

English Abstracts

Alexey (Eliyahu) Yuditsky

Weakening of the Consonantal *Aleph* in Biblical Hebrew

As is well known, consonantal *aleph* quiesces in certain phonetic environments. In the light of this phenomenon, I wish to suggest an alternative explanation for some examples in which there is lack of gender or number agreement between subjects and their verbs. See, e.g., כִּי אֵשׁ יֵצֵא מִהַשְּׁבֹבֹת (Jer 48:45), in which the predicate יֵצֵא disagrees in gender with its subject אֵשׁ; יֵצֵא could be interpreted here as reflecting the expected feminine form יֵצֵאה with quiescence of the *aleph*, i.e., **yaša'a > yašā* (or *yašâ*). In כִּי מִצְפֹּן יְבוּא־לָהּ הַשׁוֹדְדִים (Jer 51:48), the imperfect יְבוּא may reflect the expected plural form יְבוּאו following the quiescence of the *aleph*, i.e., *yabō'ū > *yabōū > *yabōw > yabō*. Some enigmatic forms of the infinitive could also be better elucidated if one assumes that the *aleph* has quiesced, e.g., in לְבַלְתִּי בָאוּ הַכְּלִים הַנוֹתְרִים בְּבֵית ה' (Jer 27:18), בָּאוּ might in fact be a peculiar writing of the infinitive *bô* (בּוֹא).

Ohad Cohen

“And He Ate and Drank and Rose and Went and Esau Spurned the Birthright” (Gen 25:34) – On the Meaning of Consecutive Forms in Biblical Hebrew

The present article elucidates the chronological functions of the verb form *wayyiqtol* in the Biblical Hebrew. By dint of an analysis of the different uses of the form, we reexamine the accepted grammatical assumption that the consecutive (or sequential) form represents an action that occurs after an anterior action in the same continuum, namely, that consecutive forms express chronological or logical succession. This premise is based on the wide distribution of consecutive forms serving in either capacity, whereas those that do not express chronological succession are deemed to be exceptions. Nevertheless, we would like to suggest a different point of view. Placing the exceptions at the center of our analysis has enabled us to redefine the role of consecutive forms in Biblical Hebrew. The findings of

this study indicate that these forms mark the event and reference time as one unit [R,E]. As a result, the ordinary and most prevalent usage of this form – the signification of chronological sequence – should be regarded as but one of its optional applications.

David Talshir

The Usage of ידיד Throughout the Ages

This paper continues the discussion began by M. Bar-Asher in his recent study on the word *yadid*. The present article centers on the usage of the term in the Dead Sea scrolls, rabbinical literature and during the Haskala period. In addition, the question is raised whether the meaning of ‘friend’ was first attributed to *yadid* in the days of the revival of the Hebrew language.

Christian Stadel

The Metathesis of Initial ʕ and ʔ in the Reading Tradition of the Samaritan Pentateuch

In this paper I discuss the metathesis in Samaritan Hebrew of an original or secondary ʔ (glottal stop) with another original or secondary ʕ (*ayin*) at the beginning of a word. ʕ is only preserved in Samaritan Hebrew as the first consonant of a word and only when it is followed by an *a* vowel. In all other positions the laryngeals and pharyngeals are now usually pronounced as a glottal stop. I examine all the words in the Samaritan Pentateuch in which a laryngeal and an *a* vowel precede an ʕ that should have been pronounced (i.e., when followed by an *a* vowel): the two consonants have switched positions and the ʕ is pronounced first. This phenomenon might have occurred in Samaritan Hebrew in order to avoid homonyms, and a similar metathesis of gutturals is also attested in Mandaic, in which the differentiation of laryngeals and pharyngeals was also partly eliminated.

Ariel Gabbai

The Language of Biblical Quotations in Ms. Kaufmann of the Mishna

This article examines the hundreds of quotations from the Bible interwoven in the Mishna according to MS Kaufmann, which is the closest version to the original Mishna that we have. Each quotation from the Bible in MS Kaufmann is compared with its parallel in the Jerusalem Crown, the Bible of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, which is based on the version and the Masorah of the Aleppo Codex and manuscripts that are close to it. These are the two best texts for comparison between the Tiberian version of the Bible and the biblical version cited in the Mishna.

