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Language and Characterization in the Roman Trial Narrative: A Sociolinguistic Analysis of Pilate's Dialogues with the Jewish Leaders and Jesus in John 18:28–19:16a

ABSTRACT: This article aims to understand and explicate how Pilate's dialogues with the Jewish authorities or Jesus function to portray the governor in the Roman trial narrative in John 18:28–19:16a. The treatment of the participants' conversations will be conducted on the basis of Michael A. K. Halliday's model of systemic functional linguistics and particularly the register theory in this model. The most relevant notion of this theory for this study is "tenor," which is the contextual variable regarding the participants' role relationships and power differences. This article will also adapt Suzzane Eggins's and Diana Slade's integrated method of analyzing the conversation by utilizing both the synoptic and the dynamic approaches. The main thesis of this article is that the characterization of the Johannine Pilate arises through the use of language in dialogue.

KEYWORDS: John, Pilate, Roman trial narrative, characterization, sociolinguistics, systemic functional linguistics

This article aims to understand and explicate how Pilate's dialogues with the Jewish authorities or Jesus function to portray the governor in the Roman

trial narrative in John 18:28–19:16a.[1] Approximately half of the words (49.2%) or ranking clauses (independent and dependent clauses, 49.5%) in this narrative are made up of Pilate's conversations with the Jewish leaders and Jesus, thus suggesting that John frequently uses dialogues to flesh out the characters, particularly Pilate. This article will draw upon the notion of "tenor" according to the "register" theory of Michael A. K. Halliday's

1. The characterization of Pilate in the Johannine trial narrative has been a subject of scholarly debate. At one end of the spectrum, R. Alan Culpepper says that Pilate exemplifies "the futility of attempted compromise." Jörg Frey sees in the Johannine depiction of Pilate's going outside and inside the praetorium as signifying that he is "einen instabilen Charakter," who is indifferent and skeptical toward the legal case against Jesus. At the other end of the spectrum, Helen K. Bond considers that Pilate takes advantage of the situation "not only to mock the prisoner but also ridicule the Jews and their messianic aspirations." For Christopher M. Tuckett, Pilate "is opposed to all that Jesus stands for" and is "the arch-opponent of the Jews." Between these two ends of the spectrum, D. Francois Tolmie describes Pilate's characteristics in terms of a paradigm of traits and concludes that he is a "multi-layered character." Cornelis Bennema approaches the Johannine portrayal of Pilate from the perspective of "a continuum of degree of characterization" as regards the subjects of complexity, development, and inner life. Ronald A. Piper believes that it is mistaken to describe Pilate as "strong or weak, or manipulative or indecisive" because all of these characteristics are detected in John's portrayal of the governor. For the view that considers Pilate a "weak" character, see Raymond E. Brown, *The Death of the Messiah from Gethsemane to the Grave: A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels*, vol. 1 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994), 753; R. Alan Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 143; Charles H. Giblin, "John's Narration of the Hearing before Pilate (John 18,28–19,16a)," *Biblica* 67 (1986): 221–39 (p. 238); Paul D. Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1985), 126–37; Jörg Frey, "Jesus und Pilatus: Der wahre König und der Repräsentant des Kaisers im Johannesevangelium," in *Christ and the Emperor: The Gospel Evidence*, ed. Gilbert van Belle and Joseph Verheyden (Leuven: Peeters, 2014), 337–93 (p. 389). For the view that sees Pilate a "strong" character, see Helen K. Bond, *Pontius Pilate in History and Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 192; Christopher M. Tuckett, "Pilate in John 18–19: A Narrative Critical Approach," in *Narrativity in Biblical and Related Texts*, ed. George J. Brooke and J. D. Kaestli (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2000), 131–40; Warren Carter, *Pontius Pilate: Portraits of a Roman Governor* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2003), 127; See also D. Francois Tolmie, "Pontus Pilate: Failing in More Ways than One," in *Character Studies in the Fourth Gospel: Narrative Approaches to Seventy Figures in John*, ed. Steven A. Hunt, D. Francois Tolmie, and Ruben Zimmermann (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016), 578–97; Cornelis Bennema, *Encountering Jesus: Character Studies in the Gospel of John*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2014), 324–25; Andreas J. Köstenberger, "'What Is Truth?' Pilate's Question in Its Johannine and Larger Biblical Context," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 48 (2005): 33–62; Ronald A. Piper, "The Characterisation of Pilate and the Death of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel," in *The Death of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel*, ed. Gilbert van Belle (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2007), 121–62 (p. 159).

systemic functional linguistics (SFL) to analyze the language of the dialogues in the Roman trial account.[2] From the perspective of SFL, language is "social semiotic," and there is a reciprocal relationship between text and context.[3] Since the context of a situation places constraints on how language is used in that situation, it is believed that certain contextual features are embedded in the text and are recoverable by analyzing it.[4] The Hallidayan notion of tenor is pertinent to the present investigation regarding the Johannine characterization of Pilate through dialogue because this notion is primarily concerned with the participants' role relationships with respect to each other within the situational context.[5] One of the key variables of tenor is "power," which falls into the vertical dimension of the interpersonal relations.[6] Cate Poynton says that the continuum of power can range from "equal" at one end to "unequal" at the other end depending on "force," "authority," "status," and "expertise."[7] Since the Johannine trial narrative does not refer to the participants' physical strength (force), only the other three factors observed by Poynton are relevant to this study. The main thesis of this study is that the characterization of the Johannine Pilate arises through the use of language in dialogue.[8]

2. According to the Hallidayan model of SFL, there are three variables of the context of a situation that are intrinsically linked to and affect language usage. These variables altogether constitute the "register" of a situational context. They are called the "field," the "tenor," and the "mode" of discourse—that is to say, "the text generating activity, the role relationships of the participants, and the rhetorical modes they are adopting." See Michael A. K. Halliday, *Language as Social Semiotic: The Social Interpretation of Language and Meaning* (Baltimore: University Park Press, 1978), 125. For a helpful introduction to SFL, see Suzanne Eggins, *An Introduction to Systemic Functional Linguistics*, 2nd ed. (New York: Continuum, 2004).

3. The term *social semiotic* is coined by Halliday in *Language as Social Semiotic*.

4. Eggins, *An Introduction to Systemic Functional Linguistics*, 85–112; Wendy L. Bowcher, "Field, Tenor, and Mode," in *The Routledge Handbook of Systemic Functional Linguistics*, ed. Tom Bartlett and Gerard O'Grady (New York: Routledge, 2017), 391–403 (pp. 392–95); Stanley E. Porter, *The Letter to the Romans: A Linguistic and Literary Commentary* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2015), 26–27.

5. Ruqaiya Hason, "The Place of Context in a Systemic Functional Model," in *Continuum Companion to Systemic Functional Linguistics,* ed. Michael A. K. Halliday and Jonathan Webster (London: Continuum, 2009), 166–89 (p. 172).

6. The horizontal dimension of the interpersonal relations is "solidarity." See J. R. Martin and David Rose, *Working with Discourse: Meaning beyond the Clause*, 2nd ed. (London: Continuum, 2007), 302. Cate Poynton, *Language and Gender: Making the Difference* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 76–77.

7. Poynton, *Language and Gender*, 76–86.

8. Several scholars note that Pilate is characterized indirectly and his traits are revealed subtly through his words and actions in the Fourth Gospel. See Tolmie, "Pontus Pilate,"

To my limited knowledge, there are only a handful of studies taking a systemic functional approach to treat the texts in the Fourth Gospel. Beth M. Stovell's study of the Johannine metaphor of kingship draws the interpretive insights from cognitive linguistics, systemic functional linguistics, and other literary methods.[9] David A. Lamb's sociolinguistic analysis of the Johannine writings deals with five narrative asides and not the characters' speeches in this Gospel.[10] Christopher D. Land examines the lexicogrammatical features and the discourse structure of the dialogue between Pilate and Jesus in John 18:33–38.[11] Land's study has illuminated the Johannine depiction of Pilate in the Fourth Gospel. However, the result of this study is limited in scope because it treats exclusively Pilate's first interrogation of Jesus in the selected passage.[12] With this in mind, the present study will treat all the conversations that involve Pilate as participant in the entire Roman trial account.

