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## The Potential of Linguistic Theories in the Study of Aspect and Tense in Ancient Greek, With Particular Attention to New Testament Greek

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# The Potential of Linguistic Theories in the Study of Aspect and Tense in Ancient Greek, With Particular Attention to New Testament Greek

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JOINT FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND THEOLOGY | LUND UNIVERSITY



# The Potential of Linguistic Theories in the Study of Aspect and Tense in Ancient Greek, With Particular Attention to New Testament Greek

Jan H. Nylund



**LUND**  
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**Title:** The Potential of Linguistic Theories in the Study of Aspect and Tense in Ancient Greek, With Particular Attention to New Testament Greek

**Abstract:** This enquiry discusses the potential of a large number of linguistic theories, approaches, concepts etc. from Plato to usage-based linguistics for the understanding of the tense system in Ancient Greek, and particularly in the Greek of the New Testament. It is argued that many significant insights within linguistics in the period from the earliest beginning of linguistic thought up to Saussure have not been noted or included in the discussion of the tenses in New Testament Greek. Many of these insights find corroboration in later linguistic theories in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. In this volume it is demonstrated that ideas from structuralism and generative linguistics that so far have dominated the debate on the New Testament Greek tense system, such as in the works of Stanley E. Porter, Buist M. Fanning and Constantine R. Campbell, need to be revised or discarded. It is noted that insights from Systemic Functional Linguistics, though favoured by many contributors to the New Testament verbal aspect debate, have been underused. Throughout this volume it is argued that certain theories, both ones preceding and following structuralism and generative linguistics, such as genuine functionalism, grammaticalisation theory, cognitive linguistics and usage-based linguistics, have considerable explanatory power in regard to the understanding and analysis of the New Testament Greek tense system.

**Key words:** Apollonius Dyscolus, Benjamin Lee Whorf, Bloomfieldian linguistics, Cognitive Grammar, Cognitive linguistics, Cognitive pragmatics, Comparative linguistics, Comparative studies of syntax, Competition theory, Componential analysis, Conceptual blending theory, Conceptual metaphor theory, Conceptual structuring system, Construction grammar, Copenhagen school, Corpus linguistics, Cross-linguistic studies, Diachronic construction grammar, Diagrammatic iconicity, Domain theory, Edward Sapir, Embodied construction grammar, Emergent grammar, Extended vantage theory, Frame semantics, Francis Bacon, Functional discourse, Functional grammar, Functionalism, Generative linguistics, Generative semantics, Geneva School, Georg Curtius, Gestalt psychology, Glossematics, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, Government and binding theory, Grammaticalisation theory, Head-driven phrase structure grammar, Historical linguistics, Historical-philological lexical semantics, Historicism, Immanuel Kant, Indexicality, Integrative functionalism, Invited inferencing theory, Johan Gottfried Herder, Language anthropology, Language typology, Lexical aspectual classes, Lexical field theory, Lexical functional grammar, Linguistic empiricism, Linguistic theory, London school, Mental spaces theory, Metaphorical extension approach, Minimalist programme, Modern linguistics, Modistae, Natural morphology, Natural phonology, Natural semantic metalanguage, Neogrammarians, Neurolinguistics, Optimality theory, Organicism, Port-Royal grammarians, Prague school, Prototype theory, Psychologism, Radical construction grammar, Rationalist grammarians, Relational semantics, Role and reference grammar, Roman Jakobson, Schemata theory, SFL Cardiff grammar, Sir William Jones, Sociolinguistics, Speculative etymology, Structuralism, Subjectification model, Systemic functional linguistics, Tagmemics, Typological functionalism, Universal grammar, Usage-based linguistics, Vantage theory, Völkerpsychologie, Wilhelm von Humboldt, William Croft

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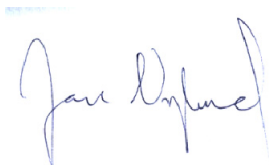
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Jan H. Nylund



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*To my wife Maria for her love and passionate support*

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## Abbreviations

CG	Cognitive Grammar (Langacker)
CL	Cognitive linguistics
CG	Construction Grammar
CT	Competition theory
CSSM	Conceptual Structuring System Model, The
FG	Functional Grammar (Dik)
GL	Generative linguistics
NM	Natural Morphology
NSM	Natural Semantic Metalanguage
PT	Prototype Theory
RRG	Role and Reference Grammar
SFL	Systemic Functional Linguistics
UBL	Usage-based linguistics
V/C	Vendler and Croft's lexical aspectual classes
VT/EVT	Vantage Theory/Extended Vantage Theory

# Introduction





# I The Purpose of the Enquiry

Regardless of the many foci that the discipline of New Testament studies may have, it is ultimately based on the study of the Greek text of the New Testament as a point of departure, which makes it a discipline where linguistics is a concern. One of the key issues in New Testament Greek linguistics is the much-debated matter of how to understand the Greek tenses.<sup>1</sup> Since more or less every clause in the New Testament contains one or several verbs, this issue is omnipresent. The verb is virtually always in focus since it concerns the action or state of someone or something, often in relation to the action or state of another someone or something. The verb relates to all other linguistic elements in the sentence, both bottom-up and top-down, which means that the discussion of the Greek verb and the Greek tense system relates to all levels of the language system, from morphology to textual discourse units, as well as to the actual and real encyclopaedic world out there to which the verb refers and from which it acquires its meaning. It all comes together in the cognitive dimension of the language user, whether in language production or language comprehension, where a sense is given a linguistic expression or a linguistic expression is attributed a sense.

The study of the use of the tenses in Ancient Greek has been a matter of interest for a long time, in fact ever since the birth of historical linguistics at the beginning of the 19th century. Indeed, we could go further back to Aristotle, the Stoics and Dionysius Thrax who to various degrees discuss the Greek tense system. In 1819 Philipp Buttmann (1764–1829) published an influential Greek grammar, *Ausführliche Griechische Sprachlehre*,<sup>2</sup> later translated into English,<sup>3</sup> which includes a discussion on Greek tense usage. As a part of a whole in this enquiry, attention was directed early on to the particular use of the Greek tenses in Koine Greek as exemplified in the Greek of the New Testament, such as in the work of Georg Winer from 1822,<sup>4</sup> which was

- 
1. When speaking about Greek, ‘tense’ refers to the verb forms that traditionally are referred to as tenses, whereas in other contexts ‘tense’ is used in the sense of ‘grammaticalised reference to time.’
  2. Philipp Buttmann, *Ausführliche griechische Sprachlehre*, vol. 1 (Berlin: In der Myliussischen Buchhandlung, 1819).
  3. Philipp Buttmann, *A Greek Grammar*, trans. Edward Robinson (Andover: Flagg, Gould, and Newman, 1833).
  4. Georg Benedict Winer, *Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Sprachidioms: als sichere Grundlage der neutestamentlichen Exegese*, 1 ed. (Leipzig: F. C. W. Vogel, 1822); see also Eng. translation from 1882 (Georg Benedikt Winer, *A Treatise on the Grammar of New Testament Greek*, trans. W.F.