Our comparison has yielded several differences in text, in orthography, and in vocalization. The number of textual differences is small, and most of them are insignificant. The number of vocalization differences is higher and the number of orthographic differences even more so. We have attempted to show that the scribe of MS Kaufmann also tends to use the full spelling when quoting a biblical verse. Inconsistency in the spelling of biblical verses has also been discovered. A word from a biblical verse may appear with defective spelling in one place and with full spelling in another quotation of the same verse and sometimes even in the same section.

As for the textual and spelling differences reflected in the orthography of the scribe of MS Kaufmann, we mention a number of important factors that might have caused those differences. Primarily, full spelling was common and conventional in non-biblical Hebrew literature, and the scribes and copyists of the Mishna tended to use it even when writing biblical verses. Those scribes who wished to transmit the version of the Mishna as it had been said and recited for generations did not feel bound by the Masoretic rules of defective and full spelling.

For this and other reasons, we have come to the conclusion that the numerous orthographic differences between the biblical quotations in MS Kaufmann and the Masoretic text are not evidence of the existence of a biblical version for public reading that differs from the Masoretic

version. As for the vocalization, we have sought to show that the vocalizer of MS Kaufmann, despite his “Sephardic” origin, and even though he makes no distinction in pronunciation between *qamets* and *patah*, or between *sere* and *seghol*, adheres to the Tiberian vocalization more than the scribe follows the Tiberian orthography. The agreement between his vocalization of biblical quotations and the Tiberian vocalization of the Bible is greater than the agreement between his vocalization for non-quotations and the Tiberian rules. Some of the vocalization differences between MS Kaufmann and the Tiberian vocalization may reflect differences between various traditions of Biblical Hebrew. The most prominent of these is that *patah* does not become *qamets* in pause.

Haim Dihi

Amoraic Hebrew in the Light of Ben Sira’s Lexical Innovations

The linguistic innovations in the book of Ben Sira may be divided into two groups: the first group is linguistic innovations that are common to Ben Sira and to late biblical books and/or to the Dead Sea Scrolls, Mishnaic Hebrew, and Aramaic. The second group includes linguistic innovations unique to Ben Sira. The innovations of the second group should be attributed to Ben Sira’s exceptional linguistic abilities and to the particular literary type of his work, namely, wisdom literature, which makes use of such poetic features as parallelism, rhythm, rhyming, etc.

In this article, I focus on linguistic innovations that are common and exclusive to Ben Sira and Amoraic literature and post-Amoraic literature. It must be made clear at the outset that these innovations are used in Amoraic literature independently and not as part of paraphrases of Ben Sira. Altogether, I located six linguistic innovations common and exclusive only to Ben Sira and Amoraic literature, and four linguistic innovations common and exclusive only to Ben Sira and post-Amoraic literature.

These innovations can be divided into two kinds: eight morphological

innovations and two semantic innovations. These findings are of the utmost importance since the accepted view in Amoraic Hebrew research is that it was a dead literary language, which did not undergo those changes and developments which characterize a living language. It rather continued the static traditions of literary Hebrew which preceded it, especially Biblical Hebrew and Tannaitic Hebrew. Significantly, these innovations do not occur in Aramaic. If they did, we could have attributed their existence in Amoraic Hebrew to their presence in Aramaic.

The presence of these linguistic innovations in Amoraic Hebrew and their absence from Biblical Hebrew, Tannaitic Hebrew, and Aramaic clearly indicates that within Amoraic Hebrew, in contrast to the accepted view, dynamic linguistic processes were still taking place. As opposed to the accepted view, one should not consider this dialect merely as a dead language which makes use of earlier classical Hebrew for scholastic purposes.

Examples:

1. The use of the root **דא"ב** in the *Hifil* conjugation is common only to Ben Sira and Amoraic Hebrew (one occurrence in the Babylonian Talmud [*Nedarim*, 3a]).
2. The abstract noun **דלות** is also common only to Ben Sira and Amoraic Hebrew. There are approximately 52 occurrences of this noun in Amoraic Hebrew. In the Jerusalem Talmud all the occurrences are related to the verse “**וְאֵם דָּל הוּא...**” (Lev. 14:21). In the Babylonian Talmud, most of the occurrences likewise are related to this verse
3. The verbal noun **השיגה** in the phrase **השיגת יד** is common only to Ben Sira and Amoraic Hebrew, both as regards morphological structure and semantic usage.
4. The verbal noun **ישינה (=שינה)** is also common only to Ben Sira and Amoraic Hebrew (three occurrences of this verbal noun in Amoraic Hebrew).