582; Cornelis Bennema, "A Comprehensive Approach to Understanding Character in the Gospel of John," in *Characters and Characterization in the Gospel of John*, ed. Christopher W. Skinner (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2013), 36–58 (p. 39); Richard A. Burridge, *What Are the Gospels? A Comparison with Graeco-Roman Biography*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 222–23; Thomas Tops, "Whose Truth? A Reader-Oriented Study of the Johannine Pilate and John 18,38a," *Biblica* 97 (2016): 395–420; Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel*, 142.

9. Beth M. Stovell, *Mapping Metaphorical Discourse in the Fourth Gospel: John's Eternal King* (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

10. The five narrative asides treated in Lamb's work are found in John 2:21–22; 12:16; 19:35–37; 20:30–31; 21:23–25. All of these narrative asides fall outside the context of the Roman trial account. See David A Lamb, *Text, Context and the Johannine Community: A Sociolinguistic Analysis of the Johannine Writings* (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2014), 159–73.

11. See Christopher D. Land, "Jesus before Pilate: A Discourse Analysis of John 18:33–38," in *Modeling Biblical Language: Selected Papers from the McMaster Divinity College Linguistics Circles*, ed. Stanley E. Porter, Gregory P. Fewster, and Christopher D. Land (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 230–49.

12. Several studies employ a theory of sociolinguistics to interpret the non-Johannine texts in the NT. For example, Philip L. Graber, "Context in Text: A Systemic Functional Analysis of the Parable of the Sower" (Ph.D. diss., Emory University, 2001); Bryan R. Dyer, *Suffering in the Face of Death: The Epistle to the Hebrews in Its Context of Situation* (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017); Stanley E. Porter, "Systemic Functional Linguistics and the Greek Language: The Need for Further Modeling," in *Modeling Biblical Language*, 9–47; idem, "Dialect and Register in the Greek of the New Testament Theory," and "Dialect and Register in the Greek of the New Testament: Application with Reference to Mark's Gospel," in *Rethinking Contexts, Rereading Texts: Contributions from the Social Sciences to Biblical Interpretation*, ed. M. Daniel Carroll R. (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 190–208 and 209–29, respectively.

The next section will present an overview of the text John 18:28–19:16a and in particular the different verbs of speaking used for introducing the speeches of Pilate, the Jewish authorities, and Jesus. What follows is an analysis of the grammatical and discourse features of Pilate's conversations with the Jewish leaders and Jesus, focusing on those features that hold potential for revealing the power relationship between Pilate and the Jewish leaders as well as the power relationship between Pilate and Jesus. Throughout this analysis, treatment will be carried out mainly at the clause level. This article will adapt the method of integrating the synoptic and the dynamic approaches to probe the grammatical patterns and the discourse structure of the dialogues. This combined method of the two approaches is delineated in the work of Suzzane Eggins and Diana Slade on the subject of conversation (more on this below).[13] Of particular interest to this study are the interactants' choice of clause types for expressing meaning, the speech roles the interactants assume and assign to each other, and their reactions to one another during the conversation. Finally, this article will present the implications of the sociolinguistic treatment of the dialogues for the interpretation of the Johannine characterization of Pilate.

Overview of the Text

It has been customary for scholars to divide the Roman trial narrative in John 18:28–19:16a into seven episodes.[14] Table 1 shows the number of the ranking clauses, the word count, the participants, and the locations of the seven episodes.

The text John 18:28–19:16a contains a total of 589 words. The total number of the ranking clauses is 121. Pilate's dialogues with the Jewish leaders or Jesus take up altogether 290 words (49.2%) and 60 ranking clauses (49.5%).[15] Notably, episode 2 contains the highest numbers of both of the ranking clauses (28) and words (144). This episode narrates Pilate's first interrogation of Jesus. The closing episode 7 contains the second highest numbers of the ranking clauses (21) and words (98). In this episode, Pilate hands over Jesus

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13. Suzanne Eggins and Diana Slade, *Analysing Casual Conversation* (London: Cassell, 1997).

14. Jörg Frey, "Jesus und Pilatus," 362–63; Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 1097; Brown, *The Death of the Messiah*, 758.

15. If the 5 words in the soldiers' utterance in John 19:3 are counted, there are a total of 295 (50%) words in all of the speeches in the Roman trial narrative. These 5 words altogether constitute a ranking clause. Thus, the total number of the ranking clauses in all of the speeches is 61 (50.4%).

TABLE I | The Seven Episodes in the Roman Trial Narrative

Episode	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Text	18:28–32	18:33–38a	18:38b–40	19:1–3	19:4–7	19:8–11	19:12–16a
Participants	Pilate, "the Jews"[16]	Pilate, Jesus	Pilate, "the Jews"	Pilate, the soldiers, Jesus	Pilate, "the Jews"	Pilate, Jesus	Pilate, "the Jews," Jesus
No. of ranking clauses (total: 121)	19	28	10	8	20	15	21
No. of ranking clauses in speech (total: 61)	6	19	6	1	12	8	9
No. of words (total: 589)	95	144	50	40	88	74	98
No. of words in speech (total: 295)	33	110	30	5	44	39	34
Location (praetorium)	outside	inside	outside	inside	outside	inside	outside

to the Jewish leaders to be crucified. Taken altogether, in the dialogues be-
tween Pilate and the Jewish authorities and the dialogues between Pilate
and Jesus there are 48 direct or indirect references to "Jesus,"[17] 32 direct or
indirect references to "Pilate," and 24 direct or indirect references to "the
Jewish leaders."[18] Since "Jesus" is referred to most often in the conversations,
it is evident that the subject of the negotiation surrounds him.

16. "The Jews" clearly refer to the Jewish authorities in the Johannine trial narrative.
17. The Jewish leaders and Jesus never communicate to each other directly throughout
the Roman trial narrative in the Fourth Gospel.
18. For the reference chain, see Eggins, *An Introduction to Systemic Functional Linguistics*,
37–40. The reference chain of "Jesus" in the participant conversations is as follows (48×):
τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τούτου—οὗτος—αὐτόν—αὐτόν—αὐτόν—σὺ—εἶ—τοῦτο—περὶ ἐμοῦ—
τὸ ἔθνος τὸ σὸν καὶ οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς—σε—ἐποίησας—ἡ βασιλεία ἡ ἐμή—ἡ βασιλεία ἡ
ἐμή—οἱ ὑπηρέται οἱ ἐμοί—μὴ παραδοθῶ—ἡ βασιλεία ἡ ἐμή—εἶ—σύ—εἰμι (in a pro-
jected clause)—ἐγώ—γεγέννημαι—ἐλήλυθα—μαρτυρήσω—μου τῆς φωνῆς—ἐν αὐτῷ—
τὸν βασιλέα τῶν Ἰουδαίων—μὴ τοῦτον—αὐτόν—ἐν αὐτῷ—ὁ ἄνθρωπος—αὐτόν—ἐν
αὐτῷ—ὀφείλει ἀποθανεῖν—ἑαυτόν—ἐποίησεν—εἶ—σύ—οὐ λαλεῖς—οἶδας—σε (in
a projected clause)—σε (in a projected clause)—κατ᾽ ἐμοῦ—μέ—τοῦτον—ὁ βασιλεὺς
ὑμῶν—αὐτόν—τὸν βασιλέα ὑμῶν. The reference to Jesus as the king of the Jews in the
soldiers' utterance in John 19:3 is not included.