followed by multiple contributions that included treatments of the Greek tenses, such as the works of Thomas Green (1842),<sup>5</sup> George Curtius (1846, 1856, 1863, 1877),<sup>6</sup> Alexander Buttmann (1859, 1873),<sup>7</sup> Karl Brugmann (1885),<sup>8</sup> Ernest De Witt Burton (1888),<sup>9</sup> William Goodwin (1889, 1894),<sup>10</sup> Friedrich Blass (1896),<sup>11</sup> Raphael Kühner

- 
- Moulton, 3 ed. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1882)); Daryl Schmidt argues that Winer's 'rationalist/rational' grammar "seems to anticipate Chomsky's attack on behaviorism" (Daryl D. Schmidt, *Hellenistic Greek Grammar and Noam Chomsky: Nominalizing Transformations*, Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series, vol. 62 (Chico, California: Scholars Press, 1981), 3-4); see also Daryl D. Schmidt, "The Study of Hellenistic Greek Grammar in the Light of Contemporary Linguistics," *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 11, (1984): 27-38, 28.
5. Thomas Sheldon Green, *A Treatise on the Grammar of the New Testament Dialect: Embracing Observations on the Literal Interpretation of Numerous Passages* (London: Samuel Bagster, 1842).
  6. Georg Curtius, *Die Bildung der Tempora und Modi im Griechischen und Lateinischen sprachvergleichend*, Sprachvergleichende Beiträge zur griechischen und lateinischen Grammatik (Berlin: Besser, 1846); Georg Curtius, *Griechische Schulgrammatik* (Prag: J. G. Calve, 1852); Georg Curtius, *Erläuterungen zu meiner Griechischen Schulgrammatik* (Prag: Verlag von F. Tempsky, 1863); Georg Curtius, *Das Verbum der Griechischen Sprache: seinem Baue nach dargestellt*, vol. 1 & 2 (Leipzig: Verlag von S. Hirzel, 1873, 1876); later published in English translation: Georg Curtius, *The Greek Verb: Its Structure and Development*, trans. Augustus S. Wilkins and Edwin B. England, vol. 1 & 2 (London: John Murray, Albemarle Street, 1880).
  7. Alexander Buttmann, *Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Sprachgebrauchs* (Berlin, 1859); Alexander Buttmann and Joseph Henry Thayer, *A Grammar of the New Testament Greek* (Andover: W. F. Draper, 1873).
  8. Karl Brugmann and Albert Thumb, *Griechische Grammatik: Lautlehre, Stammbildungs- und Flexionslehre, Syntax*, Vierte ed. (München: C.H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1913 [1885]).
  9. Ernest De Witt Burton, *Syntax of the Moods and Tenses in New Testament Greek*, 3rd ed. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1898 [1888]).
  10. William Watson Goodwin, *Syntax of the Moods and Tenses of the Greek Verb* (London: Macmillan, 1889); William Watson Goodwin, *A Greek Grammar*, Revised ed. (London: Thomas Nelson, 1894).
  11. Friedrich Blass, *Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1896), followed by a number of revised editions involving various other scholars (Henry Thackeray, Albert Debrunner, Robert Funk, Friedrich Rehkopf, Raphael Kühner), such as the following editions: Friedrich Blass and Henry St John Thackeray, *Grammar of New Testament Greek* (London, New York: Macmillan and co., limited, 1898); Friedrich Blass, *Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch*, 2. verb. und verm. Aufl. ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1902); Friedrich Blass and Albert Debrunner, *Friedrich Blass' Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch*, 4., ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1913); Friedrich Blass, Albert Debrunner, and Robert Walter Funk, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961); Friedrich Blass, Albert Debrunner, and Friedrich Rehkopf, *Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch*, 14., völlig neubearb. u. erw. Aufl. ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1975); Raphael Kühner and Friedrich Blass, *Ausführliche Grammatik Der Griechischen Sprache*, (Hannover: Verlag Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1978); Friedrich Blass, Albert Debrunner, and Friedrich Rehkopf,

& Bernhard Gerth (1904),<sup>12</sup> James Hope Moulton (1908),<sup>13</sup> Archibald Thomas Robertson (1914),<sup>14</sup> Ludwig Radermacher (1925),<sup>15</sup> Jacob Wackernagel (1926),<sup>16</sup> F. M. Abel (1927),<sup>17</sup> Pierre Chantraine (1927, 1938, 1966),<sup>18</sup> Jean Humbert (1938, 1940),<sup>19</sup> Eduard Schwyzer and Albert Debrunner (1950),<sup>20</sup> Charles Moule (1953)<sup>21</sup> Martín Sánchez Ruipérez (1954),<sup>22</sup> Maximilian Zerwick (1963),<sup>23</sup> James Hope Moulton & Nigel Turner (1963)<sup>24</sup> and Paul Friedrich (1974).<sup>25</sup>

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*Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch*, 15., durchges. Aufl. ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1979).

12. Raphael Kühner and Bernhard Gerth, *Ausführliche Grammatik der griechischen Sprache. Zweiter Teil: Satzlehre, Zweiter Band* (Hannover und Leipzig: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1904).
13. James Hope Moulton, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek: Vol. 1, Prolegomena.*, 3 ed. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1908).
14. Archibald Thomas Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1914).
15. Ludwig Radermacher, *Neutestamentliche Grammatik: Das Griechisch des Neuen Testaments im Zusammenhang mit der Volkssprache*, vol. 1 (Mohr, 1925).
16. Jacob Wackernagel, *Vorlesungen Über Syntax*, 2 ed., vol. 1-2 (Basel: Emil Birkhäuser, 1926).
17. F. M. Abel, *Grammaire du Grec biblique, suivie d'un choix de papyrus* (Paris: Gabalda, 1927).
18. Pierre Chantraine, *Histoire du parfait grec*, Collection Linguistique (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1927); Pierre Chantraine, "Remarques sur les rapports entre les modes et les aspects en grec," *Bulletin de la Société de Linguistique de Paris* 40, (1938): 69-79; Pierre Chantraine, "Questions de syntaxe grecque: 1. Encore 'EN APTAΣ, 2. Remarques sur l'emploi des thèmes de présent et d'aoriste," *Revue de Philologie* 40, (1966): 37-45
19. Jean Humbert, "Verbal Aspect: Has it Evolved From Ancient to Modern Greek?," *The Link* 1, (1938): 21-28; Jean Humbert, "L'aorist indicatif: rend-il nécessairement le passé?," *Revue des études anciennes* 42, (1940): 187-191.
20. Eduard Schwyzer and Albert Debrunner, *Griechische Grammatik: Auf der Grundlage von Karl Brugmanns Griechischer Grammatik. Syntax und Syntaktische Stilistik / vervollständigt und herausgegeben von Albert Debrunner*, vol. 2 (CH Beck'sche, 1950).
21. Charles Francis Digby Moule, *An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek* (Cambridge: University Press, 1953).
22. Martín Sánchez Ruipérez, *Structure du système des aspects et des temps du verbe en grec ancien: Analyse fonctionnelle synchronique*, vol. 263 (Presses Univ. Franche-Comté, 1982 [1954]).
23. Maximilian Zerwick, *Biblical Greek: Illustrated by Examples*, Scripta Pontificii Instituti Biblici, vol. 114 (Rome: Pontificio Instituto Biblico, 1963).
24. James Hope Moulton, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek. Vol 3, Syntax.*, ed. Nigel Turner (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1963).
25. Paul Friedrich, "On Aspect Theory and Homeric Aspect," *International Journal of American Linguistics* (1974): S1-S44.

