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Vorwort


An dieser Stelle ist vielen Menschen und Institutionen Dank zu sagen, ohne die die Sektion und der hier vorliegende Band nicht zustandegekommen wären:
Alternatives for the accusative in Biblical Hebrew

by Jan H. Kroeze, Potchefstroom

Introduction

In the traditional approach to Biblical Hebrew (BH) the concept accusative is often used in the same way as in classical languages and in other Semitic languages. However, the accusative should rather be seen as a primarily morphological concept because it refers to a certain group of case endings. In Biblical Hebrew case endings do not occur. A case can be made diachronically for the "accusative function" in BH on the basis of the argument that other Semitic languages (such as Akkadian, Ugaritic and Arabic) do have three cases. However, that doesn't help the student, and especially the beginner, a lot. Very often the student doesn't know these other Semitic languages. And he or she can't see the accusative in BH. It is simply not acceptable, and rather confusing, to teach the student of BH the whole Semitic system so that he or she can learn to guess which nouns and adjectives could have been in the accusative. Therefore, one should try to describe the BH system synchronically. This implies that the term and concept accusative cannot be used for BH any more.3

If the concept accusative can no longer be used, alternatives have to be found in order to replace such concepts as "accusative of the object", "adverbial accusative" and "double accusative". The best solution for this is to differentiate between the morphological, syntactic and semantic aspects associated with this concept.4

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1 The financial assistance of the Centre for Science Development for participating in the SBL International Meeting in Dublin, July 1996, is acknowledged. Opinions expressed in this publication and conclusions arrived at are those of the author and are not necessarily to be attributed to the Centre for Science Development.
3 Cf. Hoffmeier (1965, 7); Schweitzer (1975, 133).
4 Many of the ideas and examples below were found in the standard works of Waltke & O'Connor (1990, 161-186; chapter 10); Geuenich, Kautzsch & Cowley (1976, 350, 362-389; § 114, 117-121); Jolles & Maranta (1991, 440-463; § 125-128); and Williams (1980, 12-14; § 50-60). However, they were reinterpreted, reclassified and renamed according to the method proposed here. Some other examples were found by
Morphological aspects

Morphologically speaking there are no specific case endings in Biblical Hebrew. Basically, nouns which act as subjects, copula-predicates,5 direct and indirect objects, other complements of verbs, complements of prepositions, adjectives,6 postconstructs,7 nouns in apposition and uncombined elements (like the addressee8 or dislocative9) all look alike.

Compare, for example, the word שָׁבַע (a man) in the following clauses:

Therefore a man (subject) will leave his father and mother (Gen. 2:24).

Noah was a righteous man (copula-complement) (Gen. 6:9).

I have prepared a man (direct object) with the help of the Lord (Gen. 4:1).

And he gave every one (indirect object) his piece over against each other (Gen. 15:10).10

She came to a man (complement of verb)11

Because she was taken from a man (complement of preposition) (Gen. 2:23).

With regard to every one (adjunct), you must write his name on his rod (Num. 17:11).12

And there Judah saw the daughter of a Canaanite man (postconstruct) (Gen. 38:2).

However, the particle פָּדַק is used to mark definite direct objects.13

Bring out the man (Judges 19:22).

פָּדַק is also seldom used to mark other definite nominal complements, indirect objects and adjuncts.14

And the houses of the Egyptians will be full of flies (complement) (Ex. 8:17).

God gave me (indirect object) a good gift (Gen. 30:20).

And unleavened bread shall be eaten for seven days (adjunct) (Ex. 13:7).

There are exceptions to this rule, especially in poetry15: פָּדַק is not always used before definite direct objects, complements, indirect objects and nominal adjuncts.16

You will not build Me the house (object) to live in (1 Chr. 17:4).

And the houses of the Egyptians will be full of flies (complement) (Ex. 8:17).

And I will give this people (indirect object) grace (Ex. 3:21).

Is there a place in the house (adjunct) of your father for us to spend the night? (Gen. 24:23).

On the other hand פָּדַק is used sometimes before indefinite direct objects and nominal adjuncts (the latter is very rare, if it occurs at all).

14 A complement is an obligatory constituent in the verb phrase. An adjunct is an omisssible (adverbial) phrase in the verb phrase. See below.
15 Cf. Walke & O’Connor (1990, 162).
16 פָּדַק is even sometimes used to mark the subject; the copula-complement, a word in apposition to these, or a dislocated constituent (cf. Walke & O’Connor 1990, 182-183).
Alternatives for the accusative in Biblical Hebrew

If the snake bit any man (Num. 21:9)
...to know a word on time (?) for an exhausted person (adjunct) (v. 56:4)
(transl. dubious)

In the case of strings of objects נָעַרָיוֹ can appear before the first, some, or all of the members of the string. It is sometimes not repeated before the different elements constituting a group. Therefore, it can also be used to differentiate between groups in a string of objects.

