Advanced Hebrew “Grammatical Moments”

Noun Patterns

- Most nouns are built from verbal roots. These verbal roots generally are triconsonantal (i.e., three letter words)
- Related noun variations are built by modifying their root with prefixes, suffixes, and infixes.
  - Prefixes on the root generally are the letters נ י מ ת א
  - נ is the most common prefix
  - Suffixes generally are applied to other denominative [nouns that are not derived from verbal root] nouns
  - Infixes basically are internal phonetic vowel changes or possible reduplications of syllables: e.g., נְלַבָּל

Examples of Infixes

- כְּפָר Pattern often denotes objects or professions: כְּפָר = ram’s horn נוֹח = priest
- כְּפִיל Pattern often denotes body parts: כְּפִיל = upper arm כְּפִיל = thigh
- כְּפִיל Pattern often denotes profession, agricultural terms, or passive identity:
  - כְּפִיל = anointed one כְּפִיל = refugee כְּפִיל = prophet כְּפִיל = grain harvest
- Patterns with Medial lengthening כְּפִיל often imply occupation/profession or repeated action:
  - כְּפִיל = judge כְּפִיל = sinner כְּפִיל = perverse
- Patterns with Reduplication often serve as adjectives, especially for colors: כְּפִיל = reddish

Examples of Suffixes

- כְּפִיל Pattern serves as adjectives or diminuatives: כְּפִיל = first כְּפִיל = pupil, little man
- כְּפִיל Pattern serves for abstract nouns: כְּפִיל = childhood
- כְּפִיל Pattern serves for adverbs: כְּפִיל = by day

Origination Pattern: כְּפִיל = Hebronite
  (Gentilic ending כְּפִיל for Gentiles but not for Hebrews)

Example of Prefixes
A מ prefix often implies location, instrument, or abstraction: מָקוֹם = judgment

A ג prefix often denotes the action of the verb: וָהּ = thanksgiving
NUMBER: singular, plural, dual forms

These word forms are used to identify
- things countable (one or more objects)
- collectives (group of objects or a mass of material, “butter” “face”)

Numeric identifications are not always logical—only grammatical

- e.g.: “Will you have some grapes” vs. “Will you have some fruit“
- “The oats are in the field” vs. “The wheat is in the field”
- Note the verbal disharmony with these collectives
  - The sheep are in the field
  - The wheat is in the field
- Hebrew collectives often have singular nouns
- Sheep and Bird(s) are collective in Hebrew while only the first in English is
- trousers, pajamas

“Honorific” plurals
- German and other European languages use the plural pronoun You for individuals when respect is called for.
- Hebrew: plural for אָנָיָה and for “let us…”

Enumerations often use a singular noun
- Is. 7:23 – 1,000 vines = נְבֵין
- I Kings 5:12 – 3,000 proverbs = נְבֵין נְבֵין

Collective modifiers (e.g., “all, every” = כל) use singular nouns
- “every male” in Hebrew can also translate “all your males” : בכל בנים
- “an abundance of counselors” in Prov. 11:14 : העון י בארץ

Repetition
- Distributive singulars to represent plural quantities
  - “year by year” Dt. 14:2 = שְׁנֵיהֶם
  - “day after day” Est. 3:4 = יָמִים יָמִים

Diversity
- Psalm 12:3 (Heb)

Emphasis, like “really really happy”
- “pure gold” in 2 Kings 25:15 = בַּעֲבֹד בַּעֲבֹד

Dual Number
Accusative Nouns

Accusatives serve as objects of the action of the verb, i.e., the action of the verb passes over to the object signified by its noun.

The objects of verbs may be acted upon (“he planted tomatoes”) or created (“he raised tomatoes”). Certain types of verbs imply an inherent object (“he cried tears”) or a complementary object (“he wore clothes”).

Double Accusatives

“Some verbs are doubly or complexly transitive and may have more than one object associated with them. Such verbs are much more common in Hebrew than in English….” Waltke & O’Conner, 173

“Double Accusative” should not be confused with a “compound accusative,” e.g., “He taught the girl and the boy.”