The first full volume on the Greek tense system seems to have been Jens Holt's volume<sup>26</sup> from 1943, and in 1973 Basil Mandilaras published a volume on the Greek verb,<sup>27</sup> but neither of these dealt with the Greek of the New Testament; this field of study was first covered by Juan Mateos<sup>28</sup> and by Kenneth L. McKay; the latter published works on the usage of the Greek tenses both in Ancient Greek in general<sup>29</sup> and specifically in New Testament<sup>30</sup> Greek.<sup>31</sup> Johannes P. Louw also published works on aspect in 1959, 1967, 1971 and 1975<sup>32</sup> and on New Testament Greek semantics in 1982.<sup>33</sup> Works on the verb in Homeric and Classical Greek have been published by

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26. Jens Holt, "Études d'aspect," in *Aarsskrift for Aarhus Universitet*, Acta Jutlandica (Copenhagen: Universitetsforlaget i Aarhus / Ejnar Munksgaard, 1943).
  27. Basil G. Mandilaras, *The Verb in the Greek Non-Literary Papyri* (Athens: Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sciences, 1973).
  28. Juan Mateos, *El aspecto verbal en el Nuevo Testamento* (Madrid: Ediciones Cristiandad, 1977).
  29. Kenneth L. McKay, "The Use of Ancient Greek Perfect down to the End of the Second Century AD," *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* 12, (1965): 1-21; Kenneth L. McKay, "Further Remarks on the 'Historical' Present and other Phenomena," *Foundations of Language* 11, (1974): 247-251; Kenneth L. McKay, *Greek Grammar for Students: A Concise Grammar of Classical Attic with Special Reference to Aspect in the Verb* (Department of Classics. The Australian National University, 1974); Kenneth L. McKay, "On the Perfect and other Aspects in the Greek Non-Literary Papyri," *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* 27, no. 1 (1980): 23-49; Kenneth L. McKay, "Aspects of the Imperative in Ancient Greek," *Antichthon* 20, (1986): 41-58; Kenneth L. McKay, "Aspectual Usage in Timeless Contexts in Ancient Greek," in *In the Footsteps of Raphael Kühner*, ed. A. Rijksbaron, H. A. Mulder, and G. C. Wakker, (Amsterdam: J.C. Gieben, 1988).
  30. Kenneth L. McKay, "On the Perfect and other Aspects in New Testament Greek," *Novum Testamentum* (1981): 289-329; Kenneth L. McKay, "Aspect in Imperative Constructions in New Testament Greek," *Novum Testamentum* (1985): 201-226; Kenneth L. McKay, "Time and Aspect in New Testament Greek," *Novum Testamentum* 34, no. 3 (1992): 209-228; Kenneth L. McKay, *A New Syntax of the Verb in New Testament Greek: An Aspectual Approach* (New York: Peter Lang, 1994).
  31. D. A. Carson, "An Introduction to the Porter/Fanning Debate," in *Biblical Greek language and Linguistics: Open Questions in Current Research*, ed. Stanley E. Porter and D.A. Carson, JSNTSUP 80 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 20-21.
  32. Johannes P. Louw, "On Greek Prohibitions," *Acta Classica* 2, (1959): 43-57; Johannes P. Louw, "Die Semantiese Waarde van die Perfektum in Hellenistese Grieks," *Acta Classica* 10, (1967): 23-32; Johannes P. Louw, "Verbal Aspek in Grieks," *Taalfasette* 15, (1971): 13-26; Johannes P. Louw, "Verbal Aspect in the First Letter of John," *Neotestamentica* 9, (1975): 98-104.
  33. Johannes P. Louw, *Semantics of New Testament Greek*. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982).

Neal Wilkinson (1980),<sup>34</sup> Alfred Moorhouse (1982),<sup>35</sup> François-Xavier Druet (1983),<sup>36</sup> Jean Carrière (1983)<sup>37</sup> and Albert Rijksbaron (1984, 1988).<sup>38</sup>

Not too many years later the interest in the understanding of the Greek tenses in this context was particularly brought into focus by the coincidental publication of two monographs on tense in the Greek of the New Testament in 1989 by Stanley E. Porter<sup>39</sup> and in 1990 by Buist M. Fanning,<sup>40</sup> followed by a considerable number of publications, including that of Constantine R. Campbell in 2007,<sup>41</sup> responding to or building on their work. Moving ahead roughly another 10 years, a landmark-size volume on the Greek verb and the tenses in Ancient Greek was published by Andreas Willi in 2018,<sup>42</sup> a volume that marks a time from which a line can be traced back 200 years to Buttman's Greek Grammar from 1819, around the time when historical and comparative linguistics arose.

*The purpose of this enquiry is to explore and showcase the potential of various linguistic theories, approaches and concepts etc. for the study of aspect and tense, since linguistic parameters in general linguistics are critically decisive for the analysis of aspect and tense in Ancient Greek as well as aspect related characteristics and for the outcome of such analyses. The implied thesis is that earlier attempts to offer a linguistically informed analysis of the New Testament Greek tense system, especially those of Porter, Fanning and Campbell (but also later ones), to various degrees have failed due to lack of attention to insights from theories with more explanatory power—some predating their works, others current at the time of*

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34. Neal K. Wilkinson, "“Aspect” in the Syntax of the Verb in the Poems of Homer: The Testing of a Theory" (Ph.D. thesis, The Australian National University, 1980).
  35. Alfred Charles Moorhouse, *The Syntax of Sophocles*, vol. 75 (Leiden: Brill, 1982).
  36. François-Xavier Druet, "L'Aspect en grec classique: une école de nuances," *Les études classiques* 51, (1983): 97-104.
  37. Jean Carrière, *Stylistique grecque: l'usage de la prose attique*, 3 ed., Tradition de l'humanisme 6 (Paris: Klincksieck, 1983).
  38. Albert Rijksbaron, *The Syntax and Semantics of the Verb in Classical Greek: An Introduction* (Amsterdam: J.C. Gieben, 1984); Albert Rijksbaron, "The Discourse Function of the Imperfect," in *In the Footsteps of Raphael Kühner: Proceedings of the International Colloquium in Commemoration of the 150th Anniversary of the Publication of Raphael Kühner's Ausführliche Grammatik Der Griechischen Sprache, II. Theil: Syntaxe*, ed. Albert Rijksbaron, H. A. Mulder, and Gerrigje Catharina Wakker, (Amsterdam: J. C. Gieben, 1988).
  39. Stanley E. Porter, *Verbal Aspect in the Greek of the New Testament, With Reference to Tense and Mood* (Bern: Peter Lang, 1989).
  40. Buist M. Fanning, *Verbal Aspect in New Testament Greek*, Oxford Theological Monographs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990).
  41. Constantine R. Campbell, *Verbal Aspect, the Indicative Mood, and Narrative: Soundings in the Greek of the New Testament*, Studies in Biblical Greek (New York: Peter Lang, 2007).
  42. Andreas Willi, *Origins of the Greek Verb* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

*their writing, yet others occurring later but not included in their later works or comments on their earlier work—than the essentially structuralist models of Porter, Fanning and Campbell.* In a second volume, already written, I deal in detail with language typology and grammaticalisation theory as well as the application of the theories covered in this volume to Ancient Greek and particularly to the Greek of the New Testament, that is, post-Classical Greek in the first century as manifested in the New Testament.<sup>43</sup> In the second volume I also discuss in more detail the contributions of Porter (and those of his followers), Fanning and Campbell, and other more recent contributions. A key issue, particularly emphasised in the second volume, but which is also argued in this volume, is that the synchronic tense system of the Greek of the New Testament is the result of, depends on and can only be explained by previous diachronic developments of tense usage in Homeric and Classical Greek. The Greek of the New Testament should thus be understood within the framework of the development of Ancient Greek from Homer onwards.