A total of 26 projecting clauses are used to usher in the utterances of Pilate, the Jewish leaders, and Jesus (see table 2).[19] These clauses altogether contain 30 verbs of speaking.[20] One-third of these verbs of speaking are historical presents (10), which are φησίν in John 18:29 and nine instances of λέγω in John 18:38 (2×); 19:4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 14, 15.[21] It is noteworthy that Pilate is the speaker in all of the 10 historical presents above. The concentrated use of the historical present exclusively to introduce the governor's utterances probably signifies his prominent role and serves to underline his sayings in the trial account.

There are four instances in which two verbs of speaking (not historical present) link together in a projecting clause to introduce an utterance. These four instances are ἀπεκρίθησαν καὶ εἶπαν in John 18:30 as well as ἐκραύγασαν λέγοντες (3×) in John 18:40, 19:6, and 19:12.[22] The use of extra verbs of speaking has the "pragmatic effect" of accentuating the speech by slowing the narrative pace and "highlighting a discontinuity in the text."[23] In fact, the phrase ἀπεκρίθησαν καὶ εἶπαν is often used to

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The reference chain of "Pilate" in the participant conversations is as follows (32×): σοι—ἀπὸ σεαυτοῦ—σύ—λέγεις—σοι—ἐγὼ—εἰμι—ἐμοί—σὺ—λέγεις—ἐγώ—εὑρίσκω—ἀπολύσω—ἀπολύσω—ἄγω—εὑρίσκω—σταύρωσον—σταύρωσον—ἐγώ—εὑρίσκω—ἐμοί—ἔχω—ἔχω—εἶχες—σοι—σοι—ἀπολύσῃς—εἶ—ἆρον—ἆρον—σταύρωσον—σταυρώσω.

The reference chain of "the Jewish leaders" in the participant conversations is as follows (24×): φέρετε—παρεδώκαμεν—λάβετε—ὑμεῖς—τὸν νόμον ὑμῶν—κρίνατε—ἡμῖν—ἄλλοι—τὸ ἔθνος τὸ σὸν καὶ οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς—τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις—ὑμῖν—ὑμῖν—βούλεσθε—ὑμῖν—ὑμῖν—γνῶτε—λάβετε—ὑμεῖς—σταυρώσατε—ἡμεῖς—ἔχομεν—ὁ βασιλεὺς ὑμῶν—ὁ βασιλεὺς ὑμῶν—ἔχομεν. The reference to the Jewish people in the phrase ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων is not included.

19. A projecting clause is used to introduce the soldiers' utterance in John 19:3. If this is counted, there are altogether 27 projecting clauses involved in the locutions in the Roman trial narrative.

20. These 30 verbs of speaking do not include the aorist indicative verb ἐφώνησεν in John 18:33. The reason is that this verb is not used to introduce an utterance. Similarly, the aorist indicative verb εἶπεν in the narrative aside in John 18:32 is not counted. A verb of speaking (ἔλεγον) is found in the projecting clause in John 19:3 as regards the utterance of the soldiers.

21. There are a total of 11 historical presents in John 18:28–19:16a. Apart from the 10 historical presents that involve a locution, the remaining occurrence of the historical present (ἄγουσιν) is found at the outset of John 18:28. This historical present is used to signal the beginning of a new literary unit. See Mavis M. Leung, "The Narrative Function and Verbal Aspect of the Historical Present in the Fourth Gospel," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 51 (2008): 703–20.

22. In the Fourth Gospel, the combination ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν is found a total of 32 times. See Mavis M. Leung, "The Discourse Function of ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν ('He Answered and Said') in the Gospel of John," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 171 (2014): 310–12.

23. Steven E. Runge, *Discourse Grammar of the Greek New Testament: A Practical Introduction for Teaching and Exegesis* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2010), 145.

TABLE 2 | The Verbs of Speaking in the 27 Projecting Clauses (Locutions)

Episode	Speaker to Receiver	Verbs of Speaking
1	1. Pilate to the Jews	1. φησίν
	2. The Jewish leaders to Pilate	2. ἀπεκρίθησαν καὶ εἶπαν
	3. Pilate to the Jews	3. εἶπεν
	4. The Jewish leaders to Pilate	4. εἶπον
2	5. Pilate to Jesus	5. εἶπεν
	6. Jesus to Pilate	6. ἀπεκρίθη
	7. Pilate to Jesus	7. ἀπεκρίθη
	8. Jesus to Pilate	8. ἀπεκρίθη
	9. Pilate to Jesus	9. εἶπεν
	10. Jesus to Pilate	10. ἀπεκρίθη
	11. Pilate to Jesus	11. λέγει
3	12. Pilate to the Jewish leaders	12. λέγει
	13. The Jewish leaders to Pilate	13. ἐκραύγασαν … λέγοντες
4	14. The soldiers to Jesus	14. ἔλεγον
5	15. Pilate to the Jewish leaders	15. λέγει
	16. Pilate to the Jewish leaders	16. λέγει
	17. The Jewish leaders to Pilate	17. ἐκραύγασαν λέγοντες
	18. Pilate to Jewish leaders	18. λέγει
	19. The Jewish leaders to Pilate	19. ἀπεκρίθησαν
6	20. Pilate to Jesus	20. λέγει
	21. Pilate to Jesus	21. λέγει
	22. Jesus to Pilate	22. ἀπεκρίθη
7	23 The Jewish leaders to Pilate	23. ἐκραύγασαν λέγοντες
	24. Pilate to the Jewish leaders	24. λέγει
	25. The Jewish leaders to Pilate	25. ἐκραύγασαν
	26. Pilate to the Jewish leaders	26. λέγει
	27. The Jewish leaders to Pilate	27. ἀπεκρίθησαν

introduce speech countering someone's criticism or proposal within an exchange.[24] For the present purpose, it merits mention that "the Jewish leaders" are the speaker, and "Pilate" is the receiver in all of the four instances that involve two verbs of speaking above. In John 18:30, the Jewish leaders' utterance is a countering rejoinder to Pilate's question in the prior v. 29. In John 18:40, the Jewish authorities cry out their counter-proposal to the governor to release Barabbas in place of Jesus. In John 19:6, they ask Pilate to crucify Jesus. In John 19:12, they demand that Pilate not release Jesus by appealing to the higher authority of Caesar. Therefore, it is probable that

24. Stephen H. Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek: A Coursebook on the Information Structure of New Testament Greek*, 2nd ed. (Dallas: SIL International, 2000), 255–60.

the use of two verbs of speaking to introduce the Jewish leaders' speeches serves to underscore their endeavor to thwart the governor's agenda or influence his decision.

Last, all of Jesus's utterances are ushered in simply by the verb ἀπεκρίθη (4×) in John 18:34, 36, 37, and 19:11. The employment of this verb of speaking suggests that Jesus's speeches are mainly his replies to the questions asked by Pilate. In contrast, the verb ἀπεκρίθη is used of the governor only once in John 18:35 in the Roman trial account. In a nutshell, it seems that the verbs of speaking used for introducing the participants' utterances hint at their different roles in this account—Pilate in the role of interrogator, the Jewish authorities in the role of accuser negotiating with or countering Pilate's proposal, and Jesus in the role of respondent being questioned by the governor.