Rather, one of the Hebrew accusatives will often serve as an English indirect object, or as an adverb to modify the verb’s action on the principle direct object.

Form: Normally, clauses with double accusatives will have only one sign of the definite object יִפְדוּ if the accusatives are definite. Contrast this to the reduplicated sign for compound definite objects.

Often, the first accusative simply is a pronoun suffixed to the verb, and the second accusative follows.

Translation: English prepositions may have to be supplied to identify the indirect object or to connect the second accusative with the first one.

Occurrence:

Often with the verbs of speaking and with “to give” or “to make,” and especially with Hiphils (Causative forms)

Examples

Indirect Objects

Is. 58:2 יַעַל בוּוּר מָשָׁא הָעָם
Ex. 34:32 נִצְּבֵה אַלְלוֹת אַלְלוֹת יָדָהּ אַלְלוֹת

Preposition Required

Gen. 42:25 = “with” נִמְסָכָה אַלְלוֹת בֵּר
I Kgs. 18:32 = “into” נִבְנָה אַלְלוֹת בֵּר
Gen. 2:7 = “from” נִנְבְּרָה יַרוּחָה אַלְלוֹת בֵּר מְרָצָה

Adverbial Use

I Kgs. 12:13 = “harshly” כִּנְבֵרִים אַלְלוֹת בֵּר קֶשׁ

Directional ה

Roughly equivalent to the English suffix “-ward,” this is a vestige of the old accusative ending

Occasionally may interrupt a construct chain: Gen. 43:17 נְבַע אַלְלוֹת בֵּר וּבִרְשָׁת יֶרֶץ

Can be used with movement in time: Ex. 13:10 נְבַע אַלְלוֹת בֵּר וּבִרְשָׁת יֶרֶץ
Nouns can be modified (qualified, explained) not only by restrictive adjectives, but also by other nouns. Construct phrases (“crown of gold” vs. “golden crown” in English) are used extensively; in fact, construct phrases appear more often in Hebrew than nouns with attributive adjectives.

Apposition is another syntactical form of nouns qualifying nouns. Apposition takes place when a noun or noun phrase is juxtaposed next to the “leadword” noun to give more precision to the leadword: “Isaiah the prophet.”

“Hebrew employs apposition more extensively than English” (p. 227), and some of the examples are rather abrupt and unexpected, and therefore will often be translated with an English adjective instead of with an appositional phrase in English: Ps. 120:2 = “…tongue, duplicity…” or in other words, “a deceitful tongue.”

**Noun-noun Appositional Phrase:** A general leadword is restricted by a more limited appositive

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hebrew</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Type of Apposition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>II Sam. 10:7</td>
<td>the entire army of fighting men</td>
<td>exact parallel apposition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ex. 30:23</td>
<td>fine spices</td>
<td>apposition of quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prov. 22:21</td>
<td>truthful words</td>
<td>quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Kgs 16:17</td>
<td>bronze oxen</td>
<td>apposition of material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen. 6:10</td>
<td>three sons</td>
<td>apposition of measure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Use with Names**

In cases in which the name is an apposition and the phrase takes a proposition or נָא, the particle is generally repeated on leadword and apposition.

Gen. 24:4

In cases in which the name is the leadword, the particle is generally not repeated.

Gen. 4:8
It is often necessary to combine more than one predication; in such situations the main or independent clause contains one or more subordinate clauses” (p. 330). Relative clauses are the main type of subordinate clause that modifies/expanded/qualifies the main predication.

Relative pronouns in English and Hebrew connect (relate) together two clauses. A clause is a phrase that predicates something.

The main clause will be followed and amplified by the subordinate, relative clause. Normally, (not always, e.g., “the lost brother ^ he came to know” vs. “the lost brother whom he came to know”), the two clauses will be joined by a relative pronoun.