The Usage of the Vocative in the Mishna and Tosefta: A Textual, Pragmatic, and Syntactic Study

The vocative (address) is defined as a nominal element added to an utterance, denoting the addressee to whom the address is directed. The vocative is used in order to seek the attention of the addressee by singling him out from others who may be within hearing and also to express the estimation of the addressor about the status of the addressee and about the form of address that is suitable. The vocative is characterized from the point of view of its position in the sentence and its intonation.

The article describes the vocative in Tannaitic language on the basis of its 161 occurrences in the Mishna and Tosefta. In these compositions the vocative is usually directed to a person of halakhic status, such as a sage or a priest.

The article discusses the circumstances of the usage of the vocative in the Mishna and Tosefta in relation to syntactic, textual, and pragmatic aspects: the syntactic aspect – the position of address in the sentence and in the discourse; the textual aspect – the different types of contexts in which the occurrences of the address appear; and the pragmatic aspect – the different speech acts at the time when the addressor uses the vocative.

Syntactically, the vocative often occurs in the Mishna and Tosefta in the beginning of the clause and less frequently at the end of it, and if the vocative is a part of a discourse which includes an exchange of words between addressor and addressee, it often occurs in its beginning. Textually, the vocative is frequent in narrative context, but it also occurs in contexts of ceremonies and halakhic give-and-take. The ceremonial context differs from the other two types of contexts in that the address is uttered not spontaneously, but as a part of a fixed formula which is directed to the addressee by the addressor at the time of the ceremony. In the Mishna the vocative occurs in the three types of context to a similar degree, while in the Tosefta it is frequent only in the narrative context and to a great extent. Pragmatically, the vocative is mostly uttered while performing five speech acts: requesting, directing (ordering), asserting, reprimanding, and asking. The addressor can use the address in the

course of the speech act in order to signal to the addressee that the utterance is to make him amenable or in order to make him amenable and thus attenuate the force of the act.

Shlomy Raiskin

The Origin and Meaning of *Pardakht*

The *Amora* Rav Ashi, in a Babylonian Talmudic passage (*Bava Batra* 55a) stated the following: “A *pardakht* must assist the townspeople [with their tax payment], whereas with an *andiski* – it is Divine help [which exempted him from the taxes, and therefore he does not have to assist the townspeople]”.

The word *pardakht* has been interpreted by most commentators, classical and modern alike, as meaning “an idle person”, “an unemployed individual”, or “one lacking skills”. The origin of this word, however, has remained ambiguous: some have traced its origins to Middle Persian, others have suggested various Greek etymologies, while there are also those who have believed that the word represents a certain type of Persian official, though they were unable to point to the exact origin or meaning in Persian.

This article examines this word, its interpretations, and context as reviewed in the existing literature throughout the ages, and finally reaffirms those opinions tracing its origin to Middle Persian.

Chaim E. Cohen

עשבי בשמים: A Study of the Grammar Reflected in Ashkenazic Prayer Books and Its Influence on Halachic Codifiers

Grammarians of the Ashkenazic prayer book disagreed as to the correct punctuation of the word עשבי in the blessing בורא עשבי בשמים. Their hesitation was due to the fact that the form עשבי does not appear in the

Bible. Various grammatical considerations led those grammarians to establish עֲשָׂבִי or עֲשָׂבִי/עֲשָׂבִי, while the more daring (Isaac Satanow and his followers) took a more extreme position and changed the word עֲשָׂבִי to the biblical עֲשָׂבוֹת, which is the only plural form of the word עֵשֶׂב found in the Bible. It goes without saying that this change constituted an “alteration of the formula established by the sages in benedictions.”

Reverberations of this conflict may be found among the codifiers who commented on the proper pronunciation of this word. Rabbi David Ha-Levi, author of the *Turei Zahav*, a gloss on the *Shulḥan Arukh*, confirms the usage of the pronunciation עֲשָׂבִי, but rejects it saying, “I have heard from grammarians that it (i.e., the proper reading) must be עֲשָׂבִי with a *hiriq* under the *ayin*” (*Turei Zahav*, *’Orah Hayyim* 216:12). Rabbi Yosef Te’omim, author of *Pri Megadim*, also advocates this reading with a *hiriq*, but he cites the opposing opinion of Solomon Hanau, that the correct reading is עֲשָׂבִי, and concludes: וכעת אין הדיוט כמוני מכריע (“but for now, a layman such as I cannot decide”). Hanau’s opinion was rejected by Rabbi Jacob Emden who, following the biblical form עֲשָׂבוֹת, established עֲשָׂבִי, with a *dagesh* in the *sin*.

