival of things in nature.⁸³ For this reason, many people were attracted to it. When Augustus (27 BCE–14 CE) assumed office as the first Caesar of Rome, he introduced another new religion—the emperor cult.⁸⁴ Augustus also assumed the post of *pontifex maximus* (high priest). That Caesar is κύριος (Acts 25:26) was quickly accepted in the eastern regions of the empire.⁸⁵ The Jews and Christian, however, had serious problems

⁸⁰ See table of traditional gods and goddesses of the Greeks and Romans in Jeffers, *Greco-Roman World*, 93.

⁸¹ See Nash, *Christianity*, 115–48. Greek mysteries and eastern religions include local, Eleusinian, and Dionysiac mysteries as well as Egyptian (Isis, Osiris, and Sarapis), Phoenician (Astarte and Adonis), Syrian (Atargatis), Phrygian (Cybele and Attis), and Persian (Mithras) deities (see Ferguson, *Backgrounds*, 251–300).

⁸² Mystery religions would also have included such personal religions as oracles, dreams and divination, healing cults, magic and maledictions, imprecations and oaths, demons and superstition, astrology, astral religion, and fate, and death and the afterlife (see Ferguson, *Backgrounds*, 213–51).

⁸³ See Nash, *Christianity*, 7–11; and Harrison, *Apostolic Church*, 12–13.

⁸⁴ The emperor cult had its precedents (see Ferguson, *Backgrounds*, 200–3). See Frankfort, *Kingship*, 337–43, for example, who notes that the Egyptian pharaoh was considered a king, for he was the divine god incarnate. Alexander the Great may also have considered himself to be a deity (see Robinson, “Alexander’s Deification,” 286–301; and Balsdon, “Divinity,” 383–88).

⁸⁵ See Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 163–65.

with all these religions, especially with the emperor cult. In fact, Pliny the Younger (*Letters* 10.96) had required Christians to perform an allegiance ritual as a test of their loyalty to the emperor (see Revelation 13—14). Nevertheless, the Roman government for the most part tolerated other religions.

This short review of the religious situation of Roman Palestine indicates that religion and religious activities were an important part of life of the first-century people. Undoubtedly, at homes and in both public (e.g., street corners; Matt 6:5) and private (e.g., Gethsemane—Matt 26:36//Mark 14:32//Luke 22:39; ἔρημος—Matt 14:13; Mark 1:35; Luke 4:42; 5:16) places, people prayed to their gods. The main worship site of the people, however, was the sanctuary or the temple. All religions had their own temples as the designated site for worship and sacrifice. Religious personnel handled religious affairs and activities. In Roman temples, a group of priests known as the *collegium* managed the religious activities.⁸⁶ Because the *paterfamilias* represented the household, the basic unit of society, the public performance of sacrifices and major rituals was primarily his responsibility.⁸⁷ In Greek temples, religious affairs were not handled by a professional class. The office of the priest in Greek temples could be occupied by anyone (Isocrates 2.6), provided that the person knew how to pray and offer sacrifice to the deity; Plato (*Laws* 290) says, “There is also the priestly class, who, as the law declares, know how to give the gods gifts from men in the form of sacrifices which are acceptable to them, and to ask on our behalf blessings in return from them” (cf. Stobaeus, *Ecl. Apoph.* [or *Florilegium*] 2.122). Both Roman and Greek sanctuaries consisted of an enclosure and an

⁸⁶ Ferguson, *Background*, 169, lists five major colleges of priests—the pontiffs (incl. the *Flamen*, most holy priest, *pontifices*, and presiding priests), the augurs (sign interpreters), the “Board of Ten” (keepers of the Sibylline Books), the Haruspices, and the Fetiales.

⁸⁷ On this, see Orr, “Roman Domestic Religion,” 1557–91.

altar and may thus have more or less resembled the Holy of Holies and the long-lost ark of the covenant of the temple of the Jews. The various sections of the Jerusalem temple may give us a clue as to the groups of people that visited and gathered in the temple area (ἱερόν; Matt 24:1). The Court of the Gentiles was a place for commercial activity (Mark 11:15–17). A low balustrade and an inscription⁸⁸ separated the Court of the Gentiles from the temple proper (ναός; John 2:20). The Court of Women was a place where the Levites stood (on the steps to the temple) to sing the “Psalms of the Ascents.” The Court of Israel was the area where Jewish men gathered, and a low wall separated it from the Court of Priests (or the Holy Place). This might have been the actual temple proper, in which the great altar of burnt offerings, incense altar, table of showbread, and menorah are located. A veil divides this area from the Holy of Holies.⁸⁹

Aside from the Jerusalem temple, the Gospels also mention other political and religious orders, such as the Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, Zealots, Herodians, and Samaritans,⁹⁰ the Sanhedrin, and the rabbis. The Pharisees were concerned with the accurate interpretation of the law and the promotion of the tradition of the elders (Mark 7:3–5).⁹¹ The Sadducees were composed of wealthy priests and aristocrats (Acts 5:17), who apparently rejected the bodily resurrection of humans and denied the existence of

⁸⁸ The inscription reads: “No man of another nation is to enter within the barrier and enclosure around the temple. Whoever is caught will have himself to blame for his death which follows” (*J.W.* 6.2.4 [125–26]; 5.5.2 [194]; *Ant.* 15.11.5 [417]; see Bickerman, “Warning Inscription,” 387–405).

⁸⁹ On the Jerusalem temple and priesthood, see Ferguson, *Backgrounds*, 562–67; and Instone-Brewer, “Temple and Priesthood,” 197–206.

⁹⁰ On these parties and sects, see Ferguson, *Backgrounds*, 513–36; and Lee-Barnewall, “Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes,” 217–27.

⁹¹ The New Testament, Josephus, and rabbinic literature all agree in this characterization of the Pharisees (see Lee-Barnewall, “Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes,” 219; Baumgarten, “Pharisees,” 411–28; and Baumgarten, “Pharisaic Paradosis,” 63–77).

angels and spirits (Acts 23:8).⁹² Jesus had many contacts with both of these religious parties, and most of the time, it concerned such issues as tithing, fasting, purity, and keeping the Sabbath (e.g., Matt 9:11, 34; 12:2, 38; 16:1; Mark 7:5; 8:11; Luke 6:7). While these political groups would have been frequently involved in the Jewish and Christian religious matters of the day, the larger and more important religious assembly to note is the Sanhedrin. The Sanhedrin was composed of chief priests, elders of the people, and scribes (Matt 16:21; Mark 8:31; 11:27; 14:43; 15:1; Luke 9:22; 20:1).⁹³ It was the council responsible for delivering Jesus to his death on the cross (Matt 26:3–4//Mark 14:1//Luke 22:2). The council probably had a roster of between seventy and seventy-two members, but it is uncertain whether this number included the high priest.⁹⁴ The council had three courts of assembly in Jerusalem: one at the gate of the temple mount; one at the gate of the temple court; and one in the chamber of the hewn stone (Sanhedrin 11.2). While it is possible that the assembly performed legislative, judicial, and advisory functions, it is likely that the Sanhedrin as a whole was a judicial body.⁹⁵ As such, it might be important to note that the Sanhedrin can also be classified under the government domain. One last social group to mention is the rabbis. Rabbis were leaders and teachers of the Jewish tradition or, as some would say, they were the masters of the Torah.⁹⁶ They were men who “fear God, men of truth hating unjust gain” (*Midrash Rabbah Deuteronomy* 1). The disciples and some people, including the religious leaders

⁹² There is discussion whether the Sadducees actually denied angels and spirits, since there is no evidence to prove that they did (see Daube, “On Acts 23,” 493–97).

⁹³ On the Sanhedrin, see Ferguson, *Backgrounds*, 567–70; and Litwak, “Synagogue and Sanhedrin,” 268–70. Some scholars deny the existence of such an institution (see Goodman, *The Ruling Class*, 113).

⁹⁴ See Metzger, *Historical and Literary Studies*, 67–76.

⁹⁵ See Gordis, ed., “The Trial of Jesus,” 6–74; and Stewart, “Judicial Procedure,” 94–109.

⁹⁶ See Ehrhardt, “Jewish and Christian Ordination,” 125–38; and Daube, *New Testament*, 224–46.

considered Jesus a rabbi (Matt 26:25, 49; Mark 9:5; 10:51; 14:45; John 1:38, 49; 3:2, 26), and the Pharisees loved the address rabbi (Matt 23:7; cf. v. 8).

The accounts in the Gospels seem to tell us that Jesus was a special type of “rabbi,” since, while he teaches and preaches to the people, and engages the religious leaders in discussion and debate concerning religious matters, on many occasions, he also heals the sick and performs miracles. The ancients would likely have considered both the teaching of the Torah and the performance of healing and miracles as religious matters.⁹⁷ Both activities are acts of devotion for one’s deity, not least the two popular pagan deities, Asclepius and Serapis, who were believed to be “healers” of the people.⁹⁸ There are many Greco-Roman pagan miracle workers (and miracle accounts for that matter) as well as healing sanctuaries in antiquity; however, as Craig Keener notes, even though “Belief in miracles was alive and well in the Roman Empire...Most ancient supernatural or suprahuman healing accounts, especially in the first century, appear to involve particular healing sanctuaries, which are not readily comparable with accounts in the Gospels and Acts.”⁹⁹ Nevertheless, it seems clear that Jesus’ involvement in these activities puts him in a unique category to be a “teacher-healer,” hence the designation “extraordinary rabbi.” As an extraordinary type of rabbi, it is possible that Jesus performs healings and miracles to achieve a specific objective—to authenticate his divinity, to proclaim the kingdom of

⁹⁷ Even until today, the healing business is still considered a religious matter. For an excellent summative report of miracles and healings in the modern world (especially Asia, Africa, and Latin America), see Keener, *Miracles*, 1:209–358, 426–599. But see my review and critique of Keener’s *Miracles* (Keener, *Review of Miracles*, 28–32).

⁹⁸ See Keener, *Miracles*, 37–40.

⁹⁹ Keener, *Miracles*, 1:37–61, here 37. Keener points out that the basic format of ancient miracle reports differs from those in the Gospels (see *Miracles*, 41).

God, and to gain the opportunity to give behavioral instructions to the people.¹⁰⁰ Most episodes in the Gospel of Matthew indicate that Jesus was often teaching and performing healings and miracles, which allow him to transact and interact with various groups of people in the religion domain. In fact, based on the Gospels' record, Jesus appears to spend most of his time with his disciples, the religious leaders, and the crowd in the religion domain, although this perhaps is only so, because Matthew and the other Gospel writers might have wanted to highlight this public ministry aspect of Jesus' life. In other words, we also need to entertain the idea that Jesus also did interact frequently with other social domains, even though they are not recorded in the Gospels.

The next place of importance to the temple is the synagogue.¹⁰¹ According to Everett Ferguson, most synagogue buildings postdate the New Testament era, and excavations of the more impressive synagogues were confined to the vicinity of Galilee (e.g., Chorazin, Capernaum, and Tiberias).¹⁰² The physical structure of a synagogue was made up of an ark (or chest) that stored the Torah (Taanith 2.1), a platform with a rostrum, benches, and a chief seat ("Moses' seat"; Matt 23:2). Some synagogues had guest rooms and a menorah.¹⁰³ The activities performed in a synagogue service focused on prayer, the study of Scripture, and teaching and exhortation. It was probably the most important social institution in the daily life of the Jewish people. Ferguson writes,

The synagogue was the most institutional development within Judaism insofar as Christian origins are concerned: it provided the locus for the teaching of Jesus and

¹⁰⁰ On these three basic functions of miracles stories in antiquity, see Talbert, *John*, 162. Cf. Keener, *Miracles*, 61.

¹⁰¹ For a good summary discussion, see Levine, "The Synagogue," 521–44 (esp. the bibliography); and Litwak, "Synagogue and Sanhedrin," 264–67.

¹⁰² Ferguson, *Backgrounds*, 505–6. But Philo (20 BCE–50 CE) refers to many synagogues in his writings (e.g. *Life of Moses* 2.216; *Hypothetica* 8.7.12–13; *Every Good Man Is Free* 81; and *Special Laws* 2.62).

¹⁰³ Ferguson, *Backgrounds*, 506–7.

later his apostles and so the place of recruitment of the earliest Christian converts, and many aspects of the worship and organization of the early church were derived from the synagogue...The synagogue was the center of community, religious, and social life for the Jewish people. It served as the schoolhouse (*beth midrash*), house of prayer (*beth tefillah*), meeting house (*beth kenesseth*), and house of judgment (*beth din*) for administering community discipline.¹⁰⁴

The Pharisees, however, were not so much involved in synagogue life.¹⁰⁵ If any of the religious orders were involved, the most likely candidate would have been the rabbis, although this cannot be asserted with certainty (but see Matt 12:9–14; 13:53–58; Luke 4:14–30). While it has been traditionally assumed that the rabbis were politically, socially, and religiously active in Jewish life at the time, some studies have advocated an opposite view.¹⁰⁶

We have now seen that virtually all people in Roman Palestine were in one way or another actively involved in the religion domain. They prayed to and communicated with their gods in their own homes as well as in private, solitary places, but temples (for all people) and synagogues (for Jews and Christians) functioned as the primary loci of religious activities, especially for sacrifices and rituals. There were designated temple officials that handled the affairs of the temple as we have seen, and there were also two workers that managed a synagogue. The person who sat at the “Moses’ seat” during services was probably the overseer of a synagogue (ἀρχισυνάγωγος; Acts 13:15; 18:17), and assisting him was an “attendant” (ὑπηρέτης; Luke 4:20), who could be a caretaker of the scrolls (Luke 4:17; cf. m. Sotah 7.7 and m. Yoma 7.1) and of service

¹⁰⁴ Ferguson, *Backgrounds*, 574–75. Levine, “The Synagogue,” 521, also writes, “The Jewish community not only worshipped in the synagogue, but also studied there, held court, administered punishment, organized sacred meals, collected charitable donations, housed communal archives and library, and assembled for political and social purposes.”

¹⁰⁵ Levine, “The Synagogue,” 524.

¹⁰⁶ Levine, “The Synagogue,” 540–41.

functions (m. Sukkah 4.6), a teacher of the targums, or officer of the community (m. Makkoth 3.12).¹⁰⁷ The topics of conversations in the religion domain naturally revolved around both formal and informal religious matters, such as moral and spiritual teachings and sermons, scriptural interpretations, petitions and prayers, ritual recitations, and other ceremonial invocations. Personal prayers and petitions may also have been offered to their gods especially in more private settings. Because many religious groups (e.g., the Sanhedrin) were involved in the political affairs of the society, non-religious topics (e.g., temple tax, commercial activities, etc.) as well as other topics concerning the political issues of the day were certainly also part of their conversation.¹⁰⁸

The Education Domain

Education was a visible social domain in the Greco-Roman world, including Palestine.¹⁰⁹ It is in this social domain where we can clearly see the social stratification of the community by age, gender, ethnicity, social class, and literacy level. Despite this stratification, however, education for the Romans, Greeks, and Jews had several things in common.¹¹⁰ One is that ancient education adopted the Hellenistic ideal of *paideia*, which meant “training and discipline,” and placed emphasis on the formation of the human person.¹¹¹ Another commonality is that most schools were small and private, and classes

¹⁰⁷ See Rajak and Noy, “Archisynagogoi,” 75–93; and Sky, *Office of the Hazzan*.

¹⁰⁸ See Levine, *Ancient Synagogue*, 135–73, 381–411.

¹⁰⁹ Hezser, “Private and Public Education,” 465, notes that sources for studying the education of ancient Palestine are mostly confined to literary and legal ones, since no archaeological remains have been excavated yet that can be associated with the region, and that Greco-Roman educational practices also need to be further studied and revised (Harris, *Ancient Literacy*, 233). This section is also related to the multilingual proficiency of Jesus (see below). For comprehensive studies on ancient Jewish literacy, see Harris, *Ancient Literacy*, 3–24, 116–46; and Hezser, *Jewish Literacy*, esp. 39–109.

¹¹⁰ The Roman society adopted their educational system from Hellenistic educational practices (see Hezser, “Private and Public Education,” 466).

¹¹¹ Isocrates’ (436–338 BCE) dictum is that a true Greek is defined by their Hellenistic education and not by their birth: “the name ‘Hellenes’ suggests no longer a race but an intelligence, and the title ‘Hellenes’ is

were usually held at a private home, a makeshift structure, or a shop near the marketplace.¹¹² A third one is that the ancients implemented education through a two- (primary and advanced) or three-stage system (primary, secondary, and advanced), although it would be wrong to think that the ancient educational system had a structured, universal curriculum that is similar to our modern western educational system.¹¹³ The important thing to note, however, is that these categories, even though they may not reflect the actual scenario, allow us to explain why there were both less educated and educated people in the first century CE. A fourth one is that most of the people, if they had any formal education, only acquired a primary education, since only wealthy families could afford to send their children to higher education; the father (at least for Jewish families) would have played a significant role in teaching their young children.¹¹⁴ A fifth one is that the priority of higher education was given to men, and so men had a higher degree of education than women.¹¹⁵ A sixth and final commonality is that physical education at all levels of education included both physical and moral training (1 Cor 9:25; 1 Tim 4:8) as part of the “perfect life” ideal in Greek philosophy.¹¹⁶

applied rather to those who share our culture than to those who share a common blood” (*Panegyricus* 50, LCL).

¹¹² See Bonner, *Education*, 115; and Harris, *Ancient Literacy*, 236.

¹¹³ The traditional view is that Hellenistic education is composed of three stages. Scholars who argue that the boundaries demarcating these stages are often blurry and more fluid, however, have now challenged this rigid categorization of a three-tiered system. For a discussion of this two- or three-tiered system of education in the Greco-Roman world, see Kaster, “Notes,” 325–39; Hezser, “Private and Public Education,” 466–69; Porter, “Paul and His Bible,” esp. 99–105 (revised in Porter and Pitts, “Paul’s Bible,” esp. 11–21); and Pitts, “Hellenistic Schools,” 19–50. See also Porter, “Paul of Tarsus,” 532–85.

¹¹⁴ Ebner, *Elementary Education*, 38.

¹¹⁵ In fact, there is no evidence that Jewish girls attended elementary schools (see Morris, *Jewish School*, 28–31; and Ebner, *Elementary Education*, 35). Jeffers, *Greco-Roman World*, 253, points out that formal education was important for men in the upper classes of society. Daughters of wealthy families had tutors (see Bonner, *Education*, 27–28).

¹¹⁶ On the education of the Greco-Roman world and ancient Palestine, see Ferguson, *Backgrounds*, 109–13, 132–33; Jeffers, *Greco-Roman World*, 249–57; and esp. Hezser, “Private and Public Education,” 465–79.

For the Romans and the Greeks, primary education began at the age of seven and taught reading and writing and arithmetic. Teachers cultivated the skill of memorization and implemented stern discipline. Children at this age also came under the tutelage of a strict pedagogue, often a slave assigned to look after the general welfare of the child.¹¹⁷ In fact, most Roman children would have bilingual tutors, since that was the Roman ideal for their children.¹¹⁸ Secondary education (which may likely have overlapped with advanced education) in the classics started at the age of eleven or twelve, and only the rich people could normally afford it (see Philo, *Spec.* 2.228–30).¹¹⁹ A *grammaticus* (grammarian) taught the fundamentals of grammar, including spelling, correct usage, and rules of composition, as well as rhetoric, dialectic, geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, and music. Advanced education began at about the age of eighteen, and wealthy parents send their children for advanced education to prepare them for a social and public career. The children entered the *ephebeia*, which is associated with the city gymnasium (see 1 Macc 1:14; 2 Macc 4:9, 12) and library,¹²⁰ to learn rhetoric and philosophy and to gain experience in public life (through awareness of their culture and politics).¹²¹ During this time, young men, whether or not they finished the *ephebeia*, would attempt to acquire a profession in philosophy, medicine, law, or rhetoric under the supervision of a philosopher, doctor, lawyer, or rhetorician.

¹¹⁷ Jeffers, *Greco-Roman World*, 254.

¹¹⁸ On this, see Bonner, *Education*, 20–46.

¹¹⁹ Townsend, “Education,” 2:312–17.

¹²⁰ Both the *ephebeia* and the gymnasium were publicly funded (Clarke, *Higher Education*, 8).

¹²¹ Some Jews also attempted to enter the *ephebeia* (see Tcherikover and Fuks, *Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum*, 1:38–39, 59, 61, 64, 75–76).

For the Jews, the aim of education was knowledge, practice, and mastery of the Torah (and the oral tradition of the scribes), so that children would learn how to worship God, remember the history of their nation (esp. the Exodus), and know how to live their lives, especially morally and ethically (see Josephus, *Ag. Ap.* 2.178).¹²² Primary education began at the early age of five but, because primary schools were scant in the first-century CE, the home was the center for the Jewish religious education.¹²³ The teacher was usually a scribe or sometimes a synagogue attendant, and they taught reading and writing, placing emphasis on memorizing and copying Scripture. Teaching was conducted orally, and students listened attentively to their teachers' lessons and instructions.¹²⁴ Most Jewish boys, and less with Jewish girls, would have studied until the age of thirteen.¹²⁵ Secondary or higher education (which seems to overlap with advanced education) began at the age of thirteen, and secondary schools (supported by the synagogue), which were more common in the second century CE, taught the oral law and scripture commentaries (midrash) and the legal requirements of the law (Mishnah). The synagogue played a major part in the life of Jewish children (see above);¹²⁶ Paul went to synagogues first whenever he entered a new city to preach the gospel (Acts 13:14; 14:1; 17:1). Jesus taught in the synagogue of Nazareth (Luke 4:16–30), and exorcised a demon

¹²² See Yinger, "Jewish Education," 325–29. There is debate over the extent to which Jewish children (esp. boys) had access to primary education (for a summary, see Heszer, "Private and Public Education," 469–71).

¹²³ The Qumran community, however, may have been an exception to this, since it provided more educational offerings throughout most of Palestine (see Victor, *Colonial Education*, 118–24). Keith, *Jesus' Literacy*, 117–18, also notes that both the home and the synagogue are places of biblical instruction.

¹²⁴ Heszer, "Private and Public Education," 468.

¹²⁵ On Jewish women's education, see Heszer, "Private and Public Education," 476–78. She notes that most scholars agree that Jewish girls would not have attended primary schools.

¹²⁶ "The synagogue provided even in small Galilean villages such as Nazareth a kind of popular education system" (see Riesner, "Jesus as Preacher and Teacher," 12). "If nothing else, this education was acquired in synagogue[s]" (see Keith, *Scribal Elite*, 6 n. 5).

in the synagogue in Capernaum (Mark 1:21–27). Advanced education, if we could use such a nomenclature, probably began at the age of eighteen, and one could only acquire such an education by studying with a well-known scholar (Acts 5:34; 22:3) or attending one of the academies such as the one at Jamnia. Students studied the Talmud (scriptural and rabbinic interpretation) to prepare them for ordination as a rabbi.

Primary education may have been pervasive in ancient Palestine, especially among the male population. The reading and study of the Torah at the primary level most likely require knowledge of the Hebrew alphabet.¹²⁷ Paul's familiarity with the writings of Aratus (Acts 17:28; cf. Acts 26:24), Menander (1 Cor 15:33), and Epimenides (Tit 1:12), which simultaneously implies that some of his readers were also familiar with these ancient poet, dramatist, and philosopher, shows that some people actually attained higher education.¹²⁸ Thus, from the age of five to thirteen, some children would have attended a primary education of some sort, and from then on, some boys would have pursued a secondary education, with some of them even proceeding to an advanced education.¹²⁹ Primary and secondary teachers, which included synagogue attendants and household fathers, were common.¹³⁰ A small fraction of the teacher population comprised rabbis and scholars, from whom the well-to-do children received their advanced training in philosophy, medicine, law, and rhetoric. A few of these prominent men who attained

¹²⁷ On this, see Hezser, *Jewish Literacy*, 241–42.

¹²⁸ Stambaugh and Balch, *New Testament*, 122. There is question whether Paul did acquire advanced education (but cf. 2 Cor 10:10), especially since he was sent to Jerusalem at age 13 or even earlier (Acts 22:3) and since he did not use technical rhetorical language (1 Cor 1:17; 2:4; 2 Cor 11:6; see Tambasco, *In the Days of Paul*, 7).

¹²⁹ Few people attained advanced education (Morgan, *Literate Education*, 57; Rawson, *Intellectual Life*, 57), but we cannot be certain about this for sure, and we also need to define what we mean by “few people.”

¹³⁰ Harris, *Ancient Literacy*, 237, notes, however, that both the government and the society in general lack interests in primary education, such that fathers had to fill into the role of teachers (cf. Bonner, *Education*, 11–12).

advanced education, such as Nicodemus (John 3:10), Gamaliel (Acts 5:34; 22:3), Luke (Col 4:14), Josephus (*Ant.* 20.12.1, 263), Justus of Tiberias (*Vita* 9, 40), and members of the Herodian family and the Jewish aristocracy (*C. Ap.* 1.9, 51; *Bell* 1.31.1, 602), are mentioned in the New Testament and some extrabiblical literature.¹³¹ Classes in the primary and secondary education were typically held in private homes, shops adjacent to the agora, and synagogues, as they were not publicly funded. Public schools, academies, and gymnasiums, which had access to provincial and national libraries, were restricted to advanced education.¹³² Unlike modern-day classroom lectures, which would often go off-topic and talk about various subjects, ancient teachers, including tutors, were much stricter and would therefore confine their class lessons to the subject they ought to teach. Thus, it would seem that teacher-pupil relations are highly status-oriented and formal, with the teacher ensuring that their pupils learned their subjects and skills well.

We have now seen the typical or “standard” set of sociolinguistic elements (i.e., participants, social settings, topics of conversation) that compose the fixed social domains of ancient Palestine (i.e., family, friendship, government, transaction, religion, education). The results are summarized in Table D (see below). As discussed above, each domain essentially employs a “default” language of communication. The native language of the speakers would naturally be employed in the family and friendship domains, except in cases where the participants involved in the friendship domain would have had different native languages. In such cases, Greek, being the *lingua franca* of the speech community, would most likely have been the language choice. The *lingua franca* would

¹³¹ Cf. Heszer, “Private and Public Education,” 475.

¹³² There were many libraries in the major cities of the empire and Qumran, which held thousands of scrolls, the largest of which is Alexandria, which had a collection of about 700,000 scrolls before its destruction in the first-century BCE (see Millard, *Reading and Writing*, 18, 161).

also have generally been the language choice in the government and transaction domains. Participants in both of these domains came from all walks of life and from various ethnic groups and were therefore highly diversified. Even between participants of the same ethnic group, communication would still have transpired in Greek, because of the nature of the social setting (public and formal). Determining the default language in the religion domain, specifically in temples and synagogues, can be tricky. In the Jerusalem temple proper and most synagogues, it is possible that Hebrew (and not Aramaic) would have been the language choice, at least for formal functions and ceremonies, especially if the Jews wanted to preserve their religious heritage.¹³³ In the homes and private settings, people would pray to their gods in their native languages. The default language in the education domain would largely have depended upon the topic or subject in study. Even in private homes, the formality of the domain would have required the use of the appropriate language for the subject in study.

Table D: The Sociolinguistic Components and “Default” Languages of the Fixed Domains of Ancient Palestine

Social Domain	Default Language	Participants	Social Settings	Conversation Topics
Family (intimate, private, informal)	native language (Aramaic, Greek, or Latin)	husband, wife, children, grandparents, extended family members, slaves	houses, apartment buildings (with shops), deluxe houses and apartments	marriage and divorce, religious matters, job apprenticeship and trade, homemaking
Friendship (intimate, private, informal)	native language; Greek when friends have	neighbors, business associates, familiar acquaintances	house courtyard, streets, shops, restaurants and taverns, marketplaces, schools,	gossips, life stories and experiences, friendly advice on life issues

¹³³ Schwartz, “Language, Power and Identity,” 33–34, points out that Hebrew was a “holy language” for the rabbis, since it is the language of God and of creation (cf. Mekh. *Bachodesh* 9: “the Lord said to Moses: Thus you shall say to the people of Israel: In the very language I speak to you, you shall speak to my children. This is the holy language of Hebrew.”).

	different native languages		entertainment establishments, temples, synagogues	
Government (public, formal, official)	mostly Greek—the <i>lingua franca</i> ; Latin among Roman officials	civil and military government officials of all ranks, government-affiliated personnel (e.g., Herod, tax collectors), and the general populace	streets, marketplaces, “places of toll,” government official residences	civic matters (e.g., taxation, finance, law, and justice), construction project plans, government-policy making, political campaigns
Transaction (public, informal; private, informal in rural areas settings or between owner and slaves)	mostly Greek—the <i>lingua franca</i> ; native language in private, informal rural settings	business and land owners, clients, workers and laborers (e.g., farmers, herders), moneylenders, traders, bankers, government officials, tax collectors	coastal ports, market places, farmlands in rural areas and villages	business and commercial transactions, employment transactions, friendly conversations
Religion (public, formal, official; private, informal)	native language in private settings; Hebrew in public, formal, and official settings	<i>paterfamilias</i> , temple and synagogue officials and personnel, religious and political orders (e.g., Pharisees and Sadducees, the Sanhedrin), pagans, religious believers	homes, selected public places (e.g., street corners), solitary places, temples (sanctuaries), synagogues	religious topics (e.g., prayers, petitions, scriptural interpretations, ceremonies and rituals), political issues, commercial and temple tax policies
Education (public, formal)	language (incl. instruction medium) depends on the subject of study	all levels and classes of the population (esp. between the ages five and twenty), parents, teachers, tutors, rabbis and scholars	private homes, shops, synagogues, public schools, academies, gymnasiums, libraries	class lessons in various academic subjects, scripture and other literature memorization

THE SOCIAL NETWORK OF JESUS

The identification of these fixed domains in ancient Palestine raises the question of whether Jesus was involved in any of these domains, and if he were, the next question is how frequently did he interact with them. The evidence provided by the four canonical Gospels indicates that Jesus actually had frequent social interactions, especially with some of these domains. In order for Jesus to interact with these domains, however, he would need to have known the default languages spoken in these domains. Otherwise, it would have been impossible for him to communicate with the participants who were engaged in these domains. This section thus aims at mapping out in broad strokes the social network of Jesus based on the Gospel of Matthew, with the pertinent references to the other three Gospels. Jesus' social network gives us a picture of what his private and public social relationships would have looked like and asserts the idea that he needed to be a multilingual speaker of the languages of ancient Palestine. It is important to note, however, that this may only be a representative picture of the kinds of social networks that existed in the first-century CE, especially when we consider the possibility that the Gospel authors may have redacted their retelling of the Jesus events to achieve their purposes and needs. Before I investigate this matter, I first discuss the sociolinguistic concept of social network.

Social Network Theory

Janet Holmes writes, "Networks in sociolinguistics refer to the pattern of informal relationships people are involved in on a regular basis."¹³⁴ Informal (and formal) relationships can be translated as social interactions (or situational contexts) that happen

¹³⁴ Holmes, *Introduction*, 194. Cf. Milroy, *Language and Social Networks*, 174.

in a speech community, and they may be analyzed to determine the pattern of an individual's relationship. Every social interaction occurs within a particular fixed domain. A social interaction can be either unidirectional, which is called a transaction (e.g., a sermon), or inter-directional, which is called an exchange (e.g., a dialogue).¹³⁵ Jesus' indignant conversation with the Jewish authorities in the Jerusalem temple (John 2:13–22), for instance, occurred in the religion (as well as transaction) domain. But in the following episode with his conversation with Nicodemus (John 3:1–21), that event probably happened in the house or friendship domain, considering the fact that Nicodemus visited Jesus in the nighttime (νυκτός; v. 2). Tracing the various social interactions of Jesus can allow us to determine the plexity and density of his social network. In what follows, I explain the concept of social network, following Lesley Milroy's approach to social network analysis.¹³⁶

The theory of social network begins with the principle of anchorage, which is a perspective that views an individual being engaged in different social relationships with the various institutions of a speech community. The people who are directly connected constitutes the first order network zone, and those who are indirectly connected through intermediaries are considered the second order network zone of the individual. My concern in this study is only with Jesus' first order network zone. A person's social network can be characterized in terms of its structure and content. Network structure

¹³⁵ Milroy, *Language and Social Networks*, 48.

¹³⁶ See Milroy, *Language and Social Networks*, esp. 12–22, 40–69, 173–203. There are four main areas in which social network theory is applied to sociolinguistic network research: (1) synchronic variationist sociolinguistics, which studies urban dialectology and vernaculars; (2) historical sociolinguistics, which studies language change and maintenance; (3) code-switching; and (4) language acquisition and loss (see Schenk and Bergs, "Netzwerk/Network," 438–43). Milroy pioneers the first systematic account of synchronic variationist sociolinguistics, showing the relationship between social network and language variation, which is the subject with which I am also concerned (see also Milroy and Milroy, "Linguistic Change," 339–84).

measures the density of a person's social network. A network is considered very dense if the people in a person's network knew each other; otherwise, the network is said to be less dense.¹³⁷ So, if Jesus knew Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, and Jesus' disciples also knew the three, then the network is said to be denser than if the disciples did not know the three. I note, however, that my focus is only upon Jesus' social relations with various individuals and groups in the Gospels and not so much on whether his contacts knew each other. Network content measures the plexity of a person's social network. Plexity refers to the types of relationships an individual has with a particular person or group. A uniplex relationship is such when a person is related to another person in only one area or capacity; otherwise, the relationship is said to be a multiplex one. Jesus' relationship with Peter as his disciple and as a friend is an example of a multiplex relationship. It is possible for a person "to relate to relatively few people in many capacities and have relatively [*sic*] multiplex network ties, or to relate to a great many people mainly in a single capacity and have relatively uniplex network ties."¹³⁸ The evidence we have in the Gospels seems to indicate that Jesus had relatively uniplex network ties but with a large number of people, except of course with those who are both his friends or families and his disciples.

The basic idea behind the social network concept is that people do not just form part of social class, caste, age, or gender groupings in a community, but they also interact meaningfully with each other in these structured, functional institutions.¹³⁹ To interact

¹³⁷ Some sociolinguists would employ the terms "closed" or "open" networks to refer to the density of a social network (see, for example, Hudson, *Sociolinguistics*, 235–36). But it is better to describe social networks as either "more" or "less" dense, as density cannot be measured in absolute terms.

¹³⁸ Milroy, *Language and Social Networks*, 51.