In the following sections of the introduction, I briefly discuss the standing of linguistics in New Testament studies, the challenge of general linguistics in New Testament Greek studies, the potential constituted by linguistic theories for the study of tense and aspect in the Greek of the New Testament along with the issues in view, and, finally, the scope of the enquiry, method, terms and structure.

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43. Geoffrey Horrocks asserts that the language in the New Testament is “a reasonably close reflection of the everyday Greek of the majority of the literate population in the early centuries AD” (Geoffrey C. Horrocks, *Greek: A History of the Language and Its Speakers*, 2nd ed. ed. (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 147); see also Porter’s discussion (Stanley E. Porter, “A Natural Language Approach to Koine Greek Exegesis,” *Biblical and Ancient Greek Linguistics* 11, (2022-23): 69-100, 72-77).

## 2 The Standing of Linguistics in New Testament Studies

A longstanding issue in the study of the Greek tenses, whether explicitly or implicitly so, has been what linguistic tools or what linguistic approach or method to use. Even early on, around the birth of the study of language in the second half of the 18th century or when the historical-comparative approach came about, opinions were strong; fierce battles were fought over the precise approach to the study of language, and even then shiftings of Kuhnian magnitude took place, though they may seem less dramatic from a hindsight perspective.

More recently the important role of the usage of a particular linguistic approach or approaches for the study of tense and aspect in Greek has been underlined. In regard to the three major contributors to the study of the New Testament Greek tense system, Stanley Porter, Buist Fanning and Constantine Campbell, there is a considerable difference concerning the extent to which they explicitly relate to linguistic theory: Fanning is brief in stating his linguistic preference, Campbell devotes much more space to a general discussion but leaves the reader with little information about his own preferred approach,<sup>44</sup> whereas Porter discusses the matter of linguistic theory at length both in general terms and specifically in regard to his own approach.<sup>45</sup> However, to be fair to Fanning, it is striking that even though he pays little attention to linguistic theory, his bottom-up approach and his findings approximate to a considerable extent several of the most recent insights in linguistic theory, in particular by his attention to the interaction between lexical and grammatical aspect, and the role of contextual factors.<sup>46</sup> More recently, in 2017 and 2021, he also approached typological and diachronic studies much more positively than in his dissertation.<sup>47</sup> In this sense,

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44. On this point, see Conclusion of the chapter Systemic Functional Linguistics.

45. Porter comments that Fanning and Campbell “possibly do not really have an articulable theory” (Stanley E. Porter, *Linguistic Analysis of the Greek New Testament: Studies in Tools, Methods, and Practice* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2015), 200).

46. Fanning, *Aspect*, 126–196.

47. Buist M. Fanning, “Greek Tenses in John’s Apocalypse: Issues in Verbal Aspect, Discourse Analysis, Diachronic Change,” in *The Language and Literature of the New Testament*, ed. Lois K. Fuller Dow, Craig A. Evans, and Andrew W. Pitts, (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2017), 347–48 and Buist

Fanning seems to be the only one of these three contributors who has clearly developed his view on the Greek tense system since the publication of their original PhD theses.<sup>48</sup> Like Fanning, Campbell notes the significance of interaction between lexical and grammatical aspect—though there is in practice hardly any discussion on this topic—and he recognises the importance of “aspectual contexts.”<sup>49</sup>

Porter argues that modern linguistics first became a concern in biblical studies when James Barr in 1961<sup>50</sup> criticised “abuses of modern structural linguistics” within biblical studies.<sup>51</sup> However, Nicholas Ellis notes that the corrective influence of Barr led to the decontextualisation of meaning and other excesses as well as scepticism towards the value of cross-linguistic studies.<sup>52</sup> Other early attempts at adopting structural linguistics include works by Sawyer, Burres, Silva<sup>53</sup> in lexical studies, and works on grammar by Kieffer, Louw, Silva, Schmidt, Wonneberger, Nida et al. and Levinsohn.<sup>54</sup> Porter notes that “the theoretical models applied to analysis of the Greek language have traditionally been very few in number.”<sup>55</sup> Porter’s observation echoes the question put by Lars Rydbeck as early as in 1975, asking what happened to studies in New Testament Greek linguistics after Albert Debrunner.<sup>56</sup> Many years later (2023), Porter made roughly the same observation as in 1989, stating that “New Testament Greek study offers far fewer linguistic theories than are to be found in the general field of linguistics.”<sup>57</sup> In 1989,

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M. Fanning, “Response to Campbell’s Imperfective View of the Greek Perfect,” in *The Perfect Storm: Critical Discussion of the Semantics of the Greek Perfect Tense under Aspect Theory*, ed. D. A. Carson, (New York, Bern etc: Peter Lang, 2021), 32–44.

48. In Porter’s case, see e.g. Stanley E. Porter, “The Perfect Isn’t Perfect - it’s Stative: The Meaning of the Greek Perfect Tense-Form in the Greek Verbal System,” in *The Perfect Storm: Critical Discussion of the Semantics of the Greek Perfect Tense under Aspect Theory*, ed. D. A. Carson, (New York, Bern etc: Peter Lang, 2021), 108.
49. Campbell, *Aspect*, 33, 107.
50. James Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961).
51. Porter, *Aspect*, 2; see also Jonathan M. Watt, *Code-Switching in Luke and Acts*, Berkley Insights in Linguistics and Semiotics, vol. 31 (New York: Peter Lang, 1997), 2.
52. Nicholas J. Ellis, “Biblical Exegesis and Linguistics,” in *Linguistics and New Testament Greek: Key Issues in the Current Debate*, ed. David Alan Black and Benjamin L. Merkle, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2020), 238, 243.
53. Moisés Silva, *Biblical Words and Their Meaning: An Introduction to Lexical Semantics*, Revised and expanded ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983).
54. Porter, *Aspect*, 2.
55. *Ibid.*, 6.
56. Lars Rydbeck, “What Happened to New Testament Greek Grammar After Albert Debrunner,” *New Testament Studies* 21, no. 3 (1975): 424-427.
57. Stanley E. Porter, *Linguistic Descriptions of the Greek New Testament: New Studies in Systemic Functional Linguistics* (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2023), 9; for a similar point, see also



