CHAPTER 10

Exploring Linguistic Variation in an Ancient Greek Single-Author Corpus: A Register Design Analysis of Josephus and Pauline Pseudonymity

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This chapter will address three of Stan's interests, all topics on which he has published—the authorship of the Pastoral Epistles, linguistic criticism, and the social world of the New Testament. The primary goal of this study is to test a method of style-shift analysis recently developed by Andrew W. Pitts. While Pitts explored the implications of this method for the Pauline corpus, here we hope to expand the analysis by testing it against another single-author corpus in ancient Greek, the works of Josephus, where the issue of authorship is not seriously questioned. We will also examine occurrences of Latinisms in Josephus and Paul from the perspective of Pitts's model. If we discover linguistic variation within Josephus's major works similar to what we find in the Pauline corpus, this will further demonstrate the potential viability of a register design interpretation of linguistic variation within a single-author corpus.

1 The Register Design as an Interpretive Model for Linguistic Variation

While this study builds upon the work of Pitts on Paul and pseudonymity, we can only very briefly summarize his model here and seek to add new theoretical components that will aid in the assessment of Josephus in particular. Pitts originally noted a common assumption among studies in the Pastoral letters, which “famously employ several (mainly) linguistic criteria to detect shifts in style on the typically unargued assumption that a shift in style necessarily entails a shift in authorship.” Pitts sought to provide an alternative interpretation of linguistic variation accounting for style-shift through shift in register rather than shift in authorship. (In fact, in social linguistics, style is not

1 Pitts, “Style and Pseudonymity.”
2 Ibid., 13.
merely defined as linguistic variation but as *linguistic variation in response to changing registers or social situations.* This has the distinct advantage in the Pauline corpus of confirming the voluminous external evidence that corroborates Pauline authorship for all thirteen New Testament letters in his name. By register we mean the semantic configuration that is typically associated with the situation type in question, involving three metafunctions, each with their own realizations:

1. **Mode of Discourse (Textual Meaning)**
   a. **Primary Channel**
      i. Linguistic medium: written < > spoken, etc.
      ii. Literary structure: letter, novel, etc.
   b. **Format/Permanency**
      i. Level of publication: published < > unpublished, locally published, etc.
   c. **Setting**
      i. Institutional vs. personal: private < > public

2. **Tenor of Discourse (Interpersonal Meaning)**
   a. **Addressor**
      i. Demographic, social, cultural details of the author
   b. **Addressee**
      i. Demographic, social, cultural details of the audience
      ii. Plurality < > Singularity
      iii. Present < > Absent
      iv. Levels of interactiveness: interactional < > informational
      v. Shared Knowledge: personal, cultural, etc.

3. **Field of Discourse (Experiential Meaning)**
   a. **Factuality (+/-)**
   b. **Purposes: goal of writing or speaking**
   c. **Topics: subject matter**

By register design, we mean the way that language is designed by an author to respond to specific social situations or, an author’s *style.*

A great deal of confusion has emerged among biblical scholars due to a lack of rigorous attention to an adequate definition of “style” and how an author’s style can be not only influenced by but deeply embedded within a variety of social factors. Sociolinguists, on the other hand, have progressively refined their definition of “style” in the course of their longstanding discussion of style variation. At first, for many years they focused their investigation primarily on