¹³⁹ Social network as an analytical tool was first developed by Barnes, "Class and Committees," 39–58, when he correlated an order of social relationship with human behavior in his study of the Norwegian

meaningfully with one's audience involves intention, effort, and accommodation on the part the speaker. Consequently, the density and plexity of a person's social network becomes a "norm enforcement mechanism": the volume of exchanges creates greater familiarity (and shared knowledge) with each other; the multiplexity (contra uniplexity) of relations provides greater accessibility to one another; and extreme density signals a uniformity of norms and values within one's social network.¹⁴⁰ All these norm enforcement features directly correlate with the speech forms (or languages for that matter) that are used in various social interactions within a particular domain. To accommodate one's values and behaviors with that of another also means aligning one's speech forms and language. Thus, mapping out Jesus' social network can tell us something about his ability to speak the various languages of the speech community (i.e., his linguistic repertoire), and more importantly, the degree to which he was familiar or fluent with a particular language. That Jesus was a fluent speaker of the Aramaic language, his native tongue, was probably the result of his frequent interaction with his Jewish parents, disciples, and friends,¹⁴¹ that he was a fluent speaker of Greek undoubtedly came from his interactions with various social groups and his disciples in the community, and that he was able to speak Aramaic, Greek, and Hebrew and (perhaps even) Latin (a few words here and there) could be seen in the multiplexity and density of his social network.

village of Bremnes. Recent sociolinguists have now generally used it to analyze "the relationships between social entities such as individual actors, sets of individuals, groups or organizations, and the patterns and implications of these relationships" (see Vetter, "Social Network, 208; and Mitchell, "Network Procedures," 74).

¹⁴⁰ Milroy, *Language and Social Networks*, 52, 60–1.

¹⁴¹ See Holmes, *Introduction*, 195. Holmes says, "Who we talk and listen to *regularly* is a very important influence on the way we speak" (*emphasis added*; 197, 235–41). See also Hudson, *Sociolinguistics*, 236.

I will now attempt to map out Jesus' first order social network zone. I examine this social network via a uniplex mode, and I do not intend to measure the density level of Jesus' social network, since my objective is merely to determine his social contacts and interactions in various domains. In the rest of this section, I first summarize Jesus' social contacts in the various domains recorded in the Gospel of Matthew, acknowledging again the question of the historicity of some of these recorded events. This summary will highlight the frequency (hence, the degree) of Jesus' interaction with his social contacts and will indicate the various domains in which he encountered them. It should be noted that I am not investigating the details of any particular episodes, for this is a subject matter of the next chapter, where I will attempt to determine the specific language Jesus would have used in the various variable domains (or episodes) in the Gospel of Matthew. For now, I only wish to establish the fact that Jesus would have to be a multilingual speaker of the languages of ancient Palestine, in order to have been able to interact with his social contacts. From this summary, I provide a diagram of Jesus' social network (see Appendix 2).

Jesus' Social Network Based on the Gospel of Matthew with Pertinent References to the Other Gospels

The Gospel of Matthew records Jesus as having extensive interaction with three groups of people—his disciples (μαθηταί), which include both the women he encountered during his ministry and those who followed and attended to him, the crowds (ὄχλοι) from different geographical places, and the religious leaders of his day. While the Gospel writers may have focused their narratives upon these four groups for their purposes, the fact that Jesus interacted regularly with them could tell us something about his identity and character; Jesus was an ordinary citizen who taught about God's kingdom

and who cared about the general welfare of his fellow citizens, especially the poor and needy. In fact, he was not so much a friend of the rich and powerful; many of those who belong to this rich and powerful group were even his persistent opponents, who plotted his arrest, trial, and crucifixion.

I will say more about these four groups of people shortly, but aside from them, Jesus also had various interactions and conversations with “other” individuals and social groups. I list and discuss Jesus’ numerous interactions with individuals and social groups, but this list is meant to be (adequately) representative not comprehensive. I note that I have classified these episodes in Matthew’s Gospel under fixed domains, even though many of them are actually variable domains. For instance, Jesus’ healing of Peter’s mother-in-law in Peter’s house (Matt 8:14–15) actually happened in a fixed family domain, but it converted to a variable family domain because of the presence of Jesus. My objective here is simply to determine the social network of Jesus and to highlight the argument that he would need to be a multilingual speaker of the languages of ancient Palestine.

Jesus and “Other” Individuals and Groups

The first individual that belonged to these “other” groups is John the Baptist (Ἰωάννην τοῦ βαπτισθῆναι). Matthew apparently records only one encounter of Jesus with John, and this incident happened when Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan River to be baptized by John (a religion domain) (3:13–17; Mark 1:9–13; cf. John 1:29–34).¹⁴² That Jesus and the baptizer were familiar acquaintances may be seen in some later events (Matt 9:14–17; Mark 2:18–22; Luke 5:33–39; and Matt 11:2–19; Luke 7:18–35),

¹⁴² Based on my discussion of the fixed social domains above, the social setting of this event precludes it from being classified under the religion domain, even though we could argue that baptism is a religious rite.

especially when the latter sent his disciples to Jesus to inquire whether he was the messiah (Matt 11:2–3; Luke 7:18–19), and when Jesus proclaimed that no one was greater (μείζων) than John (Matt 11:11; Luke 7:28).

A second individual that Jesus encountered was the devil (διάβολος or σατάν).¹⁴³ The setting of this incident was in the wilderness (ἔρημος), and here we see Jesus having several exchanges with the devil (Matt 4:1–11; Luke 4:1–13; cf. Mark 1:12–13). Jesus' frequent remarks concerning the devil (e.g., Matt 13:39; 25:41; Mark 8:33; John 8:44) may indicate that the devil was familiar to him, but his conversation with him, citing the scriptures suggests that it concerns religious matters. For this reason, the participants, social setting, and topic and nature of their conversation would indicate that this event happened in a friendship or religion domain.

A third individual that Jesus met was a leper (λεπρός), who was with the large crowds that greeted Jesus after he came down from the mountainside (ὄρος). Although Jesus probably did not previously know this leper, he nevertheless had a brief exchange with him at a location in the vicinity of the mountainside (see Matt 8:1–4; Mark 1:40–44; Luke 5:12–14);¹⁴⁴ Jesus healed and told him to present himself to the priest and to offer a gift to Moses (a religion domain).

A fourth individual was the centurion that Jesus faced in Capernaum (Matt 8:5–13; Luke 7:1–10). The centurion asked Jesus to help his paralyzed servant, and Jesus not

¹⁴³ It is important to note that διάβολος or σατάν was a supernatural being.

¹⁴⁴ This encounter with the leper is usually taken as a triple tradition (Hagner, *Matthew 1–13*, 197; Reicke, *Roots of the Synoptic Gospels*, 36), but it is possible that the record in Mark 1:40–44 and Luke 5:12–14 were different incidents from that of Matt 8:1–4 by virtue of the different locations of the event, although we cannot of course be certain. Luke says that Jesus was in a town (πόλις); Mark does not provide a location.

only healed the servant, but also commended the centurion for having such great faith in him. The setting of this event would have been in the centurion's household (v. 7), but because of the centurion's faith, Jesus did not need to visit his house (v. 13). The presence of the centurion (a government official) suggests that this event should be categorized in the government domain (see vv. 8–9).

A fifth individual was Peter's mother-in-law (Matt 8:14–15; Mark 1:29–31; Luke 4:38–39), who was staying at Peter's house (a family domain) in Capernaum (see Matt 8:5; Mark 1:21; Luke 4:31). Jesus healed Peter's mother-in-law who was sick with fever.

A sixth social encounter happened in the region of Gadara (Γαδαρηνός), where Jesus exorcised two demon-possessed men, sending the demons into a herd of pigs (Matt 8:28–34). This episode seems to be different from that of Mark 5:1–17 and Luke 8:26–37, because of the difference in their social settings (see chapter 3—The Decapolis). Jesus' pithy exchange (with the command Ὑπάγετε; v. 32) with the demons in contrast to the longer ones in Mark and Luke also suggests that Matthew's episode was most likely a different event. This event probably took place in some isolated land near a cemetery (ἐκ τῶν μνημείων ἐξερχόμενοι; v. 28) and a lake (θάλασσα; v. 32). Because Jesus performed a healing miracle in this incident as part of his ministry to the people, this episode should belong to the religion domain.

A seventh and eighth individual were a synagogue ruler (ἄρχων)¹⁴⁵ and a bleeding woman. The ἄρχων came to Jesus (Matt 9:18–26) while he was probably still at the vicinity of house of the tax collector, Matthew (Matt 9:10). Jesus accompanied the

¹⁴⁵ The text in Matt 9:18 does not say that it was a synagogue ruler, and it is questionable whether this episode is similar to the one recorded in Mark 5:22–43 and Luke 8:41–56, where the synagogue ruler (ἀρχισυναγωγός; [Mark 5:22]; ἄρχων τῆς συναγωγῆς [Luke 8:41]), Jairus, was explicitly mentioned.

ἄρχων to his house, and along the way, he encountered a bleeding woman, had a brief exchange with her, and healed her (vv. 20–22)—a religion domain. Arriving at the house of the ἄρχων (a family domain), he found a band of flute players and a disorderly crowd. He immediately sent them away and healed the daughter of the ἄρχων (vv. 23–25).

A ninth social encounter involved the two blind men who followed Jesus, and a demon-possessed man, after he left the house of the ἄρχων (Matt 9:27–31). It is possible that Jesus was still outside the house of the ἄρχων when the two blind men approached him, since after this incident, Matt 9:32, states, ἐξέρχομένων (departing from there), a mute, demon-possessed man was brought to Jesus. In any case, Jesus had a few exchanges with the blind men and healed them (a religion domain).

A tenth individual that Jesus met was a Canaanite woman in the region of Tyre and Sidon (Matt 15:21–28; Mark 7:24–30). The woman, a Greek (Mark 7:26), asked Jesus to help her demon-possessed daughter. Jesus apparently had an extended exchange with her (a friendship domain), explaining to her about his mission for the lost sheep of Israel (vv. 24–27), but because of the woman’s faith, Jesus granted her request and healed the daughter (a religion domain).

An eleventh individual that Jesus encountered was the rich young man (Matt 19:16–22; Mark 10:17–22; Luke 18:18–25),¹⁴⁶ who wanted to gain eternal life. The location of this incident was probably somewhere in the region of Perea—Jesus ἦλθεν εἰς τὰ ὄρια τῆς Ἰουδαίας πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου (went into the region of Judea to the other side of the Jordan; Matt 19:1; Mark 10:1). Jesus probably had a long exchange with this

¹⁴⁶ The account in Luke does not indicate the location of this incident.

man concerning the relationship between wealth and salvation (a religion domain) (vv. 21, 23–24).

A twelfth individual Jesus met was the mother of the sons of Zebedee (Matt 20:20–28; cf. Mark 10:35–45). The mother requested Jesus to honor her two sons in his kingdom by granting them the left and right seats next to him. Jesus probably had a long exchange with the mother, explaining to the mother and her sons how he will suffer and what it means to become great in the kingdom of heaven (vv. 23–28). The social setting of this place is uncertain; we can only speculate that this event happened when Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem, probably on a road or street (a friendship domain), as he was with the Twelve when the Zebedee's mother approached him (see vv. 17, 20).

A thirteenth social encounter was in Jericho, where two blind men who were sitting by the roadside (ὁδός) cried out to Jesus for help (Matt 20:29–34). Jesus briefly conversed with the two blind men and healed them (a religion domain). After receiving their sight, the two blind men joined the crowd and followed Jesus.

A fourteenth individual Jesus faced was Pilate (Πιλάτος), the governor (ἡγεμών) of Judea (Matt 27:11–26; Mark 15:2–15; Luke 23:2–3, 18–25). John 18:28 indicates that this incident happened in the governor's residence (πραιτώριον). The interrogation of Jesus by Pilate concerning the charge of political sedition (a government domain; see Luke 23:2–3) seemed to have lasted for a while, although it is interesting to note that the synoptic Gospels only recorded Jesus' short line, Σὺ λέγεις (you have said so), as a rejoinder to Pilate's questions (but cf. John 18:34, 36–37).

A fifteenth person that Jesus communicated with was the Father (Πάτερ μου), before Judas and the crowd arrested him (Matt 26:36–46; Mark 14:32–42; Luke 22:40–

46). The social setting was in a solitary place in Gethsemane, where Jesus prayed three times to his Father concerning his coming suffering and crucifixion (a religion domain). On the cross, Jesus had another intimate conversation with his father (a religion domain), when he cried out, Θεέ μου θεέ μου ἵνατί με ἐγκατέλιπες (Matt 27:46; Mark 15:34; see also Luke 23:46; John 19:28, 30).

The sixteenth and last social group was the group of women (incl. Mary Magdalene, the other Mary, and Salome; Matt 28:1 [cf. Mark 16:1; Luke 24:1; and John 20:1]) that Jesus had a casual conversation with (a friendship domain) near his tomb (Matt 28:9–10; Luke 24:7; John 20:15–26), after his resurrection. The social setting of the place was most likely a location within the vicinity of Jesus' tomb (Matt 28:8; Mark 16:2, 5; Luke 24:1–3; John 20:6).

Jesus and His Disciples (and Women)

Jesus interacted most frequently with his disciples, especially with the Three, Peter, James, and John. Included in this group of disciples are the women whom Jesus interacted with in both his private and public life. Some interactions with these women were casual and informal, and they happened mostly during Jesus' public ministry, such as when he healed Simon's mother-in-law (8:14–15; Mark 1:29–31; Luke 4:38–39), the synagogue leader's daughter (9:18–19, 2–26; 5:21–24; 35–43; Luke 8:40–42, 49–56), the bleeding woman (9:20–22; Mark 5:25–34; Luke 8:43–48), and the Canaanite woman's daughter (15:21–28; Mark 7:24–30), and when he fed the five thousand and four thousand men (14:21; 15:38; cf. Luke 9:14). On other occasions, Jesus' interactions with them were more intimate and familial in nature, and they happened often in more private settings, such as his anointing by the woman with the alabaster jar of perfume

(Matt 26:6–13; Mark 14:3–9; Luke 7:36–50; John 12:1–8), his visitation by the “many women” (γυναῖκες πολλαί), including Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the Zebedee brothers during his crucifixion (27:55–56; Mark 15:40–41; Luke 23:49; John 19:25b–27), his burial (27:61; Mark 15:47; Luke 23:55–56), his resurrection (28:1–8; Mark 16:1–8; Luke 24:1–11; John 20:1–2, 11–13), and his appearing to Mary Magdalene and the other Mary after his resurrection (28:9–10; [Mark 16:9–11];¹⁴⁷ Luke 24:10–11; John 20:14–18). Jesus also frequently included women as a topic of conversation in his teachings, and it is apparent in these instances that his view and treatment of women were counter-cultural and contrary to the norms and practices of his day.¹⁴⁸ Matthew, as well as the other Gospel writers (especially Luke), often mentions explicitly that women were included in Jesus’ circle of friends and disciples, or at least in his egalitarian perspective of humanity,¹⁴⁹ such as in Jesus’ teaching about the character identity of his “family members” (12:46–50; Mark 3:19–21, 31–35; Luke 8:19–21), the parable of the unforgiving servant (18:25), divorce (19:3–12; Mark 10:2–12; Luke 16:18), the blessing of discipleship (19:29; Mark 10:29–30; Luke 18:29), the marriage at the

¹⁴⁷ The earlier Alexandrian text, which includes the codexes Sinaiticus and Vaticanus, does not have Mark 16:9–20. This longer ending of Mark is found only in the “traditional text” that is based on the Textus Receptus and the Majority Text (for further discussion, see Porter, *How We Got the New Testament*, 67, 133, 139, 153, 166).

¹⁴⁸ Cf. Corley, *Women and the Historical Jesus*; and Corley, “Feminist Myths of Christian Origins,” 51–67, who argues that the gender egalitarianism that Jesus initiated did continue to the early church period but had later on yielded to the patriarchal system of the Roman world.

¹⁴⁹ I do not intend to enter into this debate over gender equality in the New Testament nor do I want to argue against any particular view, especially since I acknowledge that there are in fact many views within a particular view’s camp. But based on the Gospels’ evidence, it is most likely that Jesus did view the kingdom of God as an egalitarian community (so Crossan, *The Essential Jesus*; Crossan, *The Historical Jesus*; Theissen, *Sociology of Early Palestinian Christianity*; and Theissen and Merz, *The Historical Jesus*). Contra Elliott, “Jesus Was Not an Egalitarian,” 75–91; and Elliott, “The Jesus Movement Was Not Egalitarian but Family-Oriented,” 173–210, who challenges this proto-Christian egalitarian view or the “discipleship of equals” theory (cf. Corley, “The Egalitarian Jesus,” 291–325; and Davis, “Some Reflections,” 201–8). For a critique of Elliott, see Beavis, “Christian Origins, Egalitarianism, and Utopia,” 27–49.

resurrection (22:23–33; Mark 12:18–27; Luke 20:27–40), the end-of-days events (24:19; Mark 13:17; Luke 21:23–24), and the parable of the ten bridesmaid, in quoting the Decalogue (5:7–28; 19:19; Mark 10:19; Luke 18:20) and the Old Testament “daughter of Zion” (21:5; cf. Isa 62:11; Zech 9:9; John 12:15), in mentioning the servant girl during Peter’s denial (26:69–75), and in introducing Jesus’ family lineage (1:1–17) and nuclear family (13:55–56; cf. 1:16, 18–25; 2:11; Mark 6:3; John 6:42).¹⁵⁰

It is fair to say that wherever Jesus was in his public ministry, his disciples will also be there with him. The disciples were his companions and friends. The types of social interactions between Jesus and his disciples range from casual conversations to serious, intimate teachings and instructions. They traveled together to various places in ancient Palestine, notably in Judea and Galilee, interacted with different social groups, and ministered to the people in many different ways. The Gospels recount many of these things and stories. I highlighted many of Jesus’ interaction with the various fixed domains discussed above. However, with reference to the episodes of “Jesus and his disciples,” I will simply provide a general overview of their social interactions, especially as I will be examining them in more detail in the next chapter.

The three most common domains that Jesus and his disciples interacted with are the family, friendship, and religion domains. An example of a family domain episode is the event of Jesus’ dining at Matthew’s house (Matt 9:9–13; Mark 2:14–17; Luke 5:27–

¹⁵⁰ There are of course many other episodes in the four Gospels that are not found in Matthew. On studies on women in the New Testament, see Newsom and Ringe, eds., *Women’s Bible Commentary*; Meyers, Craven, and Kraemer, eds., *Women in Scripture*; Gench, *Back to the Well*; Miller, *Women in Mark’s Gospel*; Bauckham, *Gospel Women*; Yamaguchi, *Mary and Martha*; Getty-Sullivan, *Women in the New Testament*; Kraemer and D’Angelo, *Women and Christian Origins*; Thurston, *Knowing Her Place*; Reid, *Choosing the Better Part?*; Moloney, *Woman First among the Faithful*; Witherington, *Women in the Ministry of Jesus*; Moltmann-Wendel, *The Women around Jesus*; and Stendahl, *The Bible and the Role of Women*.

32), although one can argue that this event should belong to the government domain, since Matthew was still a tax collector at that time, and that their conversations would have involved non-personal, business matters.¹⁵¹ Jesus' calling of his disciples is an example of a friendship domain (Matt 4:18–22//Mark 1:16–20//Luke 5:2–11);¹⁵² John's Gospel further mentions the disciples staying at Jesus' house (John 1:35–42). In some instances, such as in his transfiguration in the “high” (ὕψηλός) mountain (Matt 17:1//Mark 9:2//Luke 9:28), in the garden of Gethsemane (Matt 26:37//Mark 14:33), and in the healing of Jairus's daughter (Mark 5:37–43//Luke 8:51–57), Jesus only took with him Peter, James, and John (with Andrew in the Mount of Olives [Mark 13:3]). Jesus and his disciples would also have regularly visited the temple, especially during the Passover festivals (e.g., Matt 26:17–19; Mark 14:12–16; Luke 22:7–13). This is an example of their interaction with the religion domain.

On many occasions, Jesus taught the people in the synagogues (Matt 4:24; 9:35; 13:54; Mark 1:21; Luke 4:15; John 6:59; 7:14, 28; 18:20) and in the temple courts (Matt 21:23–27; Mark 11:27–33; 12:35; Luke 20:1–8). In fact, both Matt 26:55 and Luke 19:47 (cf. 21:37) indicate that Jesus was teaching daily in the temple. We would naturally assume that these incidents of Jesus' teaching in the synagogue would fall under the religion domain. However, given the nature and function of the synagogues during Jesus' time (see above), it is possible that some of the synagogue incidents should probably have belonged to the education domain. On some occasions, Jesus was at the temple

¹⁵¹ See also Jesus' teaching of the parables of the Weeds, the Hidden Treasure, and the Net to his disciples at his home (Matt 13:36–52)—Τότε ἀφείς τοὺς ὄχλους ἦλθεν εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν (v. 36); and Matt 26:17–19//Mark 14:12–16//Luke 22:7–13, where Jesus celebrated his last supper with the disciples in a friend's house.

¹⁵² The following may also be generally classified as friendship domains: Matt 5:1–7:29; 9:35–38; 10:1–42; 13:1–35; 14:13–21; 14:22–36; 15:29–39; 16:5–12; 16:13–28; 18:1–35; 19:28–26:46.

driving out the traders and moneychangers and arguing with the religious leaders concerning buying and selling in the temple (Matt 21:12–16; Mark 11:15–17; Luke 19:45–46; John 2:14–17).¹⁵³ This is an example where Jesus interacted with the transaction domain—the Court of Gentiles was a place for commercial activity (see above), although because he actually did not transact business with the moneychanger should mitigate us from seeing this as happening in a transaction domain. Another transaction domain can be seen in Jesus and his disciples’ encounter with the collectors of the two-drachma temple tax (οἱ τὰ δίδραχμα λαμβάνοντες) in Capernaum (Matt 17:24–27). In all these occasions, Jesus would most likely have been with his disciples (at least with some of them on different occasions).¹⁵⁴

Mary and Joseph and Jesus’ brothers (ἀδελφοί) and sisters (ἀδελφαί) were his blood family (Matt 2:13–23; 13:55–56; Mark 6:3; Luke 2:4–7, 22–52; Gal 1:19), but they were also his disciples. Jesus’ compares his blood family to those who do the will of God to explain what true familial relationship meant for him (Matt 12:46–50; Mark 3:31–35; Luke 8:19–21; cf. John 19:26–27). The Gospel of John notes that Jesus’ brothers did not believe in him at least during the early part of his ministry (John 7:1–10). Later, however, Acts 1:12–14 records Jesus’ mother and half-siblings praying with the apostles in finding a replacement for Judas. While the Gospels did not provide substantial information concerning Jesus’ life and relationship with his blood family, it is important to note that Jesus would no doubt have spent a good portion of his time with them in the family domain, especially during his childhood and teenage years.

¹⁵³ John’s Gospel mentions two (6:4; 11:55), or possibly three (5:1), additional Passover festivals.

¹⁵⁴ On one occasion, the child Jesus reasoned with the religious teachers in the temple (Luke 2:46–47), and one could argue that Jesus in this instance was interacting with the teachers in the education domain.

Jesus and the Religious Leaders

Jesus also interacted frequently with the religious leaders of his day. His most frequent interactions were with the Pharisees (Matt 9:11, 34; 12:2, 14, 24; 15:12; 22:15, 34, 41). For the most part, the relationship between Jesus and the Pharisees seemed to be antagonistic, with the latter usually finding ways and means to trap Jesus in what he did and said. The Pharisees were sometimes mentioned with the Sadducees. John the Baptist condemned these two groups, calling them offspring of vipers (Γεννήματα ἔχιδνῶν), shortly before Jesus' baptism in the Jordan River (Matt 3:7). These two groups also confronted Jesus in the vicinity of Magadan (Μαγαδάν), an unknown location near Lake Gennesaret (Matt 15:39), asking him to show them a sign (σημεῖον) from heaven (Matt 16:1–12; Mark 8:11–21). The Pharisees were also mentioned with the scribes (γραμματεῖς). On various occasions, Jesus taught his disciples about righteousness (Matt 5:20) and hypocrisy (Matt 23:2, 13, 15), using the Pharisees and the scribes as examples. Both these groups also challenged Jesus in a few instances either demanding for a sign (Matt 12:38) or questioning him on breaking Sabbath laws (Matt 12:1–8; Mark 2:23–28; Luke 6:1–5). Most of Jesus' encounters with these religious groups of people were in the friendship domain.

The chief priests (ἀρχιερεῖς) were another religious group that Jesus encountered. They were sometimes mentioned with the scribes and the elders (πρεσβύτεροι). It was this group of religious leaders that plotted Jesus' trial and arrest and delivered Jesus to the cross (Matt 16:21; 20:18; 21:15, 23; 27:1, 3, 12, 20, 41; Mark 8:31; 10:33; 11:18, 27; 14:1, 43, 53; 15:1, 31; Luke 9:22; 20:1, 19; 22:2, 66; 23:10). Chief priests were members of the Sanhedrin (see Religion Domain above), and their head priest or high priest

(ἀρχιερεὺς) during Jesus' trial was Caiaphas (Καϊάφας; Matt 26:57–68; Mark 14:53–65; John 18:12–24). While Jesus' met this group of religious leaders once in the transaction domain (Matt 21:15, 23), most of his encounters with them were in either the religion or government domain. This fact should tell us that Jesus actually died at the hands of this political, religious group of his day. Jesus had few political connections, as he was merely an ordinary Jewish citizen who had the mission of establishing God's kingdom and of helping the needy.

Jesus and the Crowd

It is fascinating to observe that the various groups of “crowds” (ὄχλοι) mentioned in the Gospels played a significant role in Jesus' social network. There are two general references to the ὄχλοι mentioned in the Gospels.¹⁵⁵ The first one refers simply to a large group of people that gathered together on a specific occasion for some common purposes (e.g., Matt 9:23, 25; 15:35; Mark 2:4; 3:9; Luke 5:1; John 5:13; 6:22). Such large crowds came from various geographical places (Matt 5:1; 7:28; 8:1; 12:15; 13:2; 15:30; 19:2; Mark 10:1; Luke 5:15; 14:25). The second reference is used to contrast the “common people” (ὄχλοι) from those of the upper classes of society (e.g., Matt 14:5; 15:10; 21:26, 46; 26:5; Mark 6:34; 11:18, 32; John 7:49). It is possible that the various ὄχλοι encountered by Jesus might have constituted one of the motivations of his teaching and social ministry (e.g., Matt 9:35–38; 14:14). Jesus almost always met them in the friendship domain, although the ὄχλοι were also present in the religion domain, when he was in the temple courts teaching (see Matt 21:23—23:1), and the government domain, when Jesus was at his trials before Pilate (Matt 27:20; Mark 15:11). On a few occasions,

¹⁵⁵ See Arndt, Danker, and Bauer, *Lexicon*, 746; and Louw and Nida, *Lexicon*, 1:119, 739.

Jesus encountered them in the family domain, such as when he was at the house of the synagogue ruler (Matt 9:23, 25) and when he healed a paralytic at a house in Capernaum (Mark; 2:3–12; cf. Matt 9:2–8; Luke 5:18–26). Some ὄχλοι seemed attentive to Jesus' teaching (e.g., Matt 13:1–3a; Luke 5:1), but others appeared to be hostile to him (e.g., Matt 27:20, 22). Nevertheless, the important thing to note here is that Jesus had considerable interaction with various groups of ὄχλοι in ancient Palestine.

Jesus' social network shows that he interacted with diverse ethnic individuals and social groups in various fixed domains, which, in turn, indicates that he needed to be a multilingual speaker of at least the Aramaic and Greek languages.¹⁵⁶ However, a still lingering issue concerns the level or degree to which he was able to speak those languages. The frequency of his interaction with each individual or social group in various domains may tell us something about his linguistic proficiency in that particular default language, but the linguistic proficiency of an individual can further be examined using individual bilingualism proficiency concepts, a subject that I will now turn to and discuss in this final section.

JESUS' MULTILINGUAL PROFICIENCY

The topic here is intricately related to two other issues, namely, the education domain of ancient Palestine, which I have discussed above, and the literacy of Jesus, which is a subject that has continued to receive scholarly attention in Gospel studies. For the most part, the study of Jesus' literacy is gleaned from the limited historical evidence we have from the Gospels. Studies on Jesus' literacy naturally encroach upon my study

¹⁵⁶ Cf. Strauss, *Four Portraits*, 421, who conjectures, “Jesus was probably trilingual, speaking Aramaic in the home and with friends, using Hebrew in religious contexts, and conversing in Greek in business and government contexts”; and Strauss, “Introducing the Bible,” 14.

of Jesus' multilingual proficiency, since Jesus' speaking ability also relates to his reading and writing ability (literacy) and depends upon the frequency and density of his social network (see above).¹⁵⁷ Inasmuch as I want to engage in this scholarly discussion on Jesus' literacy, however, I need to focus on my objective and keep my discussion within the purview of this study. And, additionally, because my methodological approach to the study of Jesus' multilingual proficiency is uniquely different from past studies, I see it impractical to do so. Nevertheless, while I will refrain from critiquing studies on Jesus' literacy, I will still interact with them when necessary. There are three things that I wish to say before I delve into my subject of interest.

First, the definition of literacy for both antiquity and modernity is a subject of continuous debate.¹⁵⁸ Scholarly definitions ranges from the simple use of language (i.e., speaking) in "oral cultures" at one end of the spectrum to the ability to read and write texts at the other end.¹⁵⁹ The specific timeframe of ancient Israel's literacy is also a significant issue that one needs to carefully delineate. During the Bronze and Iron Ages, Israel was for the most part still a Hebrew-speaking nation. Literacy during that period must be measured with reference to the Hebrew language.¹⁶⁰ But literacy during the

¹⁵⁷ Cf. Heszer, *Jewish Literacy*, 242–43, who makes a similar argument, stating that, "The frequency and density of such contacts [i.e., Jesus' contacts in my case] depended on the place where the person lived and on the composition of his social network, including the extended family, friends, neighbors, and business contacts."

¹⁵⁸ See, for example, Treiman and Kessler, "Writing Systems," 120–34; Seymour, "Early Reading Development," 296–315; Byrne, "Theories of Learning to Read," 104–19; Rollston, "Phoenician Script," 61–96; Niditch, *Oral Word and Written Word*, esp. 39–98; and Schniedewind, *How the Bible Became a Book*, 35–63.

¹⁵⁹ I argue and note that "oral culture" is an elusive and inaccurate nomenclature that is used to contrast ancient societies from modern ones. Our modern society is as much an "oral culture" as yesterday's society, although it is significant to note that oral media takes precedence over textual media in ancient societies (cf. Niditch, *Oral Word and Written Word*, 41). But it is fair to say that the obvious difference between ancient and modern societies is perhaps the sophistication of the writing system and textual media of the latter.

¹⁶⁰ For a discussion of literacy during these periods, see Rollston, *Writing and Literacy*, esp. 127–35.

subsequent periods until the early centuries of the Common Era must be evaluated with reference to the Aramaic, Greek, and Latin languages at various time periods due to the language shifts that happened in ancient Israel's history (see chapter 3). For example, while the majority of the people of the first century may be able to speak Greek, it does not follow that they are able to write Greek, apart from a few common words, such as their own names.

Second, I note the three recent monographs of Chris Keith on the subject of Jesus' literacy.¹⁶¹ In all three studies, Keith seeks to determine the level or degree of Jesus' education and literacy.¹⁶² Keith argues that Jesus was not a scribal-literate teacher, yet he was able to convince others that he was.¹⁶³ It is fair to say that Keith's investigation is in some ways anchored in his social-memory approach, a "historiographical, sociological method" that a number of recent Gospel scholars are using to understand the nature and development of the Jesus tradition.¹⁶⁴ I seriously question the relevance and the capability of such a methodological approach in investigating Jesus' literacy and education, however. What studies on Jesus' literacy like Keith's can at best offer is only a descriptive reconstruction of what the education system of the first century could have looked like, something that is similar to what I did in my discussion of the education domain above. Assuredly, one cannot actually determine the level of Jesus' literacy. But

¹⁶¹ See Keith, *Scribal Elite*, esp. 15–37; Keith, *Jesus' Literacy*, esp. 1–26, 71–123, 165–88; and Keith, *The Pericope Adulterae*, esp. 53–94.

¹⁶² In *Scribal Elite*, Keith ties in his theory of Jesus as a "scribal-illiterate carpenter," who occupies frequently the position of a "scribal-literate authority," a position that he was not supposed to occupy in the eyes of Jewish leaders, with Jesus' conflict with the religious authorities of his day (see xi, 6, 155–57).

¹⁶³ See Keith, *Jesus Literacy*, 4, 165, 187–88.

¹⁶⁴ On the use of social-memory approaches in Gospel studies, see Keith, *Jesus' Literacy*, 47–70; and Eve, *Behind the Gospels*, 86–134; Foster, "Memory," 193–202; and Le Donne, "Problem of Selectivity," 85–87. See also Porter and Ong, "Memory...A Response," 143–64.

one cannot nonetheless be hopeless. In fact, Keith points out that the current state of discussion of the issue is “an attempt to decide how best to interpret the paucity of evidence we have in light of the overwhelming amount of evidence we lack.”¹⁶⁵ So for Keith, his objective and method is “to propose an answer to ‘What really happened?’ with regards to Jesus’ literate status...but only once the early Christian claims about Jesus’ literate status are appreciated...in light of the literate landscape of first-century Judaism.”¹⁶⁶

So third, the important task is for us to search for an appropriate methodological tool and use it as a lens to interpret the historical data. To be sure, Catherine Hezser remarks, “In order to determine the likelihood of a widespread bilingualism or even trilingualism amongst Jews in Roman Palestine, one has to examine the factors which will have advanced or impeded an individual person’s acquisition of a particular language and determined the level of proficiency which he or she achieved.”¹⁶⁷ In Keith’s approach, it seems that any interpretation is feasible as long as one is able to support it with evidence (that everyone uses). But this of course is not the best direction to go. This section thus attempts to offer some supplementary and clarificatory information to previous studies, such as Keith’s, which seems to lack methodological sophistication and rigor.¹⁶⁸ It is important to remember that the issue I am addressing here concerns the

¹⁶⁵ Keith, *Jesus’ Literacy*, 72 (but note the contradiction in this statement).

¹⁶⁶ Keith, *Jesus’ Literacy*, 70.

¹⁶⁷ Hezser, *Jewish Literacy*, 237.

¹⁶⁸ Keith’s method may be summed up in his statement: “Given the need to avoid claiming more than the evidence can bear, then, in what follows ‘literate education’ will refer to the acquisition of reading and writing skills without implying a formal framework for stages for how that happened, as reflected in latter rabbinic tradition. Additionally, although the focus will be on Second Temple Jewish evidence from Roman Palestine, relevant Diasporan and comparative evidence will be included as well” (see Keith, *Jesus’ Literacy*, 72).

multilingual proficiency (i.e., the ability to speak multiple languages) and not the literacy level (i.e., the ability to read and write) of Jesus.

