

Introduction to Hebrew linguistics

March 31, 2011

Assignment for week 9

Deadline: April 6

Next week we learn about Modern/Israeli Hebrew. In the subsequent weeks, we learn about phonology (*klankleer*), morphology (*vormkunde*) and syntax. This assignment prepares the floor for all of these four topics.

In September, you began your studies with Modern/Israeli Hebrew (IH). This semester, you have also started learning Biblical Hebrew (BH). I am sure you have noticed a number of surprising similarities, and a number of surprising differences. Your assignment is to leaf through your two books (your Modern Hebrew book, and your Biblical Hebrew book), and to collect as many differences as you can.

Specifically, I would like to focus on the following questions:

- Phonology: are there consonants that appear in one version of Hebrew, but not in the other version? Hint: Hebrew orthography makes the distinction between different letters, and between different variants of some letters, but which are pronounced the same in Modern Hebrew. Does your BH book tell you what the differences were between them?
- Phonology: are there vowels that appear in one version of Hebrew, but not in the other version? Hint: compare the vocalization system (reflecting the Tiberian Hebrew tradition) to the modern Israeli pronunciation. Does your BH book tell you why there are so many vowel signs?
- Any interesting observation regarding other phonological features (e.g., stress)?
- Verbal morphology: Within the Qal (Pa'al) stem, are there any differences you observe? Are there forms that exist in one variety but not in the other? Are there forms that exist in both varieties, but are slightly different?
- Verbal morphology: Are there differences between the seven stems of BH and the seven stems of IH? Do you observe differences in irregular verbs?
- Morphology: any other interesting observation (e.g., vocalization of the article)?
- Syntax of possession: How is possession/ownership expressed in BH, how in IH?
- Syntax of subordinate clauses: What words are used to introduce a subordinate clause (*bijzin*) in IH, and which ones in BH?
- Do you have any other interesting observation in syntax (e.g., word order)?
- Lexicon: have you encountered words that have a different meaning in BH and in IH? Or meanings which are expressed with different words in BH than in IH?

You do not have to cover each of these topics, but at least four of them. You must include at least one topic in phonology, one in morphology and one in syntax.

As usual, send your answers (approx. 1 page) in an email to me (t.s.biro@uva.nl) by next Wednesday noon.