Peter Cotterell and Max Turner argue in favour of “bringing together linguistics and biblical interpretation.”<sup>58</sup> In 1995, Micheal Palmer notes that new linguistic theories “are often highly technical and difficult to master,” but “can make significant contributions to an accurate description of the language.”<sup>59</sup> Also in 1995, Dennis L. Stamps notes the difficulty of “pluralism in grammatical theory.”<sup>60</sup> Porter likewise notes it is sometimes argued that “linguistics is a highly diverse field” and that “it is difficult to know which type of linguistics one should use.”<sup>61</sup> Carson, writing in 1999, laments that though linguistics is a discipline “that has erupted with torrential force in the twentieth century” it is “only now beginning to wash over NT studies.”<sup>62</sup> In 2004, Porter comments that Greek linguistics within New Testament studies is a neglected area.<sup>63</sup> Campbell, in his work from 2007, observes that linguistic approaches “are adopted without due regard to competing models,” though he argues that there is an “increasing awareness of the role of linguistic theory in grammatical analysis.”<sup>64</sup> Furthermore, he argues that the modern linguist is obliged to not only explicitly apply a linguistic approach but also to make the choice of an approach apparent to his readers.<sup>65</sup> In a later publication, Campbell states that “Greek grammarians are subject to linguistic theory, whether or not they are aware of it and whether or not they are explicit about it.”<sup>66</sup>

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Stanley E. Porter, “Linguistic Theory in Hebrew and Greek Language Study,” in *Putting the Pieces Together: Formalizing Units and Structures in the Biblical Languages*, ed. Stanley E. Porter, Christopher D. Land, and James D. Dvorak, *Putting the Pieces Together ...* (2024), 109.

58. Peter Cotterell and Max Turner, *Linguistics & Biblical Interpretation* (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, 1989), 33.
59. Micheal W. Palmer, *Levels of Constituent Structure in New Testament Greek.*, Studies in Biblical Greek, vol. 4 (New York: Peter Lang, 1995), 1.
60. Dennis L. Stamps, “Interpreting the Language of St Paul: Grammar, Modern Linguistics, and Translation Theory,” in *Discourse Analysis and other Topics in Biblical Greek*, ed. Stanley E. Porter and Donald A. Carson, *Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series* 113 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 131.
61. Porter, *Linguistic Descriptions of the Greek New Testament: New Studies in Systemic Functional Linguistics*, 2.
62. D. A. Carson, “Introduction to Introductions,” in *Linguistics and the New Testament*, ed. Stanley E. Porter and D. A. Carson, *Studies in New Testament Greek* 5 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 18.
63. Stanley E. Porter, “Greek Grammar and Syntax,” in *The Face of New Testament Studies*, ed. Scot McKnight and Grant R. Osborne, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic Apollos, 2004), 76.
64. Campbell, *Aspect*, 7, 16.
65. *Ibid.*, 16.
66. Constantine R. Campbell, *Advances in the Study of Greek: New Testament Insights for Reading the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2015), 55.

More recently, in 2016, Christopher Thomson expresses in indirect terms the need for a better grounding in general linguistics in the study of the Greek tense system when he states that the development of aspect studies among New Testament scholars “reflects a misunderstanding of the linguistic literature.”<sup>67</sup> He argues for the need for cross-linguistic studies about tense and aspect, and undertakes an excursion where he addresses a few topics in this direction.<sup>68</sup> David Alan Black, writing in 2020, notes a recovery for linguistics as a discipline among New Testament scholars during the last 10-20 years, even though there has been some hesitancy in regard to the incorporation of linguistics into the field of biblical studies.<sup>69</sup> He further notes the multiplicity of linguistic approaches and the need for those studying Greek to be acquainted with several linguistic theories rather than just a preferred one.<sup>70</sup> Ellis asserts that “biblical scholars can no longer afford not to do linguistics and be able to evaluate linguistic truth claims.”<sup>71</sup> In this context he is critical of Porter’s rejection of alternative linguistic approaches, such as cognitive linguistics, typological studies and prototype theory, while at the same time he promotes his own linguistic approach, “[Porter] ends up assuming the validity of this Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL) school as the governing model within biblical studies.”<sup>72</sup> Fanning is similarly critical of Porter’s far-reaching claims.<sup>73</sup> Fanning argues that “Porter’s writings on aspect almost completely ignore the work of other contemporary linguistics in favour of insisting that biblical scholars simply accept his system and results,”<sup>74</sup> though he acknowledges Porter’s broader concern<sup>75</sup> to include insights from various linguistic theories.<sup>76</sup> Ellis argues that “a turn to serious linguistic study has the power to provide an antidote to the chaos of

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67. Christopher J. Thomson, “What is Aspect? Contrasting Definitions in General Linguistics and New Testament Studies,” in *The Greek Verb Revisited: A Fresh Approach for Biblical Exegesis*, ed. Steven E. Runge and Christopher J. Fresch, (Bellingham: Lexham Press, 2016), 14.

68. *Ibid.*, 18–38.

69. David Alan Black, “Where did We Come from?,” in *Linguistics and New Testament Greek: Key Issues in the Current Debate*, ed. David Alan Black and Benjamin L. Merkle, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2020), 2, 5, 10.

70. *Ibid.*, 6.

71. Ellis, “Biblical Exegesis and Linguistics,” 230.

72. *Ibid.*, 231.

73. Buist M. Fanning, “Response to Porter’s Stative View of the Greek Perfect,” in *The Perfect Storm: Critical Discussion of the Semantics of the Greek Perfect Tense under Aspect Theory*, ed. D. A. Carson, (New York, Bern etc: Peter Lang, 2021), 143–146.

74. *Ibid.*, 146.

75. Stanley E. Porter, “Studying Ancient Languages from a Modern Linguistic Perspective: Essential Terms and Terminology,” *Filología Neotestamentaria* 2, (1989), 151.

76. Fanning, “Response to Porter’s Stative View of the Greek Perfect,” 149.

our own general linguistic ignorance.”<sup>77</sup> In 2023 Elizabeth Robar points out that “schools of linguistic thought ... heavily influence how we interpret the biblical text, which places a burden on the student and scholar not to remain ignorant about formative influences behind their own interpretations.”<sup>78</sup>

It is noteworthy that Porter as late as 2020, when summarising the history of linguistic development and particularly within biblical studies, comments that Wallace gives the impression of being “familiar with the latest developments in Greek language study” because he uses phrases such as “synchronic priority” and “structural priority,”<sup>79</sup> considering that the validity of these terms and what they represent were already becoming out of touch with the latest developments in linguistics 50-60 years earlier as well as the fact that Porter’s formal systemic-structuralist model, for the same reason, was strictly speaking already dated in 1989 and in need of revision because of the corrective influences of more developed linguistic approaches, such as grammaticalisation theory (Meillet (1912), Greenberg (1966), Kuryłowicz (1965), Givón (1971), Bybee (1985) and Bybee and Dahl (1989)), Dik’s Functional Grammar (1978, 1989) and usage-based linguistics (Bybee (1985)). The same applies to Fanning, also writing on tense in the Greek of the New Testament at the same time as Porter and explicitly subscribing to a set of structuralist concepts, with no or little attention to other linguistic approaches existing at the time. In fact, as early as in 1992 Martin Haspelmath applies grammaticalisation theory to the understanding of the Greek tense system, specifically the Perfect, drawing on the works of Bybee and Dahl (and even Bybee et al.’s seminal work (1994) which was then in preparation<sup>80</sup>).<sup>81</sup>

Whether modern linguistics can really be said to have been applied in the works of Porter and Fanning is thus both a matter of quality and quantity. Porter certainly made an admirable effort to present a massive argument (1989) beyond what anyone could ask for, but it remains a fact that other more up-to-date and developed linguistic approaches were left out. Fanning too presents a well-argued volume (1990) on the

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77. Ellis, “Biblical Exegesis and Linguistics,” 232; on a few pages Ellis offers a helpful overview of different linguistic theories and approaches (Ibid., 232–237).