Individual Bilingualism Proficiency Theories

Given the fact that the sociolinguistic environment of Jesus was multilingual, studies concerning Jesus' language proficiency need to take multilingualism as the starting point of reference. Several reasons support this proposal. First, when dealing with Jesus' literacy, we are not measuring his linguistic competency in just one language as we would in measuring the linguistic proficiency of, for example, a monolingual English individual.¹⁶⁹ Second, as discussed above (see Education Domain section), the language a Jewish child was exposed to in any of the three stages of education in the ancient Greco-Roman society depended on the subject matter he or she was studying. In the primary, Jewish fathers or teachers would likely have instructed young children in Greek and Aramaic. But this scenario was definitely different from when they learned philosophy, law, rhetoric, grammar, etc. in higher education. Third, modern research and statistics show that the linguistic competencies of a bilingual in a particular language is normally lower than that of a monolingual, since the nature and circumstances involved in the learning and cognitive processes between monolinguals and bilinguals are significantly different.¹⁷⁰ Thus, it is pointless to compare multilingual's multiple language proficiencies with those of a monolingual.¹⁷¹ Fourth, because research on bilinguals' underachievement in education indicates that one of the causes is sometimes attributed to

¹⁶⁹ Keith, *Scribal Elite*, 26–27, also recognizes this socio-historical fact.

¹⁷⁰ See Baker and Jones, *Encyclopedia of Bilingualism*, 9–11.

¹⁷¹ Professor François Grosjean popularized this argument, providing the analogy of a sprinter, a high jumper, and a hurdler. Grosjean says that, while the sprinter and high jumper focus on one skill and may excel in it, the hurdler, although trying to excel in both, had to concentrate on two different skills (see Grosjean, *Life with Two Languages*).

the “mismatch” between not only the languages used in the home and the school but also the cultural dissimilarities, measuring a bilingual’s linguistic proficiency becomes extremely difficult.¹⁷² To be sure, “Bilinguals use their two languages with different people, in different contexts and for different purposes. Levels of proficiency in a language may depend on which contexts (e.g. street, home) and how often that language is used.”¹⁷³ Fifth and last, multilingual linguistic proficiency must further be measured in terms of the receptive (listening and reading) and productive (speaking and writing) skills of the multilingual with reference to each of their known languages.¹⁷⁴ As such, one also needs to determine the type of bilingual a person is through the so-called concept of childhood bilingualism (see below).

Using individual multilingualism, then, as our starting point, there are four concepts that need to be defined and discussed—types of bilinguals, code-switching, types of bilingual families and childhood bilingualism, and categories of measuring bilingual proficiency. The categories subsumed under each of these three concepts may subsequently be used to analyze and identify which of the categories would best characterize or fit the multilingual Jesus of ancient Palestine based on the pertinent historical data gleaned from the Gospel accounts. The results of this study of course cannot be conclusive; yet, despite this limitation, I still think that we can move the discussion forward, when we use an appropriate methodological tool to examine the evidence.

¹⁷² See Baker and Jones, *Encyclopedia of Bilingualism*, 570–75.

¹⁷³ Baker and Jones, *Encyclopedia of Bilingualism*, 11. It should be noted that this has been the subject matter I have tackled in the above two main sections of this chapter.

¹⁷⁴ See Baker and Jones, *Encyclopedia of Bilingualism*, 90–94.

Types of Bilinguals

The classic or layperson's definition of a bilingual is an individual who holds a native-like control of two or more languages. Sociolinguists varyingly label such an individual as a balanced bilingual, true bilingual, symmetrical bilingual, equilingual, or ambilingual.¹⁷⁵ Sociolinguists, however, say that balanced bilingualism is not only a rare but also an idealized phenomenon. Balanced bilingualism, strictly speaking, would entail that a bilingual has no accent, no non-target vocabulary and expression selection, no age of second language acquisition, equal quality of linguistic instruction received, and equal amount of language usage in all the known languages of the bilingual. Moreover, it also means that the bilingual is situated in a speech community where there is equal status, function, and usage of all its languages in all social domains, a linguistic situation that is virtually inexistent.¹⁷⁶ Nevertheless, to speak of balanced bilingualism in terms of a single area of linguistic proficiency, especially speaking and listening, for instance, is quite possible.¹⁷⁷

A second type of bilingual individuals is a simultaneous or early bilingual. Simultaneous bilinguals are those who have acquired both of their languages at an early age and who have used both of them throughout their life. Most second-generation (and

¹⁷⁵ See Halliday, *Language and Society*, 7; Bullock and Toribio, "Themes," 7; and Baker and Jones, *Encyclopedia of Bilingualism*, 12–13.

¹⁷⁶ Halliday, *Language and Society*, 8, points out that near-ambilinguals who have native-like control of two or more languages "rarely perform all language activities in both." Similarly, Hamers and Blanc, *Bilinguality and Bilingualism*, 8, says that "Dominance or balance is not equally distributed for all domains and functions of language; each individual has his own dominance configuration."

¹⁷⁷ A corollary to balanced bilingualism is semilingualism or double semilingualism, which relates to bilinguals who are deficient in their command of both languages, and prestigious bilingualism, which is associated with bilinguals who own two high status languages—English and French, for instance, among bilingual speakers in Canada, French and Dutch in Belgium, Finnish and Swedish in Finland, English and Chinese (Mandarin) in Singapore (see Sebba, "Societal Multilingualism," 445–46) and English and Filipino (or Tagalog) in the Philippines. On these categories, see Baker and Jones, *Encyclopedia of Bilingualism*, 14–17.

some third-generation) immigrants are simultaneous bilinguals. Some sociolinguists further differentiate simultaneous bilinguals from consecutive, sequential, or successive bilinguals, since the latter acquire their native language at home and the dominant language or *lingua franca* outside of home not concurrently but consecutively (approximately between the age three and five for acquisition of the second language outside of home).¹⁷⁸ Over time, however, early bilinguals may become more exposed to the dominant language, such that their descendants will become more fluent speakers of that language.

A third type of bilingual individuals is a second-language acquirer or late bilingual. This category refers to those who have the linguistic system of their native language in place (at reaching adulthood) when they begin to learn their second language. Second-language acquirers are classified as either naturalistic or folk bilinguals (without formal instruction) or elite bilinguals (with formal instruction). For many second-language acquirers, learning the new language is often a necessity so that they can function more effectively, usually for personal and professional gain, in the dominant society. During the early stage of second-language acquisition, learners who are unable to produce a target form may switch to speak their native language, a process referred to as “crutching.”

The above three types of individual bilingualism are just useful terms or reference points by which we may characterize the type of bilingual an individual is. But it is important to note that bilinguals are speakers of multiple languages that fall along a

¹⁷⁸ A phenomenon relevant to both simultaneous and consecutive bilingualism is what is known as “subtractive bilingual situation.” This is an instance when a second language is introduced to a child, which detracts them from developing their skills in the first language (see Lambert, “Social Psychology,” 415–24).

bilingual cline, and the identification of bilingual types therefore needs to be described more fully.¹⁷⁹

Code-switching

An important concept related to individual bilingualism is code-switching.¹⁸⁰ All bilinguals of any type have the ability to switch between languages when the social situation calls for it. There are two major social motivations and reasons for code-switching,¹⁸¹ and bilinguals switch between codes either consciously (marked) or unconsciously (unmarked).¹⁸² First, bilinguals code-switch for social identity reasons. Henri Tajfel defines “social identity” as “that part of the individual’s self-concept which derives from their knowledge of their membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership.”¹⁸³ The idea is that people always project a public image and that they prefer a positive to a negative self-image, which is reflected by their linguistic code choice.¹⁸⁴ Second, bilinguals code-switch to accommodate the needs of their audience or adjust to the social norm of a

¹⁷⁹ Mackey, “Description of Bilingualism,” 555–83, notes that bilingualism is a relative concept, and it involves the question of degree (knowledge of the known languages by the bilingual), function (the role and purpose of language usage), alternation (code-switching and language shifting ability), and interference (how do bilinguals separate and fuse their languages).

¹⁸⁰ Baker and Jones, *Encyclopedia of Bilingualism*, 36–43, 58–61.

¹⁸¹ Gal, “Code Choice,” 247, says that code-switching is a conversational strategy (or tool) that a bilingual can use to “establish, cross or destroy group boundaries; to create, evoke or change interpersonal relations with their rights and obligations.” Finlayson, Calteaux, and Myers-Scotton, “Orderly Mixing,” 417, also says that code-switching reduces possibilities of situational conflicts.

¹⁸² Wardhaugh, *Introduction*, 104. “Unmarked” and “marked” are terms typically used in linguistics to mean, respectively, “conventional, neutral, ordinary,” and “unconventional, positive, and out of the ordinary.” Swigart, “Two Codes or One?” 83–102, applies these terms to distinguish between code-switching employed strategically or purposefully to achieve a goal (marked) and code-switching as a norm (unmarked).

¹⁸³ Tajfel, ed., *Social Identity*, 2.

¹⁸⁴ See Tajfel, *Human Groups*, 45.

community.¹⁸⁵ Accommodation behavior comes in two types—convergence and divergence. Convergence happens when a speaker tries to adopt the accent, dialect, or language of his audience as a conversation or politeness strategy. Divergence is seen when a speaker decides not to converge to their audience, and the behavior is understood as uncooperative or antagonistic.

From these two main social motivations of code-switching result the various functions of code-switching. One function is to emphasize a particular point in a conversation. Another function is to reinforce a request or to clarify a point. A third common function is to communicate friendship or family bonding. A fourth one is to use it as a way of interjecting into a conversation. A fifth function is to ease tension and inject humor into a conversation. A sixth one is to exclude people from a conversation. And a seventh and last function is to change or transition relationship (e.g., breaking social boundaries).

Code-switching also comes in two common types—situational and metaphorical code-switching. Situational code-switching occurs when bilinguals switch between codes for situational, contextual reasons, such as when there is a sudden arrival of a new person (e.g., the arrival of Jesus at Peter's house in Capernaum to heal Peter's sick mother-in-law in Matt 8:14–16) in the social scene or when there is a change in the social domain of a speech event (e.g., when Jesus was taken from the Sanhedrin court to Pilate's residence in Matt 26:57; 27:1–2, 11). Metaphorical code-switching happens when there is a change in the topic of conversation, such that the new topic calls for a change in the linguistic code that needs to be used. When Jesus told the parable of the sower in Matt 13:1–23, a

¹⁸⁵ Giles and Coupland, *Language*, 60–61.

metaphorical code-switching might have occurred when the disciples came to Jesus and asked him for the meaning of the parable (Matt 13:10). While Jesus might have told the parable to the large crowds (ὄχλοι πολλοί) that gathered around him (Matt 13:2) in Greek, he might have explained the meaning of the parable to his own disciples in Greek (see chapter 5). Whatever the actual case may be, my point here is merely to show that Jesus, as a multilingual speaker, would have practiced code-switching in his daily conversations.

Types of Bilingual Families (or Childhood Bilingualism)

Sociolinguists have identified six broad categories of family bilingualism,¹⁸⁶ and these categories are determined based on a set of configuration of three factors—the native language of the parents, the language of the community at large, and the parents’ language strategy in speaking to the child. But it is important to note that there are many sociolinguistic factors and issues that affect the nature and level of bilingualism within an individual family.¹⁸⁷ A common scenario, for example, is that many immigrant families who are originally monolinguals of a minority language convert to bilinguals in the minority and majority language then back to monolinguals in the majority language within two or three generations. To be sure, every “bilingual family is different, with its own patterns of language within the family and between the family and the local community.”¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁶ These categories are gleaned from Harding and Riley, *Bilingual Family*, esp. 47–8; and Romaine, “Bilingual Language Development,” 287–303, who includes examples of studies done on each type of childhood bilingualism in the modern world. See also Baker and Jones, *Encyclopedia of Bilingualism*, 30, 33.

¹⁸⁷ For a list and discussion of these factors and issues, see Baker and Jones, *Encyclopedia of Bilingualism*, 28–33. See also Romaine, “Bilingual Language Development,” 291–302.

¹⁸⁸ See Baker and Jones, *Encyclopedia of Bilingualism*, 28.

The first type of childhood bilingualism is known as “one-person-one-language.” The parents have different native languages, but each has some degree of competence in the other’s language. The language of one of the parents is the dominant language of the community. Both parents speak their native languages to the child from birth.

The second type is known as “non-dominant home language” or “one language-one-environment.” The parents have different native languages. The language of one of them is the dominant language of the community. Both parents speak the non-dominant language to the child, but the child is fully exposed to the dominant language when outside the home, especially in the education domain.

The third type is called “non-dominant home language without community support.” The parents speak the same native language, which is different from the dominant language of the community. The parents speak their native language to the child.

The fourth type is called “double non-dominant home language without community support.” The parents have different native languages, neither of which is the dominant language. The parents each speak their own language to the child from birth.

The fifth type is labeled as “non-native parents.” The parents share the same native language, which is the dominant language of the community. But one of the parents always addresses the child in a language, which is not his or her native language.

The sixth and last type is labeled as “mixed languages.” The parents are bilingual. Sectors of the community may also be bilingual. Parents speak both languages to the child and tend to code-switch and mix languages.

I add here another type of childhood bilingualism. This type is based on my own experience as a bilingual child from bilingual parents (who speak their shared native language to me), and as a bilingual father to my virtually monolingual children. I perhaps can also accurately say that this is more or less the linguistic situation for many of the Filipino-Chinese immigrants of my generation in the English-speaking world, such as in the United States, Canada, Australia, and England.

So the seventh type can be called “non-native parents and mixed languages,” perhaps an amalgamation of the fifth and sixth type. The parents are bilingual who share the same native language. The native language is not the dominant language of the community. The parents speak their native language to the child, but the child speaks the dominant language outside the home (my parents’ family)—type A, or the parents speak the dominant language to the child, and mixing languages and code-switching on occasions (my own family)—type B.

Categories of Measuring Bilingual Proficiency

Colin Baker and Sylvia Prys Jones say that, “To classify people as either bilinguals or monolinguals is too simplistic. In between white and black are many shades of gray.”¹⁸⁹ This is actually true, since stereotyping is not the means to identify whether one is a bilingual. Second-language educators devise bilingual proficiency tests to determine the competency of a bilingual with reference to their known languages. Bilingual proficiency is measured by intersecting eight-dimensional elements that assess the language skills and abilities of a bilingual individual (see Table E below). The vertical dimensions contain the listening and speaking (oracy) and reading and writing

¹⁸⁹ Baker and Jones, *Encyclopedia of Bilingualism*, 91.

(literacy) components, whereas the horizontal dimensions include the listening and reading (receptive or passive) and speaking and writing (productive or active) components. These eight dimensions tell us about four basic language abilities of a bilingual individual, and at the same time, allow us to measure their oracy versus literacy abilities as well as their receptive and productive skills. Typically, they say that listening is the easiest skill to acquire, followed by speaking, reading, and writing, although they also recognize that some bilinguals are able to read and write well, without being able to speak particularly well because of lack of speaking practice in the particular language.¹⁹⁰

Table E: Eight Dimensions of Bilingual Proficiency Skills¹⁹¹

	1st LANGUAGE		2nd LANGUAGE	
	Oracy	Literacy	Oracy	Literacy
Receptive	Listening	Reading	Listening	Reading
Productive	Speaking	Writing	Speaking	Writing

Without even delving into the sub-skills (e.g., pronunciation, vocabulary repertoire, grammar, and styles of speaking) of each of the four basic language abilities,¹⁹² it is important to note that these basic language skills all fall within a range of abilities, say, from poor to excellent. For example, speaking ability can range from being “basic” or “elementary” to being “fluent” or “accomplished.” Similarly, it is also important to identify which particular language ability of a bilingual we are measuring. When we talk about Jesus’ literacy, for instance, are we referring to his oracy, literacy, or overall language skills? I would argue that, based on the information in the Gospel

¹⁹⁰ See Baker and Jones, *Encyclopedia of Bilingualism*, 90–94.

¹⁹¹ Reproduced from Baker and Jones, *Encyclopedia of Bilingualism*, 90.

¹⁹² Hernandez-Chavez, Burt, and Dulay, “Language Dominance,” 41–54, suggests that these four basic language abilities can be further broken down into sixty-four separate components. Oller, “Evaluation and Testing,” 99–112, argues otherwise and says that there is only one overall component in a language, since these four basic language abilities overlap each other.

accounts, studying the oracy skills of Jesus is the best thing that we can offer. For this reason, if scholars say that it is impossible to determine the spoken languages of Jesus, then it is even more impossible to determine his literacy level, since there is just no way for us to measure his reading and writing skills with the available information we have. What we do have is linguistic evidence, which shows that ancient Palestine was a multilingual society (see chapters 1 and 3) and that Jesus' sociolinguistic environment was also multilingual and diglossic (see above).

Measuring Jesus' Multilingual Proficiency

In what follows, I will discuss three aspects relating to Jesus' multilingual proficiency. The first aspect concerns the type of childhood bilingualism Jesus would have acquired based on the languages of his parents, his sociolinguistic environment, and the possible languages he learned and received from his parents. With reference to the languages of Joseph and Mary, I would think that both of them would have been fluent speakers of Greek and Aramaic and receptive users of Hebrew (i.e., being able to understand the language when it is used in liturgical settings), although we have to allow for the possibility that Mary might have been less fluent in Greek, since women would have spent most of their time in the home.¹⁹³ A few factors seem to support this hypothesis. One is that the person, "someone" (τις), from the large crowd (see Matt 12:15; Luke 8:19) who reported to Jesus about his mother and siblings waiting for him (Matt 12:46–50; Mark 3:31–35; Luke 8:19–21) could have been a Greek speaker. If he were, then Jesus' mother and siblings would have conversed with the person in Greek (Matt 12:47; Mark 3:31). There is a high probability that the person was a Greek speaker,

¹⁹³ That Joseph and Mary knew Hebrew may be assumed from their participation in temple and synagogue services as believing Jews (Luke 2:22–24, 41).

since Jesus was preaching in the towns of Galilee, including Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum (Matt 11:1, 20–24) to a large crowd concerning various topics, and since the people in the crowd would have included many non-Jews (see chapter 5). A second factor is that by Jesus' time, most Jews would already have at least been receptive speakers of the Greek language by virtue of the duration of time that has elapsed, which allowed for the language shift of the *lingua franca* (from Aramaic to Greek) of the speech community (see chapter 3). A third and last factor is that Galilee was predominantly a Greek-speaking region (see Table C in chapter 3). For Jesus' family to have resided in that region meant that they would also have been exposed to speaking Greek.

Because Mary and Joseph were bilinguals in Greek and Aramaic, the question now becomes which language did they use to speak to Jesus in the home. There are two possibilities, but one is more likely than the other. It is possible that the family practiced code-switching at home, which means that they alternated using Greek or Aramaic or tried to mix Greek and Aramaic in their conversations at home. But given the fact that they were a Jewish family, and considering the cultural milieu of the time, Jesus' parents would more likely have spoken to Jesus in Aramaic in the home. Moreover, the theories of social domain and diglossia indicate that the native language is typically the default language used in the home (see above). Thus, it is accurate to say that Jesus would largely have learned his Aramaic from speaking with his parents in the home (at least as a child) and his Greek from speaking with other people in the community outside of the home.¹⁹⁴ The social network of Jesus (see above and Appendix 2) would indicate that his frequent interaction with the various social domains of his community required him to

¹⁹⁴ The second-century apocryphal Infancy Gospel of Thomas 6:1–6 claims that Jesus learned his Greek from a teacher by the name of Zacchaeus.

know how to speak both Greek and Aramaic. As such, the bilingual family type of Jesus would fall somewhere along the seventh type (type A) category.

The second aspect, which follows from Jesus' bilingual family type, concerns the type of bilingual Jesus was. Jesus most likely was an early, consecutive bilingual. He was born to a Jewish bilingual family that taught him to speak his native language Aramaic. By the time he was ready for primary education at about the age of five or so, he would have studied in the synagogues or in private school homes and have been instructed in both Aramaic and Greek, depending on the subject he was learning at various moments (see Education Domain above). Whether Jesus had attained a higher level of education when he reached the age of thirteen is uncertain. We do not have any substantial evidence to support any kind of speculative assumptions and arguments. We do know, however, that he reasoned extraordinarily with the religious leaders in the temple at the age of twelve (Luke 2:42–48). That Jesus had reached the highest attainable level of education is even harder to speculate. Nevertheless, contrary to Keith's conjecture that Jesus did not reach scribal literacy (see above), it is not entirely impossible that Jesus might have attained a level of education beyond the primary. Jesus was an able and knowledgeable Jewish teacher (Matt 7:28; 13:54; Mark 6:2; cf. Luke 2:47; 4:22; John 8:6, 8),¹⁹⁵ and he taught in the synagogues. Moreover, because Jesus began his ministry at about the age of thirty, it is also at least possible that he had acquired a higher level of education, given

¹⁹⁵ Mark 6:2 states, "And when the Sabbath came, he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astounded (ἐκπλήσσω)... What is this wisdom (σοφία) that has been given him?" The term σοφία (see Louw and Nida, *Lexicon*, 2:225) could mean either "wisdom" (the capacity to comprehend correctly), "insight" (the knowledge repertoire of a wise man), or "specialized knowledge" (knowledge which makes possible skillful activity or performance). Its juxtaposition with the term ἐκπλήσσω (to be amazed to the point of being overwhelmed; see Arndt, Danker, and Bauer, *Lexicon*, 308) suggests that σοφία as used by Matthew and Mark could mean either "insight" or "specialized knowledge," or it could even mean both.

the span of time that would allow him to gain further education prior to his public ministry. Indeed, some Jewish boys attended the *ephebeia* (see above), if they had the financial means to do so. His use of parables may also suggest that he had learning beyond that of the primary, since only learned Jewish teachers would have known how to use this type of genre.¹⁹⁶ Additionally, Jesus' statement, "Surely you will quote this proverb to me: 'Physician heal yourself' (Πάντως ἐρεῖτέ μοι τὴν παραβολὴν ταύτην· Ἴατρὲ, θεράπευσον σεαυτόν)" (Luke 4:23), may also suggest that he had some acquaintance with both Jewish and Greek literature.¹⁹⁷ The only thing that would mitigate us from considering this possibility that Jesus did attend an education beyond the primary is if he did not have the financial means to do so.

The third and last aspect concerns how to measure Jesus' multilingual proficiency. As noted earlier, the best that we can offer here, on the basis of the information we have in the Gospel accounts as well as the available linguistic evidence, is to examine the oracy level (listening and speaking) of Jesus. We do not have sufficient information to speculate about Jesus' literacy skills (reading and writing), except for two instances in Luke 4:16–20 and John 8:6, 8.¹⁹⁸ We have thus far seen that Jesus lived in a multilingual

¹⁹⁶ Scholars have noted that at least 35 percent of Jesus' teaching is found in the form of parables (see Hunter, "Interpreter," 71; Stein, *Parables*, 22–26).

¹⁹⁷ This proverb is found in Greek literature, "A physician for others, but himself teeming with sores" (Euripides [480–406 BCE], *Incertarum Fabularum Fragmenta* 1086), as well as in Jewish literature, "Physician, physician heal thine own limp!" (*Genesis Rabbah* 23:4). Nolland, "Physician," 193–209, shows surviving parallels of this proverb in classical and rabbinic literature.

¹⁹⁸ For a summary of scholarly opinions on John 8:6, 8 (incl. Mark 6:3, Luke 4:16–20, and John 7:15), see Keith, *Jesus' Literacy*, 8–25, 13–16, 21–23. I strongly disagree with the opinion that Matt 13:55 and Mark 6:3 indicate that Jesus was unlearned because he was a carpenter's son, since for all we know those who heard him in the synagogue (Matt 13:54; Mark 6:2) did not know him well or only met him for the first time. I would even argue the same for the case in John 7:15. The Jews not only may not have known Jesus, but they also may just have assumed that Jesus was unlearned. Unless they actually had witnessed Jesus growing up from childhood to adulthood, they could not have possibly known the education of Jesus. The population of the 204 settlements and villages in Galilee was estimated to be about 630,000, so how would

sociolinguistic environment, and for this reason, he would have known the languages of the community in order to interact with the various ethnic residents who lived there and with the different social institutions and domains of the society. Jesus' oracy skills, however, in each of his known languages would have varied from being a receptive speaker to a fluent speaker of each of the languages. There is no doubt that Jesus would have been fluent in Aramaic (his native language) and in Greek (the prestige language and the *lingua franca* of the time). What is uncertain is his oracy ability in the Hebrew and Latin languages as well as his literacy ability in the Aramaic and Greek languages.¹⁹⁹

With reference to Hebrew, Jesus may have been able to read and understand the language (see Luke 4:14–20), but it is doubtful whether he would have been able to write or speak the language fluently (as Hebrew was neither his native language nor the dominant language of the community). But we cannot rule out the possibility that he was able to speak Hebrew, especially since he taught often in the synagogues and the temple, although we also need to keep in mind that the use of Hebrew was confined to liturgical and ceremonial settings, which were only usually performed by priests (see Religion Domain above).

With reference to Latin, Jesus may have been able to understand and say a few Latin words here and there. I say this for a few reasons. First and foremost, Jesus' pithy response Σὺ λέγεις (you have said so) during his interrogation before Pilate as recorded in the synoptic Gospels (Matt 27:11; Mark 15:2; Luke 23:3), in contrast to his answer to the similar questions before the Sanhedrin, may suggest that he uttered those words in

it be possible for everyone to know each other's name and family, much more their education, unless they lived in the same neighborhood or village?

¹⁹⁹ Porter, "The Language(s) Jesus Spoke," 2470, says that Jesus seems to have had active multilingual competence in Greek and Aramaic, and possibly even Hebrew.

Latin, regardless of whether Pilate spoke to him in Greek or Latin (see chapter 5). This is an instance where a multilingual speaker could have been converging or communicating friendship or simply showing solidarity with their conversation partner. Second, Jesus lived and worked in Galilee for most of his life. Galilee was a region that was commercially dependent upon the coastal areas of Phoenicia (even including Caesarea Maritima) as well as the northern regions of the Golan Heights and Tyre and Sidon (see chapter 3 on Galilee). These regions would have used Latin in some parts of their communities to some extent (see chapter 3 on Phoenicia, Samaria, and Table C). As such, it is likely that many Galileans would also have been exposed to the Latin language and would consequently have learned a few Latin words here and there. As Porter states, “Latin may have been an active second language for a limited number in strategic positions, and a passive second language for others (e.g., some tax collectors or possible religious leaders).²⁰⁰ Third, exposure of a Jewish multilingual to Roman officials in the Greco-Roman community of ancient Palestine would unavoidably have allowed for learning and acquiring some Latin words (language borrowing). This is simply the norm in a multilingual speech community.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has shown that Jesus lived in a social environment that was multilingual, and that in order for Jesus to have lived in that social environment, he would have to be a multilingual speaker. The various social institutions that comprised Jesus’ multilingual environment, which I have labeled fixed social domains, required the use of a particular default language for people to interact and communicate effectively

²⁰⁰ Porter, “The Language(s) Jesus Spoke,” 2470.

within those fixed domains. The default language is derived from a set of sociolinguistic elements—participants, social setting, and topic of conversation—that configures each fixed domain. Each of the episodes in the Gospels, which record Jesus’ various interactions with different individuals and social groups, happened within a particular fixed domain. This implies that Jesus must have known and been able to speak the default languages of these fixed domains. I have discussed Jesus’ interaction with these fixed domains through the concept of social network and have also summarized and displayed them through a diagram (see Appendix 2). That Jesus was able to speak the default languages of these fixed domains must be proven by way of his multilingual speaking proficiency, however. This endeavor becomes a tricky business, as the Gospels are lacking in much of the information that we need regarding Jesus’ literacy. Nevertheless, despite this lack of information, I have moved the scholarly discussion regarding Jesus’ literacy further by using a more sophisticated method in investigating the subject matter. To be specific, I have argued that Jesus was most probably an early, consecutive bilingual, who had learned the Aramaic language from his bilingual parents and the Greek language from school and the society in general. Consequently, Jesus would have been productively fluent in speaking these two languages, while at the same time, he would also have been receptively fluent to some degree in the Hebrew and Latin languages.

Chapter Five: Jesus' Multilingualism in the Gospel of Matthew

INTRODUCTION

We now have reached the last part of this study. My concern since chapter 3 has primarily been with demonstrating that ancient Palestine was a multilingual and diglossic speech community and that Jesus was a multilingual speaker who lived in that community. In chapter 3, I showed from a macro-sociolinguistic perspective how ancient Palestine, which originally was a Hebrew-speaking community, became a multilingual speech community. I also attempted to paint a geographical portrait of the possible linguistic landscape of the entire speech community. But that macro portrait of ancient Palestine's linguistic situation was unable to explain how people would have appropriated Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin in the various social institutions of the speech community. It also was unable to indicate whether Jesus actually interacted with those social institutions and whether he possessed the required ability to speak these languages. So, in chapter 4, I supplemented my macro analysis of the sociolinguistic situation of ancient Palestine with a microanalysis of the sociolinguistic world of Jesus. Chapter 4 discussed the six major social institutions, which I have called "fixed" (or standard) social or language domains, of ancient Palestine, and the social network and multilingual proficiency of Jesus. The chapter demonstrated that Jesus frequently interacted with these various fixed domains, and consequently, it argued that he probably was an early, consecutive multilingual who could speak Aramaic and Greek fluently, and Hebrew and Latin receptively (to some degree). Jesus' use of Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin in various speech situations can be further examined, however. In this chapter,

I will attempt to determine the language Jesus would have used in each of the episodes or speech situations in the Gospel of Matthew.

This chapter has two main sections. The first section explains the theory of ethnography of communication, a discourse analytic tool that sociolinguists use to analyze and describe the sociolinguistic context of a speech situation. It should be recalled that every speech situation happens in a particular fixed social domain, and its occurrence is constrained by a set of sociolinguistic factors that affect the language choice of the people involved in the conversation (see chapter 4). This set of sociolinguistic factors includes participants, social setting, and topic of conversation, and to this set of factors can still be added the various components involved in an ethnographic description of a speech situation. Such expanded ethnographic descriptions allow us to determine more accurately the language that would have been used in a particular speech situation or event. The second and last section deals with the languages Jesus would have used in the various speech situations and events recorded in Matthew's Gospel. This section is divided into five sub-sections, each of which includes and discusses the speech situations where Jesus would have used Aramaic, Greek, Hebrew, or Latin. The speech situations are analyzed and described through the various components of the ethnography of communication. The possible language used in each of those speech situations or events is determined through a set of sociolinguistic rules. This set of rules are generated from a hierarchical "decision tree" that categorizes the order of importance of the ethnographic components. This set of rules also serves as my basis for identifying the language used in a particular episode in the Gospel of Matthew; specifically, I plot this set of criteria with their corresponding ethnographic components

on a Gospel episode. Before I explain the concept of ethnography of communication, let me first discuss my concept of “variable” social domains, which I introduced in the preceding chapter.

VARIABLE SOCIAL DOMAINS

Strictly speaking, no speech situations in the real world are exactly alike. This is similar to asserting the idea that what we find in the real world is not really language or dialect but idiolect, that is, each person’s speech or language is unique. Such realities also apply to the concept of social domains. We have seen from the preceding chapter that “fixed” social domains are identified through a familiar, standard set of sociolinguistic configuration. For instance, the ideal family domain in ancient Palestine would typically consist of family members, slaves, freedmen, and other first- and second-degree relatives interacting with each other and discussing family matters in a private or home setting. Many social factors, however, can disrupt this familiar, standard set of sociolinguistic configuration that marks the family domain. A visit by a friend can immediately make the private social setting in the home become more public, and it can simultaneously change the topic of conversation from dealing with family matters to non-family ones. In this particular case, the ideal or fixed family domain is converted into a variable family domain, since the standard set of sociolinguistic configurations that characterize a fixed domain has been altered. In other cases, two or more fixed domains may also combine to form a variable domain. A social setting with large crowds that gathered to listen to Jesus’ teaching, for instance, may comprise family domains, friendship domains, and transaction domains intermingling with each other. This is simply what characterizes social domains in the real world. In sum, variable domains are speech situations or subsumed speech

situations which speech components deviate from the standard set of configuration that characterizes fixed domains. The concepts of fixed (or standard) and variable domains somehow concretize the abstract concepts of context of culture and context of situation, as they allow us to establish a clearer linkage between an *actual* context of situation (or speech event) and the *specific* cultural community (context of culture) to which the context of situation belongs. To be more precise, when I analyze the speech events or episodes in Matthew, I am actually analyzing them within the sociocultural context of first-century CE Palestine through its various social institutions (i.e., fixed domains—see chapter 4). As we will see shortly, many of the speech situations in Matthew's Gospel are variable domains. And because they are "variable," the language that is used in those speech situations will also become "variable," that is, they are contingent upon the set of configuration that characterizes a particular speech situation. Variable domains may be characterized in the same manner as how fixed domains are identified. The procedure requires an analysis of the three sociolinguistic elements of participants, social setting, and topic of conversation. However, variable domains can be described more accurately by way of the ethnography of communication approach.

ETHNOGRAPHY OF COMMUNICATION

Ethnography of communication is an approach to the sociolinguistics of language in which use of language is linked with its social and cultural values.¹ As mentioned in chapter 2, Dell Hymes was the developer of this theoretical framework. Hymes was an anthropological linguist who reacted to the linguistic approach that largely dealt with language as an abstract system. Such an abstract-system approach paid attention to the

¹ Fasold, *Sociolinguistics of Language*, 39.

grammar of a language but neglected its functions in actual usage.² For Hymes, linguistics must include not only study of the abstract structure of semantics and syntax but also how language users employ these abstract structures. Similarly, Hymes was also discontent with the sociological and anthropological approaches that treated language as ancillary to cultural studies.³ He believes that speaking (hence, language) is an important component to the ethnographic description of a society's culture. Hymes further says that, "The ethnography of speaking is concerned with situations and uses, the patterns and functions, of speaking as an activity in its own right."⁴ Thus, because speaking is an activity that occurs in social situations and serves social functions, it brings us back to the notion of "speech community," a concept that I have introduced in chapter 3. I will need to elaborate on this idea of speech community, however, as it is one of the central concepts of ethnography of communication. In what follows, my discussion of the theory of ethnography of communication is mainly based on Hymes and on some other scholars who have discussed his theory (with some modifications).⁵ Many of the speech components described and explained by Hymes, however, are too general and abstract, which makes it difficult for one to apply them to an ancient text like the Gospel of Matthew. For this reason, I have extended and modified Hymes's approach by

² Hymes was particularly critical of Noam Chomsky's generative (transformational) grammar, arguing that linguistic competence does not account for language variation and that ethnographic observation rather than introspective theorizing is a better way of studying language; hence, Hymes posits "communicative competence" as the alternative, which sees language as being learned through its use in actual speech situations (see Johnstone and Marcellino, "Dell Hymes," 58–59; and Hymes, "Ways of Speaking," esp. 433).