In contemporary Ashkenazic prayer books that contain this blessing, the full spectrum of possibilities may be found: עֲשָׂבִי, עֲשָׂבִי, עֲשָׂבִי. It is difficult to make any definitive statement regarding the common usage, as this blessing is not commonly recited aloud. During the havdala ceremony on Saturday night, which is the usual opportunity to recite this blessing publicly, Ashkenazic custom, as opposed to Sefaradi and Yemenite, is to recite a generic blessing בּוֹרָא מִיְּמֵי בִשְׂמִים regardless of the source of the aromatic substance used (See *Shulḥan Arukh*, *Orah Hayyim*, 216:2; *Ba’er Heteb*, *ibid.*, 12).

Ilan Eldar

Eliezer Ben-Yehuda as a Language Planner

The revival of the Hebrew language in Palestine at the end of the 19th century was a successful act of language planning and is to be attributed on the whole to the forceful personality and activities of Ben-Yehuda

(1858–1923). Upon his arrival in Palestine (1881), Ben-Yehuda immediately set to work to implement the revival of Hebrew by modernizing the language; he also strove to gain social acceptance for the notion of a revived Hebrew. Although he was active in many different ways, Ben-Yehuda did not proceed in an organized and authoritative framework until the end of the first wave of Jewish immigration to Palestine (1882–1904).

This paper describes the elements of Ben-Yehuda’s program: the idea, the aim, and the means by which he acted in order to realize the Hebrew revival and to modernize the new spoken language. The article concludes with an appreciation of the life work of Ben-Yehuda as a language planner.

Rivka Bliboim

Lexical Reduplication in Hebrew: Old Form – New Meaning

This article discusses lexical reduplication in Hebrew. The common understanding of reduplication in Classical Hebrew is described and re-examined. New uses of lexical reduplication in Modern Hebrew are shown to indicate a prototypical use, reservation, and urgency. Reduplication of proper names is discussed here as well from semantic and pragmatic points of view.

Deciphering and using lexical reduplicated forms is, to some extent, culture-dependent. The reduplicated form “movie-movie” in English denotes a movie of the traditional kind, black and white, usually a drama, while in Hebrew, it is documented in my data as describing a movie of a regular length as opposed to a short documentary movie, in addition to the more prototypical use: a very good movie. Reduplicated forms are becoming more and more frequent, mainly in the prototypical use, especially by reduplicating nouns.

Rivka Tamir

A Linguistic Study of Early Realistic Literature as Reflected in the Works of the Group *Ha-Mahalax he-Hadash*

The present research aims to investigate the turning point which occurred in literary Hebrew during the transition from the Hebrew Enlightenment to the revival of Modern Hebrew, as seen in the works of the authors of *ha-Mahalax he-Hadash*, and to evaluate the linguistic role of the movement in creating a new literary style. The study examines the structural-morphemic aspect of the language. Despite its prominent biblical nature, the language of the the writers of *ha-Mahalax he-Hadash* is not the language of the Bible. Their distance from the Bible is expressed in the distribution, manner of usage, and introduction of post-biblical elements. The style reflected in the choice of linguistic material is the “mixed style”, which draws on various sources – classical, post-classical, and foreign. It is not based on moderation, but rather uses marked linguistic elements.

Amir Gaash

Some Remarks on the Cardinal Numerals in Contemporary Colloquial Hebrew (and in Neo-Arabic Dialects)

It is well known that there is a tendency among those who speak substandard Hebrew to neutralize the gender distinction in the cardinal numerals and to say, e.g., *šaloš banim/banot* (and also *šloša banim/banot*). Even among those who usually speak standard Hebrew and abstain from saying *šaloš banim* and *šloša banot* there is a tendency, however, to use certain substandard forms such as *šmona-esre*, *šmona-meʔot*, *šlošet abanot* and *šva-talafim*. These deviations from standard Hebrew are due mainly to paradigmatic levellings and other analogical changes; phonological factors, however, also play a role.

Neo-Arabic dialects exhibit some similar phenomena, such as the development of the *t* from a suffix of the numeral to a prefix of the counted noun. These similar phenomena are most likely due to independent, parallel developments.