78. Elizabeth Robar, “Introduction,” in *Linguistic Theory and the Biblical Text*, ed. William A. Ross and Elizabeth Robar, (Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2023), 1.

79. Stanley E. Porter, “Where have all the Greek Grammarians Gone? And why should anyone Care?,” *Biblical and Ancient Greek Linguistics* 9, (2020), 12; see also Stanley E. Porter, “Linguistic Schools,” in *Linguistics and New Testament Greek: Key Issues in the Current Debate*, ed. David Alan Black and Benjamin L. Merkle, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2020), 17 and Stanley E. Porter, *New Testament Theology and the Greek Language: A Linguistic Reconceptualisation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022), 21.

80. Martin Haspelmath, “From Resultative to Perfect in Ancient Greek,” *Función* 11/12, (1992), 209.

81. Ibid.

basis of a structuralist approach that was favoured at the time,<sup>82</sup> but, as noted, with little attention to competing theories. As for Campbell, publishing his dissertation as late as 2007, it is noteworthy that he essentially replicates a systemic-structural approach some 40 years after grammaticalisation theory had its breakthrough, and some 20 years after usage-based linguistics had its beginning, soon to outcompete, or at least essentially correct, the systemic-structural approach, and more than 15 years after the breakthrough of cognitive linguistics. However, it is clear that he is aware of the grammaticalisation theory “which is complex and will not be entered into here.”<sup>83</sup> He also refers to Evans’s observation<sup>84</sup> of diachronic effects in the Greek tense system, though he does not make use of these linguistic resources in his own analysis of the Greek tense system.<sup>85</sup>

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82. That is, in biblical studies that mostly has not made use of generative linguistics; on this point, see Daryl Schmidt (Schmidt, *Hellenistic Greek Grammar and Noam Chomsky: Nominalizing Transformations*, 67) and Stanley Porter (Porter, “Linguistic Theory in Hebrew and Greek Language Study”, 106); in 1984 Schmidt, again, notes the relative lack of interest in generative linguistics among New Testament scholars (Schmidt, “The Study of Hellenistic Greek Grammar in the Light of Contemporary Linguistics”, 32). As for structural linguistics, Schmidt was too quick to state in 1984 that it “has not proven to be the new dominant tradition in the study of NT Greek grammar,” considering that 5–6 years later Porter and Fanning, and further ahead Campbell, would all subscribe to some version of structuralism in their volumes on the New Testament Greek tense system (Ibid., 31).

83. Campbell, *Aspect*, 24.

84. Trevor V. Evans, *Verbal Syntax in the Greek Pentateuch: Natural Greek Usage and Hebrew Interference* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

85. Campbell, *Aspect*, 23–24.

### 3 The Challenge of General Linguistics in New Testament Greek Studies

A challenge in this context is how to include more than one linguistic approach in one's research. This is a difficulty with more than one layer. First, novel work is often done by novel persons, such as PhD students who depend on the goodwill of their supervisor who in his or her turn may have been trained in and/or developed a certain approach and who may subscribe to a particular linguistic school. Second, linguistic tribalism may make it difficult to even consider a competing approach: even when a linguistic approach has obvious weaknesses scholars are often for various reasons willing to go out of their way to defend their approach. Within the sociology of science the problem of aversion towards other approaches than one's own and the presence of the protective shields provided by one's own approach have been noted.<sup>86</sup> Porter aptly comments that "being a master of several different methods is not just unpracticed but is often frowned upon."<sup>87</sup> Third, to take into consideration two, three or even more approaches requires an amount of time and effort beyond what may be available, not to mention the sheer cognitive effort of "reloading" after having learnt and come to appreciate one approach—then to move on to the next one with an open mind. Fourth, yet another closely related problem is the challenge of doing cross-disciplinary work when a certain discipline, such as New Testament studies, has to be combined with linguistics: such a challenge may not be taken up at all. Even in Indo-European studies, a field that in itself is linguistic, where the methods of historical-comparative linguistics are applied, awareness of new or at least newer approaches may not be recognised. In the study of ancient languages there seems to be an inbuilt slowness in the application of new linguistic insights, for good or ill. In connection to the application of modern linguistics

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86. Wolfgang Dressler, Gary Libben, and Katharina Korecky-Kröll, "Conflicting vs. Convergent vs. Interdependent Motivations in Morphology," in *Competing Motivations in Grammar and Usage*, ed. Brian MacWhinney, Andrej Malchukov, and Edith Moravcsik, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 181.

87. Porter, "Linguistic Schools," 13; see also Porter, *Linguistic Descriptions of the Greek New Testament: New Studies in Systemic Functional Linguistics*, 13.

in New Testament studies, Porter likewise asks the legitimate question of why outdated linguistic theories are still held on to,

Why is it that modern linguistics has been resisted in New Testament Greek study, to the point that many if not most New Testament scholars are content to rely upon works that follow language theories that, while valuable and useful in their times, have now been superseded by the discoveries of modern linguistics?<sup>88</sup>

Compared to Fortson IV's work on Indo-European language,<sup>89</sup> the volume on the Greek verb by Andreas Willi<sup>90</sup> from 2018 does better with several references to grammaticalisation theory and even more so the recently published grammar on Classical Greek (2019)<sup>91</sup> by Evert van Emde Boas et al., with references to works on grammaticalisation theory (such as Bybee and Dahl<sup>92</sup>) and different kinds of functionalism (such as works by Dik and Givón<sup>93</sup>). It is also noteworthy that there are no references to Chomsky in these two works. However, both volumes would have benefited from more recent insights within general linguistics.

In the face of these challenges in the study of tense and aspect in Ancient Greek, and particularly in the Greek of the New Testament, in this volume I set out to enquire into the potential of various linguistic theories and concepts; here 'the Greek of the New Testament' refers to first-century post-Classical Greek as exemplified in the New Testament. I take such a task to be a tall order but still well worth pursuing in the interest of paving the way for a more fruitful study of the New Testament Greek tense system. In principle though, many of the points to be made may be applicable to and relevant for the study of tense and aspect in languages in general.

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88. Ibid., 3.

89. Benjamin W. Fortson IV, *Indo-European Language and Culture: An Introduction*, 2 ed. (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010).

90. Willi, *Origins of the Greek Verb*.

91. Evert van Emde Boas and others, *The Cambridge Grammar of Classical Greek* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019).

92. Joan Bybee, Revere Perkins, and William Pagliuca, *Evolution of Grammar: Tense, Aspect and Modality in the Languages of the World* (Chicago/London: University of Chicago Press, 1994); Östen Dahl, *Tense and Aspect Systems* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1985); Östen Dahl, ed., *Tense and Aspect in the Languages of Europe*, *Empirical Approaches to Language Typology* (Berlin & New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 2000).

93. Simon C. Dik, *The Theory of Functional Grammar: Part 1: The Structure of the Clause*, ed. Kees Hengeveld, 2 revised ed. (Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter, [1989] 1997); Simon C. Dik, *The Theory of Functional Grammar: Part 2: Complex and Derived Constructions*, ed. Kees Hengeveld, 2nd revised ed. (Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter, [1989] 1997); Talmy Givón, *Syntax: An Introduction* (Amsterdam: Benjamins, 2001).