³ Hymes, *Foundations*, 126, remarks, "linguists have abstracted from the content of speech, social scientists from its form, and both from the pattern of its use."

⁴ Hymes, "Ethnography," 101.

⁵ See Hymes, *Foundations*, esp. 3–117; Hymes, "Ethnography of Speaking," 99–138; Hymes, "Toward Ethnographies," 21–44; Hymes, "Models," 35–71; Fasold, *Sociolinguistics of Language*, 39–64; Coulthard, *Discourse Analysis*, 33–58; Philipsen and Coutu, "The Ethnography of Speaking," 355–79; Johnstone and Marcellino, "Dell Hymes," 57–66; Holmes, *Introduction*, 365–72; and Wardhaugh, *Introduction*, 247–51.

establishing a clearer linkage between the description of each ethnographic component and the formal features of the text.

Three Central Concepts of Ethnography of Communication

There are three central concepts of ethnography of communication,⁶ each of which needs to be explained adequately so as to demonstrate how the theory can be applied to the text of Matthew. The first concept is the notion of “speech community.” An ethnographic description can only be applied to a particular speech community. This is just another way of saying that the speech community I am interested in is that of ancient Palestine and not that of another speech community. I explained in chapter 3 that ancient Palestine was, first and foremost, not a conventional, monolingual community, but it was rather a complex, multilingual community. Ancient Palestine was also, secondly, one large community composed of smaller communities. Such smaller communities may be defined in terms of regions (e.g., Judea, Galilee, Samaria, etc.), and may even be further broken down into still smaller communities, such as cities, towns, and social groups or basic units of society. Because these regions are adjacent and accessible to each other, and because social groups within a region intermingle, language and socio-cultural mixing becomes inevitable. This brings up a third feature of the concept of speech community, which is concerned with the idea of “overlapping” speech communities.⁷ This idea suggests that people are normally members of several speech

⁶ See Hymes, *Foundations*, 45–66.

⁷ See Saville-Troike, *Ethnography*, 14–17, esp. 17. Recent scholars working with multilingual communities have extended the traditional definition of speech communities, paying attention to the individuals that make up the community. They theorize the intricate interrelationship between individual repertoires and communal social patterns, giving rise to their formulation of the concept of “communities of practice” (CofP). Based on the “theory of practice” of Bourdieu (Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*), CofP has been discussed in Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, “Think Practically and Look Locally,” 461–90;

communities at the same time and will appropriately modify their speech forms and behavior to conform to the particular speech community in which they are engaged at that particular moment.⁸ Jesus, for example, would likely have been, simultaneously, a resident of Galilee (Matt 2:23), a regular teacher of the temple in Jerusalem (Matt 26:55; Mark 12:35; Luke 21:37; John 7:14, 28) and synagogues (Matt 4:23; John 18:20) in both Jerusalem and Galilee, a member of the Jewish community of ancient Palestine, and a Jewish person of the Greco-Roman Empire.⁹ In studying the speech community of ancient Palestine, therefore, it is important that we become familiar with some of the major elements that define and distinguish it from other speech communities, such as its history, geography, demography, language, and social structure and institutions. These major elements were my subjects of interests in chapters 3 and 4. They now serve as the background information upon which I will base my investigation of the various speech situations in Matthew's Gospel.

The second central concept of ethnography of communication is the set of the so-called notions of "speech situation," "speech event," and "speech act." Hymes comprehends these notions as a nested hierarchy of units, as speech acts are part of speech events, which, in turn, are part of speech situations. We need to note, however, that a particular speech act can in and by itself be, at the same time, a speech event within an entire speech situation. While a prayer may be considered a speech act that is part of a

Wenger, *Communities of Practice*, esp. 43–142; and Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder, *Cultivating Communities of Practice*, esp. 4–14. See also Mendoza-Denton, "Individuals and Community," 181–91.

⁸ Cf. Fasold, *Sociolinguistics of Language*, 42.

⁹ To accurately paint a picture of the first-century CE Jesus, one needs a robust and elaborated description based upon the various Gospel accounts that have depicted him in one way or another. Thus, this concept of social membership, which is a more realistic and accurate way of describing the identity of an individual, should mitigate us from painting a single portrait of the person of Jesus as what previous studies have done (e.g., a cynic philosopher, a Jewish rabbi, a Jewish Mediterranean peasant, etc.).

sermon (speech event) that happens in a Sunday worship service (speech situation), a short prayer (speech act) before one goes to bed may be the only speech event in that person's midnight rite (speech situation). Similar types of speech acts may occur in various speech events, just as similar types of speech events may happen in different speech situations. Hymes describes speech situations as "situations" that may be composed of a combination of verbal and non-verbal events, which are not subject to speech rules but are referred to as "contexts" for the study of speech rules. He gives ceremonies, fights, hunts, fishing trips, meals, lovemaking, etc. as some useful examples of speech situations. From particular standpoints, speech situations may be regarded as political, business, education, religious, and other private and public situations that serve as contexts for the manifestation of the characteristics of each of these situations.¹⁰

Within the speech community of ancient Palestine, we see many types of speech situations, and they may be identified with the fixed domains discussed in chapter 4 (family, friendship, government, religion, education, and transaction) and with variable domains (see above). It should be noted, however, that this identification only applies insofar as a nested hierarchy of units is concerned, that is, because speech situations include both verbal and non-verbal events. But insofar as the classification of similar speech acts is concerned, social domains are associated with the concept of genre (see *Genre* below). Within these fixed domains or speech situations, we can further identify various speech events.

A speech event is often composed of multiple speech acts that take place within a speech situation. Unlike speech situations, speech events involve verbal communication

¹⁰ Hymes, *Foundations*, 52.

and are governed by speech rules and norms. With reference to the Gospels, they constitute the episodes where conversations between participants are involved—whether between one individual and another individual (e.g., Jesus and Peter; Matt 16:15–19), between one individual and a group of individuals (e.g., Jesus and the disciples; Matt 26:17), or between two different social groups (e.g., the Sanhedrin and the crowd; Matt 27:20). Speech acts, on the other hand, are the lowest level in the nested hierarchy of units, since they are the “minimal term of the set.”¹¹ A *transaction*, where one speaker said something to their conversation partner, or an *exchange*, where both speaker and audience communicate with each other (see chapter 4—The Social Network of Jesus), may be considered as a speech act. A series of speech acts will make up a speech event, although one single transaction or exchange may also be considered as a speech event, when there are no extra speech acts involved. For example, the speech event of Jesus’ praying to his Father at Gethsemane comprises three similar speech acts that happen in a religious domain or speech situation (Matt 26:39, 42, 44). By contrast, unless we consider Jesus’ other utterances on the cross in the other Gospels (see Luke 23:34, 43, 46; John 19:26, 28, 30), the Gospel of Matthew only records one single speech act by Jesus in the speech event on the cross, when he says, Ἡλι ηλι λεμα σαβαχθωνι (26:46; cf. Mark 15:34). If we take Jesus’ other utterances into account, however, we see an instance of a speech event occurring in three fixed domains, all of which combine to create a new, variable domain. Whereas Jesus’ conversation with the Father (and with himself; John 19:28, 30) falls under the religious domain (Matt 26:46; cf. Mark 15:34; Luke 23:34, 46),

¹¹ Hymes, “Models,” 56. It should be noted that Hymes uses the term “speech act” differently from the meaning of the term as used in linguistic pragmatics and in philosophy. Hymes notes that speech acts should not be identified with any unit at the level of grammar but should rather be linked to its social context. For a quick overview of speech act theory as used in linguistic pragmatics, see Cruse, *Meaning in Language*, 363–78; and, in philosophy, see Searle, *Speech Acts*; and Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*.

and his conversation with one of the two criminals belongs to the friendship domain (Luke 23:42–43), his conversation with his mother and the disciple may fit into the family domain (John 19:26–27). For my purposes, I only focus my analysis on the Gospel of Matthew, treating the episodes therein as the kinds and types of speech events that would have existed in first-century CE Palestine.

The third central concept of ethnography of communication is concerned with the various speech components that comprise a speech event.¹² In the above two central concepts of ethnography of communication, language use is defined in terms of a composition of speech acts and speech events that take place within speech situations in a speech community. Language use, however, can also be described in terms of the various components that make up a speech event or speech situation, and this descriptive classification will allow for a more complex way of examining language use.

“SPEAKING” Components

Hymes provides the acronym “SPEAKING” to categorize eight components of a speech event.¹³ In what follows, after defining each of these components and explaining how each component can be identified in the text of Matthew’s Gospel, I discuss the concept of social dimension scales through which each of these components is categorized and assessed in examining a specific speech event or episode. From this, a

¹² Each of these speech components roughly corresponds to the three categories of situational factors that “determine” a text or the three dimensions or metafunctions that characterize any (Hallidayan) register. Whereas field (what is being talked about) corresponds to the “setting,” “act sequence,” and “ends,” and tenor (the relationship between participants) to the “participants” and “key” of a speech event, mode (how language is functioning in the interaction) relates to its “instrumentalities” and “genre.” What is unaccounted for in the Hallidayan register framework is the “norm” of a speech event that is included in Hymes’s ethnography of communication. It is important to note, however, that the focus of the Hallidayan differ from the Hymesian. The former focuses on the relationship between the text (lexicogrammar) and its abstract representations of various social functions (semantic meaning), while the latter focuses on the specific occurrence or instance of the text, analyzing and interpreting the various individual speech components that compose it (cf. Halliday, *Language and Society*, 134–36).

¹³ See Hymes, “Model,” 59–65; Hymes, *Foundations*, 53–62.

hierarchical decision tree will outline the priority of these social dimension scales in the analysis of a speech event.

Setting (S)

“Setting” refers to the physical circumstances, that is, the time and the location, of a speech event. The text in Matthew’s Gospel often indicates the setting of a speech event, although there are instances where we need to infer setting from its immediate texts and context (i.e., preceding speech events). In the episode of the conversation between Jesus and the Pharisees regarding the latter’s inquiry about the greatest commandment (Matt 22:34–40), for instance, Matthew does not indicate the setting of the speech event. Thus, its setting must be inferred from the preceding speech events, which indicate that Jesus was teaching in Jerusalem around the temple vicinity on a particular day (see Matt 21:1; 12, 18, 23, 45; 22:23, 34). Proper names (e.g., Γαλιλαία [Galilee] and Ἰορδάνης [Jordan]; e.g., Matt 3:13) and common names (ἡ ἔρημος [the desert], οἰκία [house], πόλις [city or town], τόπος [a point in space; so space, place, room, etc.];¹⁴ e.g., Matt 10:14; 14:35) are typical indicators of locations of a speech event. Some adverbs (e.g., ὧδε [here]; ἐκεῖ [there, in that place]; ἐκεῖθεν [from there]; e.g., Matt 2:13, 15; 5:26) and particles (ὅπου [where]; Matt 6:19; 13:5) are also used as markers of locality. In these instances, the setting of a speech event may be inferred from the anaphoric or cataphoric reference to which adverbial and particle markers of location refer. In Matt 4:21, for instance, the anaphoric reference of ἐκεῖθεν is found in 4:18 (θάλασσαν τῆς Γαλιλαίας). Examples of temporal indicators are ὄψιος (the period

¹⁴ The term τόπος has many other senses of meanings (see Louw and Nida, *Lexicon*, 2:246).

between late afternoon and darkness; evening; Matt 8:16), ὥρα (a period during the day; Matt 26:55), ἡμέρα (the period between sunrise and sunset; Matt 26:55), etc. Temporal indicators, however, play a minimal role in determining the language of speech event, since language choice is dependent on the formality or informality of a speech event, which is normally influenced by the location and not the time of the event.

Participants (P)

The “participants” of a speech event includes both “speaker and addressee” and “addressor and the audience.” The difference between speaker and addressor identities may be seen in the speech event in Matt 11:2–6. John sent his disciples to ask Jesus whether he was the messiah. So the “speaker” (spokesperson) in this event was John’s disciples, but the “addressor” (the source) was actually John the Baptist. Similarly, when Jesus told John’s disciples to tell John the message concerning the healing of handicapped people, the “addressor” this time was Jesus. In some cases, the intended audience (which may be present or absent) in a speech event differs from the actual addressee (which is always present). Jesus’ address to the crowds and his disciples regarding the Pharisees and teachers of the law in Matthew 23 may have been intended both for them and for the Pharisees and teachers of the law, the latter of whom might have been absent at that particular speech event, although it is also possible that these religious leaders were actually there with the crowd (see Matt 21:45–46). This example indicates that distinctions between speaker and addressor as well as between addressee and audience can often be gleaned from the sociolinguistic elements (i.e., background elements) surrounding a speech event, which encompasses previous and later speech events. Participants of a speech event may be presented in the form of proper and

common names and personal pronouns that denote people, as well as demonstrative pronouns (i.e., this, these, that, and those) that may either anaphorically or cataphorically refer to proper and common names of people. The participants of a speech event are easy to identify, as they are the language users and the ones involved in the social interaction, and hence normally function as the grammatical subject of the clause. It is important to distinguish these four types of participants, however, as what this study is concerned with in its analysis of the type of language used is confined only to the speaker and addressee of the speech events. The speaker and addressee are the ones directly involved in the sociolinguistic interaction in a speech event.

Ends (E)

Hymes points out that the “ends” of a speech event can refer to its purposes both (1) from a cultural or community standpoint (outcome) and (2) to the individual participants (goal). From a cultural standpoint, the purpose of a speech event is directly correlated with the social domain where the event takes place. The various sociolinguistic elements that interplay within a particular fixed social domain may be invoked for the analysis of the purpose of a speech event from a cultural standpoint. So, for example, if a speech event belongs to a speech situation, say, in the education or religion domain, then the general purpose or outcome of the event is the acquisition or exchange of knowledge and information between participants that typically involves a “student-teacher” relationship. From the standpoint of individual participants, the purpose or goal of a speech event will be more specific and may be determined by answering this diagnostic question: “What do the participants who are involved in a speech event want to achieve in their conversation or interaction?” This diagnostic question will almost always be

closely related to the message content of the conversation (see *Act Sequence* below), but it will also differ in terms of whether the transaction or exchange of the message content succeeded or failed. In Matt 3:14–15, Jesus and John were discussing whether Jesus ought to be baptized by John. While John hesitated initially, saying that Jesus ought to baptize him instead, he nevertheless consented in the end after Jesus explained to him that his baptism was intended πληρῶσαι πᾶσαν δικαιοσύνην (to fulfill all righteousness). The participants in this speech event achieved their purpose, because John (successfully) baptized Jesus.

Act Sequence (A)

“Act sequence” refers to both the message form (how something is said) and the message content (what is said) of a speech event. To be specific, Wardhaugh states that act sequence “refers to the actual form and content of what is said: the precise words used, how they are used, and the relationship of what is said to the actual topic at hand.”¹⁵ Hymes notes that this particular speech component varies from one culture to another.¹⁶ The reason is that ways of speaking is a shared norm and is meaningful only within a social group. For this reason, message form or means of expression often conditions and controls the message content.

For my purposes, message content is the more significant item, as it tells about the details of what the conversation is all about. There are many ways to determine the message content of a conversation, and too often it relates to the topic of the conversation. The “topic” of a conversation is an elusive term or concept, and scholars have defined

¹⁵ Wardhaugh, *Introduction*, 248.

¹⁶ See Hymes, *Foundations*, 54–55.

and discussed it in various ways.¹⁷ Janet Holmes, for example, differentiates between topic and message content, despite adopting Hymes's ethnography of communication; she indicates that topic is what people are talking about (e.g., football) and that message content refers to the details of the topic (e.g., organizing for a football match).¹⁸ For this reason, I wish to define "topic" in my own terms, especially since my objective is narrowly focused on identifying the particular language that is used in a speech event and not on interpreting the negotiated meanings or authorial meaning of a speech event. In short, topic in this study only has relevance insofar as it is a sociolinguistic component that typically constrains or influences the language choice of a speech event.

In this study, topic will refer to the "subject matter" of a conversation, which speakers in a social interaction either accept or reject or maintain or change at every transaction or exchange in the ensuing conversation of a speech event.¹⁹ It is important to note that topic resides in the mind of speakers and writers and not in the text itself, although the notion of topic of course is represented in the text of a conversation.²⁰ It is usually the norm that the first person to speak (i.e., the speaker) initiates or determines the topic of conversation, excluding of course instances of phatic communion, where speakers initiate greetings for social maintenance or as a sociocultural convention (e.g.,

¹⁷ Brown and Yule, *Discourse Analysis*, 70, states that "the identification of 'topic' is rarely made explicit. In fact, 'topic' could be described as the most frequently used, unexplained term in the analysis of discourse." Additionally, conversations are normally governed by at least five principles: knowledge of the listener, co-operation in the conversation, the principle of relevance, context appropriateness, and participant appropriateness and linguistic skills (see Clark and Clark, *Psychology and Language*, esp. 225–26; and Cotterell and Turner, *Linguistics*, 259–66).

¹⁸ Holmes, *Introduction*, 366.

¹⁹ Hymes says that message content focuses on topic and change of topic (see Hymes, *Foundations*, 55). My discussion of topic follows Wardhaugh, *Introduction*, 296–308; Brown and Yule, *Discourse Analysis*, 68–124, esp. 68–79; and Cotterell and Turner, *Linguistics*, 268–75.

²⁰ See Brown and Yule, *Discourse Analysis*, 68, 89–90; Morgan, "Some Remarks," 434; and Wardhaugh, *Introduction*, 301.

“How are you...I am fine, thank you”; see 2 Kgs 4:26; Matt 26:49, Luke 1:28). A conversation, however, may have more than one single topic, as speakers and addressees frequently change topic within a conversation. When addressee(s) “accept” the topic from the speaker, the topic of a conversation is maintained; otherwise, the topic of discussion will change.²¹

As mentioned above, because topic refers to the “subject matter” that speakers either accept, reject, keep, or change in a conversation, the topic of a conversation may be reasonably determined by analyzing the relationship between the noun or noun phrase presented in a transaction or exchange and the actions performed by the participants toward it (i.e., noun or noun phrase) in the course of their conversation.²² When a particular noun or noun phrase or an idea associated with the noun or noun phrase recurs in subsequent transactions and exchanges, the topic of a conversation is maintained, as participants continue to “accept” the topic of discussion; otherwise, if a new noun or noun phrase is introduced, then it is likely that a new topic has emerged.²³ In John 4:7–26,

²¹ Monitoring the acceptance, rejection, maintenance, and change of topic in a conversation is the simplest way of analyzing the topics involved in a conversation but is nevertheless sufficient for the purposes of this study. For a more detailed analysis, however, it is necessary to perform a conversation “floor management analysis,” which includes analyzing back-channel cues, feedback, insertion sequence, side sequence, repairs, mitigating expressions, pre-closing signals, turn-taking, adjacency pairs, etc., all of which are concepts used in conversation analysis and interactional sociolinguistics (see Gordon, “Gumperz and Interactional Sociolinguistics,” 67–84; Wardhaugh, *Introduction*, 296–308; Holmes, *Introduction*, 372–78).

²² Cf. Cotterell and Turner, *Linguistics*, 268–69.

²³ The discourse concept of “coherence” supports this relationship between a recurring noun or noun phrase and the actions performed by participants toward them. Coherence is the element or feature that makes the texts in a discourse “hung together.” Thus, it involves the meaningful relationship of sentences (grammatical structure) and topics or themes (semantic structure). Even though such meaningful relationship of topics only exists in the mind of the speaker or writer (see Thompson, *Introducing Functional Grammar*, 179), such a relationship can nevertheless be represented by the discourse feature called “cohesion,” a “set of linguistic resources that every language has for linking one part of the text to another” (see Halliday and Hasan, *Language, Context, and Text*, 48; Hasan, *Cohesion in English*, 5). Such links of linguistic resources are known as cohesive ties, which come in various types: (1) lexical chains—formed by the repetition of the same word or its derivatives; (2) semantic chains—formed by words that share a common semantic domain; (3) participant chains—formed by noun phrases, pronouns, and verbs that refer to the same person; (4) “brand new entities” anchored by a semantic domain—a lexical entity that

for example, there are two noticeable topic shifts in Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman. The speech event begins with Jesus initiating a conversation with the woman, saying, Δός μοι πείν (Give me [water] to drink; v. 7b). It is obvious that Jesus was asking for water (ὔδωρ) and not for something else, because he saw the Samaritan woman coming to draw water (v. 7a), and because Jesus asked for water in order to drink (πίνω) it. In the ensuing conversation, Jesus and the Samaritan had a few exchanges regarding matters concerning “drinking water” (vv. 7–15); thus, the topic was maintained. In v. 16, however, Jesus suddenly switches to another topic: “Ἔπαγε φώνησον τὸν ἄνδρα σου (Go, call your husband). We see this topic about the woman's “husband” (ἄνθρωπος) sustained until v. 18, when the woman introduces a new topic concerning “where and who to worship (προσκυνέω)” (vv. 19–24).

The topic or message content of a conversation in a speech event is also naturally related to the kinds of topics that are talked about and negotiated in a particular social domain. The religion domain will naturally contain speech events that deal with “religious” topics and concerns, the government domain with “government” matters, the family domain with “family or personal” issues, the friendship domain with “casual or friend” conversations, the education domain with formal “teaching-learning” activities, and the transaction domain with “trade or market” matters. The conversations or speech acts (i.e., transactions and exchanges) involved in a speech event may be transmitted through different kinds of speech forms (see *Instrumentalities* below), which, in turn, can

has not been previously introduced, but is recognizable by a reader, since the entities are “anchored” to a familiar entity; and (5) *ad hoc* semantic domains—lexical categories that an author creates by grouping together several lexical items and naming the group with the same name, even if the items do not actually belong to the same semantic domain (on cohesive ties, see Westfall, *Discourse Analysis*, 22–88, esp. 36–55).

be pigeonholed into a particular genre type (see genre below). In the above example, Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman took place in a friendship-religion domain, and the topics of their conversation involved those kinds of casual conversations, question-and-answer exchanges, and statements of facts that "friends" would normally talk about. Nevertheless, their conversation also includes religious topics, such as the gift of God (δώρεάν τοῦ θεοῦ; v. 10), living water (ὑδὼρ ζῶν; vv. 10, 11), eternal life (ζωὴν αἰώνιον; v. 14), etc.

Key (K)

"Key" refers to the tone, manner, or nature in which transactions or exchanges of a speech event are carried out. As such, this component is closely associated with the setting and the participants involved, both of which will affect the tone, manner, or nature of the conversation in a speech event. As discussed in chapter 4 (see Table D), the setting of a social domain or speech event may be described as either formal, informal, official, public, private, or intimate, and these descriptions can at the same time appropriately be used as labels for the manner and nature in which transactions and exchanges of speech events are conducted. To be sure, speech events that occur in the religious domain can be labeled as "public, formal, and/or official" or as "private and/or informal," depending upon their social setting. Similarly, we may also say that, because the participants in religious speech events that happen in the temple proper (ναός) involved the performance of rituals and formal services, the nature or manner of the conversations that transpire in that kind of setting would typically be more formal and official. By contrast, speech events in the temple courts (ἱερόν), which involved a mixed multitude of people (e.g., Matt 21:23), would be more informal and public. The nature or manner of the prayer in

religious speech events that transpire in the home or private places, where the participants involved are just the person praying and his or her god (e.g., Matt 14:23), would be more informal and intimate. Key is an important component to examine, since it functions as a critical factor in determining the specific type of language that is used in a speech event.

Instrumentalities (I)

“Channel” and “speech forms” are the two speech elements that Hymes refers to as “instrumentalities.” Whereas channel, which denotes the way a message is transmitted from one person to another, is basically classified as either oral or written, speech forms refer to the languages or linguistic codes used in the transmission of a message. It is important to remember that in a multilingual speech community, multiple languages may be employed, as speakers have the ability to code-switch within transactions and exchanges in a speech event. In this study, the channels of all the speech events I am concerned with are orally transmitted, since I am investigating the conversations of Jesus with his addressees in those events, even though they are not recorded as written text in the Gospels. Speech form, on the other hand, refers to the type of linguistic form and code, including the specific type of language or language variety in which speech conversations are transmitted. In fact, in this study, the specific language used in a particular conversation is the unknown, variable speech element that I seek to determine. Speech form is intricately related to genre (see *Genre* below), as various speech forms (or speech acts for that matter) can be grouped together and classified into a particular genre. In Matt 3:14–15, for example, it is clear that Jesus’ exchange with John was orally transmitted via casual conversation, question-and-answer type of genre, but the type of

language used is unknown and needs to be determined. It is important to remember that speech form differs from message form (see *Act Sequence* above).

Norms (N)

“Norms” is a (cultural) speech component that comes in two forms—norms of interaction and norms of interpretation. The incident of the certain tax collector who ἔτυπτεν τὸ στῆθος αὐτοῦ (beats his breast) in Luke 18:13 may serve as a good example for understanding the meaning of this speech component. In the ancient Jewish culture, repentance is expressed by beating one’s breast or chest (cf. Jer 31:19; Luke 23:48). In modern West African culture, beating one’s chest is symbolic of taking pride in one’s achievement, and repentance is expressed by beating one’s head!²⁴ In today’s western culture, seeing people beat their chest can be interpreted as the person either is losing his or her mind, is getting agitated or aggressive, or is having some kind of mental or psychological disorder, because repentance is shown by confessing one’s mistake and changing one’s behavior and not by beating one’s chest. This speech component, however, is not really relevant for my purposes in this study, as I am not concerned with analyzing the negotiated meanings of a particular conversation in a speech event.

Genre (G)

Hymes says that “genre” refers to such common literary categories as poems, myths, proverbs, lectures, casual conversations, business transactions, etc.²⁵ He further says that, while genre appears to overlap with speech event type, the two must be differentiated, since a speech genre encompasses various types of speech events.

²⁴ See Nida and Reyburn, *Meaning across Cultures*, 2.

²⁵ Thompson, *Introducing Functional Grammar*, 42–44, notes that genre can roughly be considered as register (a set of configurations of linguistic resources recognizable in social contexts [i.e., fixed or variable social domains]) plus purpose.

Hymes's distinction between these two categories, however, is not straightforward. While he gives the example of sermon as a genre that may occur in other social contexts aside from a church service, he also treats it as a speech situation.²⁶ But genre, for it to become a useful category, must be clearly differentiated from a speech event or situation, as it is a distinctive speech component that needs analysis within a speech event or situation. Thus, I have tried to devise a better way of distinguishing between genre and speech event or situation. Genre is better understood as similar types of speech forms or speech acts that can be grouped together and classified, as they exhibit similar formal (or contextual) characteristics. To be sure, we can perhaps classify the conversations, transactions, and exchanges in the Gospels into six broad types of genres, which include casual conversations (e.g., private prayer), formal conversations (e.g., prayer in a temple), question-and-answer exchanges, commands and instructions, discourses (i.e., teachings and sermons), healings and miracles, and statements of facts.²⁷

Casual conversations often happen in the family, friendship, transaction, and religious domains, and the topics of conversations involved are associated with those types that participants in those four domains typically talk about (see chapter 4—Family, Friendship, Transaction, and Religious Domains). Formal conversations frequently occur in the religious, government, and education domain, and the topics of conversation are related to those ones that people will normally discuss in those three domains (see chapter 4—Religion, Government, and Education Domains). Question-and-answer exchanges

²⁶ See Hymes, *Foundations*, 61.

²⁷ These six categories are self-explanatory and are easy to detect when we look at the situational context of a particular speech event. I do not need to give further description of these categories, but I will explain why a particular speech act, transaction, exchange, or conversation is classified under such category in my analysis of the speech event or episode in Matthew.

refer to those speech events where participants ask, request, or demand information from each other. Commands and instructions, on the other hand, are instances where speakers tell their addressees to do or perform an action by way of commands or instructions. Teachings and sermons may be short or long transactions where speakers talk or teach about a topic or various topics, or gives a sermon without interruption by their addressees. Healings and miracles are speech events that contain healing or miracle activities (especially by Jesus). Finally, statements of facts refer to those instances where speakers simply declare something about reality, state something about the past, present, and future events, or quote something from another person or literary source.

With reference to Jesus' teachings, Robert Stein classifies them into such literary forms as overstatement, hyperbole, pun, simile, metaphor, proverb, riddle, paradox, a fortiori, irony, use of questions, parabolic and figurative actions, poetry, and parables.²⁸ Genre is closely associated with instrumentalities, as certain types of messages or conversations can only be carried out in certain types of genres. For instance, Jesus frequently used parables in his teaching, and parables can perhaps only be classified under the "teachings and sermons" genre, even though they may occur in various speech events or situations. Thus, in identifying the particular language of a speech event, genre(s) plays hand in glove with the topic of conversation or the message content of a speech event.

Social Dimension Scales

Sociolinguists use the so-called social dimension scales to evaluate the various speech components of a speech event, notably the participants, setting, and topic and

²⁸ See Stein, *Method and Message*, 7–59. It should be noted that not all of these genres of Jesus' teaching could be relevant to every textual analysis of a speech event.

purpose of a conversation. Any or all of the speech components of a speech event discussed above can be relevant to account for the language that will be selected for use in a particular situation. There are four types of social dimension scales, each of which is capable of assessing a specific or set of speech components. The first one is the social distance scale. This scale evaluates the relationship, that is, the “intimacy” or “distance,” between participants of more or less equal social status. Familial and friendly relations travel along this dimension scale. Participants that interact in speech events in the family, friendship, and transaction domains will typically engage this dimension scale, as emphasis in the relationship between speaker and addressee(s) is placed on their solidarity and not so much on their social identity, often making the tone or manner (Key) of the conversation more intimate and informal. Thus, the language that will be selected for use is dependent upon which language would be the most comfortable for the participants.

The second one is the social status scale. The relationship between participants of more or less unequal social status will be assessed using this dimension scale. Participants involved in speech events in the religious, education, government, and transaction domains may often find themselves in speech events, where there are superior-subordinate conversations, as relationships between participants are typically status-oriented (e.g., teacher-student, government official-ordinary citizen, high priest-congregant). The tone or manner (Key) of the conversation in these kinds of speech events will naturally become more formal and serious. Using honorifics and titles to address one’s addressee (e.g., rabbi or teacher) may also signal a superior-subordinate relationship between participants. The language that will be selected for use will

normally be the *lingua franca* or may be dictated by the language of the “superior” participant.

The third one is the formality scale. This dimension scale measures the “formality” or “informality” of a conversation, and it thus relates to the setting of a speech event and may at times be constrained by the genre, topic, end, and/or key of a conversation.²⁹ The setting is more formal and official when the conversation takes place in a religious and government social institution, such as a temple, synagogue, law court, or government agency. The social identities or positions of the participants and the singular topic of discussion also contribute to the formality of the social setting,³⁰ but in most cases, particularly in very formal settings, such as a law court or official’s residence, the setting will be the most salient factor that will influence language choice.³¹ Thus, the language that will typically be employed in such formal and official settings will be the *lingua franca* or the prestige language of the community. In more private and less formal settings, however, such as in the home and in other “neutral” public places (e.g., streets, bathhouses, agora; see chapter 4—Friendship Domain), the language that will be used will again be dependent on the participants involved, that is, speakers either will speak their common native (and more colloquial) language,³² or will speak the *lingua franca*, especially when other non-native speakers are present.

The fourth and last one is the functional scale. “Language can convey objective information of a referential kind; and it can also express how someone is feeling.”³³

²⁹ See Irvine, “Formality and Informality,” 211–28, esp. 212–13.

³⁰ See Irvine, “Formality and Informality,” 216–17.

³¹ Cf. Holmes, *Introduction*, 11.

³² Holmes, *Introduction*, 11.

³³ Holmes, *Introduction*, 11.

Consequently, the functional scale comes in two types—the referential scale and the affective scale. Both types of scales are concerned with the ends, key, message content, and genre of a speech event or conversation. The referential scale assesses whether a conversation has high or low message (information) content. A conversation can be said to have high information content, when the topics do not concern personal matters, when the topics presented negotiate acquisition of some specific type of information, and when the individual purpose is the acquisition of the requested information or the achievement of the demanded action. From a cultural standpoint, speech events or conversations that happen in the government, religion, education, and transaction domains will normally have higher information content than those in the family and friendship domains. By contrast, the affective scale evaluates the level of affective content (i.e., intimacy) of a conversation, and is inversely proportional to the referential scale. A conversation that has high affective content will contain language of endearment and encouragement or evince language that is at a more personal level. In sociolinguistics, the use of the native tongue versus the use of a *lingua franca* or prestige or standard language (formal) is usually analyzed along this affective-referential dimension scale. The former tends to move along the affective scale, whereas the latter moves along the referential scale.³⁴

PROCEDURE FOR THE ANALYSIS OF THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

Using the above-interrelated theories of ethnography of communication, the following is the procedure I follow for my analysis of Matthew's Gospel. Hymes notes that there is no general rule as to the priority of a particular component, when analyzing speech events and situations. The priority of one component over the other components

³⁴ Holmes, *Introduction*, 97, 133.

all depends upon whether it weighs the “heaviest,” against which all the other components are assessed in relation to it.³⁵ The weightiest component also depends upon the sociolinguist or ethnographer’s goal of investigation, which consequently will make a particular component more salient than the others. In this study, the weightiest component is the “participants,” followed by the “setting” and the “genre,” “topic,” “key,” and “ends” of a speech event. This sequence is determined on the basis of my objective in this study, which is to identify the particular language choice of Jesus and his addressee(s) in a particular episode or speech event or situation in the Gospel of Matthew.

As discussed in the previous chapters, natural language only comes into existence because of living users. This fact makes the participants of a speech event the most salient component, as speakers and addressees need to first determine whether they share a common language. In fact, Spolsky identifies two necessary conditions and five typicality conditions (after the two necessary conditions have been satisfied) for the selection of language for communication, all of which relate to the participants of a speech event.³⁶ As a general rule, the sociolinguistic landscape of ancient Palestine indicates that the majority of the population in the various regions of Palestine would have known the *lingua franca* and prestige language of the speech community, that is, Greek (see chapter 3). For this reason, if the participants of a speech event do not share a common language, they will inevitably (and automatically) employ Greek as the

³⁵ Hymes, *Foundations*, 63.