An Analysis of the Dialogues

Terminology

The grammatical and the discourse analyses of the dialogues in the Roman trial narrative will focus on the interpersonal elements that are pertinent to the exploration of the power relationships of the participants. For the sake of clarity, a brief note on terminology is necessary. In this article, the terms *imperative* and *indicative* are used to refer to the mood forms of Greek verbs and not clause types. The terms *declarative*, *directive*, and *interrogative* are used to refer to clause types, which carry out different speech functions in an exchange.[25] The declarative clause realizes the speech function of statement to give information. The directive clause realizes the speech function of command to demand goods and services. The interrogative clause realizes the speech function of question to demand information. The interrogative clause is divided into two kinds, namely, the "polar interrogative" (yes-or-no question) and the "elemental interrogative" (content question).[26]

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25. There are four basic speech functions within the system of SFL. These functions are: (1) giving information (statement), (2) giving goods and services (offer), (3) demanding information (question), and (4) demanding goods and services (command). See M. A. K. Halliday and Christian M. I. M. Matthiessen, *Halliday's Introduction to Functional Grammar*, 4th ed. (London: Routledge, 2014), 134–39; Eggins, *An Introduction to Systemic Functional Linguistics*, 146–48; Eggins and Slade, *Analysing Casual Conversation*, 85–89, 180–84.

26. Halliday and Matthiessen, *Halliday's Introduction to Functional Grammar*, 144.

The conversations in the Roman trial narrative will be examined by means of both of the synoptic and the dynamic approaches.[27] From a systemic functional perspective, the conversations will be considered "the exchange of speech functions" realized by various "moves."[28] In this article, the term *move* is used to refer to "an interpersonal semantic unit" of dialogue.[29] Furthermore, a move made by the participant "involves [his or her] taking on a speech role while positioning other interactants into predicted speech roles."[30] The term *turn* is used to refer to a sequence of consecutive moves made by the same speaker. The different moves in the conversations will be classified according to the following categories: an "attending" move is a brief opening move that seeks to gain attention.[31] An "initiating" move is an opening move that starts the negotiation of a proposition. A "continuing" move is a move made by the same speaker to sustain his or her talk. A "responding" move is a reaction move that seeks to "negotiate a proposition on the terms set up by the previous speaker."[32] A "rejoinder" move is a reaction move that queries or rejects the proposition put on the table by other interactants. Finally, the term *exchange* is used to refer to "a sequence of moves concerned with negotiating a proposition stated or implied in an initiating move."[33] An exchange "can be identified as beginning with an opening move and continuing until another opening move occurs."[34] Figure 1 is the simplified diagram of the complex system of the "moves" based on Eggins's and Slade's proposal.[35]

Synoptic Analysis

The synoptic approach treats the conversation as a whole. This approach examines the quantitative data of the overall choices of the clause type and the speech function with regard to each participant. This analysis begins with

27. Eggins and Slade, *Analysing Casual Conversation*, 215–26; cf. Xueyan Yang, *Modelling Text as Process: A Dynamic Approach to EFL Classroom Discourse* (London: Continuum, 2011), 28–34.

28. Eggins and Slade, *Analysing Casual Conversation*, 169.

29. Christian M. I. M. Matthiessen, Kazuhiro Teruya, and Marvin Lam, *Key Terms in Systemic Functional Linguistics* (London: Continuum, 2010), 147.

30. Eggins and Slade, *Analysing Casual Conversation*, 169.

31. Ibid.,191–213; for attending moves, see p. 193; and J. R. Martin, *English Text: System and Structure* (Philadelphia: Benjamins, 1992), 44–45, 49.

32. Eggins and Slade, *Analysing Casual Conversation*, 200.

33. Ibid., 222.

34. Ibid.

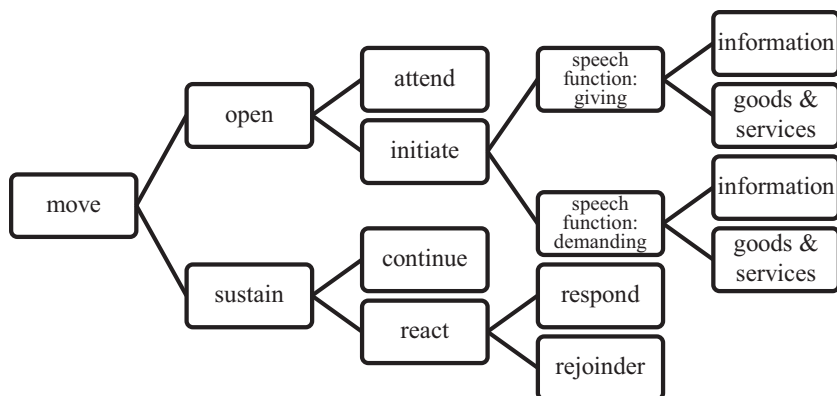35. Ibid., 191–213; cf. Yang, *Modelling Text as Process*, 33.

FIGURE 1 | A Simplified Diagram of Eggins's and Slade's System of Moves.

the length of the participants' utterances because an "indication of power is in who gets to be speaker in an exchange, and for how long."[36] On the whole, the speeches of Pilate, the Jewish leaders, and Jesus altogether are comprised of 290 words in a total of 60 ranking clauses. Pilate's speeches take up 125 words in 27 ranking clauses. The Jewish leaders' speeches take up 63 words in 17 ranking clauses. Jesus's speeches take up 102 words in 16 ranking clauses.[37] While Jesus is in the inferior position at the tribunal, the word count of his utterances is significantly higher than that of the Jewish authorities and slightly lower than that of the governor. The fact that Jesus speaks so much probably hints at the Johannine accentuation of his control of the situation.

The conversations between Pilate and the Jewish leaders in episodes 1, 3, 5, and 7, respectively, are made up of 4, 2, 5, and 5 turns. The conversations between Pilate and Jesus in episodes 2 and 6, respectively, are made up of 7 and 4 turns. It should be remarked that Jesus remains silent and does not answer Pilate's question in John 19:9b. In this analysis, this silent response of Jesus is counted as a nonverbal move and constituting a turn. Taken altogether, Pilate has 14 turns, the Jewish leaders have 8 turns, and Jesus has 5 turns (the turn of nonverbal move is included) throughout their interactions. Moreover, Pilate makes a total of 22 moves, the Jewish leaders make a total of

36. Eggins, *An Introduction to Systemic Functional Linguistics*, 184.
37. All of the statistics do not include the soldiers' saying in John 19:3 in episode 4. This saying is made up of 5 words in a ranking clause.

TABLE 3 | Summary of the Participants' Words, Turns, and Moves

Participant	Pilate	the Jewish leaders	Jesus
No. of words	125	63	102
No. of turns	14	8	5 (the turn of silence included)
No. of moves	22	14	11 (1 nonverbal move included)
Average turn-length (word count)	8.9	7.8	20.4

14 moves, and Jesus makes a total of 11 moves (a nonverbal move included).[38] The average number of words in each turn of Pilate is 8.9. The average number of words in each turn of the Jewish authorities is 7.8. The average number of words in each turn of Jesus is 20.4 (25.5 words if the turn that Jesus is silent is not counted). In light of the statistical result, Pilate takes up the largest number of words, turns, and moves in the conversations. Since the governor holds the right to speak, he is evidently a dominant participant at the tribunal. In contrast, Jesus's socially inferior position as the respondent is manifest in his having the least number of turns. However, Jesus's average turn length is longer than that of Pilate (and of the Jewish authorities). This points to the Johannine depiction of Jesus as having the power in relationship to the governor (see tables 3 and 4).

Regarding the clause types, 11 of the 13 interrogative clauses are found in Pilate's utterances in the Roman trial narrative. This suggests that Pilate enacts the role of the interrogator. His polar interrogatives (yes-or-no questions) are approximately twice as many as his elemental interrogatives (content questions). Thus, the governor tends to ask clear-cut questions to limit the choices for his interlocutor to reply. Throughout the trial narrative, Jesus utters no polar questions and only an elemental question in John 18:34.[39] While the elemental question in general is more open-ended than the polar question, this elemental question in Jesus's mouth offers only two possible responses. On the one hand, the fact that Jesus asks very few questions is in accordance with his

38. The quantitative analyses of the "moves" and the "turns" do not count the dependent, the projected, and the embedded clauses in the participants' speeches. The reason is that these kinds of clauses are generally not considered separate moves in an exchange. See Eggins and Slade, *Analysing Casual Conversation*, 190–91.