The extent to which the debate on the usage of the tenses in New Testament Greek has been, and still is, directly or indirectly dependent on arguments and concepts from general linguistics is striking; I would argue that the vast majority of the arguments put forth in this discussion depend on thoughts in general linguistics, which is why the enquiry into the potential of multiple linguistic theories is of considerable value. Porter asserts that “schools of linguistic thought are fundamental to our understanding and conceptualization of the Greek language.”<sup>94</sup> An informed choice of a linguistic approach or set of linguistic approaches, and specific concepts within them, to be used in the study of aspect/tense in the Greek of the New Testament requires insight into the mass of linguistic approaches available to the analyst.

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94. Porter, “Linguistic Schools,” 36.

## 4 Linguistic Theories as Potential and the Issues in View

In this volume I explore the potential of linguistic theories for the study of tense and aspect in the Greek of the New Testament from the beginnings of the study of language up to the present time. Methodically speaking I have been looking more for *anything* rather than *something*, i.e. I have tried to be open to identifying elements and concepts of value that at first glance might not strike one as relevant for the study of tense and aspect. Though such an approach practically speaking is unwieldy and cognitively exhausting it may pave the way for unexpected discovery. My enquiry into linguistic theories and approaches throughout history and more recent ones has led me to the realisation that the analysis of aspect/tense usage is exceedingly context dependent in the broadest possible sense. This is to say that many more linguistic and other factors are a concern in the study of the Greek tense system than so far has been realised.

Thus, in this enquiry to a considerable extent I explore uncharted territory—that is, from the viewpoint of the ongoing debate on the Greek tense system, whether in New Testament Greek or Ancient Greek in general—by first going through the notion of theory and the history of linguistics from its early beginnings up to the threshold of what often is referred to as modern linguistics at the beginning of the 1900s, identifying linguistic trends, with particular attention to matters that are of direct or indirect concern for the study of aspect/tense in the Greek of the New Testament. I then offer a synthesis of the main insights from this time period and connect them to subsequent linguistic theories that developed from Saussure until today. The recognition of old ideas and insights that have proven to be valid by the corroboration of the *avant-garde* of recent linguistics constitutes in a manner of speaking a renaissance of elements of the linguistic *arrière-garde*.

In a second set of chapters I discuss, analyse and draw out the significance of multiple linguistic theories, approaches etc. and concepts within them from Saussure up to the present time that might be or clearly are of relevance for the understanding of the Greek tense system. I will argue that many of the claims of structuralism have to be rejected or revised and that generative linguistics should be replaced by more insightful theories within functional, cognitive and usage-based linguistics. I then offer a synthesis to highlight the core contributions of each theory, approach etc., followed by a brief conclusion. As noted, the *application* of the insights gained from this study are



postponed to a second volume in which the Greek tense system from Homer up to and including the Greek of the Testament is discussed from a linguistically informed perspective.

In my enquiry I include the following around 90 theories/approaches /models/schools/persons<sup>95</sup> with various degrees of engagement, ranging from just a mention to offering a full, in-depth discussion and analysis. Approaching such an amount of linguistic theory requires a jump into a maximally wide Schleiermachian hermeneutical circle where the input is so extensive and varied that it requires a degree of boldness and perseverance for writer and reader alike to get started. To avoid getting lost in all the detail, an alternation between the whole and the parts is desirable. Efforts towards placing the parts in a whole are offered in chapter 3 (Part one): A Synthesis: From Plato to Meillet—and a Look Forward; in brief overviews at the beginning of most theory chapters; in concluding summaries at the end of most chapters where key concepts that have a potential for the study of tense and aspect are pointed to; and in chapter 14 (Part two): Synthesis, where the contribution of each theory/approach etc. is offered in a condensed format. In addition, there is a substantial subject, author/person and ancient works index.<sup>96</sup>

Below, the theories/approaches etc. included in the enquiry are listed in a *rough*<sup>97</sup> chronological order. The theories are dated according to when they first appeared. One or several representatives of each theory/approach are (mostly) included within parenthesis.

BC:

- The Platonic paradigm (Plato)
- The Aristotelian paradigm (Aristotle)
- The Stoics
- The Alexandrians
- Dionysius Thrax

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95. I mostly include persons as separate entries in reference to persons who have made significant contributions without being connected to a specific theory or who came up of with several ideas relating to several theories.

96. Originally these were separate indexes, but when the text was transferred to Word for Mac it turned out Word did not have the capability to have separate and parallel indexes.

97. There are many difficulties involved in establishing a chronological order and a date for when a theory/approach etc. was established since they often have pre-runners. For instance, Humboldt had ideas equivalent to grammaticalisation theory in the early 1800s, so did von Gabelentz towards the end of the 19th century, Meillet coined the term in 1911 and Greenberg started to apply the concept in the 1960s. It may also be difficult to establish what constitutes the beginning of a theory. Furthermore, it is difficult to place a person in a century when the person lived in overlapping centuries.

AD-Middle Ages:

- Apollonius Dyscolus
- The Modistae (Scholastic grammarians, 1200s)
- Speculative etymology

1500s:

- Francis Bacon

1600s:

- The rationalist grammarians
- The Port-Royal grammarians (Antoine Arnauld, Pierre Nicole)
- Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz
- Linguistic empiricism (John Locke)

1700s:

- Johann Gottfried Herder
- Sir William Jones
- Immanuel Kant

1800s:

- Wilhelm von Humboldt
- Historical linguistics (Jakob Grimm)
- Comparative linguistics (Franz Bopp)
- Historical-philological lexical semantics
- Historicism
- Organicism
- George Curtius
- Psychologism (Heymann Steinthal)
- Comparative studies of syntax (Berthold Delbrück)
- The Neogrammarians (Karl Brugmann, Hermann Paul)
- *Völkerpsychologie* (Wilhelm Wundt)

1900s:

- The Geneva School (Ferdinand de Saussure)
- *Gestalt* psychology (Max Wertheimer, Christian von Ehrenfels)

1910s:

- Grammaticalisation theory (Antoine Meillet, Joseph Greenberg, Joan Bybee, Östen Dahl)
- The Prague School (Roman Jakobson, Vilém Mathesius, Nikolai Trubetzkoy)
- Structuralism (Ferdinand de Saussure)

1920s:

- Functionalism (Vilém Mathesius, Roman Jakobson)

1930s:

- Language typology/Cross-linguistic studies
- Language anthropology (Bronislaw Malinowski)
- The Copenhagen School/Glossematics (Louis Hjelmslev)
- Lexical field theory (Jost Trier)
- Schemata theory (F. C. Bartlett)
- The London School (J. R. Firth)
- Edward Sapir
- Benjamin Lee Whorf
- Bloomfieldian Linguistics/American descriptive linguistics (Leonard Bloomfield)

1950s:

- Neurolinguistics (Paul Broca, Carl Wernicke)
- Lexical aspectual classes (Zeno Vendler, William Croft)
- Prototype theory (Ludwig Wittgenstein, George Lakoff, Benjamin Whorf)
- The Transformational-Generative approach, Universal Grammar, Government and Binding Theory, the Minimalist Programme (Noam Chomsky)