³⁶ The two necessary conditions are (1) participants only use the language that they know, and (2) they also use a language that their addressees know. The five typicality conditions, in chronological order, are (1) participants prefer to use the language that is best for the topic in discussion, (2) they also prefer to use the language that their addressees know best for the topic, (3) they also prefer to use the language they last used with their addressees, (4) they prefer to choose a language that either includes or excludes a third party, and (5) they prefer to use a language that asserts the most advantageous social group membership for their addressees in the proposed social interaction (see Spolsky, “Jewish Multilingualism,” 44–49).

linguistic medium. The social distance or the status scale assesses the relationship of the participants of a speech event. If the relationship is status-oriented or solidarity-oriented, and the participants share a common language other than the *lingua franca* or prestige language, the next component that needs to be examined is the setting of the speech event. The setting of a speech event may be broadly classified into either one of the six social domains discussed in chapter 4. This classification is, in turn, constrained by the genre, topic, key, and/or end of a speech event. If a speech event belongs to a particular social domain, then the setting can be generally characterized as either one or a combination of the following labels—public, private (or non-private),³⁷ formal, informal, official, and intimate—gleaned from Table D (see chapter 4). In some cases, the language selection in a particular speech event may already be determined after an assessment of its participants and setting. In other cases, however, the genre and topic, including the end or key of a conversation need to be taken into account to determine the specific language that is used in the speech event. For ease of comprehension, I have plotted my analytical procedure in a flowchart (see Appendix 3), showing a hierarchical decision tree that determines the language choice of a speech event. I note that the parameters and constraints indicated in my procedural flowchart are of course only an approximation or prediction of the language selection within a particular speech event. Nevertheless, I believe that it can function and serve as a basis upon which the language choice of a speech event in ancient Palestine may be further studied. I first analyze the episodes in Matthew chronologically, and this is followed by grouping them according to the set of sociolinguistic rules outlined below.

³⁷ I used the term “non-private” to describe the variable family domain with other members present, instead of the term “public,” which is used to contrast private and public settings.

SOCIOLINGUISTIC RULES FOR THE LANGUAGE SELECTION IN ANCIENT PALESTINE

On the basis of the parameters indicated in the hierarchical tree (Appendix 3), we can generate four sets of sociolinguistic rules that identify the use of each of the four languages—Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin—of ancient Palestine. Of course, the first general rule is that the *lingua franca* and prestige language, which is Greek, would have been used as the default language of the participants in a speech situation when there is no common language shared between them. From this general rule, the next four sets of sociolinguistic rules may be applied to the speech situations where participants shared a common language. The first set of sociolinguistic rules involves the speech instances or events where participants would have used Greek as the language for communication (Set A).

- A1 Participants' relationship is status-oriented; the setting is in a public and/or informal religion domain; and the evaluation of its genre, topic, and key is that of having low affective content.
- A2 Participants' relationship is status-oriented; the setting is in either public or private government domain; and the evaluation of its genre, topic, and end is that of having high information content
- A3 Participants' relationship is status-oriented; the setting is in either public or private government domain; the evaluation of its genre, topic, and end is that of having low information content, but its key is formal
- A4 Participants' relationship is status-oriented; the setting is in a public and/or formal higher education domain; the evaluation of its genre, topic, and end is that of having low information content
- A5 Participants' relationship is solidarity-oriented; the setting is in a public and/or informal friendship domain; the evaluation of its genre, topic, and key is that of having either high information or low affective content
- A6 Participants' relationship is solidarity-oriented; the setting is in a public and/or informal transaction domain; the evaluation of its genre, topic, and key is that of having either high information or low affective content

The second set of sociolinguistic rules involves the speech instances or events where participants would have used one's native tongue as the language for communication (Set B).

- B1 Participants' relationship is status-oriented; the setting is in a private and/or intimate religion domain
- B2 Participants' relationship is status-oriented; the setting is in a public and/or formal primary education domain
- B3 Participants' relationship is solidarity-oriented; the setting is in an intimate and/or private family domain
- B4 Participants' relationship is solidarity-oriented; the setting is in an intimate and/or private friendship domain
- B5 Participants' relationship is solidarity-oriented; the setting is in a public and/or informal transaction domain; the evaluation of its genre, topic, and key is that of having low information or high affective content

The third set of sociolinguistic rules involves the speech instances or events where participants would have used either the *lingua franca* or the native tongue (Set C). In some instances, especially within solidarity-oriented domains, code-switching is likely employed.

- C1 Participants' relationship is status-oriented; the setting is in a public or informal religion domain; the evaluation of its genre, topic, and key is that of having high affective content
- C2 Participants' relationship is status-oriented; the setting is in either a public or private government domain; the evaluation of its genre, topic, and end is that of low information content, but its key is private and/or intimate
- C3 Participants' relationship is status-oriented; the setting is in a private or informal transaction domain (note: if the native tongue is used here, it will be that of the "superior" participant)
- C4 Participants' relationship is solidarity-oriented; the setting is in a non-private and/or informal family domain

The fourth set of sociolinguistic rules indicates three special speech instances or events where participants would have used Hebrew, Latin, or the language that is appropriate to the social situation (Set D).

D1 Participants' relationship is status-oriented; the setting is in an official, formal religion domain (Hebrew)

D2 Participants' relationship is status-oriented; the setting is in an official government domain (Latin—when only Roman officials are present; the *lingua franca*—when a mixed group of people is present)

D3 Participants' relationship is status-oriented; the setting is in a public and/or formal higher education domain; the evaluation of its genre, topic, and end is that of having high information content (language dependent on the subject matter of learning)

ANALYSIS OF THE TYPE OF LANGUAGE USE IN THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

I will now employ the above sociolinguistic rules to analyze the various sociolinguistic episodes in the Gospel of Matthew. I note that this exercise is merely a means (although the best possible means so far, I would say) by which we can get at and determine the possible language selection in the various speech events in first-century CE Palestine through the Gospel of Matthew.³⁸ I also note what I have stated at the outset of this study that I only treat the speech episodes in the Gospel of Matthew as some of the typical kinds of sociolinguistic interactions that would have happened in the first-century CE speech community of Palestine. To argue for whether they actually happened is beyond the purview and scope of this study, although my personal view regarding the historicity of the Gospel of Matthew (as well as the other Gospels for that matter) is that

³⁸ Porter, "The Language(s) Jesus Spoke," 2455–71, esp. 2460–71, provides direct (where Jesus is depicted as either actively or passively using a particular language), indirect (where situations and circumstances would indicate Jesus spoke a particular language), and inferential (where inferences based on contexts can be drawn to argue for Jesus speaking a particular language) evidences to show the possible instances where Jesus would have spoken Greek, Aramaic, Hebrew, and Latin.

the episodes and narratives contained therein must inevitably be taken as historically reliable (not necessarily to the minutest detail) if we are to study and reconstruct the life and teachings of Jesus.³⁹ Lastly, I note that I also treat the episodes in the Gospel of Matthew as individual, non-chronological units of speeches, for my purpose in this study is simply to determine the type of language that is used in a particular type of speech event. In other words, as I have explained in the introduction, my concern is not with analyzing the structure, message, theme, or audience and occasion of the book, or even with the textual or authorial meaning of specific episodes, which are the typical concerns of commentaries and other studies. In what follows, I identify and analyze fifty-nine episodes in Matthew, and I subsequently categorize each of them according to the language that was possibly employed by Jesus and his interlocutor(s) in the actual event, under each of the four sets of sociolinguistic rules indicated above. I also provide a summative list of these episodes in Appendix 4.

We will observe from these fifty-nine episodes in Matthew that Jesus most frequently interacted with the religion and friendship domains, less frequently with the family and government domains, and least frequently with the education and transaction domains. Matthew only records one possible instance, the healing of the centurion's servant (8:5–13), and two likely occasions, the trial before the Sanhedrin (26:57–68) and before Pilate (27:11–26), where Jesus interacted with the government domain. With reference to the education domain, the only likely candidate is the episode of the Jesus' saying concerning the prophet without honor in the synagogue of the people (this is even inferred on the basis of the account in Luke 4:16–30), and possibly, the episode of the

³⁹ France, *Matthew*, 10–14, esp. 11, notes that the extensive citations of the Old Testament as well as allusions to Old Testament historical characters, narratives, and cultic patterns point to the fact that Matthew wants them to be seen as being “fulfilled” in Jesus.

Sermon on the Mount (5:1—7:29). Similarly, Matthew records only two possible instances where Jesus might have interacted with the transaction domain—the events of the two sayings of Jesus to a scribe and a disciple (8:18–22) and of the conversation regarding the two-drachma temple tax (17:24–27).

The extent to which Jesus transacted with these domains, however, as recorded in Matthew, does not in any way tell us that Jesus only interacted mostly with the religion and friendship domains. But it does tell us, at least based upon the Gospel of Matthew (and perhaps upon the synoptic Gospels as a whole),⁴⁰ that these are the particular aspects of Jesus' private and public life that Matthew (as well as the other Gospel authors) chose to highlight. On the basis of this study, it therefore should not come as a surprise that most of our scholarly reconstructions portray the historical Jesus almost always as a religious teacher and worker who is concerned with the eternal, spiritual welfare and physical needs of the people.⁴¹ Indeed he was such a person. Nevertheless, like any normal first century CE individual, Jesus assuredly would also have regularly interacted (more often than Matthew has recorded) with the government, transaction, and education domains during his earthly life. He would have paid his taxes when they were due, registered with the city council when there was a census, visited shops for food, clothing, and other basic needs, and chatted with friends and shop owners on regular occasions.⁴²

⁴⁰ I suspect and would anticipate that John will have greater variations in terms of the types of social domains we find in his Gospel. One apparent reason is that many of the episodes in John are not found in the Synoptics.

⁴¹ For example, we have the Jesus of John Dominic Crossan, a Mediterranean Jewish, Cynic-like peasant, of Tom Wright, a Jewish-Christian prophet, of Marcus Borg, a religious mystic, of E.P. Sanders and Albert Schweitzer, two similar versions of a Jewish eschatological prophet, and of Dale Allison's, an apocalyptic eschatological prophet. For a summative discussion of some of these scholarly portrayals of Jesus, see Witherington, *The Jesus Quest*, 42–248, esp. 235–46.

⁴² To use Crossan's language in envisaging the socio-economic world of Jesus, "His peasant village was close enough to a Greco-Roman city like Sepphoris...his work was among the farms and villages of Galilee.

Although he perhaps did not attend any formal education (but see chapter 4—Jesus’ Multilingual Proficiency), Jesus’ lectures in the synagogues would have allowed him to interact frequently (perhaps even regularly) with the education domain (see 4:23; 9:35; 13:54). Of course, the problem with these extrapolations is that many of them are not recorded in the Gospels.

Greek

The first set of episodes shows the possible speech events where Greek, the *lingua franca* of the speech community, would have been employed in the conversation(s) between the participants.⁴³ The language selection for this set of speech events derives from the sets of sociolinguistic configurations (i.e., the sociolinguistic rules) that characterize them. There are eighteen speech events that belong here, each of which is subsumed under A1 (with the Sermon the Mount possibly under D3), A3, A5, or D2.⁴⁴

Most of the speech events in Matthew where Jesus would inevitably have used Greek fall under A1 (religion domain), with two episodes under A5 (friendship domain)

His strategy, implicitly for himself and explicitly for his followers, was the combination of *free healing and common eating*, a religious and economic egalitarianism” (Crossan, *The Historical Jesus*, 421–22). Webb, “Jesus’ Baptism by John,” 133, asserts that Jesus lived the life of a “peasant artisan” prior to his baptism.

⁴³ It is important to note that all four Gospels depict Jesus as virtually speaking in Greek (see chapter 1; cf. Porter, “The Language(s) Jesus Spoke,” 2461).

⁴⁴ Porter, “The Language(s) Jesus Spoke,” 2462–63; Porter, “Role of Greek,” 379–80 (cf. Porter, *Criteria*, 141–64; Porter, “Luke 17:11–19,” 201–24), is my strongest ally (and insofar as those who have conducted a similar analysis, probably the only one) in this regard. He identifies twelve passages in the Gospels—(1) John 12:20–28, Jesus’ discussion with certain Greeks; (2) Matt 8:5–13//John 4:46–54, Jesus’ conversation with the centurion; (3) Luke 17:11–19, Jesus’ conversation with the Samaritan lepers; (4) John 4:4–26, Jesus’ conversation with the Samaritan woman; (5) Mark 2:13–14//Matt 9:9//Luke 5:27–28, Jesus’ calling of Levi/Matthew; (6) Mark 7:25–30//Matt 25:21–28, Jesus’ conversation with the Syrophenician or Canaanite woman; (7) Mark 12:13–17//Matt 22:16–22//Luke 20:2–26, Jesus’ conversation with the Pharisees and Herodians on the Roman coin; (8) Mark 8:27–30//Matt 16:13–20//Luke 9:18–22, Jesus’ conversation with his disciples near Caesarea Philippi; (9) Mark 15:2–5//Matt 27:11–14//Luke 23:2–4//John 18:29–38, Jesus’ trial before Pilate; (10) Mark 5:1–20; Luke 8:26–39; Matt 8:28–34, Jesus’ healing of the demon-possessed man at Gerasa or Gadara in the Gaulanitis region in Decapolis; (11) Mark 3:8, the mixed crowd from Jerusalem, Idumea, beyond the Jordan, and Tyre and Sidon; (12) Matt 4:25, the mixed crowd from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond the Jordan; and Luke 6:17, Tyre and Sidon—as the possible episodes where Greek would have been spoken. In only one—Matt 16:13–20—of these twelve episodes did we part ways in our conclusion.

and one episode each under A3 (government domain) and D2 (government domain). These episodes are mostly composed of healing and teaching speech events and question-and-answer dialogues, including two events where Jesus had a conversation with a centurion (8:5–13) and a Canaanite woman (15:21–28). In both events, the selection of Greek as the communication medium seems to be directly dependent upon the ethnic identity of Jesus' conversation partner. There are also other unique features to note in this set of speech events where Greek was used as the language of the participants. First, all episodes represent social situations that occur in public informal settings (where a crowd or a mixed group of people was almost always present), with the episode of Jesus' trial before the Sanhedrin (26:57–68) representing an official and formal public setting.⁴⁵ Second, with the exception of two events, that is, Jesus' teaching concerning the character identity of his mother and siblings (12:46–50), where the participants' relationship is configured as solidarity-oriented, the social relationships in all these episodes appear to be status-oriented.⁴⁶ Third, the genre, topic, key, and end in these social situations have low affective content (but high information content); in other words, it is noticeable that intimate language between participants' transaction or exchange in these speech events is absent. Fourth, contrary to what we may usually assume, many of Jesus' conversations with the religious leaders might have actually transpired in Greek

⁴⁵ Bock, "Blasphemy," 602–6, argues for the possibility that this trial was not convened as a formal Jewish council, since there are four evidences pointing to the possibility that the Sanhedrin's intention was to present Jesus to Pilate, the only person who had the power to execute Jesus as Rome's representative. Cf. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:521, who also argue that we should not think "of a formal trial but rather of a preliminary inquiry."

⁴⁶ Jesus' teaching regarding the character identity of his family members is actually a teaching on religious commitments, such that, as Davies and Allison argue (*Matthew*, 367), his teaching on this matter weakens family ties. The nature of such religious teaching consequently suggests that the relationship between the participants in these cases is more status-oriented, even though theoretically, Jesus' actual social relationship with his mother and siblings is solidarity-oriented.

(see 12:22–45; 19:1–11; 21:23—22:14; cf. 9:1–8),⁴⁷ even in the event of his Sanhedrin trial (26:57–68), indicating that the language selection in a particular speech event is not always constrained by audience identity alone.⁴⁸

Rule A1 (Religion Domain) (with Jesus' Sermon on the Mount possibly under D3 [Education Domain])

The first episode is Jesus' Sermon on the Mount (5:1—7:29).⁴⁹ The participants in this speech event include Jesus, his disciples (οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ; see 5:2), and the crowds (οἱ ὄχλοι) that followed him from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and the region across the Jordan (7:28; cf. 4:25). It is important to note that the entire Sermon on the Mount discourse is a transaction or monologue of Jesus' teachings to his disciples and the mixed crowd. The presence of a mixed crowd like this inevitably engenders participants to choose a *lingua franca* (Greek in this case) for the benefit of the mixed crowd, unless of course when the speakers decide not to do so.⁵⁰ The relationship between Jesus and the disciples and the crowd is undoubtedly status-oriented in this

⁴⁷ See also Porter, *Criteria*, 158–59.

⁴⁸ Contra Synder, *Language and Identity*, esp. 1–2, 16, who thinks that audience identity is the most salient feature to consider in analyzing speech narratives.

⁴⁹ Many scholars see the Sermon on the Mount as a literary unity, a carefully structured unit, constituting the first of the fivefold discourses of the Gospel (see Allison, “Structure,” 423–45; France, *Matthew*, 8–10; Blomberg, *Matthew*, 95; Nolland, *Matthew*, 190–91; Smith, “Fivefold Structure,” 540–51; cf. Bacon, “The Five Books of Moses,” 56–66), but most reject the idea that Jesus delivered the sermon on one single occasion, hence the argument that the sermon is a compilation of Jesus' sayings (see Evans, *Matthew*, 98, n. 116; Hagner, *Matthew 1–13*, 83; France, *Matthew*, 153–56; Brooks, “Unity and Structure,” 24; Carson, *Sermon on the Mount*, 151–57. In fact, Betz, *Essays*, 17–22, 90–93, argues that the sermon came to Matthew as a Jewish-Christian epitome of Jesus sayings compiled in the 50s CE. See France, *Evangelist and Teacher*, 160–65, for discussion of some of the important issues involved in the interpretation of this discourse; Kissinger, *Sermon*; Betz, *Sermon*, 6–44; Guelich, *Sermon*, 14–22; and Stanton, *A Gospel for a New People*, 289–95, for surveys of the history of interpretation of the sermon). But Matt 7:28 seems to indicate that Jesus told this sermon on one specific occasion (cf. Blomberg, *Matthew*, 96). See also Porter, “Role of Greek,” 362, who remarks, “I have come to the point of positing that such a passage as the Sermon on the Mount was delivered—at least on the occasion as it is recorded in Matthew's Gospel—in Greek” (cf. Porter, “Reading the Gospels,” 48–49).

⁵⁰ Cf. Porter, “Role of Greek Criteria,” 379–80, who also argues for the use of Greek in this event on account of the mixed crowd, noting a similar scenario happening in Mark 3:8 and Luke 6:17.

speech event, as Jesus assumes the position of a teacher in authority (7:29),⁵¹ teaching them (ἐδίδασκεν αὐτούς, 5:2; τῆ διδασχῆ αὐτοῦ, 7:28; διδάσκων αὐτούς, 7:29) various things and topics concerning the Beatitudes (5:1–12; cf. Luke 6:20–23),⁵² salt and light (5:13–15; cf. Mark 9:50; Luke 14:34–35),⁵³ teachings about the Law (5:17–20),⁵⁴ such as murder and anger (5:21–26; cf. Luke 12:58–59),⁵⁵ adultery and lust (5:27–30),⁵⁶ marriage and divorce (5:31–32),⁵⁷ oath-making and oath-breaking (5:33–37),⁵⁸ resisting to retaliate (5:38–42; cf. Luke 6:29–30),⁵⁹ and love for enemies (5:43 – 48; cf. Luke

⁵¹ Sitting down seems to be the position Jesus takes when he teaches the people (5:1; 13:1–2; 15:29; 24:3–4; 26:55), and it also seems to convey positional authority in Judaism (23:2; cf. Exod 18:13–27).

⁵² The term μακάριος (blessed) forms a lexical chain (repetition of the same lexical item or its derivatives) that links 5:1–12 together as a distinct unit and simultaneously serves as the topic of Jesus' teaching in this section.

⁵³ The terms ἅλας (salt) and φῶς (light) weave this section together, as Jesus equates these them with his disciples, saying, Ὑμεῖς ἐστε τὸ ἅλας τῆς γῆς... Ὑμεῖς ἐστε τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου (5:13–14).

⁵⁴ The terms ὁ νόμος (the Law), οἱ προφῆται (the Prophets), ἐντολή (commandment), and διδάσκω (to teach) form a semantic chain that binds 5:17–20 together. All three terms belong to various sub-domains categorized under the “Communication” semantic domain (see Louw and Nida, *Lexicon*, 1:387, 395, 412–13, 425). The subsequent sub-topics that Jesus taught his disciples and the crowd in 5:21–48 are prefaced by the antithetical statements, “You have heard that it was said... but I tell you” (Ἐκούσατε ὅτι ἐρρέθη... ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν).

⁵⁵ The terms φονεύω (to murder), ὀργίζω (to be very angry), ῥακά (raca or fool), and μωρός (foolish or stupid) can be considered as an *ad hoc* semantic-domain lexical items that the author wants to link together and associate with the related concepts of murder and anger (5:21–22) and its relation to various social dealings with one's enemy (5:24–26).

⁵⁶ The terms μοιχεύω (to commit adultery) and ἐπιθυμέω (to lust) are *ad hoc* semantic-domain lexical items that the author leverages to teach about getting rid of the body part that causes one to sin (5:29–30).

⁵⁷ This section is joined together by the lexical items ἀπολύω (to divorce) and γαμέω (to marry), both of which belong the semantic sub-domain “Marriage, Divorce” (see Louw and Nida, *Lexicon*, 1:455–46).

⁵⁸ This section is joined together by the lexical items ἐπιορκέω (to break an oath) and ὀμνύω (to make an oath), both of which belong to the semantic sub-domain “Swear, Put Under Oath, Vow” (see Louw and Nida, *Lexicon*, 1:440).

⁵⁹ The idiomatic expressions ὀφθαλμὸν ἀντὶ ὀφθαλμοῦ (eye for eye) and ὀδόντα ἀντὶ ὀδόντος (tooth for tooth) are quotations from the Old Testament and are “brand new entities” that the author introduces to associate them with the term ἀνθίστημι (to oppose or resist). As such, these brand new entities are anchored to the semantic domain of ἀνθίστημι, as the author spells out what it means to “not resist an evil person” (μὴ ἀντιστῆναι τῷ πονηρῷ) in 5:39–42.

6:27–28, 32–36),⁶⁰ religious practices or “acts of righteousness” (τὴν δικαιοσύνην),⁶¹ which include alms-giving (6:2–4),⁶² prayer (6:5–14; cf. Luke 11:2–4),⁶³ and fasting (6:16–18),⁶⁴ a set of social issues concerning life’s priority (6:19–24; cf. Luke 11:34–36),⁶⁵ life’s basic needs (6:25–34; cf. Luke 12:22–31),⁶⁶ the proper treatment of one’s neighbor (7:1–6; Luke 6:41–42),⁶⁷ asking and receiving (7:7–12; cf. Luke 11:9–13),⁶⁸ and finally, three warnings concerning eschatological judgment—the narrow and wide gates (7:13–14), the true and false prophets and disciples (7:15–23), and the wise and foolish

⁶⁰ This section is linked together through the play of the following phrases, ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου (love your neighbor), μισήσεις τὸν ἐχθρόν σου (hate your enemy), ἀγαπᾶτε τοὺς ἐχθροὺς ὑμῶν (love your enemies), προσεύχεσθε ὑπὲρ τῶν διωκόντων ὑμᾶς (pray for those who persecute you), and ἀγαπήσητε τοὺς ἀγαπῶντας ὑμᾶς (love those who love you). The objective was perhaps to underscore the expected antithetical attitude between Jesus’ disciples, who should be perfect just as the heavenly father is perfect (5:48), and tax collectors and pagans (5:46–47). This is especially highlighted in the association of the good (ἀγαθός) and the righteous (δίκαιος) with one’s neighbor, such that one would naturally love their neighbor, and of the evil (πονηρός) and the unrighteous (ἄδικος), such that one would naturally hate their enemies (5:43–45).

⁶¹ The section in 6:1–18 begins with a topic statement at 6:1 and contains three sub-sections that are introduced by the three subjunctive dependent clauses “when you might practice charity” (ὅταν οὖν ποιῆς ἔλεημοσύνην) in 6:2, “when you might pray” (ὅταν προσεύχησθε) in 6:5, and “when you might fast” (ὅταν δὲ νηστεύητε) in 6:16.

⁶² The lexical item ἔλεημοσύνη (charitable giving) joins this section together, contrasting two types of motivations in charitable giving between Jesus’ disciples and the hypocrites (οἱ ὑποκριταί).

⁶³ The lexical item προσεύχομαι (to pray) tightly knits this section together as Jesus teaches his disciples on the right motive to pray the right prayer (see Ong, “Lord’s Prayer,” esp. 107–18).

⁶⁴ The lexical item νηστεύω (to fast) links this section together as Jesus teaches his disciples on the right motive and purpose to fasting.

⁶⁵ This section is link together by the lexical item θησαυρός (treasure) that Jesus used to explain the fact that no one can serve two masters or serve both God and money (6:24).

⁶⁶ This section is link together by the lexical item μεριμνάω (to worry), which Jesus used to tell his disciples that the seeking God’s kingdom and his righteousness should take precedence over and will in fact overcome the worrying of the basic needs of life.

⁶⁷ This section speaks about κρίνω (to judge; 7:1–2), or more specifically, not to judge others (μὴ κρίνετε) as Jesus spells out the reasons for his command (7:3–5).

⁶⁸ This section speaks about a set of related items αἰτέω (to ask), ζητέω (to seek), and κρούω (to knock), all of which are *ad hoc* lexical items that are associated with the idea of αἰτέω. The lexical item αἰτέω tightly knits this section together.

builders (7:24–27; cf. Luke 6:47–49).⁶⁹ Jesus’ teachings on these various topics seem to indicate a high level of information content. The genre of this speech event alternates between commands and instructions and teachings and sermons. Its key appears to be informal and public, even though 5:2 suggests that Jesus’ teachings were intended for his disciples.⁷⁰ The end or purpose of this event from a cultural standpoint demonstrates that it is a public, informal teaching by a teacher to his disciples. From an individual’s standpoint, Jesus seems to want to teach his disciples about various things and topics that would show the world that they truly were his disciples through various antithetical examples. Based on these sociolinguistic features of the speech event, we may classify the social setting of this speech event under either the religion or education domain. On the one hand, under the religion domain, we could argue that the setting is a public and informal one and that the message content of the speech event has low affective content. On the other hand, under the education domain, we could argue that its message content has high information content and that Jesus clearly assumes the role of a teacher teaching his disciples and the crowd. Whatever the case may be, it is likely that Jesus taught in Greek (see A1 and D3).⁷¹

The second episode is the healing of the person with leprosy (8:1–4; cf. Mark 1:40–44; Luke 5:12–14). The participants in this speech event include Jesus and a leper

⁶⁹ This section is joined together by comparative sets of terms and concepts, such as the narrow gate (στενής πύλης) and the wide gate (πλατεία πύλης), the good tree (δένδρον ἀγαθόν) and the bad tree (σαπρὸν δένδρον), which stand for, respectively, the true and the false prophets, and the wise person (ἀνδρὶ φρονίμῳ) and the foolish person (ἀνδρὶ μωροῦ). Moreover, each of the sub-sections in this section also ends with an eschatological warning at 7:13, 19, 23, and 26–27.

⁷⁰ Cf. Ong, “Lord’s Prayer, 112–13; and France, *Matthew*, 153, who makes a similar argument and notes that the sermon is therefore not about the proclamation of the kingdom of God but about learning what life in that kingdom entails, calling it “The Discourse on Discipleship.”

⁷¹ Cf. the similar conclusion but more extensive analysis of the Sermon on the Mount by Porter, “Role of Greek,” 393–404. Porter applies his three Greek language criteria to analyze the text of the Sermon on the Mount.

(λεπρός), although the large crowds who followed Jesus (8:1) were still tailing behind him. The gesture of this leper who came kneeling and begging (προσεκύνει; lit. “to incline the face to the ground”) before Jesus and his (or her) address of Jesus as “Lord” (Κύριε) indicates that the leper acknowledges either Jesus’ authority or his superior social status or is at least a deferential gesture on his part.⁷² As such, their relationship is status-oriented. “Healing” is a religious activity, and the event in which the healing of the leper took place was in a public and informal social setting—at the foot of the mountain (καταβάντος ἀπὸ τοῦ ὄρους; 8:1). The genre of this speech event is in fact most likely a casual conversation in the form of a question-and-answer dialogue between the leper and Jesus (8:2–4). The leper asks, “Lord, if you will, can you make me clean” (Κύριε, ἐὰν θέλῃς δύνασαι με καθαρίσαι), to which Jesus replies, “I am willing...be clean” (Θέλω...καθαρίσθητι). The topic of their conversation concerns the healing or cleansing (καθαρίζω; see 8:3, 4) of the leper. The key of this event follows the formality of the social setting, a public and informal one, and thus the conversation between the participants seems to have low affective content. It is possible that the language used in this incident would have been Greek, especially if we take into account the presence of the large crowd who followed Jesus.

The third episode is the healing of a paralyzed man (9:1–8; cf. Mark 2:3–12; Luke 5:18–26). The participants in this speech event include some men (this is inferred from the use of the third-person-plural verb προσέφερον in 9:2), some teachers of the law

⁷² The term Κύριε in this instance (as well as in the many instances where the disciples and the people address Jesus as such) could mean either “lord or master” (i.e., someone who is in a position of authority) or “sir” (i.e., a title of respect used in addressing a man). See Louw and Nida, *Lexicon*, 1:138, 738; and Arndt, Danker, and Bauer, *BDAG*, 578).

(τινες τῶν γραμματέων; 9:3), the crowds (οἱ ὄχλοι; 9:8), and Jesus. There was no real conversational exchange that took place between the participants in this speech event, except that Jesus, upon seeing the faith of the “some men” (9:2) and upon knowing the thoughts of the teachers of the law (9:4), respectively, forgave (the sins) of and healed the paralyzed man (9:2, 6–7) and rebuked the teachers of the law (9:4–6). These activities suggest that this incident should be classified under the public and informal religion domain, especially as its genre is of the healings and miracles and teachings and sermons types. We can also notice that the content of Jesus’ rebuke has low affective content. It is therefore likely, especially with the presence of the crowd, that the language that was used in this incident would have been Greek.

The fourth episode is the healing of the two blind men and exorcism of the mute person (9:27–34). The participants in this speech event are the two blind persons (δύο τυφλοὶ; 9:27), the demon-possessed mute person (ἄνθρωπον κωφὸν δαιμονιζόμενον; 9:32), the demon (δαιμόνιον; 9:33), the crowds (οἱ ὄχλοι; 9:33), and the Pharisees (οἱ Φαρισαῖοι; 9:34). But it is important to note that Jesus only had conversation with the two blind persons. The relationship between the participants in this speech event is status oriented; the blind persons were seeking mercy and help from the “Son of David” (υἱὸς Δαυίδ; 9:27), and, when Jesus asked them if they believe in his power (Πιστεύετε ὅτι δύναμαι τοῦτο ποιῆσαι; 9:28), they replied, “Yes, Lord” (Ναὶ κύριε; 9:28). The setting of this incident is unknown, as 9:27 only indicates that Jesus went on “from there” (ἐκεῖθεν), that is, from the synagogue leader’s house (9:23). The setting, however, is most likely in a public and informal religion domain, as Jesus performed a healing

miracle. The conversation that transpired between Jesus and the blind persons was a straightforward question-and-answer exchange (9:27–30), and it therefore seems to have low affective content (compare Jesus’ reply to the bleeding woman in 9:22: “Take heart, daughter. Your faith has healed you” [Θάρσει, θύγατερ· ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέν σε]). It is likely that this conversation transpired in Greek (see Rule 1).

The fifth episode is Jesus’ teaching and discourse on Beelzebul and on the sign of Jonah (12:22–45; cf. Mark 3:23–27; Luke 11:17–32). The participants in this speech event include Jesus’ disciples and the crowds (οἱ ὄχλοι; 12:23), but the conversation only takes place between Jesus and the Pharisees and teachers of the law, with Jesus giving an extended answer to their questions. The relationship between the Pharisees and Jesus as I have pointed out elsewhere (e.g., see the episode on the teachings concerning the Sabbath in 12:1–14) is a unique one, with Jesus having a superior status to the religious leaders. In fact, in this instance, the religious leaders address Jesus as “Teacher” (Διδάσκαλε; 12:38). The text does not indicate the exact setting of this speech event, but we are certain that Jesus has already left the synagogue (see 12:9, 15). Wherever this event took place, it is safe to assume that this informal conversation between Jesus and the religious leaders would have been in a public setting, as there was a crowd that was present (see 12:46). The genre of this speech event resembles a question-and-answer dialogue, with Jesus’ answer resembling an extended teaching and sermon. The key, like the setting, is fairly public and informal. There are two topics of discussion in this speech event. The first topic concerns the accusation of the Pharisees in 12:24 that “This man cannot drive out demons except by Beelzebul, the prince of demons” (Οὗτος οὐκ ἐκβάλλει τὰ δαιμόνια εἰ μὴ ἐν τῷ Βεελζεβούλ ἄρχοντι τῶν δαιμονίων). Jesus’

extended response to this accusation consists of a series of illustrations that negate and invalidate the Pharisees' accusation—a kingdom cannot be divided against itself, so how can Satan drive out Satan (12:25–28), and a strong person needs to be bounded first before plundering their house (12:29)—and that rebuke the Pharisees for bringing up such an accusation against him—blasphemy against the Son of Man and the Holy Spirit (12:30–32), and giving account for every empty word spoken (πᾶν ῥῆμα ἄργὸν ὃ λαλήσουσιν) on the day of judgment (12:33–37). The second topic concerns the Pharisees' demand for a sign (12:38). Jesus answers in 12:39 that only a wicked and adulterous generation asks for a sign (Γενεὰ πονηρὰ καὶ μοιχαλὶς σημεῖον ἐπιζητεῖ). He then cites the example of Jonah as the sign that will be given to a wicked generation (12:39–42) and explains to them the condition of a person with recurring impure spirits in this wicked generation (12:43–45). Both topics contain very low affective but high information content. Considering the setting, genre, key, and topics of this speech event, it is very likely that Jesus spoke Greek with the Pharisees.

The sixth episode is the series of parables Jesus taught the crowd by the Sea of Galilee (13:1–35; cf. Mark 4:1–20, 30–32; Luke 8:4–15; 10:23–24; 13:18–21). The participants in this speech event are Jesus, his disciples (13:10), and the crowd (ὁ ὄχλος; 13:2, 34). The relationship of the participants is status-oriented, as Jesus teaches his disciples and the crowd about various things using parables. The setting of this speech event was by the lake (τὴν θάλασσαν; 13:1), with large crowds gathered around the shore (τὸν αἰγιαλὸν; 13:2), listening to Jesus, who himself was in a boat (πλοῖον). It is therefore an informal gathering in a public place just outside the house (τῆς οἰκίας) where Jesus stayed (13:1). The topics contained in the parables classify this speech event

under the religion domain, as Jesus explains the kingdom of heaven (ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν) through the parables of the sower (13:3–23), the weeds (13:24–30), and the mustard seed and the yeast (13:31–33). The genre of this speech event is of the teachings and sermons type, and its key is public and informal, which consequently suggests that it has low affective but high information content. For all these reasons, Jesus' teaching in this speech event would have been conducted in Greek.