There are four relative clause markers (connectors):
1. 받 – the most common, yet rare in poetry
2. ש – found in the oldest (Gen., Jud.) and youngest (Ezra) Hebrew books, but not in between.
3. “Z series” = ז הן זוזה זוזה Demonstrative pronouns serve as relative pronouns. Usually found in poetry.
4. מ – Interrogative pronouns may serve as relative pronouns

EXAMPLES of 받
1. Nominative נָּשִׁי נְמָה נְמָה
2. Accusative נָּשִׁי נְמָה נְמָה
3. Resumptive נָּשִׁי נְמָה נְמָה (repeats the subject of the main clause with a pronoun in the relative clause).
4. Genitive see the previous example of possession/relation of the genitive: “The land of which you are lying on it.”
5. Time “when” יָמִּי יָמִּי יָמִּי יָמִּי יָמִּי יָמִּי
6. Locative “where” יָמִּי יָמִּי יָמִּי יָמִּי יָמִּי יָמִּי

EXAMPLES of ש

Jdg. 7:12 בּוֹלֵל לֵבָּל לֵבָּל לֵבָּל לֵבָּל לֵבָּל L
Cant. 3:1 בֵּית שְׁבָּא יִתְּנַה לְפָנֵי בְּמֶשֶׁה Ps. 124:6 L
Ps. 123:2 L

EXAMPLES of ז

Prov. 23:22 שִׁמְחֶה לֶשֶׁבֶכְתִּים Ps. 104:26 L
Is. 42:24 יָמִּי יָמִּי יָמִּי יָמִּי יָמִּי יָמִּי

EXAMPLES of מ

Josh. 24:15 בּוֹרֶה אֲשֶׁר־אָשֶׁר יָבֹא Ps. 104:26 L

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Josh. 24:15 בּוֹרֶה אֲשֶׁר־אָשֶׁר יָבֹא Ps. 104:26 L
“Prepositions are relational terms that stand before nouns and noun equivalents (including certain verb forms) and thereby form phrases….”

Prepositions may be classed by the origin and use.

Nominal perspective. Some prepositions are derived from nouns. Originally a lead noun was juxtaposed to an objective noun (often in old accusative form) to show the relation of the two. Obvious examples are the prepositions אֶלֶלֶל (אֶלֶל) and לֹא לֹא (לֹא).

“The shortening of nominal construct forms is related to the unstressed status of many prepositions, written as prefixes or as proclitics (with magqeph, e.g., נַלְגַּלְגַּל).

Particle perspective. Some Hebrew prepositions have no known etymological origin. They are considered as short particles of speech.

Some do appear to have derived from geminate forms, e.g., אַלָּל but אַלָּל. Others appear to be related to the plural forms of nouns: אַלָּל but אַלָּל.

Semantic perspective. This perspective addresses the question, “what is the meaning of the relation between the noun that the preposition governs and the clause in which the prepositional phrase occurs?” The answer will usually be expressed in terms of some relation of time (e.g., before, until) or space (before the presence, in, after). Only a couple prepositions express something other than temporal or spacial relations, viz., “like” and “because of” (כִּי).

Some of the various semantic relations to the flow of the action include: origin, instrument, agent, interest, cause, and goal (p. 191).

Prepositions may appear in simple forms, compound, or complex.

Simple: נָנָנָנ
Compound (prep.+ prep.): מָשָׁל
Complex (prep. + noun): קָחֵת

Generally, a prepositional phrase that has compound objects will reduplicate the preposition.

Gen. 12:1 לִבְּנֹת מְאֹרְשָׁה וְקַמְמַמֵּל נִמְרָת חֲבִיבָה

This reduplicating may be “overridden” in some cases:
1 Sam. 15:22 מְהֵם לִבְּנֹת הָעֲלֹת הַבַּתָּים

Finally, prepositions can be implied to reduplicate, not with a compound object, but in a poetic parallel where the verb(s) control the objects in a similar way.

Isaiah 48:14 יִצְעַל רְפִּיָא כְּבָב וְרָלָה שֶׁרָה