39. The elemental question asked by Jesus in John 18:34 is made up of two clauses. Both of them are classified as the interrogative clause in this analysis.

TABLE 4 | Summary of the Types of the Independent Clauses[40]

Participant	Pilate	the Jewish leaders	Jesus
Interrogative (polar + elemental)	11 (7 + 4)	0	2 (0 + 2)[41]
Declarative (full + elliptical)	7 (5 + 2)	9 (7 + 2[42])	9 (9 + 0)
Directive	4	5	0

role being the respondent at the tribunal. On the other hand, it is probable that John wants to present Jesus as being "knowledgeable and powerful,"[43] thus his having no need for the supply of information from Pilate.

A total of 9 directive clauses are detected in episodes 1, 5, and 7. The negotiation between Pilate and the Jewish authorities unfolds in these episodes. Four of the 9 directive clauses are present in Pilate's speeches, and the remaining 5 directive clauses are present in the utterances of the Jewish leaders. Thus, the Jewish authorities produce slightly more directives than the governor during their interactions. This probably illustrates the Jewish attempt to put pressure on Pilate to advance their agenda of killing Jesus. No directive clause is found in the utterances of Jesus, whose social standing is relatively lower than other participants on the scene.

The governor produces the least (7) of the independent declarative clauses. In contrast, Jesus produces 9 declaratives in the independent clauses, and all of them are full declaratives. Most of the declaratives in Jesus's sayings are used for prolonging or elaborating his reactions to Pilate. Both Pilate and the Jewish authorities use elliptical declaratives twice when speaking to each other in the later part of the Roman trial narrative (cf. John 18:40; 19:5, 14). But no elliptical form of the declarative is found in Jesus's sayings. In light of this, Jesus makes most value out of his turns to provide comments by means of the full declaratives.[44]

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40. In addition to the independent clauses, this study has counted altogether 9 dependent clauses in the speeches of Pilate, the Jewish leaders, and Jesus. There are altogether 4 projected clauses in the speeches of Pilate and Jesus. No projected clause is found in the utterances of the Jewish authorities.

41. The elemental question asked by Jesus in John 18:34 is made up of 2 clauses. Both of them are classified as the interrogative clause in this analysis.

42. In this analysis, the utterance of the Jewish leaders in John 18:40 is considered two moves (μὴ τοῦτον ἀλλὰ τὸν Βαραββᾶν, "[We do] not [want you to release] this one, but [we want you to release] Barabbas"). These two moves are grammatically realized in two ranking clauses.

43. Land, "Jesus before Pilate," 248.

44. Eggins and Slade, *Analysing Casual Conversation*, 219.

TABLE 5 | Summary of the Circumstantial and Polarity Adjuncts

Participant	Pilate	the Jewish leaders	Jesus
Circumstantial adjunct	8[45]	1	10
Polarity adjunct[46]	4	7	4

There are 10 circumstantial adjuncts in Jesus's utterances, in comparison to 8 and 1 circumstantial adjuncts, respectively, present in the speeches of Pilate and the Jewish leaders (see table 5). Since the circumstantial adjuncts associated with Jesus are in the highest proportion to the total number of the ranking clauses in the participant speeches, there is a relatively high level of lexical density in his utterances. Furthermore, Jesus provides additional details to the topic of negotiation during his dialogue with Pilate. There are 4 polarity adjuncts in the governor's speeches. Similarly, 4 polarity adjuncts are present in Jesus's sayings. In contrast, a total of 7 polarity adjuncts are found in the utterances of the Jewish leaders.[47] Some of these polarity adjuncts occur in the Jewish leaders' confronting moves in reaction to Pilate's prior declaration. The implication is that they quite often assert the opposite with respect to the proposition or proposal of the governor.

Regarding the types of the moves in the dialogues (see table 6), the majority of the initiating moves (10) are made by Pilate. According to Eggins and Slade, a high number of opening moves indicates a "claim to a degree of control over the interaction."[48] In contrast, the Jewish authorities make 3 initiating moves, and Jesus makes 2 initiating moves. Seven of Pilate's 10 initiating moves are in the form of questions, thus revealing his role as the interrogator to start an exchange. On the whole, Pilate makes 6 continuing moves, the Jewish leaders make 6 continuing moves, and Jesus makes

45. In this analysis, the word πόθεν on Pilate's lips in John 19:9 is counted as both a circumstantial adjunct and an interrogative adjunct.

46. In the present analysis, the word μήτι on Pilate's lips in John 18:35 is counted as both a polarity adjunct and an interrogative adjunct. The statistics of the polarity adjuncts do not include the (nonadjunct) negation elements in the complement. These include οὐδένα in John 18:31, οὐδεμίαν in John 18:38, οὐδεμίαν in John 19:4, and οὐδεμίαν in John 19:11.

47. In the present analysis, the word μήτι on Pilate's lips in John 18:35 is counted as both a polarity adjunct and an interrogative adjunct. The statistics of the polarity adjuncts does not include the (nonadjunct) negation elements in the complement. These include οὐδένα in John 18:31, οὐδεμίαν in John 18:38, οὐδεμίαν in John 19:4, and οὐδεμίαν in John 19:11.

48. Eggins and Slade, *Analysing Casual Conversation*, 194.

TABLE 6 | Summary of the Types of the Moves

Participant	Pilate	the Jewish leaders	Jesus
Attending move	2	0	0
Initiating move (question + command + statement)	10 (7 + 1 + 2)	3 (0 + 2 + 1)	2 (1 + 0 + 1)
Continuing move	6	6	5
Responding move	0	1	1
Rejoinder move	4	4	3 (1 nonverbal move included)
Total moves	22	14	11 (1 nonverbal move included)

5 continuing moves throughout the conversations. Thus, the numbers of the continuing moves made by each participant are approximately the same. Most of the continuing moves serve to elaborate the speaker's initiating or rejoinder moves by providing additional information. Throughout the dialogues, Pilate makes no responding move. In fact, neither the Jewish leaders nor Jesus make more than one responding move. The overall low number of the participants' responding moves suggests that none of them tends to give preferred responses to complete the exchange with the interactants. Pilate, the Jewish authorities, and Jesus all make approximately the same number of rejoinder moves. Thus, all of the participants play a part in extending the negotiation. The majority of the rejoinder moves are countering reactions to the proposition put forward by the prior speaker. In view of this, the interactants quite often offer counter-positions between themselves on the subject under negotiation. By so doing, each of the interactants attempts to take control of the direction or the topic of the discussion.

Dynamic Analysis

The dynamic approach traces the choice of speech functions and the type of moves from one point to the next point throughout a conversation. This approach is concerned with the unfolding of the negotiation between interactants, that is to say, "how the speakers adopt and assign roles to each other in dialogues, and how moves are organized in relation to one other."[49] The following analysis will look at the development of the moves in the dialogues between Pilate and the Jewish leaders as well as the moves in the dialogues between Pilate and Jesus in the Roman trial narrative. For clarity's

49. Martin and Rose, *Working with Discourse*, 219.

sake, each dialogue is divided into the smaller units of exchanges.[50] If a speaker makes more than one move within a single turn, the moves will be labeled with a lowercase letter. Otherwise, it can be assumed that the speaker makes only one move in the turn. The grammatical features pertinent to the investigation of the participants' power relationships will be addressed when necessary.