The seventh episode is Jesus' conversation with a Canaanite woman (15:21–28; Mark 7:24–30). The participants in this episode are Jesus, the disciples (15:23), and the Canaanite woman (γυνὴ Χανααναία; 15:22). The Canaanite woman addresses Jesus as “Lord, Son of David” (κύριε υἱὸς Δαυίδ; 15:22, 25, 27), requesting him to heal her demon-possessed daughter (15:22). She kneels down (προσεκύνει; 15:25) and begs Jesus to help her (Κύριε, βοήθει μοι; 15:25; cf. 15:22). Despite Jesus ignoring her initially (15:23–24, 26), she is persistent: “Even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table” (καὶ γὰρ τὰ κυνάρια ἐσθίει ἀπὸ τῶν ψιγίων τῶν πιπτόντων ἀπὸ τῆς τραπέζης τῶν κυρίων αὐτῶν; 15:27). Although the relationship between the participants is clearly status-oriented under the public and informal religion domain, the topic and key of their conversation seem to have high information but low affective content. The genre may be classified under healings and miracles as well as teachings and sermons. It is most likely that this conversation transpired in Greek (see Rule 1), especially considering the fact that Jesus' interlocutor was a Canaanite and that the setting of this speech event was in the region of Tyre and Sidon (15:21), two highly Hellenized cities (see chapter 3—Phoenicia). In fact, if this event is the same account in

Mark 7:24–30, Mark tells us that this woman was a Greek, born in Syrian Phoenicia (7:26).

The eighth episode is Jesus' teaching about who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven (18:1–14; cf. Mark 9:33–37; Luke 9:46–48). The participants in this speech event are Jesus and his disciples (18:1) and a little child (παιδίον; 18:2). It is difficult to assume, however, that these were the only participants present. For one, if there was this little child, there must have been other people present besides Jesus and his disciples (see my discussion of Jesus' teaching on forgiveness in 18:15–35). The absence of the mention of a physical setting of the event further complicates the matter. Nevertheless, it is clear from Jesus' teaching that he was trying to explain to his disciples that one must become like little children—that is, those who believe in him (τῶν πιστευόντων εἰς ἐμέ; 18:6)—to enter and become great in the kingdom of heaven (18:3–4). He expounds his teaching in three parts, each of which is introduced by a subjunctive statement. First, Jesus says that whoever might welcome (ὅς ἐὰν δέξηται) a little child welcomes him (18:5). Second, he gives warning to whoever might cause to stumble (ὅς δ' ἂν σκανδαλίση) one of these little children (18:6). Third and last, he gives the command, “see to it that you might not despise” (Ὁρᾶτε μὴ καταφρονήσητε) one of these little children (18:10). Although this teaching was directed to the disciples, it is possible that the message content of this teaching was aimed at a crowd (after all, οἱ ὄχλοι were always following him). This factor, together with the high information content (note the parable of the sheep in 18:10–14) and genre (teachings and sermons) of his teaching in this episode, suggests that this speech event should be classified under the public and

informal religion domain; hence the language in which Jesus taught his audience would have been Greek.

The ninth episode is Jesus' teaching on divorce (19:1–12; cf. Mark 10:1–12). The participants in this episode include the large crowds (ὄχλοι πολλοί; 19:2), some Pharisees (19:3), the disciples (19:10), and Jesus. In this speech event, there are two exchanges between the Pharisees and Jesus (19:3–9) and an exchange between the disciples and Jesus (19:10–11). As is usually the case, the Pharisees seem to recognize the superior status of Jesus as a religious teacher by testing or trapping him with a question. The first question they asked is whether it was lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any or every reason (19:3), and this was followed by a second question, which inquires for the reason why Moses commands a man to give his wife a certificate of divorce.⁷³ Jesus cites Gen 1:27 and 2:24 in response to the first question (19:4–6), and he rebukes them in response to the second question, telling them that Moses permitted people to divorce because their hearts were hardened (19:8). The disciples asked a third question concerning the idea of not marrying, because of the complexity of the matter. In reply, Jesus told them that this idea is not easily acceptable, since celibacy is a gift (19:11). It seems accurate to say that the relationship between all the participants in this speech event is status-oriented, as both the Pharisees and the disciples were looking for answers about the divorce issue from Jesus. The setting of this episode is in a public place (to accommodate the large crowds) in the region of Judea to the other side of the Jordan (19:1)—that is, Perea, a region that is inhabited by a considerable population of

⁷³ The lexical item ἀπολύω (to divorce) weaves this section together and makes it the topic of discussion. Divorce is a common household topic (hence, it is important to the Pharisees) in the first-century CE (see chapter 4—Family Domain).

Jews, including the Pharisees (see chapter 3—Perea). Based on these factors, this speech event is classified under the informal and public religion domain, with the topic of discussion having low affective content, the genre belonging to teachings and sermons as well as casual question-and-answer conversation type, and the key being public and informal. It is likely that this speech event transpired in Greek.

The tenth episode is the short conversation between Jesus and his disciples concerning the laying of hands on and praying for little children (19:13–15; Mark 10:13–16; Luke 18:15–17). The participants in this speech event are Jesus and his disciples and the crowd that were still with them (see 19:2; the use of the temporal adverb τότε [then or at that time] may help support this assumption). It is clear in this event that the relationship between the participants is status-oriented; the people sought for Jesus' touch upon and prayer for the little children, but the disciples rebuked (ἐπετίμησαν) them (19:13), yet Jesus still had the final say in the matter, as he allowed the little children to be brought to him and commanded his disciples not to hinder them (Ἄφετε τὰ παιδιά καὶ μὴ κωλύετε αὐτὰ ἔλθεῖν πρὸς με; 19:14). Because the setting of this event may still be in the same location as in 19:1, the status-oriented relationship between the participants, the topic (prayer, laying of hands, and kingdom of heaven), and genre (healings and sermons or teachings and sermons type) of this speech event should be classified under the public and informal religion domain, with Greek as the more probable language used.

The eleventh episode is the healing of the two blind men in Jericho (20:29–34; Mark 10:46–52; Luke 18:35–43). The participants in this speech event are the large crowd (20:29, 31), the two blind men (20:30), and Jesus and his disciples. The

conversation was between Jesus and the two blind men (20:30–33), with an interjection by the crowd in 20:31, rebuking the blind men to be quiet. The relationship between the participants is status-oriented, as the blind men, crying out “Lord, Son of David” (κύριε, υἱὸς Δαυίδ), begged Jesus for mercy (Ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς). On hearing their cry, Jesus stopped and asked them what they want, to which the blind replied that they wanted their sight restored (20:32–33). The setting of this event is in Jericho (20:29) and is in a public and informal religion domain. Its genre is categorized under the healings and miracles type, and its key is public and informal. It is likely that this speech event transpired in Greek.

The twelfth episode is the conversation between the elders and chief priests and Jesus concerning Jesus’ authority (cf. Mark 11:27–33; Luke 20:1–8) and Jesus’ teaching of the parables of the two sons, the tenants (cf. Mark 12:1–12; Luke 20:9–19), and the wedding banquet (cf. Luke 14:16–24) (21:23—22:14). The participants in this speech event include the people in the temple courts (ἱερόν), since Jesus was teaching there (21:23, 46), the chief priests and the elders of the people (οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι τοῦ λαοῦ; 21:23) and the Pharisees (21:45; 22:15), the disciples who traveled with Jesus from Bethany (see 21:17–18), and Jesus. The conversation, however, was only between Jesus and the religious leaders. They question Jesus’ authority (ἐξουσία)⁷⁴ because of the things he did and said (21:23–27). In reply, Jesus also asks them a question concerning John’s baptism, and says that he will not answer their question, because they were also unable to give him an answer to his question about John.

⁷⁴ The lexical item ἐξουσία (authority) forms a lexical chain that links this section together, and thus indicating the topic of discussion.

Jesus, however, did not just stop at that answer, but he tells them two parables—the two sons and the tenants. Both parables drive at a common lesson: the messiah or prophet that the religious leaders were waiting for has already arrived, but they still refuse to believe and repent (21:32, 42–44). The religious leaders knew that the two parables referred to them, and so they tried to plan for Jesus’ arrest (21:45–46). Jesus gives still yet another parable, the wedding banquet, to clinch his point for the religious leaders. The main point of the parable seems to indicate that the religious leaders not only refused to believe and repent (22:2–8), but that their religious pretense could disqualify them from entering the kingdom of heaven (22:8–14). As is often the case, the religious leaders regard Jesus as an authoritative religious teacher, and their relationship therefore is often always status-oriented. The setting of this event is in the temple courts, its genre is of the teachings and sermons type, and the topic and key of the conversation have low affective but high information content. This speech event therefore is under the public and informal religion domain, and the language that was used would have been Greek.

The thirteenth episode is the four sets of question-and-answer dialogue between Jesus and the Pharisees and Sadducees and Jesus’ teaching concerning the hypocrisy of the religious leaders (22:15—23:39; cf. Mark 12:13–39; Luke 20:20–46). The participants in this episode include the Pharisees (22:15, 34, 41) and their disciples and the Herodians (τοὺς μαθητὰς αὐτῶν μετὰ τῶν Ἡρωδιανῶν; 22:16), the Sadducees (22:23, 34), the crowds and the disciples (τοῖς ὄχλοις καὶ τοῖς μαθηταῖς; 23:1; cf. 22:33), and Jesus. The relationship between the participants in this episode is status-oriented; the religious leaders all address Jesus as “Teacher” (Διδάσκαλε; 22:15, 24, 36), and Jesus teaches the crowds and his disciples (23:1). The setting of this event is in the

temple courts (see 24:1), and it is very possible that the crowds and the disciples were all present, when the conversations between Jesus and the religious leaders happened, since 23:1 and Jesus' teaching to the crowd and his disciples (23:2–39) would seem to suggest. There are four sets of exchanges between Jesus and the religious leaders and an extended transaction by Jesus to the crowds and his disciples in this speech event. The first conversation transpired between the Pharisees' disciples, along with the Herodians, and Jesus (22:15–22). They ask Jesus whether it is right to pay tax to Caesar. In reply, Jesus rebukes them for their evil intent and tells them to give back to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's. The second conversation happened that same day between the Sadducees and Jesus (22:23–32). They ask Jesus about a woman who was married to seven husbands; hence, at the resurrection, "whose wife will she be of the seven, since all of them were married to her" (ἐν τῇ ἀναστάσει οὗν τίνος τῶν ἑπτὰ ἔσται γυνή; πάντες γὰρ ἔσχον αὐτήν; 22:28). Answering them that they do not know the Scriptures and the power of God, Jesus tells them that there is no marriage at the resurrection. The third conversation was between one of the Pharisees, an expert in the law (νομικός), and Jesus (22:34–40). The law expert asks Jesus about which is the greatest commandment in the Law. Jesus tells him that all the Law and the Prophets hinged upon loving God and loving one's neighbor. The fourth and last conversation occurred between the Pharisees and Jesus (22:41–46). This time, Jesus asks them about the identity of the messiah. The Pharisees are quick to answer that the messiah is the son of David. But Jesus asks them again, saying, "How is it then that David, speaking by the Spirit, calls him 'Lord'" (Πῶς οὗν Δαυὶδ ἐν πνεύματι καλεῖ αὐτὸν κύριον), citing Ps 110:1. After this fourth conversation, the religious leaders did not dare to ask him any more questions (12:46). At

this moment, Jesus turns to the crowds and his disciples (23:1) and tells them about the self-exaltation of the religious leaders, instructing them not to follow them (23:2–12), and he pronounces seven “woes” on the religious leaders (23:13–39).⁷⁵ All these topics of the conversations have low affective content. Given these various sociolinguistic elements, this speech event should be categorized under the public and informal religion domain; hence, the language that was used would most likely have been Greek.

The fourteenth episode is the crowd’s arrest of Jesus (26:47–56; cf. Mark 14:43–50; Luke 22:47–53). The participants in this speech event are Judas (26:47), the large crowd (ὄχλος πολὺς; 26:47, 50), which includes the servant of the high priest (τὸν δοῦλον τοῦ ἀρχιερέως; 26:51), the disciples, and Jesus. The relationship between the participants in this speech event is status-oriented—Judas addresses Jesus as “rabbi” (ῥαββί) or teacher (26:49), and the arresting crowd recognizes Jesus as a teacher, as Jesus told them that “Everyday I sat in the temple courts teaching, and you did not arrest me” (καθ’ ἡμέραν ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ ἐκαθεζόμεν διδάσκων καὶ οὐκ ἐκρατήσατέ με; 26:55). It is likely that the setting of this event is in the location where Jesus had found the Three sleeping for the third time, since 26:45–47 indicates that Judas and the group arrived at that specific location. The transaction between Jesus and the person who struck the servant’s ear (26:52–54) as well as between Jesus and the crowd (26:55–56) appears to have high information but low affective content (cf. Jesus’ prior conversation with his disciples and the Father in 26:36–46). Taking all these sociolinguistic factors into account,

⁷⁵ The phrase οὐαὶ ὑμῖν (woe to you) marks this section and indicates that this was Jesus’ topic in this section.

this speech event should be classified under the public and informal religion domain and the language that was used in the conversations would probably have been Greek.⁷⁶

Rule A3 (Government Domain)

The fifteenth episode is the healing of the centurion's servant (8:5–13; cf. Luke 7:1–10). It is possible that some from the large crowds (ὄχλοι πολλοί) that followed Jesus, when he came down from the mountainside (8:1; cf. 8:18), were still with him, especially since the setting of this event was in Capernaum, a town in the northwestern part of the Sea of Galilee not far from the mountainside where Jesus gave the Sermon on the Mount. But the conversation in this speech event transpired only between Jesus and the centurion (ἐκατοντάρχης). The relationship between Jesus and the centurion appears to be status-oriented, as the centurion addresses Jesus as “Lord” (Κύριε), even though the centurion probably has a higher social status as a government official of the community. Furthermore, the use of the second-person-singular imperative “Υπάγε (Go!) on the part of Jesus may also indicate Jesus' superior status in the conversation. Because this speech event involves a government official, the setting of this incident would have been in a relatively private government domain, although one could notice that the key or tone or manner in which the conversation transpired was a relatively formal one. The deferential address of the centurion to Jesus as well as Jesus' use of an interrogative reply, “Shall I come to heal him” (Ἐγὼ ἔλθὼν θεραπεύσω αὐτόν), seems to signal conversation politeness gestures. The topic of the conversation centers on the healing of the centurion's paralyzed servant (θεραπεύσω αὐτόν, 8:7; ἰαθήσεται ὁ παῖς μου, 8:8;

⁷⁶ For further information, see my discussion in Ong, “Linguistic Analysis,” 126–27.

ἰάθη ὁ παῖς, 8:13).⁷⁷ Although the genre may be of the healings and miracles type, it should be noticed that the conversation was actually more of a question-and-answer type between Jesus and the centurion, with the request for healing of the centurion's servant as the goal or end of the conversation. The conversation also appears to have low information content. In such type of speech event, it is very likely that the conversation transpired in Greek.

Rule A5 (Friendship Domain)

The sixteenth episode is the teaching concerning who are Jesus' mother and siblings (12:46–50; cf. Mark 3:31–35; Luke 8:19–21). The participants in this speech event include Jesus' mother and siblings (ἡ μήτηρ καὶ οἱ ἀδελφοί;), the crowds (οἱ ὄχλοι; 12:46), the certain person (τις; 12:47) in the crowd, Jesus' disciples (12:49), and Jesus. The conversation is between Jesus and the certain individual, and the nature of their relationship seems to be solidarity-oriented, since there is nothing in the text that suggests otherwise. The setting of the conversation is probably in a public and informal friendship domain, and the topic is about who were Jesus' real mother and siblings (12:48–50). The genre is that of a typical question-and-answer exchange, although Jesus answers his own question in this incident. The key suggests that it has low affective content, as there are no terms or expressions of endearment between the participants. It is likely that this speech event transpired in Greek.

The seventeenth episode is Jesus' teaching on forgiveness (18:15–35). It is important to consider the idea that 18:15–20, which is about the issue of how to deal with

⁷⁷ The terms θεραπεύω and ἰάομαι (both mean to heal and belong to the semantic sub-domain “Health, Vigor, Strength”) weave this section together, and θεραπεύω also belong to the same semantic domain “Physiological Processes and States” as the term παραλυτικός (paralyzed). See Louw and Nida, *Lexicon*, 1:268, 272).

sin in the church, probably serves as a preface to the teaching on forgiveness, since this passage appears disjointed from 18:1–35, which is about the relationship between greatness in the kingdom of heaven and little children. It seems more related, however, to the teaching on forgiveness. The participants in this speech event include Peter and Jesus, with Peter asking about the number of times one must forgive their brother or sister (18:21), and with Jesus illustrating his answer through the parable of the unmerciful servant (18:22–35). Because 18:21 indicates that Peter came (προσελθὼν) to Jesus, which may imply that Peter was actually not part of the immediate audience of Jesus in 18:1–35, the setting of this speech event would probably have been a private one and should therefore be categorized under the private friendship domain. The use of the second-person-singular personal pronoun “you” (σοι) in Jesus’ reply to Peter (18:22) further supports this assessment. In this case, the language that was used would probably have been Aramaic (see Rule 10). However, we cannot ignore the fact that the physical setting of this event would allow the crowd to be present when this conversation between Peter and Jesus happened. If this were the case, this speech event would then have to be classified under the public and informal friendship domain (i.e., Jesus and Peter had a private conversation in the midst of the crowd). And since the parable of the unmerciful servant has high information and low affective content, the language that was used would have been Greek.

Rule D2 (Government Domain)

The eighteenth episode is Jesus’ trial before the Sanhedrin (26:57–68; cf. Mark 14:53 – 65; Luke 22:54–55; John 18:12–13, 19–24).⁷⁸ The participants in this speech

⁷⁸ For a thorough discussion on the authenticity of this Sanhedrin event, see Bock, “Blasphemy,” 589–67.

event are the arresting crowd (26:57), possibly including Judas (see 27:3), the whole Sanhedrin (τὸ συνέδριον ὅλον; 26:59), which members consist of (probably) Caiaphas the high priest (26:57), the teachers of the law and elders (26:57), and the chief priests (26:59), Peter (26:58; the other disciples had deserted Jesus, 26:56), the guards (τῶν ὑπηρετῶν; 26:58), and the false witnesses (26:60). The setting of this event can be in one of the three possible locations of the Sanhedrin's meeting assembly—at the gate of the temple mount, at the gate of the temple court, or at the chamber of the hewn stone (see chapter 4—Religion Domain). It is a formal and official government domain setting, with Caiaphas charging Jesus with blasphemy, as Jesus admits that he was the messiah (26:62–66). All the other participants in this speech event were involved only as spectators standing in the background. It is important to note that this is a special kind of instance where the typical unique relationship between Jesus and the religious leaders is reversed—the religious leaders now, being the officials of a court proceeding, are the ones who have the higher status. In this kind of government domain setting, the language that was used in Jesus' conversation with Caiaphas would have been Greek, particularly with various groups of participants in the background listening to the proceedings.⁷⁹

Aramaic

The second set of episodes shows the possible speech events where Aramaic, the native tongue of Jesus, would have been used in the conversation(s) between the participants. There are twenty-five speech events that belong here, each of which is categorized under B1, B3, or B4 (see the list of rules above). In some cases, the particular

⁷⁹ For additional reasons why Greek would have been the language employed in this speech event, see Ong, "Linguistic Analysis," 128–30.

speech event can be simultaneously subsumed either under B1 and B4 or under B3 and B4.

Fifteen of these twenty-four episodes fall under B4 (friendship domain), with five episodes under B1 (religion domain), four under B1 and B4, and one under B3 (family domain) and B4. The most profound sociolinguistic feature that affects the language choice in these speech events is their private or intimate setting. For this reason, it naturally follows that the participants' relationship in such kind of social setting is solidarity-oriented, and that the speech events almost always take place in the family or friendship domain. Unsurprisingly, unlike the first set of episodes where Greek was spoken (see above), the participants involved in all these events are always Jesus and his disciples, including two instances where women, such as the mother of the Zebedee brothers (20:20–28) and the women who visited his tomb (28:1–10), are also involved.⁸⁰ In the five instances that happened in the religion domain—the Pharisees and Sadducees' demand for a sign (16:1–4),⁸¹ Peter's identification of Jesus as the messiah (16:13–16),⁸² Jesus' teaching concerning the Sabbath (12:1–14), Jesus' prayer to the Father on the cross

⁸⁰ One can easily see that Jesus would have a multiplex social network with his disciples. Jesus was a teacher, mentor, friend, and a co-worker to his disciples. As most scholars believe, Jesus' selection of the Twelve is symbolic: "they represent the eschatological community of God" (Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 234; for other scholarly interpretations on "the Twelve," see McKnight, *Jesus and the Twelve*, esp. 189–92). Thus, Jesus' multiplex social network, frequent interaction, and ethnic co-membership with these women and the disciples would naturally have allowed him to communicate with them often in Aramaic in these private domains.

⁸¹ The classification of this episode in the religion domain may be seen in the idea that, in view of the ideological differences and party interests between these two groups of religious leaders, they could only be united in this instance through their united rejection of Jesus, for they believe that Jesus is pronouncing "false teachings" as shown in their demand for yet another sign, when they have been shown many already (France, *Matthew*, 605–6).

⁸² Matthew 16:20 strongly indicates that this conversation took place exclusively between Jesus and his disciples, and it further indicates that Jesus until this time still refuses to take on the title ὁ Χριστός and make it known to the public (cf. Bock, "Key Events," 836). This argument is contra Wrede, *Messianic Secret*, who argues that Mark created this "messianic secret" to make the ministry of Jesus look messianic (for a discussion of this issue, see Tuckett, ed., *Messianic Secret*).

(27:45–46), and the Great Commission (28:16–20)⁸³—the more “formal/informational and less casual/intimate” topic of the participants’ conversation appears to be the determining factor for these events to be classified under the religion domain, although the genre of Jesus’ prayer to the Father was the decisive factor for that particular event to be classified under the religion rather than under the family domain.⁸⁴

It is interesting to compare here Jesus’ Olivet Discourse (24:1—26:2) with his Sermon on the Mount (5:1—7:29). Both of these speech events involve Jesus’ extended teaching concerning various topics that contain high information content, and his targeted audience in both events was primarily his disciples. However, the language selection for these two “similar types” of events was different—Jesus probably spoke Greek in his Sermon on the Mount but Aramaic in his Olivet Discourse. These incidents tell us that the formality (or informality) of the social setting of a speech event can affect the language choice of the speakers. In the Sermon on the Mount, the presence of the large crowds from various regions would have prompted Jesus to use Greek instead of Aramaic in teaching his disciples and the people, whereas in the Olivet Discourse, the private setting of his lecture about the παρουσία would have naturally allowed him to speak Aramaic with his beloved disciples. This comparison between these two “similar types” of events also underlines the concept of variable domain, which states that “no speech situations in the real world are exactly like” (see above). The smallest alteration in the

⁸³ Matthew’s commissioning narrative, which ends with a promise of divine presence and protection, finds its parallel in Deut 31:23 and Josh 1:1–9, as well as in Livy 1.16: “Go, announce to the Romans that Heaven wishes that my Rome shall be the capital of the earth; therefore, they shall cultivate the military; they shall know and teach their descendants that no human might can resist Roman arms” (cf. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 680). The content of these sources, with its focus on divine protection, suggests that they perhaps are typically used in the religion domain.

⁸⁴ Elsewhere in Matthew, Jesus addresses God as “Father” (11:25, 26; 26:39, 42; cf. 6:9). Hagner, *Matthew 14–28*, 844, remarks: it was “this breach with the Father...[that]...the prayer avoids this intimate term, using simply ‘God’” (cf. France, *Matthew*, 1076–77; Blomberg, *Matthew*, 419).

sociolinguistic configuration of a particular speech event can convert it from a fixed or standard domain to a variable domain, or from one variable domain to another.

Rule B1 (Religion Domain)

The first episode is the Pharisees and Sadducees' demand for a sign (16:1–4; Mark 8:11–21). The participants in this speech event are the Pharisees and Sadducees (Φαρισαῖοι καὶ Σαδδουκαῖοι; 16:1) and Jesus. As is often the case, these religious leaders always question Jesus to trap and destroy him. This is the second time (the first time in 12:38) these religious leaders demanded Jesus a sign (16:1). Jesus' reply to them was the same as the first time they demanded for a sign: “A wicked and adulterous generation demands for a sign, but none will be given it except the sign of Jonah” (Γενεὰ πονηρὰ καὶ μοιχαλὶς σημεῖον ἐπιζητεῖ, καὶ σημεῖον οὐ δοθήσεται αὐτῇ εἰ μὴ τὸ σημεῖον Ἰωνᾶ; 16:4; cf. 12:39). The setting of this speech event is probably still within the mountainside area, where Jesus fed the four thousand people (15:29), as 16:1 indicates that the Pharisees and Sadducees came (προσελθόντες) to Jesus and as 16:5 tells us that Jesus and his disciples returned and crossed the lake again. As such, the setting is still in a public and informal religion domain, although, because their conversation probably took place privately, the language that was used would likely have been Aramaic.

The second episode is Peter's identification of Jesus as the messiah (16:13–16; Mark 8:27–29; Luke 9:18–20). The participants in this speech event are Jesus and his disciples (see 17:14 when they joined the crowd again), and its setting is somewhere in the region of Caesarea Philippi, a city twenty-five miles from the Sea of Galilee. The relationship between the participants in this episode appears to be both status- and

solidarity-oriented. While there is nothing in the text that indicates a status-oriented address on the part of the disciples, Jesus' topic of discussion is about Son of Man, the messiah. In fact, Jesus warned his disciple not to tell anyone that he was the messiah (16:20). For this reason, there might be an implied status-oriented relationship in this particular speech event. Furthermore, because Jesus also talked about matters relating to the kingdom of heaven (βασιλείας τῶν οὐρανῶν) and his church (ἐκκλησία), which he will build through Peter (16:18–19), this speech event appears to have high information but low affective content, although the social setting of the event seems to be a private one (only Jesus and the disciples were present) and should thus be classified under the private religion domain (cf. Luke 9:18). As such, the language that was used in the conversation would have been Aramaic.

The third episode is the teachings concerning the Sabbath (12:1–14; cf. Mark 2:23–3:6; Luke 6:1–11). There are two separate speech events in this incident but both concern matters relating to the Sabbath. The participants involved in both speech events are Jesus and his disciples, the Pharisees (12:2, 14), and the person with a shriveled hand (12:10, 13) in the synagogue. The relationship between the Pharisees and Jesus is a unique one. While the Pharisees as the religious leaders in the community appear to have a higher social status, Jesus has been considered by them as an authoritative religious teacher, such that the Pharisees were always envious of him and always looking for ways to trap and destroy him (e.g., 12:14). The Pharisees were also the ones who always question Jesus, and in this incident, they were asking Jesus matters related to working

(12:2) and healing (12:10) on the Sabbath—this was the topic of their conversation.⁸⁵ It is therefore fair to say that their unique relationship is status-oriented, with the Pharisees looking up to Jesus as a well-known and respected teacher. The setting of the first speech event is a public and informal one (religion domain); the disciples were picking heads of grain from the grain fields (12:1). Jesus' response in 12:3–8 to the Pharisees' question or accusation in 12:2 contains three examples—David eating the consecrated in the temple, the temple priests desecrating the Sabbath, and the quotation from Hos 6:6—all of which support the point Jesus wants to make, that is, that the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath (12:8). These topics have low affective content, but because the participants were only Jesus and the Pharisees, it is possible that this speech event would have transpired in Aramaic.⁸⁶ The second incident, however, occurs in the synagogue of the Pharisees. The setting, therefore, becomes a bit more private, but not necessarily formal, as there was no formal service or ritual performance that happened. This time, with the person with a shriveled hand present, the Pharisees ask Jesus whether it is lawful to heal on the Sabbath. In reply, Jesus gives an example regarding the sheep that falls into a pit on the Sabbath to justify his healing of the person with a shriveled hand. In a private setting like a synagogue and with only the Pharisees and Jesus and his disciples present, it is likely that they have used Aramaic in their conversation.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ The term *σάββατον* (Sabbath) forms a lexical chain that links together this speech event as a distinct unit.

⁸⁶ It is not impossible that the conversation in this speech event transpired in Aramaic, since the participants include only Jesus and his disciples and the Pharisees.

⁸⁷ The issue of Sabbath-keeping, which is the topic of their conversation, could also have contributed to the likelihood of Aramaic as having been the language used in this speech event. Both Sabbath-keeping and circumcision are the two distinguishing marks of the Jews as the people of God (France, *Matthew*, 454). In a private setting like this, it is possible that Jesus would have had an extended dialogue with the religious leaders concerning the Sabbath in Aramaic (although Matthew does not record), since apparently, he tells them that he is “Lord of the Sabbath” (12:8). For scholarly opinions on whether Jesus was against the

The fourth episode is Jesus' short prayer to the Father on the cross (27:45–46; cf. Mark 15:33–41; Luke 23:44–49; and John 19:29–30). I note that Matthew has only one of Jesus' seven last sayings that are recorded in the four Gospels. The participants in this speech event are Jesus and the Father, and the setting is obviously on the cross where Jesus was hanged in a place called Golgotha (27:33). On the cross, Jesus cries out to the Father, “*Eli, Eli, lema sabacthani*” (Ἠλί ἡλί λεμα σαβαχθανι), which in Aramaic means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me.” Matthew already records Jesus words in Aramaic, but it is important to recognize that this speech event belongs to the private and intimate religion domain—Jesus praying to his Father (prayer is a genre that belongs to the religion domain; see chapter 4—Religion Domain).⁸⁸

The fifth episode is the Great Commission (28:16–20). The participants in this speech event are the eleven disciples (ἑνδεκα μαθηταὶ; 28:16) and Jesus. The setting is at a mountain in Galilee (28:16), and the event is a private meeting between Jesus and the eleven disciples. The relationship between the participants in this speech event is status-oriented; the disciples worship (προσεκύνησαν) Jesus (28:17), and Jesus gives them authority and commissions them for their future ministry of discipleship and baptism (28:18–20). This event therefore belongs to the private religion domain, and the language that was used would likely have been Aramaic.

Sabbath commandment, see Doering, *Schabbat*, esp. 399–400; and Hagner, “Synoptic Sabbath Controversies,” 251–92.

⁸⁸ Neyrey, *Honor and Shame in the Gospel of Matthew*, 152–61, argues that Jesus' cry was a true prayer, demonstrating his piety as he makes a “complaint-protest” to God for not upholding his honor (27:39–44).

Rule B4 (Friendship Domain)

The sixth episode is the calling of Simon Peter and Andrew (4:18–20; cf. Mark 1:16–20). The participants in this speech event are Jesus, Simon Peter, and Andrew. It is likely that this was the very first time Jesus met these two brothers. Yet the acquaintance leads both brothers to leave their fishing nets to follow Jesus (4:20). It is clear from this incident that the relationship between the participants is solidarity oriented and that the ensuing conversation that transpired between them was a private one (cf. Jesus' private conversation with James and John in 4:21–22), even though the setting of this event, which was beside the Sea of Galilee, would allow it to become a more public event. In a private friendship domain setting, the language that was used would most likely have been Aramaic, which is the native tongue of both sets of participants.

The seventh episode is the calming of the storm incident (8:23–27; cf. 14:22–33; Mark 4:36–41; Luke 8:22–25). The participants in this speech event only include Jesus and his disciples, although it is possible that some other people (οἱ ἄνθρωποι) are with them as well (8:27); Jesus apparently tries to get away from the crowd (8:18). The setting of this incident is in the Sea of Galilee as Jesus gets into a boat to cross to the other side of the lake from Capernaum (see 8:5, 18). Thus, the conversation that takes place should be classified under the private and even intimate friendship domain. In such cases, the language that was used would have been Aramaic.

The eighth episode is Jesus' private conversation with his disciples concerning the harvest field and its workers (9:35–38). The participants in this episode include Jesus and his disciples. Jesus, seeing the multitude of people as he travels from towns and villages (9:35), and having compassion on them (9:36), tells his disciples (9:37) about the scarcity

of laborers in the harvest field and the need to send out more laborers into the harvest field (9:38). This speech event appears to have happened in an intimate and private setting (friendship domain), and the language that was used would most likely have been Aramaic.

The ninth episode is the sending out of the Twelve to the harvest field (10:1–42; cf. Mark 3:16–19; 6:8–11; 13:1–13; Luke 6:14–16; 9:3–5; 10:4–12; 12:2–9, 51–53; 21:12–17). Unlike the speech event in the Sermon on the Mount (5:1—7:28), where large crowds were present with Jesus and his disciples (4:25; 7:28), the participants in this episode include only Jesus and his twelve disciples (δώδεκα μαθητᾶς; 10:1; cf. 10:5). Consequently, the social setting of this speech event is definitely an intimate and private one, although it is apparent that Jesus gave a great number of instructions (ὁ Ἰησοῦς παραγγείλας αὐτοῖς λέγων; 10:5) to them as he teaches and prepares them for their work in the harvest field. Regardless of the topics of his instructions and teachings in this kind of intimate and private setting (friendship domain), it is very likely that Jesus' spoke in Aramaic to his disciples in 10:5–42.

The tenth episode is the feeding of the five thousand (14:13–21; 15:32–38; cf. Mark 6:32–44; Luke 9:10–17; John 6:1–13). The participants in this episode include the crowds (οἱ ὄχλοι; 14:13), the disciples (οἱ μαθηταὶ; 14:15), and Jesus. The conversation in 14:15–18 was between Jesus and his disciples, and the participants' relationship in this instance is solidarity-oriented; hence, a friendship domain. Jesus was neither preaching nor teaching; he was rather having a casual conversation with his disciples on how to

feed the crowd.⁸⁹ The setting of this speech event according to Matthew is in a “solitary place” (ἔρημον τόπον; cf. Mark 6:32) in the region of Galilee. But if this speech event parallels the Luke’s account (Luke 9:10–17), the setting is in a town called Bethsaida (Βηθσαϊδά), a place in the northeastern part of the Sea of Galilee.⁹⁰ While the setting of this event is in a public place, the conversation that happened between Jesus and his disciples is most likely a private one (friendship domain). In this case, they would most likely have used Aramaic in their conversation.