1960s:

- Tagmemics (K. L. Pike)
- Componential analysis (Jerrold J. Katz and Jerry A. Fodor)
- Generative semantics
- Systemic Functional Linguistics (Michael Halliday)
- Relational semantics (John Lyons)
- Sociolinguistics (Ulrich Weinreich, William Labov, Marvin Herzog)
- /Diagrammatic/ Iconicity (Charles Peirce, John Haiman, Joan Bybee)
- Indexicality (Charles Peirce)
- Corpus linguistics (Douglas Biber)

- Functional Grammar (Simon Dik)

1970s:

- Frame semantics (Charles Fillmore)
- Lexical Functional Grammar (John Bresnan)
- Typological functionalism (William Croft)
- Cognitive Grammar (Ronald Langacker)
- Natural Semantic Metalanguage (Anna Wierzbicka)
- Cognitive linguistics (Givón Talmy, Vyvyan Evans & Melanie Green)
- SFL Cardiff Grammar (Robin P. Fawcett)
- Natural Morphology (Wolfgang Dressler)
- Functional Discourse (Paul J. Hopper)
- Natural Phonology (David Stampe)

1980s:

- Conceptual Metaphor Theory (George Lakoff, Mark Johnson)
- Role and Reference Grammar (William Foley & Robert Van Valin)
- Competition theory (Brian MacWhinney)
- Usage-based linguistics (Joan Bybee, Talmy Givón, Hans-Jörg Schmid)
- Mental Spaces Theory (Gilles Fauconnier)
- Emergent Grammar (Paul J. Hopper, Joan Bybee)
- Cognitive pragmatics (Dan Sperber, Deirdre Wilson)
- Domain Theory (Ronald Langacker)
- Kay and Fillmore's Construction Grammar (Paul Kay & Charles J. Fillmore)

1990s:

- Metaphorical Extension Approach (Bernd Heine et al.)
- Head-driven Phrase Structure Grammar (Carl Pollard and Ivan A. Sag)
- Optimality Theory (Alan Prince)
- Integrative functionalism (William Croft)
- Vantage Theory (Robert E. MacLaury)
- Adele Goldberg's Construction Grammar (Adele Goldberg)
- The Subjectification Model (Ronald Langacker)

2000s:

- Conceptual Structuring System Model (Leonard Talmy)
- Radical Construction Grammar (William Croft)
- Invited Inferencing Theory (Elizabeth Closs Traugott & Richard Dasher)
- Conceptual Blending Theory (Gilles Fauconnier & Mark Turner)

- Embodied Construction Grammar (Benjamin Bergen & Nancy Chang)

2010s:

- Extended Vantage Theory (Adam Głaz)
- Diachronic Construction Grammar (Elizabeth Closs Traugott & Graeme Trousdale)

As a point of departure for untapping the potential of these theories, approaches and concepts, it is helpful to identify a few key areas in the Greek tense debate by scanning through the works of Porter, Fanning and Campbell that address issues which are discussed, mentioned or just implied, such as the following ones:

1. The relation between the Greek tenses and *time* and *aspect*,<sup>98</sup>
2. The significance of the correlation between *pragmatics* and *semantics*,<sup>99</sup>
3. The contribution of *cross-linguistic* and *diachronic studies*,<sup>100</sup>
4. The role of the notion of *viewpoint*,<sup>101</sup>
5. The *interaction* between the Greek tenses, and the *cotext* and *context*,<sup>102</sup>
6. The concept of *system*,<sup>103</sup>
7. The correlation between *synchrony* and *diachrony*,<sup>104</sup>
8. The significance of *cognition*,<sup>105</sup>
9. The relationship between *lexical aspect* and *grammatical aspect*,<sup>106</sup>

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98. Porter, *Aspect*, 23–25, 29, 30, 41, 43–47, 49–50, 51–53, 107–8, 188–98, 208, 211–230, 230–238, 377–90; Fanning, *Aspect*, 8–29, 185–90; Campbell, *Aspect*, 3, 57–59, 64–76.

99. Porter, *Aspect*, 15; Campbell, *Aspect*, 8, 12, 24–27.

100. Porter, *Aspect*, 182–188; Fanning, *Aspect*, 17; Campbell, *Aspect*, 23–24.

101. Porter, *Aspect*, 91; Fanning, *Aspect*, 35–36, 40, 79, 83–86, 97, 99, 103, 118, 124, 126; Campbell, *Aspect*, 8–9.

102. Fanning, *Aspect*, 46–48, 163–79.

103. Porter, *Aspect*, 9, 12, 14, 89, 93–97; Fanning, *Aspect*, 50–71; Campbell, *Aspect*, 5, 17–18.

104. Porter, *Aspect*, 8; Campbell, *Aspect*, 23–24, 139–40.

105. Porter, *Aspect*, 3, 93, 104, 105; Porter uses the term ‘mentalism.’

106. Ibid., 27, 37, 45–47, 48–49, 55, 55, 56, 57–58, 59–60, 61–62, 63–64, 87, 105; Fanning, *Aspect*, 2–4, 6, 12–14, 29–50, 69, 85, 126–196; Campbell, *Aspect*, 2, 10–12, 21–23–29; Constantine R. Campbell, *Verbal Aspect and Non-Indicative Verbs: Further Soundings in the Greek of the New Testament*, Studies in Biblical Greek (New York: Peter Lang, 2008), 79–80.

10. The significance of the Greek tenses as *discourse markers* in terms of *foregrounding/backgrounding* and the effect of discourse features on aspectual function,<sup>107</sup>
11. The significance of a *subjective* vs. *objective* understanding in the use of *grammatical aspect* and *lexical aspect*,<sup>108</sup>
12. The significance of the notion of *choice*,<sup>109</sup>
13. The correlation between *paradigmatic* and *syntagmatic* choices/relations,<sup>110</sup>
14. The nature and role of *markedness* in the correlation between the Greek tenses.<sup>111</sup>

As we shall see, this set of key areas somehow connects to the overwhelming number of more specific issues raised in this volume. It will also be noted that *none* of these 14 issues can be resolved without consulting general linguistics. The discussion on the tense system in Ancient and specifically New Testament Greek thus to considerable extent depends on insights from linguistic theories, approaches and concepts in general linguistics.

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107. Porter, *Aspect*, 92–93, 106; Fanning, *Aspect*, 72–77, 190–94; Campbell, *Aspect*, 3–5, 12–14, 61–64, 124–25, 158–59, 239–41; Campbell, *Verbal Aspect and Non-Indicative Verbs: Further Soundings in the Greek of the New Testament*, 123–124.

108. Porter, *Aspect*, 35–38, 48, 49, 273–80; Fanning, *Aspect*, 32–34; Campbell, *Aspect*, 11.

109. Porter, *Aspect*, 1, 8–9, 12, 13, 24, 86; Fanning, *Aspect*, 34–35, 52–53; Campbell, *Aspect*, 18, 19–21.

110. Porter, *Aspect*, 14; Fanning, *Aspect*, 52.

111. Porter, *Aspect*, 89–90, 106, 178–81, 245–251; Fanning, *Aspect*, 55–72, 124–25; Campbell, *Aspect*, 19–21.

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