THE FIRST ROUND OF THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN PILATE AND THE JEWISH LEADERS IN EPISODE 1

Text	Turn/Move	Move Type	Speaker: Speech
18:29	1	initiating	Pilate: τίνα κατηγορίαν φέρετε [κατὰ] τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τούτου;
18:30	2	responding	the Jewish leaders: εἰ μὴ ἦν οὗτος κακὸν ποιῶν,
18:30			the Jewish leaders: οὐκ ἄν σοι παρεδώκαμεν αὐτόν
18:31	3a	initiating	Pilate: λάβετε αὐτὸν ὑμεῖς
18:31	3b	continuing	Pilate: καὶ κατὰ τὸν νόμον ὑμῶν κρίνατε αὐτόν.
18:31	4	rejoinder	The Jewish leaders: ἡμῖν οὐκ ἔξεστιν ἀποκτεῖναι οὐδένα

The initial conversation between Pilate and the Jewish authorities is made up of two exchanges, which entail altogether 4 turns and 5 moves. The governor makes the initiating move to start the conversation. He asks the Jewish authorities an elemental question to demand information concerning the charge against Jesus. Their tactful reply to Pilate is made up of a second-class conditional sentence, in which a contrary-to-fact condition is presumed in the εἰ-clause in this sentence, for the sake of argument. Both the protasis and the apodosis of this conditional sentence are negative statements (cf. the polarity adjuncts μή and οὐκ in v. 30). The indirect object σοι (to Pilate) is placed before both of the verb and the direct object in the apodosis. Thus, the governor's necessary involvement in the legal case is the point of departure in the Jewish leaders' reply to his question.

By issuing two commands (λάβετε and κρίνατε) to the Jewish leaders, Pilate positions himself as the superior over them.[51] In response, the Jewish leaders make a rejoinder move to close the current exchange. This rejoinder move is constitutive of a first-person plural and assertive clause, which realizes a negative declarative statement. Rather than taking action to comply with Pilate's commands, the Jewish authorities acknowledge that they have

50. In the previous section I discussed "terminology" for how to identify an exchange.
51. Bond, *Pontius Pilate in History and Interpretation*, 177.

no legal authority to inflict the death penalty. While this statement tells of the Jewish leaders' subordinate position under Rome, at the same time it hints at their resolve to put Jesus to death by appealing to the governor's legal power.

THE FIRST ROUND OF THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN PILATE AND JESUS IN EPISODE 2

Text	Turn/Move	Move Type	Speaker: Speech
18:33	1	initiating	Pilate: σὺ εἶ ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων;
18:34	2	initiating	Jesus: ἀπὸ σεαυτοῦ σὺ τοῦτο λέγεις
18:34			Jesus: ἢ ἄλλοι εἶπόν σοι περὶ ἐμοῦ;
18:35	3a	rejoinder	Pilate: μήτι ἐγὼ Ἰουδαῖός εἰμι;
18:35	3b	continuing	Pilate: τὸ ἔθνος τὸ σὸν καὶ οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς παρέδωκάν σε ἐμοί·
18:35	3c	initiating	Pilate: τί ἐποίησας;
18:36	4a	rejoinder	Jesus: ἡ βασιλεία ἡ ἐμὴ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου·
18:36	4b	continuing	Jesus: εἰ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου ἦν ἡ βασιλεία ἡ ἐμή,
18:36			Jesus: οἱ ὑπηρέται οἱ ἐμοὶ ἠγωνίζοντο [ἂν]
18:36			Jesus: ἵνα μὴ παραδοθῶ τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις·
18:36	4c	continuing	Jesus: νῦν δὲ ἡ βασιλεία ἡ ἐμὴ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐντεῦθεν.
18:37	5	initiating	Pilate: οὐκοῦν βασιλεὺς εἶ σύ;
18:37	6a	responding	Jesus: σὺ λέγεις
18:37			Jesus: ὅτι βασιλεύς εἰμι.
18:37	6b	initiating	Jesus: ἐγὼ εἰς τοῦτο γεγέννημαι
18:37	6c	continuing	Jesus: καὶ εἰς τοῦτο ἐλήλυθα εἰς τὸν κόσμον,
18:37			Jesus: ἵνα μαρτυρήσω τῇ ἀληθείᾳ·
18:37	6d	continuing	Jesus: πᾶς ὁ ὢν ἐκ τῆς ἀληθείας ἀκούει μου τῆς φωνῆς.
18:38	7	rejoinder	Pilate: τί ἐστιν ἀλήθεια;

The conversation between Pilate and Jesus consists of a total of 7 turns in 5 exchanges in episode 2. Pilate has 4 turns (containing altogether 6 moves) and Jesus has 3 turns (containing altogether 8 moves). Both the first and the final moves in this episode are made by the governor, who has the power to decide when the interrogation begins and finishes. Pilate asks Jesus a polar question in v. 33 to demand confirmation of his royal aspiration. The second-person singular pronoun σύ, which is the grammatical subject of the verb εἶ in this question, is most likely sarcastic on Pilate's lips. Since Greek does not need a pronoun to indicate the verbal subject, this polar question is marked. Furthermore, this pronoun (σύ) is fronted at the beginning of the question to underline its referent, namely, Jesus. It follows that Jesus's identity is at stake in the negotiation in the present episode.

Jesus does not give a preferred response to complete the exchange with Pilate. Instead of accepting the role of respondent created by the governor's

prior move, Jesus takes on the role of the "interrogator" by asking him an elemental question in v. 34.[52] The circumstantial adjunct ἀπὸ σεαυτοῦ ("from yourself [Pilate]") and the ensuing second-person singular pronoun σύ in Jesus's question stand in contrast to the same pronoun in Pilate's question in the preceding v. 33. This elemental question is the only question asked by Jesus throughout the Roman trial narrative. The structure of this question on Jesus's lips is restrictive in the sense that it sets forth only two possible responses. Douglas Estes considers this elemental question an example of *dilemmaton*, which is "a specialized use of the alternate question in the ancient world."[53] According to Estes, this kind of question "create[s] a dilemma for an audience" to choose between two alternatives that oppose each other.[54] It deserves notice that the question asked by Jesus redirects the topic of discussion from his royal claim in Pilate's prior speech to the source of the governor's information of it. Given that the Johannine Jesus is God incarnate, it is unlikely that Jesus asks the question out of ignorance. Rather, as Estes notes, "Pilate asks Jesus to choose; Jesus does not choose and instead fires back for Pilate to choose."[55] In addition, Jesus probably increases his negotiating power by intimating his knowledge of the source of Pilate's information. Upon hearing Jesus's question, Pilate tries to turn the tables on him by making the rejoinder move in v. 35. Notably, the fronted grammatical subjects of the two questions asked by Pilate are different. The grammatical subject has been changed from the second-person singular pronoun σύ in v. 33 to the first-person singular pronoun ἐγώ in v. 35. Thus, the matter of negotiation changes from "Jesus" to "Pilate" himself. Ironically, "the interrogator has been made the topic of the interrogation."[56]

The elemental question in Pilate's mouth begins his third exchange with Jesus in v. 35. Jesus's reply to the governor is made up of a negative declarative clause in v. 36. Without giving Pilate a direct answer, Jesus refuses to assume the conversational role assigned by Pilate. The last continuing move of Jesus restates the negative proposition in his earlier rejoinder in different terms. Again, Jesus does not give a favorable response to the governor.

Pilate returns to the subject of his previous question to resort to the confirmation of Jesus's aspiration to kingship in v. 37. The previous two times,

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52. Land, "Jesus before Pilate," 241.

53. Douglas C. Estes, *The Questions of Jesus in John: Logic, Rhetoric and Persuasive Discourse* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 120.