The eleventh episode is Jesus walking on the Sea of Galilee (14:22–36; cf. Mark 6:45–52; John 6:15–21). The participants in this episode are Jesus and his disciples, and their relationship in this instance is solidarity-oriented; hence, a friendship domain. Their conversation in 14:26–31 appears to have high affective content, as Jesus encourages them, saying, “Take courage. It is I. Don’t be afraid” (Θαρσεῖτε, ἐγὼ εἰμι· μὴ φοβεῖσθε; 14:27). Jesus also took Peter by the hand and asked him “Why did you doubt?” (τί ἐδίστασας; 14:31). The setting of this incident is in the middle of the Sea of Galilee, which, along with the participants involved, makes this speech event a private and relatively intimate one (friendship domain). Thus, the conversation would naturally have transpired in Aramaic.

The twelfth episode is Jesus’ private conversation with his disciples concerning the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees (16:5–12). The participants involve are Jesus and his disciples, and the setting is at a place across the lake (16:5) from the

⁸⁹ The lexical items ἄρτος (bread) and ἰχθύς (fish) are associated with the term βρῶμα (food; 14:15), indicating the topic of conversation of the participants.

⁹⁰ The account in John 6:1–14 is most probably a different one, since John records Jesus crossing to the far shore of the Sea of Galilee, that is, the Sea of Tiberias (ἀπῆλθεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς πέραν τῆς θαλάσσης τῆς Γαλιλαίας τῆς Τιβεριάδος).

mountainside where Jesus fed the four thousand people (15:29). Jesus cautions them about the yeast of these religious leaders (16:6, 11) and reminds them of the lessons they learned from the two feeding events (16:8–10). This speech event is classified under the private friendship domain, and the language that was used would most likely have been Aramaic.

The thirteenth episode is the transfiguration event (17:1–13; cf. Mark 9:2–13; Luke 9:28–36). The participants in this speech event include Jesus, Peter, James, and John (17:1), Moses and Elijah (17:3), and the voice from the cloud (φωνὴ ἐκ τῆς νεφέλης; 17:5; cf. 3:17). The conversation in the speech event, however, was only between Jesus and the disciples (17:4, 6–12), and the relationship between them in this instance appears to be solidarity-oriented. There is nothing in the text to suggest otherwise. The setting of this event is at a high mountain (ὄρος ὑψηλὸν) in the region of Galilee. The content of Jesus' conversation with his disciples appears to have low information and fairly high affective content. When the disciples became terrified with the transfiguration apparition (17:6), Jesus touched (ἀψάμενος) and encouraged them, saying, "Get up, and don't be afraid" (Ἐγέρθητε καὶ μὴ φοβεῖσθε; 17:7). Similarly, the disciples were able to comprehend easily (17:13; cf. 15:16; 16:9) Jesus' answer (17:11–12) to their question in 17:10: "Why do the teachers of the law say that Elijah must come first." It thus follows that this event should be categorized under the intimate, private friendship domain and that the language that was used would have been Aramaic.

The fourteenth episode is Jesus' (second) prediction of his death (17:22–23; cf. 16:21; 20:17–29). The participants in this speech event are Jesus and his disciples. This event happened at a place in Galilee, and the setting is classified under the private,

intimate friendship domain—the disciples were filled with grief upon learning about Jesus’ imminent death. The language that was used in this incident would have been Aramaic.

The fifteenth episode is Jesus’ (third) prediction of his death (20:17–19; cf. 16:21; 17:22–23). Like in the two previous prediction speech events, this third speech event is a private conversation between Jesus and his disciples. This time, however, Jesus was now on his way to Jerusalem (20:17). On this journey to Jerusalem, we are uncertain whether the large crowds (ὄχλοι πολλοί) in 19:2 that have consistently followed Jesus in the region of Galilee were with Jesus and his disciples (note that in 20:29, as Jesus left Jericho, a [new?] crowd [ὄχλος] followed him, which later became the crowd [ὁ ὄχλος] in 20:31). Again, Jesus reminds them of his imminent death and resurrection (20:18–19). It is clear that the setting of this event is under the private and intimate friendship domain, and it is most likely that their conversation transpired in Aramaic.

The sixteenth episode is Jesus’ conversation with the Zebedee brothers’ mother (20:20–28; Mark 10:35–45). The participants in the conversation in this speech event include Jesus and the Zebedee brothers and their mother (20:20–23), although the other ten disciples perhaps were nearby (20:24). The relationship between the mother and Jesus is status-oriented, with the mother and her sons kneeling down (προσκυνοῦσα) and asking Jesus for a favor (αἰτοῦσά τι ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ): “Say that one of my two sons might sit at your right and the other at your left in your kingdom” (Εἰπὲ ἵνα καθίσωσιν οὗτοι οἱ δύο υἱοί μου εἶς ἐκ δεξιῶν σου καὶ εἶς ἐξ εὐωνύμων σου ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου)

(20:22).⁹¹ On hearing the mother's request, the ten other disciples became indignant, and Jesus called them together and taught them a lesson on servanthood (20:25–28). The setting of this event may be somewhere along the road or in a town on Jesus' way to Jerusalem (20:17), and it is possible that on this journey, only the Twelve and some other disciples traveled with Jesus (see the [new?] crowd [ὄχλος] introduced in 20:29, which later became the crowd [ὁ ὄχλος] in 20:31). This speech event should perhaps be categorized under the private friendship domain; hence, Aramaic would have been the language employed in their conversation.

The seventeenth episode is Jesus' arrival at Jerusalem and Bethpage on the Mount of Olives (21:1–11; Mark 11:1–10; Luke 19:29–38; John 12:12–15). A short transaction between Jesus and two disciples happened in this event. Jesus instructs two of his disciples to fetch the donkey that he needs from the village (τὴν κώμην). Although the setting of this event is in a public place, probably somewhere in the Mount of Olives, and there was a very large crowd (ὁ πλεῖστος ὄχλος) present (21:8), it is likely that this was just a private conversation between Jesus and the two disciples (friendship domain). For this reason, Jesus' instruction would have been given in Aramaic.

The eighteenth episode is the Olivet discourse (24:1—26:2; cf. Mark 13:1–37; Luke 21:5–36).⁹² The participants in this speech event are Jesus and his disciples (24:1, 3; 26:1). The relationship between the participants is status-oriented, as Jesus on this

⁹¹ Mothers are emotionally attached to their children; hence, the Zebedee brothers' mother concern for their future wellbeing (see chapter 4—Family Domain).

⁹² Scholars have noted the close resemblance between the Olivet Discourse (notably chapter 24) and Mark 13, thus arguing that Mark, along with Q and *Didache* 16:3–6, serves as Matthew's source (e.g., Nolland, *Matthew*, 956–57; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:327–28).

occasion teaches his disciples about various topics.⁹³ The first topic concerns future things and events as initiated by the statement Jesus made in 24:2 and introduced by the disciples' question to Jesus in 24:3.⁹⁴ Jesus informs them about those things (24:3–51) and instructs them to keep watch (γρηγορεῖτε) for that future moment (24:42; cf. 25:13). The second topic, signaled by the temporal adverbial indicator τότε, is the parable of the ten virgins (25:1–13), which further explains Jesus' instruction to his disciples to keep watch for the “arrival” (παρουσία). The third topic, the parable of the talents (25:14–30), continues the lesson from the parable of the ten virgins, as signaled by the phrase, “For, it will be like...” (Ὡσπερ γὰρ; 25:14). The fourth topic is the parable of the sheep and goats (25:31–36) and speaks of the judgment day, when “the king” (ὁ βασιλεὺς) will separate the goats from the sheep (25:33).⁹⁵ After Jesus taught these things, he reminds his disciples that the Passover is two days away (26:1–2). The setting of this event is in the Mount of Olives (24:3) and is a private (ἰδίαν) conversation between the participants

⁹³ The meaning of the individual verses in this discourse is disputed (see Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 328–33).

⁹⁴ The pervasive use of the third-person future and subjunctive tense-forms of the verbs, the temporal adverb τότε (then, at that time; 24:9, 10, 14, 16, 21, 23, 30, 40; 25:1, 7, 31, 34, 37, 41, 44, 45; 26:3), and the noun παρουσία (24:27, 37, 39) in this section is apparent, indicating that the topics discussed concern future things and events. Both the future and the subjunctive tense-forms in Greek grammaticalize the semantic feature of expectation and projection respectively, with the future tense-form evincing a greater sense of certainty. To be specific, the use of both tense-forms expresses the visualization on the part of the speaker of the projected realm of reality, which he or she thinks awaits realization (Porter, *Idioms*, 43–45, 56–59). Paired with τότε and παρουσία, Matthew's use of these two tense-form verbs (through the mouth of Jesus) visualizes and projects the things or events that will and must take place at a time in the future.

⁹⁵ Cf. Nolland, *Matthew*, 956, who divides this eschatological discourse into three major sections: Jesus' response to the question of 24:3 (24:4–35); the unknown timing of Jesus' return (24:36–25:30); and events in the final judgment by the Son of Man (25:31–46). Matthew 26:1 marks the end of this fifth and final discourse (cf. 7:28; 11:1; 13:53; 19:1).

(friendship domain).⁹⁶ Thus, even though Jesus taught about various topics, which may suggest that the conversation has high information content, it is likely that the language used in this speech event would have been Aramaic.

The nineteenth episode is Jesus' private conversation with his disciples at the Last Supper event (26:17–35). The participants in this speech event are Jesus and the Twelve (26:20). The relationship between the participants is solidarity-oriented, as Jesus spends and celebrates his last supper with his disciples. Shortly before the supper, on the first day of the Festival of the Unleavened Bread, Jesus instructs his disciples to prepare for the Passover (26:17–19). When suppertime came, as Jesus reclines at the table with them, he tells them that one of them will betray him, and he pronounces a curse on that man. He then eats the bread, drinks the wine, and sings a hymn with them (26:20–30). Finishing their meal, Jesus goes out with his disciples to the Mount of Olives, and on the way, he has a conversation with his disciples and Peter (26:31–35). He tells them that they will be scattered that very night. But Peter says that even if everyone falls away, he will rather die with Jesus than disown him. In reply, Jesus tells him that “this very night before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times” (ταύτη τῆ νυκτὶ πρὶν ἀλέκτορα φωνῆσαι τρὶς ἀπαρνήση με; 21:34). This speech event is a private and intimate conversation between friends who are about to be separated from each other and clearly belongs the private and intimate friendship domain. The language that was used in the conversation would most likely have been Aramaic.

⁹⁶ France, *Matthew*, 979, describes the setting aptly: “The context for this final instruction is the Passover meal...for which this close-knit group of traveling companions forms the ‘family’ group who share the ceremonial meal.”

The twentieth episode is Jesus' short conversation with the women who visited his tomb (28:1–10; cf. Mark 16:1–8; Luke 24:1–10; John 20:1–8). The participants in this episode include Mary Magdalene and the other Mary (ἡ ἄλλη Μαρία; 28:1), the angel of the Lord (ἄγγελος κυρίου; 28:2, 5), the guards (οἱ τηροῦντες; 28:4, 11), and Jesus. Upon learning from the angel of the Lord that Jesus has risen (26:5–7), the two women ran to report the news to Jesus' disciples (28:8). On their way, Jesus meets them (28:9) and says, "Do not be afraid; go and take word to my brothers and sisters to leave for Galilee, and there they will see me" (28:10). It is apparent that this speech event belongs to the private friendship domain, as the participants only involve Jesus and the two women. The language that they used in their conversation would likely have been Aramaic.⁹⁷

Rule B1 (Religion Domain) and/or B4 (Friendship Domain)

The twenty-first episode is the temptation of Jesus (4:1–11; cf. Mark 1:12–13; Luke 4:1–13). The participants in this speech event are the devil (ὁ διάβολος) or the tempter (ὁ πειράζων) and Jesus. It is perhaps difficult to determine the nature of the relationship of the participants in this episode. On the one hand, on the basis of the fact that the devil plays the role of the tempter, and Jesus the one tempted in this incident, we can argue that the one who does the tempting would be the superior participant. On the other hand, however, Jesus passes every single test of the devil and even commands him

⁹⁷ It is interesting to note that scholars have regarded the appearance of the women in the empty tomb as evidence for the historicity of this event (using the criterion of embarrassment). As Osborne, "Jesus Empty Tomb," 785, notes, "in the ancient world, women could not legally serve as witnesses" (contra Lowder, "Historical Evidence," 283–85, who argues that women can testify in the absence of male witnesses, citing *m. Yebam.* 16:7, *m. Ketub.* 2:5, and *'Ed.* 3:6). In the Gospels, however, the women who visited the tomb were Jesus' close networks of associates; they were his disciples, companions, and friends. Thus, it is a moot point to argue for the historicity of this event using the criterion of embarrassment.

to depart from him (Ἐπιπαγε, Σατανᾶ; 4:10); as such, one can thus argue that Jesus is the superior participant. In fact, the devil cannot do anything but leave him with the angels who come afterwards to attend him (4:11). It is therefore possible to classify their relationship as either status- (of unequal status) or solidarity-oriented (of equal status). While it is clear that the social setting is probably a private one, especially since this speech event occurred in the wilderness (ἔρημος; 4:1) of Judea and since there were no other participants present,⁹⁸ it is not very clear whether this speech event should be classified under the religion (if status-oriented) or the friendship (if solidarity-oriented) domain. In either case, nevertheless, the language that was used would probably have been Aramaic or the native tongue.

The twenty-second episode is the feeding of the four thousand (15:29–39; cf. 14:13–21; Mark 7:31—8:10). The participants in this episode include the great crowds (ὄχλοι πολλοί; 15:30), the disciples (15:32), and Jesus, but the conversation in 15:32–34 is only between Jesus and his disciples. Like the event of the feeding of the five thousand (14:13–21), the subject matter of their conversation is about feeding the crowd. The setting of this speech event is at the mountainside (τὸ ὄρος) near the Sea of Galilee (15:29). This event is classified under the public and informal religion domain, since Jesus healing of the great multitude belongs to the healings and sermon genre. The conversation between Jesus and his disciples appears to be in private (friendship domain); Jesus called his disciples to him (προσκαλεσάμενος τοὺς μαθητὰς αὐτοῦ; 15:32). It is most likely that Jesus spoke Aramaic with his disciples.

⁹⁸ France, *Matthew*, 129, states, “The fact that Jesus was taken into the wilderness by the Spirit suggests a deliberate ‘retreat’ away from other people, but the specific area of ‘wilderness’ is no more defined here than it was for John 3:1.”

The twenty-third episode is Jesus' (first) prediction of his death (cf. 17:22–23; 20:17–19) following Peter's identification of him as the messiah (16:21–28; cf. Mark 8:31–9:1; Luke 9:22–27). The participants in this speech event include Jesus and his disciples (see 17:14 when they returned to the crowd again), and the setting is probably still in the region of Caesarea Philippi (see 16:13). The domain under which this speech event may be classified could be either the religion or friendship domain. On the one hand, the brief exchange between Peter and Jesus in 16:22–23 seems to show that the relationship between the participants are solidarity-oriented, as Peter was able to rebuke (ἐπιτιμάω) Jesus. If this were the case, then this speech event should be classified under the private friendship domain. But on the other hand, the things that Jesus told the disciples in 16:24–28, which was prefaced by “Whoever wants to come after me” (Εἴ τις θέλει ὀπίσω μου ἐλθεῖν; 16:24), imply that the relationship between them is status-oriented, as Jesus explains to them the cost of discipleship. As such, the speech event should be classified under the private religion domain. Whatever the case may be, a speech event that belong to both such domains would suggest that the language employed for communication would have been the native tongue, and in Jesus and his disciples' case, Aramaic.

The twenty-fourth episode is the speech events in Gethsemane prior to Jesus' arrest (26:36–46; cf. Mark 14:32–42; Luke 22: 40–46). The participants in this episode are the disciples (12:36), the Father (12:39), Judas the betrayer (ὁ παραδιδούς; 12:46), and Jesus. The relationship between the participants in this speech event is clearly solidarity-oriented and very private and intimate (between Jesus and his disciples) and status-oriented (between Jesus and the Father), and the setting is in a place in

Gethsemane (26:36). Jesus leaves the other disciples at a location, tells them to sit there while he goes further to pray, and takes with him Peter and the two Zebedee brothers to a further location (26:36–37). Arriving at the location, he then tells the Three to stay there in that location and to pray as he goes further to a third location to pray to the Father.

Jesus shares with the Three his extreme sorrow (ἡ ψυχὴ μου ἕως θανάτου; 26:38).

When Jesus reached the third location, he prays to the Father and asks him to take the cup away from him (26:39). After praying, he returns to the Three and finds them sleeping (26:40–41); this same incident happens again for a second time (26:43–45). In between these incidents, Jesus returns to the third location to pray the same thing to the Father (26:42, 44). The heightened affective content of Jesus' conversations with his disciple and the Father is noticeable; he shares his deep emotional and spiritual distress with them (26:38, 39, 42).⁹⁹ It is most likely that the language used in the conversations would have been Aramaic, as this speech event is classified under the private and intimate friendship domain (B4) for Jesus' conversation with the disciples, and under the private and intimate religion domain for Jesus' prayer to the Father (B1).¹⁰⁰

Rules B3 (Family Domain) and B4 (Friendship Domain)

The twenty-fifth episode is the continuation (from 13:1–35) of Jesus' teachings on various parables to his disciples (13:36–52). The participants in this speech event include Jesus and his disciples, and the setting is in the house (τὴν οἰκίαν) where Jesus is staying (13:36). Jesus continues to teach his disciples by explaining the parable of the weeds and by telling them three more parables—the hidden treasure, the pearl, and the net—to

⁹⁹ As Cullmann, *Immortality*, 21–22, suggests, Jesus perhaps faces the fear of death.

¹⁰⁰ See a more thorough analysis of this speech event in Ong, "Linguistic Analysis," 124–26; and Ong, "Aramaic and Greek Language Criteria," 50–55.

further describe what the kingdom of heaven (ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν) is like. This teaching took place in a private setting, and his disciples were the only ones with him. These factors suggest that this setting should be classified under a variable family-friendship domain and that the language that was used would therefore have been Aramaic (see B3 and B4).

Aramaic and/or Greek (with Language-shifting and Code-switching)

The third set of episodes shows the possible speech events where use of either Greek or Aramaic, or Greek and Aramaic, might have been employed in the conversation(s) between the participants. In cases where Greek and Aramaic were used, there is the possibility that the participants would have switched between the two languages in interacting with their interlocutors. The variable nature of social domains in this set of episodes is again evident. Not only is it difficult to fit one particular speech episode into a particular domain, in some cases two or three domains combine to form a new domain. The two-drachma temple tax episode (17:24–27), for instance, seems to display the combination of the transaction, the family, and the friendship domains. Consequently, it is difficult to determine the type of language used in a specific speech event, because of the highly variable nature of their domain classification.

There are fourteen speech events that belong here, and they may be subdivided into three groups. The first group comprises four episodes subsumed under C1 (religion domain), C3 (transaction domain), and C1 and C4 (family domain). The language choice in this first group of events could go either in Aramaic or in Greek, because of the

complex nature of the participants' relationship. For instance, John's baptism of Jesus poses the question whether Jesus or the Baptist has the superior status.¹⁰¹

The second group involves situations where there is use of Greek and Aramaic, as well as possible occurrences of language shifting between Greek and Aramaic. There are six episodes that belong to this group, and each of them is classified either under A1 and B1 (religion domains), under A1 (religion domain) and B4 (friendship domain), under A6 (transaction domain), B3 (family domain), and B4 (friendship domain), or under B1 and C1 (religion domains). A common topic of conversation is noticeable in each of these speech events. But the sudden change in participants or social setting (situational code-switching) in these speech events engendered a change in the language of the participants. For instance, in Jesus' teachings concerning the Sabbath (12:1–14), Jesus' interlocutors in both incidents are the religious leaders; the first incident takes place along the grain fields, whereas the second one happens in the synagogue. By contrast, in 11:1–24, while the social setting of the speech event remains at a specific location in a Galilean town, Jesus' interlocutors shifts from John's disciples to the crowd.

The third group includes the possible social situations in Matthew where there is code-switching. There are four episodes in this group, and they are subsumed either under C4 (family domain), under A1 and B1 (religion domains), or under A1, B1, and B4 (friendship domains). Although language shifting can be considered as a type of code-switching in the sense that there is change in the use of linguistic codes, the two should

¹⁰¹ The debate between John and Jesus explores the nature of their relative status as "baptizers"; whereas John baptizes with water, Jesus baptizes with the Holy Spirit (3:11). This has raised the theological question in the early church concerning why a sinless Jesus should receive a baptism of repentance and forgiveness (see Jerome, *Pelag.* 3:2, citing *Gos. Heb.*). Some scholars have consequently argued that this contrast between the two baptisms is an attempt to promote the "high" Christology of the church (on this, see Taylor, *John the Baptist*, 262–63; Luz, *Matthäus*, 1:174–76).

be distinguished, since code-switching is more accurately language shifting at the intra- and inter-sentential level. This is evident in that language shifting within the second group occurs in variable domains, while code-switching within this third group happens in only one particular domain. Code-switching also usually happens when the participants' relationship is solidarity-oriented, and when there is change in the topic of conversation (metaphorical code-switching). For instance, in the episode of Jesus' calling of Matthew and the question about fasting (9:9–17), the non-private and informal, family-friendship social setting in Matthew's house would likely have prompted the participants to switch between Aramaic and Greek at various moments in their conversation.

Group 1 (Rule C1 [Religion Domain])

The first recorded speech episode of Jesus in Matthew is found in the event of his baptism (3:13–17; cf. Mark 1:9–11; Luke 3:21–22; John 1:31–34). Although there was probably a mixed group of people who were present, including some Pharisees and Sadducees (3:5–7), the main participants in this speech event are John the Baptist and Jesus. It is interesting to note, however, the invisible participant, that is, the voice that came out of heaven (φωνὴ ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν), in this event (3:17). Whether this voice was audible to those who were present is a matter of dispute. But if it were, it probably would have been uttered in Greek, the language that everybody would have been able to comprehend. It is clear from the exchange between John and Jesus that the participants' relationship is status-oriented; John tells Jesus, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me" (3:14; cf. 3:11–12), to which Jesus responds, "Let it be so now" (Ἄφεξ

ἄρτι) (3:15), an imperative that acknowledges Jesus' superior status.¹⁰² The setting of this event is at a place within the vicinity of the Jordan River. Because of the performance of a baptismal rite, the setting may be said to have occurred in a public, informal (i.e., not in the temple or synagogue) religion domain. The genre of the short exchange between Jesus and John (3:14–15) would have been a casual conversation, while the baptismal rite and the declaration of the voice from heaven could have been, respectively, a formal transaction and a miracle. The topic of their exchange was about the baptism of Jesus as signaled by the subject complement in 3:14, “[the] need to be baptized” (χρείαν ἔχω ὑπὸ σοῦ βαπτισθῆναι), and by the subsequent reference to that subject complement in 3:15, “Let it be so now” (Ἄφες ἄρτι). The key of this speech event is somewhat intimate and informal as John yields to the authority and status of Jesus and as it probably only transpired privately between them, even though there were other people present. We may thus conclude that their conversation has moderately high affective content. In this speech event, it is likely that the language used by John and Jesus was Aramaic, with a possibility that Greek could have been used instead on account of the other people present.

The second episode is the exorcism of the two demon-possessed men (8:28–34; cf. Mark 5:1–17; Luke 8:26–37). The participants in this speech event include Jesus and his disciples, the two demon-possessed men (δύο δαίμονιζόμενοι), and the demons (δαίμονες). The demons inside the two men requested Jesus to drive them out into the herd of pigs, and Jesus, granting their request, immediately said, “Go” (ὑπάγετε). The

¹⁰² Similarly, the imagery of John's being unworthy to carry Jesus' sandals (a rabbinic image of self-humiliation [see b. *Sanh.* 62b; b. *'Erub.* 27b]) may indicate John's self-acknowledged inferior status to Jesus (Nolland, *Matthew*, 146).

setting of this incident is in the region of the Gerasenes,¹⁰³ and it is accurate to say that it took place in a public and informal religion domain, since this event belongs to the healings and miracles genre. Its key appears to have a somewhat high affective content, as the demons “begged” or “asked earnestly” (παρακαλέω)¹⁰⁴ Jesus when they uttered their request (8:31). For these reasons, the language that was used in this event would have been either Aramaic or Greek.

Group 1 (Rule C3 [Transaction Domain])

The third episode is the two sayings of Jesus to a teacher of the law and a disciple (8:18–22; cf. Luke 9:57–60). The setting of this speech event is probably still in Capernaum as Jesus was preparing to cross to the other side of the lake with his disciples (8:18). The relationship between Jesus and both participants of this speech event is status-oriented, with the teacher of the law (γραμματεὺς) calling him “Teacher” (Διδάσκαλε) and with the disciple (μαθητῆς) addressing him as “Lord” (Κύριε). One could nevertheless also argue that, in terms of their social status, their relationship would seem to be solidarity-oriented. If this were the case, the setting would have to be in a public and informal friendship domain. It is more likely, however, that both participants grant Jesus the superior status of a teacher, as both of them wanted to follow Jesus (8:19, 21). In this case, we probably need to categorize this variable domain as one that combines both friendship and transaction domains, with Jesus telling his interlocutors about the cost of following him.¹⁰⁵ The nature of the setting of this speech event seems to be a

¹⁰³ Some manuscripts read Gadarenes, while others read Gergesenes. There is debate as to the exact location or name of this region (see chapter 3—The Decapolis).

¹⁰⁴ See Louw and Nida, *Lexicon*, 1:407.

¹⁰⁵ The term ἀκολουθέω (to follow) joins this section together at 8:18 and 8:22.

private and informal one. As such, the language that was used would have been either the language of the superior participant (Aramaic) or the *lingua franca* (Greek).

Group 1 (Rule C1 [Religion Domain] and C4 [Family Domain])

The fourth episode is the raising of a dead girl and the healing of a bleeding woman (9:18–26; Mark 5:22–43; Luke 8:41–56). There are two incidents and settings in this episode. The first incident happened when Jesus was still in Matthew’s house (see 9:10–17), and later, in the synagogue leader’s house (9:19, 23). The participants in this speech event were Jesus and his disciples, the synagogue leader (ἄρχων), the noisy crowd (τὸν ὄχλον θορυβούμενον), and the oboe players (τοὺς αὐλητὰς). Both family settings (i.e., in Matthew’s and the synagogue leader’s house) are non-private and informal ones, since there were other people present besides the household’s family members. As such, the language that was used in this instance would have been either Greek or Aramaic (see rule C4). The second incident happened when Jesus was on his way with his disciples to the synagogue leader’s house (9:20–22). On the road, Jesus encountered a bleeding woman (γυνὴ αἱμορροοῦσα). The woman did not say anything but only touched Jesus’ cloak. Seeing her faith, Jesus said to the woman that her faith has healed her. The setting of this incident can be classified under a public informal religion domain, and Jesus’ response to the woman’s inner thoughts (9:21) appears to have high affective content with his use of the second-person-singular imperative “take courage” (Θάρσει) and with his marvel at the woman’s faith, out of which he consequently said, “your faith has healed you” (ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέν σε). The language that was used in this speech event, therefore, would have been either Aramaic or Greek (see rule C1).

Group 2 (Rules A1 and B1 [Religion Domains])

The fifth episode is Jesus' conversation with the rich young man and with his disciples concerning how to gain eternal life (19:16—20:16; Mark 10:17–30; Luke 18:18–30). There are two sets of conversations in this speech event. The participants in the first event include Jesus and the rich young man (19:16–22), and their relationship is status-oriented (19:16). Their conversation was in the form of a question-and-answer dialogue, with the young man (ὁ νεανίσκος; 19:20, 22) asking Jesus about how to gain eternal life (19:16). In reply, Jesus told him to keep the commandments (19:17), spelling them out to the young man (19:18–19). The young man continues to probe the issue—“which ones” (Ποίας; 19:18), he asked Jesus. The persistent young man then told Jesus that he had kept all of them (πάντα ταῦτα ἐφύλαξα) and asked what he still lacked (τί ἔτι ὑστερῶ) (19:20). The young man turned sad and walked away, because he was unwilling to follow what Jesus said, that is, to sell all his possessions and give them to the poor (19:21). The text does not say where this speech event took place, but 19:16 tells us that “behold, a person came to Jesus” (ἰδοὺ εἶς προσελθὼν), which may consequently suggest that this young man was still part of the large crowds that was mentioned in 19:2. Taking the above factors into account, this speech event should be classified under the public and informal religion domain, with Greek (see rule A1), especially since their conversation contain low affective content, as the most likely language employed in their conversation. The participants in the second conversation include Jesus and his disciples, as Jesus taught and explained to them why it is harder for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven (19:23–24). But Peter was quick on his feet to say that they have left everything to follow Jesus (ἡμεῖς ἀφήκαμεν πάντα καὶ ἠκολουθήσαμεν σοι),

expecting to receive a future reward (19:27). In reply, Jesus told his disciples that they will be judging the twelve tribes of Israel, will be rewarded a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life, and will become first (19:28–30). He subsequently told them a parable that illustrates the kingdom of heaven as a landowner hiring their laborers (20:1–16). The gist of the parable is that paying the right amount of wage to a laborer is solely the prerogative of the landowner just as it will be in God’s kingdom. Even the last person to be hired in the vineyard or to enter the kingdom of heaven will be treated the same as the first person (20:16). It is possible that this conversation between the participants was a private one in the midst of the public crowd, as 19:23 tells us that “Jesus then *turned to say* to his disciples” (Ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ), after the young man had walked away (19:22). It is likely that Jesus’ conversation with his disciples transpired in Aramaic (see rule B1).

The sixth episode is Jesus’ cleansing of the temple (21:12–17; cf. Mark 11:15–18; Luke 19:45–47; John 2:13–22).¹⁰⁶ The participants in this speech event include Jesus, the temple merchants (21:12), the blind and the lame (21:14), the children (τοὺς παῖδας; 21:15), and chief priests and teachers of the law (οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ γραμματεῖς; 21:15), but the conversations only transpired between Jesus and the temple merchants (21:13) and the religious leaders (21:16). Jesus tells the merchants that his house is a house of prayer and not a den of robbers, and he quotes Ps 8:2 (LXX) in answering the religious leaders’ question, “Do you hear what these children are saying.” The setting of this speech event is in the temple courts or temple area (ἱερόν), which is to be

¹⁰⁶ See Charlesworth, ed., *Jesus and Temple*, chapters 1 to 9, for some recent discussions regarding textual and archeological explorations on the Jerusalem temple.

distinguished from the temple proper (ναός; John 2:20), where Gentiles were prohibited from entering (see chapter 4—The Religion Domain). This setting classifies this speech event under the public and informal religion domain, and the conversations clearly have low affective content (Jesus was mad at them). It is therefore possible that both conversations transpired in Greek (see rule A1), although if the conversation between Jesus and the religious leaders were in private, their conversation might have shifted to Aramaic (see rule B1).

Group 2 (Rules A1 [Religion Domain] and B4 [Friendship Domain])

The seventh episode is the healing of the demon-possessed boy and the teaching about faith (17:14–20/21;¹⁰⁷ cf. Mark 9:14–29; Luke 9:37–42). The participants in this speech event include the disciples (17:14, 19), the crowd (ὁ ὄχλος; 17:14), the boy's father (17:14–16), the demon-possessed boy (17:18), and Jesus. The setting of this event is probably at the foot of the high mountain, since 17:14 tells us that Jesus and his disciples returned (ἐλθόντων) to the crowd. There are two instances of conversations in this speech event. The first instance was between Jesus and the boy's father (17:15–17), and the second one was between Jesus and his disciples (17:19–20). The first conversation is status-oriented, and the setting and genre (healings and miracles) suggest that the speech event should be classified under the public and informal religion domain. The statement of the boy's father concerning the failure of Jesus' disciples to heal his child (17:15–16) only brings about a stern rebuke from Jesus (17:17). This short exchange clearly has low affective content, and with the public crowd present (cf. 17:19), the language that was used would have been Greek (see rule A1). The second

¹⁰⁷ Some manuscripts include another verse that contain words similar to that of Mark 9:29.

conversation seems to be solidarity-oriented, and the setting should thus belong to the private friendship domain—the disciples came to Jesus privately (ιδίαν; 17:19). The topic of the conversation concerns the disciples’ “little faith” (ὀλιγοπιστία) as the reason for their failure to heal the boy. It is likely in this instance that the conversation between Jesus and his disciples switched to Aramaic (see rule B4).

The eighth episode is the chronological episodes of conversation between John’s disciples and Jesus and Jesus’ address to the crowd (11:1–24). The first incident in this episode involves Jesus and John’s disciples (11:1–6), and it seems that the relationship between the participants is solidarity-oriented. This solidarity-oriented relationship is apparently on account of John’s relationship with Jesus; 11:2–3 reads, “he [John] sent his message through his disciples, and he said to him [Jesus], ‘Are you the one who is to come?’” (πέμψας διὰ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ εἶπεν αὐτῷ, Σὺ εἶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος). The setting of this speech event is possibly at a specific location in one of the towns of Galilee (see 11:1). The exchange in this speech event appears to have occurred in an intimate and private friendship domain, and Jesus’ response to John in 11:4–6 would therefore have transpired in Aramaic (see rule B4). Matthew indicates that “As these people were going away” (Τούτων δὲ πορευομένων ἤρξατο; 11:7), the second incident that involves Jesus and the crowds (οἱ ὄχλοι) in 11:7–24 follows. It seems accurate to say that the setting of this incident occurs in a public and informal religion domain (note that the physical location of this event is still the same),¹⁰⁸ as Jesus, quoting from Mal 3:1 (11:10),

¹⁰⁸ Like the Sermon on the Mount, we could arguably classify this speech event under the education domain with Jesus’ status as a teacher and with the long discourse of his instructions and teachings. However, the education domain, as we have seen, is more restricted to a more formal setting and confined to an enclosed physical location, such as a private house, school, or synagogue (see chapter 4—Education Domain). Moreover, the topics in this speech event more accurately categorize them into the religion domain.

speaks to the crowd about the prophet (προφήτης) John the Baptist (11:9, 10), with whom he associates the kingdom of heaven (11:11–12), the Prophets and the Law (11:13), Elijah (11:14), and the Son of Man (11:19). Following these topics, Jesus pronounces his woes against the unrepentant cities of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum (11:20–24). All these topics contain low affective but high information content. As such, the language that was used in this speech event would have been in Greek (see rule A1).