54. Ibid.

55. Ibid., 122; cf. Edward W. Klink, *John*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016), 763.

56. Land, "Jesus before Pilate," 242.

when Jesus is asked by the governor, he does not answer directly.[57] Similarly to his previous responses, this time Jesus again does not give a direct answer to Pilate.[58] Nevertheless, he quotes Pilate's words and so implicitly acknowledges his royal status. Furthermore, Jesus starts a new exchange by bringing in the matter of the truth to negotiate. This turn of Jesus is quite long, consisting of altogether 3 moves in 4 ranking clauses. This relatively long turn-length of Jesus suggests his control of the subject of the negotiation. The first-person singular pronoun ἐγώ is fronted in the declarative clause of Jesus's initiating move in v. 37 to stress the referent, namely, Jesus himself. In response, Pilate's reaction move is constitutive of an elemental question in v. 38. Although this question is open-ended, it probably serves to ridicule Jesus. The reason is that Pilate leaves the scene immediately, showing no interest in knowing how Jesus would respond to him.

THE SECOND ROUND OF THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN PILATE AND THE JEWISH LEADERS IN EPISODE 3

Text	Turn/Move	Move Type	Speaker: Speech
18:38	1a	initiating	Pilate: ἐγὼ οὐδεμίαν εὑρίσκω ἐν αὐτῷ αἰτίαν.
18:39	1b	continuing	Pilate: ἔστιν δὲ συνήθεια ὑμῖν
18:39			Pilate: ἵνα ἕνα ἀπολύσω ὑμῖν ἐν τῷ πάσχα·
18:39	1c	initiating	Pilate: βούλεσθε οὖν ἀπολύσω ὑμῖν τὸν βασιλέα τῶν Ἰουδαίων;
18:40	2a	rejoinder	the Jewish leaders: μὴ τοῦτον
18:40	2b	continuing	the Jewish leaders: ἀλλὰ τὸν Βαραββᾶν.

Both Pilate and the Jewish authorities have one turn in the second round of their conversation. By making the initiating move, the governor takes on the role of arbiter to pronounce his initial judgment of Jesus in v. 38. The first-person singular pronoun ἐγώ is fronted at the beginning of this pronouncement, thus insinuating Pilate's assertion of his positional power to decide the legal matter. The next initiating move in the conversation is again made by the governor. He asks the Jewish authorities a polar question to give them the choice of releasing the king of the Jews. While this polar question is not formulated to indicate an expectation of a positive or negative answer, it probably serves to put pressure on the Jewish leaders to respond affirmatively. In other words, the question is implicitly "conducive"

57. Ibid., 245.
58. Stovell notes that both Jesus and Pilate avoid direct answers in their conversation in John 18:33–38. Stovell, *Mapping Metaphorical Discourse in the Fourth Gospel*, 281.

to the speaker's (Pilate's) preferred answer.[59] However, the Jewish leaders ask for the release of Barabbas instead of Jesus in v. 40.

THE THIRD ROUND OF THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN PILATE AND THE JEWISH LEADERS IN EPISODE 5

Text	Turn/Move	Move Type	Speaker: Speech
19:4	1	initiating	Pilate: ἴδε ἄγω ὑμῖν αὐτὸν ἔξω,
19:4			Pilate: ἵνα γνῶτε
19:4			Pilate: ὅτι οὐδεμίαν αἰτίαν εὑρίσκω ἐν αὐτῷ.
19:5	2	attending[60]	Pilate: ἰδοὺ ὁ ἄνθρωπος.
19:6	3a	initiating	the Jewish leaders: σταύρωσον
19:6	3b	continuing	the Jewish leaders: σταύρωσον
19:6	4a	rejoinder	Pilate: λάβετε αὐτὸν ὑμεῖς
19:6	4b	continuing	Pilate: καὶ σταυρώσατε·
19:6	4c	continuing	Pilate: ἐγὼ γὰρ οὐχ εὑρίσκω ἐν αὐτῷ αἰτίαν.
19:7	5a	rejoinder	the Jewish leaders: ἡμεῖς νόμον ἔχομεν
19:7	5b	continuing	the Jewish leaders: καὶ κατὰ τὸν νόμον ὀφείλει ἀποθανεῖν
19:7			the Jewish leaders: ὅτι υἱὸν θεοῦ ἑαυτὸν ἐποίησεν.

The first initiating move of Pilate is realized by a declarative clause, which begins with the particle ἴδε to draw attention to the ensuing announcement in v. 4. Then, Pilate makes an attending move to call for the Jewish authorities' attention to the coming of Jesus outside the praetorium. What follows is a relatively long exchange, which is comprised of altogether 7 moves in 3 turns in John 19:6–7. The second-person singular imperative σταύρωσον occurs twice in the Jewish leaders' utterance in v. 6 to add force to their demand for the death penalty for Jesus. In response, Pilate fires back by issuing two commands in his rejoinder and continuing moves. But the Jewish authorities refuse to comply with the governor's commands to complete the exchange. Both their rejoinder and continuing moves are made in the form of statement in v. 7, seeking to offer information to persuade Pilate that Jesus deserves crucifixion. The first-person plural pronoun ἡμεῖς at the beginning of the Jewish leaders' rejoinder stands in contrast to the first-person singular pronoun ἐγώ in Pilate's earlier speech in v. 6. These two personal pronouns highlight the conflicting standpoints between the Jewish authorities and Pilate on the fate of Jesus. While both the Jewish authorities and Pilate attempt to take control of the direction of the conversation, none of them, thus far, has succeeded in achieving their preferred agenda.

59. Irene Koshik, *Beyond Rhetorical Questions: Assertive Questions in Everyday Interaction* (Philadelphia: Benjamins, 2005), 10–11.

60. In the present analysis, the utterance ἰδοὺ ὁ ἄνθρωπος is considered an attending instead of initiating move. For the distinction between the attending move and the initiating move, see Eggins and Slade, *Analysing Casual Conversation*, 193.

THE SECOND ROUND OF THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN PILATE AND JESUS IN EPISODE 6

Text	Turn/Move	Move Type	Speaker: Speech
19:9	1	initiating	Pilate: πόθεν εἶ σύ;
19:9	2	rejoinder	[Jesus remains silent.]
19:10	3a	initiating	Pilate: ἐμοὶ οὐ λαλεῖς;
19:10	3b	continuing	Pilate: οὐκ οἶδας
19:10			Pilate: ὅτι ἐξουσίαν ἔχω ἀπολῦσαί σε
19:10			Pilate: καὶ ἐξουσίαν ἔχω σταυρῶσαί σε;
19:11	4a	rejoinder	Jesus: οὐκ εἶχες ἐξουσίαν κατ' ἐμοῦ οὐδεμίαν
19:11			Jesus: εἰ μὴ ἦν δεδομένον σοι ἄνωθεν·
19:11	4b	continuing	Jesus: διὰ τοῦτο ὁ παραδούς μέ σοι μείζονα ἁμαρτίαν ἔχει.

Pilate asks Jesus a content question regarding his origin in v. 9. But Jesus does not reply to the governor. This silence of Jesus functions as a nonverbal rejoinder move, which seeks to disengage from talking with Pilate. In addition, this move is probably suggestive of Jesus's "tacit claim to superiority" because silence is "an appropriate response when challenged by the inferior."[61] Without hearing a word from Jesus, Pilate starts another exchange and asks two polar questions in v. 10. The word ἐξουσίαν occurs twice in the projected ὅτι-clause in the second question. In both of these two instances of the word ἐξουσίαν, it is the direct object of the verb ἔχω and is placed before this verb in the clause. In view of this, Pilate's "authority" over Jesus is the subject of negotiation put on the table.[62] In other words, the governor confronts Jesus's silence by asserting that he has the power to determine Jesus's fate.

Jesus breaks his silence and refutes the challenge of Pilate in v. 11. The rejoinder move of Jesus is constitutive of a second-class conditional sentence, in which the apodosis comes before the protasis. The contrary-to-fact assumption of the protasis underlines that all authority ultimately originates from God. Therefore, this rejoinder move seeks to relativize the power of the governor.[63] While Jesus is being interrogated by the governor, he turns the tables by taking on the authoritative role of the judge to pronounce a verdict in v. 11 (cf. the rejoinder and the continuing moves). No responding or reaction move is made by Pilate. All of his exchanges with Jesus are finished in

61. Bruce J. Malina and Richard L. Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary on the Gospel of John* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1998), 260.

62. Stovell, *Mapping Metaphorical Discourse in the Fourth Gospel*, 286.

63. Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John, XIII–XXI* (New York: Doubleday, 1966), 892; Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1125–27.

the Roman trial narrative. In this episode, it is clear that Jesus has the power in relationship to Pilate.

THE FOURTH ROUND OF THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN PILATE AND THE JEWISH LEADERS IN EPISODE 7

Text	Turn/Move	Move Type	Speaker: Speech
19:12	1a	initiating	the Jewish leaders: ἐὰν τοῦτον ἀπολύσῃς,
19:12			the Jewish leaders: οὐκ εἶ φίλος τοῦ Καίσαρος·
19:12	1b	continuing	the Jewish leaders: πᾶς ὁ βασιλέα ἑαυτὸν ποιῶν ἀντιλέγει τῷ Καίσαρι.
19:14	2	attending[64]	Pilate: ἴδε ὁ βασιλεὺς ὑμῶν
19:15	3a	initiating	the Jewish leaders: ἆρον
19:15	3b	continuing	the Jewish leaders: ἆρον,
19:15	3c	continuing	the Jewish leaders: σταύρωσον αὐτόν.
19:15	4	rejoinder	Pilate: τὸν βασιλέα ὑμῶν σταυρώσω;
19:15	5	rejoinder	The Jewish leaders: οὐκ ἔχομεν βασιλέα εἰ μὴ Καίσαρα.

In the previous episodes, Pilate always has more turns than the Jewish leaders in the conversations. However, the Jewish leaders have 3 turns and Pilate has 2 turns in their last few exchanges in the closing episode 7. Moreover, both the first and the final moves are made by the Jewish leaders. Thus, they dominate and have the floor in their fourth and final round of the dialogue with the governor in the trial account. The Jewish authorities endeavor to influence Pilate's judgment of Jesus by setting forth a projective statement to challenge his loyalty to Caesar in v. 12. The direct object τοῦτον (cf. the referent is Jesus) is placed before the subjunctive verb ἀπολύσῃς and so is underlined in the protasis. This indicates that the topic of the negotiation surrounds "Jesus." The next continuing move of the Jewish authorities serves to elaborate and add weight to their argument so that Pilate would be more likely to make the decision in their favor.

After Jesus is brought outside the praetorium, Pilate calls for the attention of the Jewish leaders by making an attending move in v. 14. The initiating and continuing moves of the Jewish leaders are realized by altogether three short directive clauses. Each of these clauses contains a second-person singular imperative (ἆρον, ἆρον, and σταύρωσον in v. 15) to demand the governor to sentence Jesus to death. The force of these imperatives is so strong that they probably are not imperatives of request, which are "normally used to speak to a superior."[65] Pilate does not immediately fulfill the Jewish demand

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64. In the present analysis, Pilate's saying ἴδε ὁ βασιλεὺς ὑμῶν is considered an attending instead of initiating move.

65. Klink, *John*, 785; Daniel B Wallace, *Greek Grammar beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 457–58.

to complete the exchange. Rather, he asks them a polar question to require confirmation of the capital punishment. While the Jewish authorities do not directly give Pilate a "yes" or "no" answer, their reply is implicitly affirmative. The polarity adjunct οὐκ is fronted in their declaration in v. 15 to add force to their repudiation of anyone except Caesar as king. Upon the Jewish leaders' last utterance, all of the exchanges in the Roman trial narrative are finished.

Synthesis and Conclusion

This study has adopted a sociolinguistic approach to gain an understanding of how John uses dialogues subtly to reveal Pilate's role in the Roman trial narrative in John 18:28–19:16a. The treatment of the participants' conversations was conducted on the basis of Michael A. K. Halliday's model of systemic functional linguistics and particularly the register theory in this model. The most relevant notion of this theory for this undertaking was tenor, which is the contextual variable regarding the participants' role relationships and power differences. This article has also adapted Suzzane Eggins's and Diana Slade's integrated method of analyzing the conversation by utilizing both the synoptic and the dynamic approaches. The grammatical and the discourse features of Pilate's dialogues with the Jewish leaders or Jesus have been examined in detail. On the basis of the linguistic choices made by each participant in the conversations, the power relationship between Pilate and the Jewish leaders as well as the power relationship between Pilate and Jesus have been probed. On the whole, sociolinguistic analysis of the dialogues has proven helpful for demonstrating how John draws on the grammatical, the semantic, and the discourse resources of language to construct and present the characters' interpersonal relationships in the Roman trial narrative.

The result of this study has indicated that there is ongoing power negotiation throughout the dialogues between Pilate and the Jewish leaders as well as throughout the dialogues between Pilate and Jesus. These three participants assume different social or conversational roles during the interactions. They also attempt to position themselves and the interactants in certain roles in order to gain control of the direction of the conversation. Furthermore, the social or conversational roles taken on by the participants are linked with their linguistic choices in speech, which express varied degrees of authority. On the whole, Pilate dominates the number of turns, makes the most initiating moves, and asks the most questions. By giving directives to the Jewish leaders, Pilate tries to position himself as the superior over them. While the Jewish leaders come on scene as being in the subordinate role in episode 1, they gradually gain power in relationship to the governor in the later episodes. Given that most of the polarity adjuncts are associated with the Jewish authorities, they often counter Pilate's proposal and refuse to be submissive

in the interaction. Significantly, the Jewish leaders have more turns than Pilate and make both the first and closing moves in episode 7. While Pilate manipulates the Jewish leaders to acknowledging Caesar as their only king, the sociolinguistic treatment of the structure of the exchanges has pointed out that the Jewish leaders and not the governor appear to be the dominant participant at the closing of the Roman trial account. Thus, the result of this undertaking does not favor the view that Pilate holds the power from start to finish in relationship to the Jewish authorities throughout this account.

Regarding Pilate's dealing with Jesus, the linguistic phenomenon of their conversation has revealed that he assumes the role of the interrogator to fulfill the judicial duty. However, Jesus often does not directly answer the governor's questions and once remains silent in the face of his interrogation. While Jesus makes no initiating move and has the fewest number of turns, he enjoys relatively long turn-length and consistently refuses to take on the deferent role assigned by Pilate during the interaction. Furthermore, Jesus introduces new topics of discussion and provides additional information not requested by the governor. Since the possession of knowledge is an indicator of power, Jesus's superiority over Pilate is underscored in the trial narrative. From the Johannine perspective, the power clearly lies with Jesus in spite of his lower social standing than Pilate's at the tribunal. It is of the Johannine conviction that Jesus the Messiah enjoys universal kingship over Rome, which is symbolized by the governor's presence on the scene. Therefore, the linguistic features in the participants' conversations in the Roman trial account serve the Fourth Gospel's broader purpose of asserting Jesus's messiahship. Finally, it should be remarked that this study has not sought to provide a comprehensive treatment or evaluate all possible readings of Pilate's portrait in the Fourth Gospel.[66] Rather, the focus of this study has been on the linguistic phenomenon in Pilate's conversations with the Jewish leaders and Jesus and the implications for the understanding of their interpersonal relations. The result of this study has pointed out the important linkage between language use and characterization in the Roman trial narrative. Thus, the main thesis of this study that the characterization of the Johannine Pilate arises through the use of language in dialogues has been substantiated.

66. Some of the important works on the Johannine characterization of Pilate are listed in n. 1.