Group 2 (Rules A6 [Transaction Domain], B3 [Family Domain], and B4 [Friendship Domain])

The ninth episode is the conversation regarding the two-drachma temple tax (17:24–27). There are two separate speech events in this episode. The first speech event involves Peter and the two-drachma temple tax collectors (οἱ τὰ δίδραχμα λαμβάνοντες), who asked him whether Jesus is paying the temple tax (17:24–25). This incident happened in Capernaum (17:24), and its setting is classified under the public and informal transaction domain—the topic of conversation concerns the temple tax, and one of the participants is the tax collectors. The language that was used in this incident would have been Greek (see rule A6). The second speech event involves Peter and Jesus (17:25–27). The setting is in the house (τὴν οἰκίαν) in Capernaum where Jesus stayed (17:25). Both the setting and the topic of conversation of the participants suggest that the speech event should be classified under the private family-friendship variable domain. Jesus' question regarding the kings' collection of duty and taxes was a sarcastic one, as he already anticipated Peter's answer (17:26), and hearing it, he instructs Peter to take the four-drachma coin that Peter will find in the mouth of a fish and give it to the tax

collectors (17:27). It is likely that Aramaic would have been the language that was used in this incident (see rules B3 and B4).

Group 2 (Rules B1 and C1 [Religion Domains])

The tenth episode is Jesus' cursing of the fig tree and his second teaching about faith (cf. 17:14–20) to his disciples (21:18–22; cf. Mark 11:12–14, 20–24). The participants in this speech event include the fig tree (συκῆν; 21:19), the disciples (19:20), and Jesus. Jesus first speaks (λέγει) to the fig tree, saying, “No longer from you may there be fruit again” (Μηκέτι ἐκ σοῦ καρπὸς γένηται εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα). Because the fig tree immediately withered, we can say that the relationship between the participants is status-oriented, although we need to note the fact that the fig tree is an inanimate participant that is perhaps incapable of performing human speech (cf. Exod 3:2–10; Mark 12:26). This event obviously belongs to the healings and miracles genre, and it is apparent that the message content of Jesus' curse has high (negative) affective content. In this kind of event, the language that would have been used could be either the native tongue (Aramaic) or the *lingua franca* (Greek) (see rule C1); however, on account of the participants present, Aramaic would have been the more likely linguistic choice. After this event, Jesus speaks to his disciples, when they asked him how the fig tree quickly withered (19:20–22). Jesus answers them that if they will have faith (πίστιν) and not doubt, they will be able to do what he did to the fig tree and even move “this mountain” (ὄρει τοῦτο) and cast it into the sea. He also tells them that, if they believe (πιστεύοντες), they will receive all things that they will ask in prayer. This event is Jesus' second teaching about faith to his disciples, and its genre belongs to the teachings and sermons category. The setting of this event is at a place on the way to Jerusalem (see

21:17–18, 23), and, because the relationship between Jesus and his disciples in this instance seems more status-oriented (i.e., he was teaching his disciples on a subject matter), this event should be classified under the private religion domain. It is most likely that the language that was used would have been Aramaic (see rule B1).

Group 3 (Rule C4 [Family Domain])

The eleventh episode is the calling of Matthew and the question about fasting (9:9–17; cf. Mark 2:14–22; Luke 5:27–39). The participants in this speech event include Jesus, his disciples, Matthew, many tax collectors and sinners (πολλοὶ τελῶναι καὶ ἁμαρτωλοὶ; 9:10), and the Pharisees (οἱ Φαρισαῖοι; 9:11). While Jesus had a short transaction with Matthew, calling Matthew to follow him (9:9), Jesus spent most time responding to the question the Pharisees raised against his disciples—“Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners” (9:11). The relationship between the participants in this speech event is solidarity-oriented, because this incident happened at a dinner event in Matthew’s house (9:10). In other words, the social setting is that of a non-private and informal gathering under the family-friendship variable domain. In this kind of setting, it is possible that participants would switch between their linguistic codes, depending on their conversation partners at particular moments, and Jesus’ response in 9:12 and in 9:15–17 would consequently have been either in Greek or in Aramaic.

The twelfth episode is Jesus’ anointing at Bethany (26:6–13; cf. Mark 14:3–9; Luke 7:37–38; John 12:1–8). The participants in this speech event include Simon the Leper (26:6), the woman with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume (γυνὴ ἔχουσα ἀλάβαστρον μύρου βαρυτίμου; 26:7), the disciples (26:8), and Jesus. The relationship between the participants is solidarity oriented, and this speech event should be classified

under the non-private family-friendship domain, since it happened in the home (οἰκίᾳ) of Simon the Leper (26:6). The conversation appears to be casual, consisting of a single transaction by Jesus to his disciples. Jesus tells them that what the woman did is a good thing (ἔργον καλόν) and will be remembered (εἰς μνημόσυνον) in time (26:10–13), after he overheard the disciples' complaint regarding the extravagance of the woman (26:8). The language that was used in this type of situation could be either the native tongue (Aramaic) of the participants or the *lingua franca* (Greek). It is possible that when the disciples were talking among themselves (26:8–9), they would have used Aramaic, while Jesus could have used Greek in response to their complaint, especially if the woman were a non-native Aramaic speaker. This type of event would also allow for the phenomenon of code-switching.

Group 3 (Rules A1 and B1 [Religion Domains])

The thirteenth episode is Jesus' short prayer to the Father and his short invitation to the weary and burdened (11:25–30; cf. Luke 10:21–22). There are two speeches in this event. The participants in the first event in 11:25–26 are Jesus and the Father (ὁ πατήρ). The setting of this speech event is a private and intimate one and is classified under the religion domain. The language that Jesus used would most likely have been Aramaic (see rule B1). When Jesus addresses the crowd in 11:27–30, however, there is a sudden shift in his conversation partners as well as in the topic of the speech event. Whereas Jesus pronounces praise and agreement (ἔξομολογέω) with the Father for revealing hidden things to “little children” (νηπίοις), he tells of his oneness with the Father (11:27) to the crowd and invites them to find rest in him (11:28–30). Nevertheless, his language with both his Father and the crowd evinces high affective content, with his use of the second-

person address (e.g., σοι, ἔκρυψας, ἀπεκάλυψας [11:25]; σου [11:26]; ὑμᾶς [11:28, 29]; ἄρατε, μάθετε, εὐρήσετε, ὑμῶν [11:29]). The topic concerning his oneness with the Father in 11:27 appears to have low affective content, as Jesus was merely stating it as a fact (note the absence of use of second-person address). Taking these sociolinguistic elements into account, it is possible that there might be an instance of code-switching here (metaphorical code-switching). Jesus prays to the Father in Aramaic, but he speaks to the crowd in Greek (see rule A1). Theoretically, it is even possible that Jesus may also have switched from Greek to Aramaic in 11:28–30, although the similar audience in 11:27 and 11:28–30, that is, the crowd, should mitigate this from happening.

Group 3 (Rules A1, B1 [Religion Domains], and B4 [Friendship Domain])

The fourteenth episode is Jesus' reply to the religious leaders' question concerning purification (15:1–20; cf. Mark 7:1–23). The participants in this speech event include the Pharisees and teachers of the law (Φαρισαῖοι καὶ γραμματεῖς; 15:1), the crowd (ὁ ὄχλος; 15:10), and the disciples (15:12). Jesus gives three sets of teachings in this speech event—one responds to the religious leaders' question (15:3–9), another addresses the crowd (15:10–11), and a third one responds to the disciples' question (15:13–20). As I have noted elsewhere in this section, the relationship between Jesus and the Pharisees is a unique one, since, even though the religious leaders possess the social status that recognizes them as such, they always seem to acknowledge Jesus' superiority and status as a well-known and respected religious teacher. On this occasion, they ask Jesus a question again concerning purification (15:2), looking for ways to trap and condemn him. Jesus' reply centers on rebuking them for breaking God's commandment for the sake of keeping their tradition (Διὰ τί καὶ ὑμεῖς παραβαίνετε τὴν ἐντολὴν τοῦ

θεοῦ διὰ τὴν παράδοσιν ὑμῶν) (15:3, 6). He then calls the crowd and tells them to understand that it is what comes out and not what goes into one's mouth that defiles a person (15:11). The disciples then came to ask Jesus whether he knew that the Pharisees were offended by his response (15:12). In reply, Jesus gives a short parable about unplanted plants being uprooted and about blind guides leading blind people (15:13–14) and explains the parable to his disciples (15:16–20). The text does not indicate the setting of this speech event, but it is possible that it was at a location in Gennesaret (see 14:34), an area on the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee. The setting appears to be in a public and informal place, as there probably were a mixed group of crowds present (14:35–36), including the religious leaders and Jesus' disciples. Nevertheless, the conversation between Jesus and the religious leaders seems to be a private one, since Jesus had to call the crowds to him (προσκαλεσάμενος τὸν ὄχλον; 15:10) when he told them about the thing that defiles a person. Similarly, the disciples had to come to Jesus (προσελθόντες οἱ μαθηταί; 15:12) when they asked their question. For these reasons, it is possible that Jesus probably would have spoken Aramaic to the religious leaders, since that particular speech setting would be categorized under the private religion domain (see rule B1), Greek to the crowd on account of the mixed group of people present (see rule A1), and Aramaic to his disciples, since that particular setting with his disciples would be under a private friendship domain (see rule B4). Here is another possible scenario of code-switching happening in a speech event.

Hebrew or Aramaic

There is one episode in Matthew that would have used Hebrew by virtue of the physical setting of the speech event as well as the formality of the occasion. In this event,

Jesus was teaching the people in their synagogue, but we do not know whether there was any formal service or scriptural reading performed, as Matthew does not say.¹⁰⁹ In Luke 4:14–30, however, Luke is clear that Jesus read the prophet Isaiah from the scroll in the synagogue; thus, there was a reading of the Scripture, which may consequently suggest that a formal service ensued.¹¹⁰ It is even significant to note that in the Lukan account, Jesus was also teaching the people in their synagogues in Nazareth, suggesting a resemblance between the Matthean and the Lukan accounts.

Rule B2 (Education Domain) or D1 (Religion Domain)

This episode in Matthew is Jesus' saying concerning the prophet without honor (13:53–58; Mark 6:1–6; Luke 4:16–30).¹¹¹ The participants in this speech event are Jesus and the people in the synagogue; the text in 13:54 reads: “he [Jesus] began teaching the people in their synagogue” (ἐδίδασκεν αὐτοὺς ἐν τῇ συναγωγῇ αὐτῶν). The physical setting is obviously in a formal and official setting, that is, in the synagogue(s) of Nazareth, Jesus' hometown. In a formal and official teaching event in a religion domain like the synagogue,¹¹² it is likely that the scriptural readings and performance of rituals and service would have been conducted in Hebrew (see rule D1). However, because the text does not provide the information, it is most likely that on this particular occasion, Jesus was teaching the people in a formal but not official manner (although one can

¹⁰⁹ The question of the extent to which Hebrew was spoken in Jesus' time is also a question of whether it was a ritual or an active language (see chapter 1; cf. Porter, “The Language(s) Jesus Spoke,” 2459).

¹¹⁰ Porter, “The Language(s) Jesus Spoke,” 2463–64, presumes that Jesus would have read in Hebrew from the biblical scroll.

¹¹¹ Blomberg, *Matthew*, 227, asserts that this could be the first time Jesus spoke in the synagogue in Nazareth.

¹¹² Some scholars strongly dispute the understanding of the New Testament συναγωγή as a religious building (see Horsley, *Galilee*, chapter 10; Horsley, *Archaeology*, chapter 6). But Levine, “Palestinian Synagogue,” 425–48; Keener, *Gospel of Matthew*, 156–57; Overman, *Matthew's Gospel*, 56–62; and Kee, “First-Century CE Synagogue,” 481–500, all argue otherwise (cf. Luke 7:5).

certainly infer from the Lukan account that those are the kinds of activities [i.e., scripture reading, formal service led by the synagogue attendant [ὕπηρέτης; see chapter 4—Religion Domain], exposition of scripture, teaching, etc.) that happen whenever Jesus teaches on the Sabbath in the synagogue of Nazareth). The synagogue, therefore, functions in this instance as a venue for “primary” education (hence, the education domain), which of course includes the teaching of religious matters (see chapter 4—Education Domain). If this were the case, the language that was used would probably have been Aramaic (see rule B2).

Greek or Latin

There is also an episode in Matthew where Jesus would have used Latin, instead of Greek, in response to Pilate’s question.¹¹³ This, nevertheless, remains fairly speculative.

Rule D2 (Government Domain)

This episode is Jesus’ trial before Pilate (27:11–26; Mark 15:2–25; Luke 23: 2–3, 18–25; John 18:29—19:16). The participants in this speech event are Pilate (27:11), the chief priests and elders (27:12), the crowds (τοὺς ὄχλους; 27:20, 25), Pilate’s wife (29:19), and Jesus. The setting of this event is most likely in the governor’s residence or the *praetorium* (πραيتώριον; see 27:27), and with Jesus being tried by the governor on the basis of the accusation of the religious leaders (27:12–14), this speech event is a formal and official one that should be classified under the government domain. Thus, the conversation between Pilate and Jesus in 27:11 would probably have transpired in

¹¹³ Porter, “The Language(s) Jesus Spoke,” 2459, notes that Jesus would have heard Latin on many occasions.

Greek,¹¹⁴ although it is not entirely impossible that Jesus' *pithy* answer to Pilate's question could have transpired in Latin, especially when we compare his more elaborate answer to the religious leaders during the Sanhedrin trial (see rule D2).¹¹⁵

CONCLUSION

This has been a long chapter, but when we consider the scope of the investigation, it is actually a short one. This is not to say that the discussion or analysis is inadequate, but it is to acknowledge the fact that most studies perhaps would take at least a few chapters to discuss their analysis of the book of Matthew. However, this entire study from the outset has been method-driven, as would have also been noticed in this chapter. This approach not only allows me to establish a solid basis and criteria for my investigation, but it also paves the way for a more straightforward analysis of the text of Matthew. Specifically, I formulated a set of sociolinguistic rules for the use of the languages in ancient Palestine, which derives from the methodological framework (see chapter 2—The Proposed Model) that I have set up since chapter 3 for analyzing the text of Matthew. The result of my analysis, on the basis of my methodological approach, seems promising, as it definitely moves forward the scholarly discussion concerning the linguistic situation of ancient Palestine. Contrary to what previous scholars have been willing to recognize and argue, the multilingualism of first-century Palestine can actually be described, and consequently be visualized, more clearly. At the least, this chapter has identified the kinds and types of sociolinguistic situations or contexts where Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin would have been spoken in the social milieu of first-century CE Palestine. It

¹¹⁴ Porter, *Criteria*, 161–62, suggests that the criteria of multiple attestation, of moving against redactional tendency, and of execution or historical consequence all support the idea that Jesus spoke Greek with Pilate.

¹¹⁵ See Ong, "Linguistic Analysis," 130–31.

also has demonstrated the fact that Jesus must have been a multilingual speaker of the languages for him to be able to interact with the various social groups in his speech community during his lifetime. All these findings provide us with a number of implications for various areas of research in New Testament studies. In the next section, the concluding chapter, I will note these implications and suggest some of the ways future studies can take to move further the discussion.

Concluding Chapter: Final Remarks and Implications

SUMMARY FINDINGS

This study has attempted to show the various ways ancient Palestine could be seen as a multilingual speech community and to propose that Jesus was an active speaker of Aramaic and Greek, and a passive speaker (to some degree) of Hebrew and Latin as a resident of that community. Without having that level of multilingual proficiency, Jesus would not have been able to interact with various social groups in his speech community nor would he have been able to perform his duties as a Jewish rabbi. Whether Jesus actually attained that proficiency level, however, is a debatable point, as nobody today will ever know what actually happened. We can only discuss this issue today in terms of likelihood and probability. With little reservation, the speech community of first-century CE Palestine was almost certainly multilingual (with Greek as its *lingua franca*), and Jesus was most likely a multilingual speaker. Many people, even biblical scholars, may not be convinced of this theory, however. Thus, it is critical that a theory be adjudicated by its own merit. In other words, this study should be assessed on the basis of its method of investigation. My methodology derives from a single, workable theoretical framework that I have formulated through consolidation of various sets of sociolinguistic theories (see chapter 2). This approach suggests that a theory needs to be evaluated not only on the basis of the reasons and explanations one gives to support the theory, but also on the basis of how one derives those reasons and explanations. This approach highlights the difference between a method-driven theory and an intuitively derived theory: “Jesus was a multilingual because the sociolinguistic world he lived in was multilingual” is better than “Jesus was a Hebrew or Aramaic speaker because he was of Jewish descent.”

Applying my methodological framework to the historical and textual data has generated some plausible and even highly probable findings. First, it is clear from a historical standpoint that the Jewish nation encountered consecutive language shifts (i.e., Hebrew→Aramaic→Greek) from the period of the Babylonian captivity (sixth century BCE) to the time of Jesus under the Roman Empire (first century CE). Second, the geographical distribution of the languages of ancient Palestine indicates a highly complex level of multilingualism. Linguistic evidence for the use of Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin (including other language varieties) are distributed throughout the various regions of ancient Palestine, with specific combination of languages concentrated upon each region. Third, the use of Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin is also distributed throughout the various social institutions that compose ancient Palestine; each language has its own social function within the various social institutions of the speech community. A set of sociolinguistic rules governs the probable use of a particular language in a particular social situation (see chapter 6). Fourth and last, it seems that during the time of Jesus, most Jews would have acquired either Greek or Aramaic as their native tongue or first language, that is, the language people have learned from birth or within a critical period during their childhood. Some Jewish children might have spoken Aramaic in the home and in more private social settings, but would have inevitably spoken Greek outside of the home and in more public social settings, especially because Greek was the *lingua franca* and the prestige language of the time. In fact, because Greek was introduced to the speech community three or four centuries ago, it is possible that at least the first and second earlier generations would already have been Greek speakers by Jesus' time. These

findings can hardly be ignored in evaluating the linguistic environment of ancient Palestine.

IMPLICATIONS FOR NEW TESTAMENT RESEARCH

This study has several implications for several areas of New Testament research. The first implication relates to the issue of method-formulation in New Testament research. We have now entered the era of “data overload” in New Testament research. Too many views and arguments have already been put forward on a specific subject; it will be a challenge now to find new things to theorize or argue. Thus, the discipline needs more sophisticated methods for the investigation of a particular area of research, methods that are clearly defined and applicable to the primary data and text. This ensures that we continue to contribute or supplement new insights to scholarship. This is what I have tried to offer in this study.

The second implication concerns my findings regarding the multilingualism of ancient Palestine and of Jesus (see above). Those findings help and influence our understanding of the sociolinguistic composition of early Christianity and the early Church. An early Christianity that is set against a multilingual social milieu could be radically different than one that is set against a strictly or predominantly Jewish setting.

This leads to the third implication, which touches upon the research areas of the sociocultural background of Jesus and Jesus’ literacy. Future research into these areas needs to consider the important implications of the multilingualism of Jesus. Because Jesus was multilingual, his character and personality would have been “less Jewish” than many scholars would want to make him—Jesus’ social networks indicate that he interacted with different social groups and individuals.

The fourth and last implication relates to several aspects of studies of the Gospels on the basis of my analysis of Matthew's Gospel. The first aspect concerns the kinds of Jesus stories and materials contained in Matthew (and probably also the other Gospels). Matthew concentrates on the Jesus stories and activities that happened in the friendship and religion domains with reference to Jesus' public ministry. Within his public ministry, Jesus seems to have used Aramaic most often in more private settings with his disciples, and Greek almost always in more public settings, especially when there are crowds are present. These information tell us that perhaps the Gospels only give us a glimpse of who the real historical Jesus was, for surely Jesus would have often interacted with the other domains as a resident of that community as well. The second aspect is my introduction of the concepts of "variable" and "fixed" (or standard) domains. These concepts provide a helpful way for concretizing the concepts of register, context of situation, and context of culture, all of which are important concepts used to describe the "context" of a New Testament text. An instance of variable domain is a description of an actual situational context, but the description is a highly abstract notion, unless mediated by (or subsumed under) a fixed domain. Fixed domains represent the actual social institutions of a real speech community. To be sure, my description of the episodes in Matthew is in relation to the actual social institutions of ancient Palestine. The third aspect relates to the so-called criterion of Semitic language phenomena (and by extension, the criterion of dissimilarity). As Porter states: "we should not reject any words or episode as inauthentic... simply because they appear to have been spoken in Greek or were spoken in a Greek-speaking environment, or were spoken to those who appear to have themselves

Greek-speaking.”¹ Corollary to the preceding implication, the fourth and last aspect relates to the criteria of authenticity in historical Jesus research. The sociolinguistic rules I have formulated may serve as a criterion for determining the specific language that would have been used in a Gospel episode (see chapter 5). To be specific, if there is a high level of congruence between similar or parallel episodes in the Gospels, such as in terms of the type of language that was used, the domain classification of the episodes, and the ethnographic description of the episodes, the more likely is the episode an authentic Jesus tradition.² These rules also serve as a supplemental criterion to the three Greek language criteria that Porter proposed more than a decade ago.³ It now remains to be seen how these Greek linguistic criteria can be combined into a single, robust framework, so as to provide the necessary and more complete linguistic mechanisms for authenticating the episodes in the Gospels and for other relevant studies of the Gospels.

¹ Porter, *Criteria*, 164.

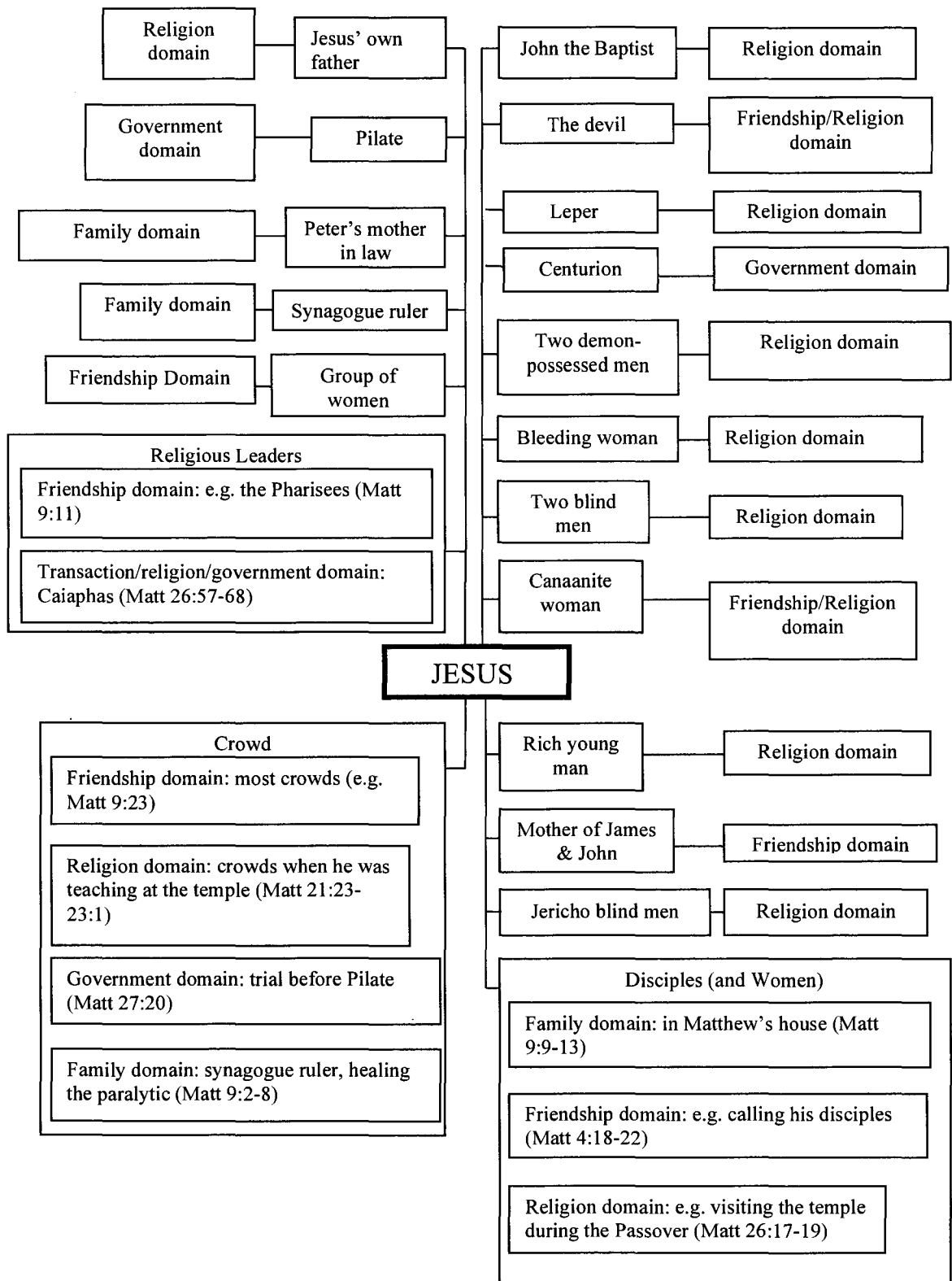
² This criterion of course does not work, if one assumes a literary dependence theory.

³ See Porter, *Criteria*, chapters 4–6, and Porter, “The Role of Greek Criteria,” 361–404.

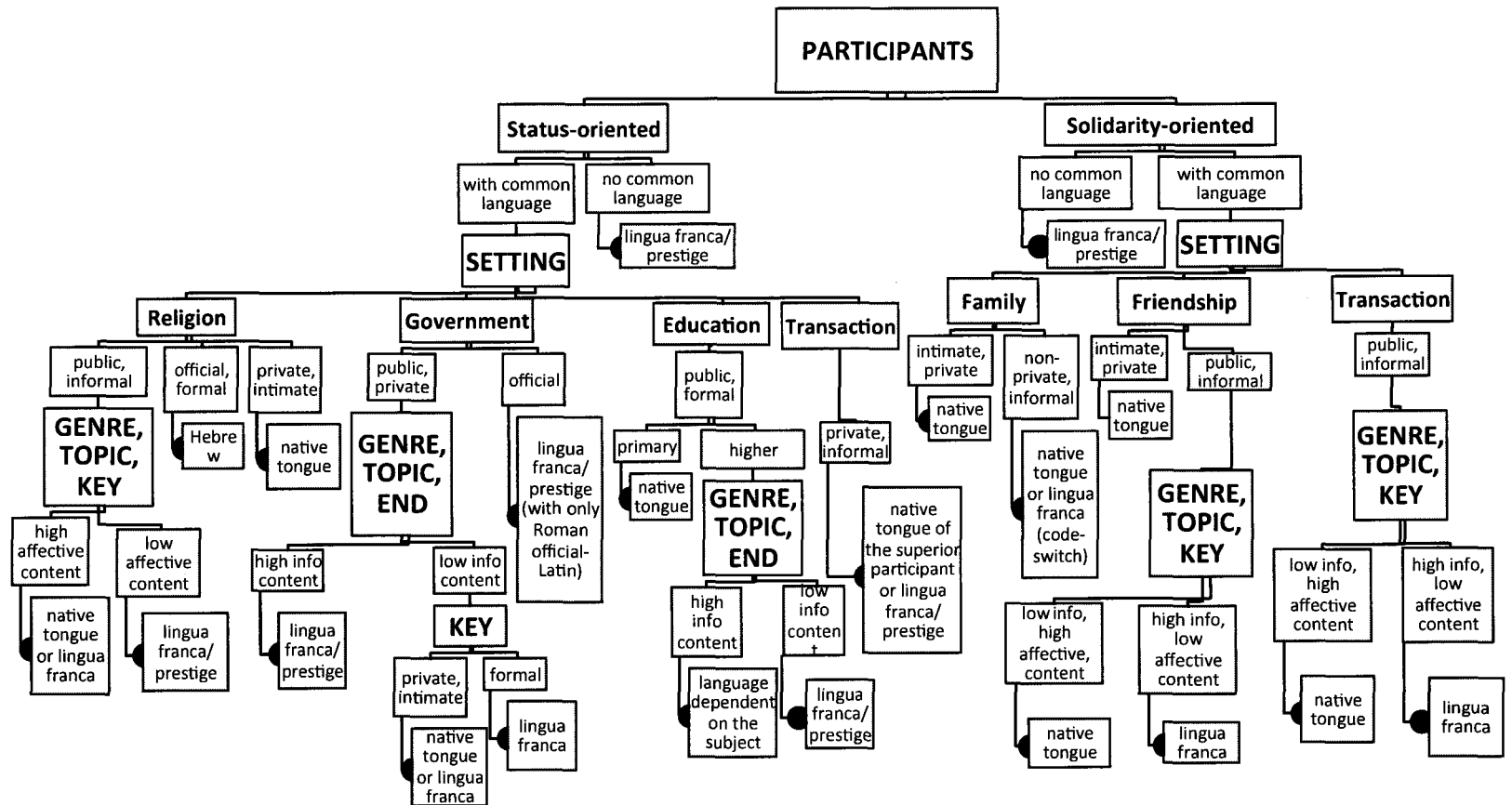
APPENDIX 1: MAP OF ANCIENT PALESTINE



APPENDIX 2: THE SOCIAL NETWORK OF JESUS WITH REFERENCE TO THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW



APPENDIX 3: PROCEDURAL FLOWCHART OF THE PROBABLE-LANGUAGE SELECTION IN A SPEECH EVENT OR SITUATION



**APPENDIX 4: SUMMARY LIST OF SPEECH EVENTS OF THE USE OF THE
LANGUAGES OF ANCIENT PALESTINE WITH REFERENCE TO THE
GOSPEL OF MATTHEW**

No.	Text	Episodes (Speech Events)	Domain	Rule
GREEK				
1	5:1—7:29	The Sermon on the Mount	Religion, Education	A1, D3
2	8:1-4	The Healing of a Leper	Religion	A1
3	9:1-8	The Healing of a Paralyzed Man	Religion	A1
4	9:27-34	The Healing of Two Blind Men and the Exorcism of a Mute Person	Religion	A1
5	12:22-45	The Teaching and Discourse on Beelzebul and on the Sign of Jonah	Religion	A1
6	13:1-35	The Teaching of a Series of Parables by the Sea of Galilee	Religion	A1
7	15:21-28	The Conversation with a Canaanite Woman	Religion	A1
8	18:1-14	The Teaching about the Greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven	Religion	A1
9	19:1-12	The Teaching on Divorce	Religion	A1
10	19:13-15	The Short Conversation with the Disciples on the Laying of Hands and Praying for Little Children	Religion	A1
11	20:29-34	The Healing of the Two Blind Men in Jericho	Religion	A1
12	21:23— 22:14	The Conversation between Jesus and the Elders and Chief Priests on Jesus' Authority	Religion	A1
13	22:15— 23:39	The Four Sets of Question-and-Answer Dialogue between Jesus and the Pharisees and Sadducees and Jesus' Teaching on the Hypocrisy of the Religious Leaders	Religion	A1
14	26:47-56	The Crowd's Arrest of Jesus	Religion	A1
15	8:5-13	The Healing of the Centurion's Servant	Government	A3
16	12:46-50	The Teaching concerning Jesus' Mother and Siblings	Friendship	A5
17	18:15-35	The Teaching on Forgiveness	Friendship	A5
18	26:57-68	The Trial before the Sanhedrin	Government	D2
ARAMAIC				
1	16:1-4	The Pharisees and Sadducees	Religion	B1

		Demand for a Sign		
2	16:13–16	Peter's Identification of Jesus as the Messiah	Religion	B1
3	12:1–14	The Teachings concerning the Sabbath	Religion	B1
4	27:45–46	Jesus' Short Prayer to the Father on the Cross	Religion	B1
5	28:16–20	The Great Commission	Religion	B1
6	4:18–20	The Calling of Simon Peter and Andrew	Friendship	B4
7	8:23–27	The Calming of the Storm	Friendship	B4
8	9:35–38	The Private Conversation with His Disciples on the Harvest Field and Its Workers	Friendship	B4
9	10:1–42	The Sending Out of the Twelve to the Harvest Field	Friendship	B4
10	14:13–21	The Feeding of the Five Thousand	Friendship	B4
11	14:22–36	The Walking on the Sea of Galilee	Friendship	B4
12	16:5–12	The Private Conversation with His Disciples concerning the Yeast of the Pharisees	Friendship	B4
13	17:1–13	The Transfiguration Event	Friendship	B4
14	17:22–23	Jesus' (Second) Prediction of His Death	Friendship	B4
15	20:17–19	Jesus' (Third) Prediction of His Death	Friendship	B4
16	20:20–28	The Conversation with the Zebedee Brothers' Mother	Friendship	B4
17	21:1–11	The Arrival at Jerusalem and Bethpage on the Mount of Olives	Friendship	B4
18	24:1—26:2	The Olivet Discourse	Friendship	B4
19	26:17–35	The Private Conversation with His Disciples at the Last Supper Event	Friendship	B4
20	28:1–10	The Short Conversation with the Women who Visited His Tomb	Friendship	B4
21	4:1–11	The Temptation of Jesus	Religion/Friendship	B1/B4
22	15:29–39	The Feeding of the Four Thousand	Religion/Friendship	B1/B4
23	16:21–28	Jesus' (First) Prediction of His Death	Religion/Friendship	B1/B4
24	26:36–46	The Speech Event in Gethsemane prior to His Arrest	Religion/Friendship	B1/B4

25	13:36–52	The Continuation (from 13:1–35) of Jesus' Teachings on Various Parables	Friendship-Family	B3-B4
ARAMAIC and/or GREEK				
1	3:13–17	The Event of Jesus' Baptism	Religion	C1
2	8:28–34	The Exorcism of Two Demon-Possessed Men	Religion	C1
3	8:18–22	The Two Sayings of Jesus to a Scribe and a Disciple	Transaction	C3
4	9:18–26	The Raising of a Dead Girl and the Healing of a Bleeding Woman	Religion/Family	C1/C4
5	19:16— 20:16	The Conversation with the Rich Young Man and with His Disciples	Religion	A1/B1
6	21:12–17	The Cleansing of the Temple	Religion	A1/B1
7	17:14–20/21	The Healing of a Demon-Possessed Boy and the (First) Teaching about Faith	Religion/Friendship	A1/B4
8	11:1–24	The Chronological Episodes of Conversation between Jesus and John's Disciples and Jesus' Address to the Crowd	Religion/Friendship	A1/B4
9	17:24–27	The Conversation regarding the Two-Drachma Temple Tax	Transaction/Family/ Friendship	A6/B3/B4
10	21:18–22	The Cursing of the Fig Tree and the (Second) Teaching about Faith	Religion	B1/C1
Possible Code-switching Speech Events				
11	9:9–17	The Calling of Matthew and the Question about Fasting	Family/Friendship	C4
12	26:6–13	The Anointing at Bethany	Family	C4
13	11:25–30	The Short Prayer to the Father and the Short Invitation to the Weary	Religion	A1/B1
14	15:1–20	The Reply to the Religious Leaders' Question concerning Purification	Religion/Friendship	A1/B1/B4
HEBREW or ARAMAIC				
1	13:53–58	The Saying concerning the Prophet without Honor in the Synagogue of the People	Education/Religion (Formal)	B2/D1
GREEK or LATIN				
1	27:11–26	The Trial before Pilate	Government	D2

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