And your fields,
...your good vineyards and olive orchards,
he will take (1 Sam. 8:14)

פַּרְעֹה can also mark words in apposition to other words marked with the same particle.
...And I will lead out my hosts, my people
(Ex. 7:4)

Pronominal objects are expressed by נָעַרָיוֹ in combination with the relevant pronominal suffix, by נָעַרָיוֹ plus independent pronouns, or by a pronominal suffix following the subject suffix to the verb. They are by definition definite.

Because they did not reject you (1 Sam. 8:7)
And if you take this one also from me
(Gen. 44:29)
Because we did not seek Him according to the stipulation
(1 Chr. 15:13)

If the direct object, complement, indirect object or adjunct is not clearly marked, the reader has to rely on other means to identify it, such as syntactic analysis and the presence or absence of other surface structure phenomena. With regard to the last-mentioned, these elements do not have to agree in person, gender and number with the verb (as in the case of the subject). In other words, if a noun disagrees with the verb, it cannot be the subject, and the chances are better that it will be the direct object, complement, indirect object or adjunct than if it agrees with the verb.

If a man (3 m. sg.) takes a wife (f. sg.)
(Deut. 22:13)

And they came (3 m. pl.) to the land (l. sg.) Canaan (Gen. 45:25)
And I will give (1 c. sg.) this people (m. sg., not first person) favor in the sight of the Egyptians (Ex. 3:21)
And You must hear (2 m. sg.) in heaven
(m. pl.) (1 Kings 8:52)

Another surface marker of the direct object, complement, indirect object and adjunct is word order. If the word order is unmarked, the direct object or complement comes directly after the verb and subject, followed by the indirect object and the adjunct as the last element in the clause. Like adverbs, nominal adjuncts very often precede the verb.

בְּעָלָם אֲנִי יָדַעְתִּי אֲנִי מְאָמַר מָצַע אֵלֶּה יָבֹא יָבֹא יָכָב And now, may the pharaoh (subject) see an intelligent and wise man (direct object) (Gen. 41:53)
בָּרֹא תֵבָּא הַגָּלְעָד The meadows are clothed with flocks
(complement) (Ps. 65:14)
בָּרֹא תֵבָּא הַגָּלְעָד וְנַעַרְתַּתִּי הַגָּלְעָד And I will give favor (direct object) to this people (indirect object) in the sight of the Egyptians (Ex. 3:21)
בָּרֹא תֵבָּא הַגָּלְעָד אֵלֶּה לְכֵל הֲלָה And you will not walk in height
(haughtily) (adjunct) (Mic. 2:3)
בָּרֹא תֵבָּא הַגָּלְעָד וְנַעְּרַתְתִּי הַגָּלְעָד And I will strike the earth (object) with a curse (adjunct) (Mal. 3:24)
בָּרֹא תֵבָּא הַגָּלְעָד וְנַעְּרַתְתִּי הַגָּלְעָד They will live many ages (adjunct precedes verb) (Hos. 3:4)

Cognate objects and adjuncts are etymologically related to the verb.

You sow your seed (Deut. 11:10)
He will be buried in the grave i with the burial of an ass (Jer. 22:19)

Syntactic aspects

Syntactically speaking verbs can govern nouns directly (without the help of prepositions). These are noun phrases in the verb phrase, namely nominal

17 Cf. Van der Merwe, Naadé & Kroene (1996, 195: § 33.4.2 (iv), (v)).
20 The so-called etymological figure of speech.
complements and adjuncts. Complements form part of the nucleus of the verb phrase. They cannot be omitted without changing the basic meaning of the sentence, making the sentence ungrammatical, or changing the classification of the main verb (transitive, intransitive, copulative or prepositional). They are obligatory constituents.

**Direct objects** are nominal complements of transitive verbs.

Nouns following intransitive verbs of being full and empty (verba copiae, inopiae, abundandi, deficiendi), verbs of being clothed or “unclad” (verba indumenti, exuendi), verbs of living or staying at a certain place, and verbs of moving from or to a certain place are also **nominal complements**.

In the passive the direct object becomes the subject.

- **Direct objects** appear after causative and factitive verbs, verbs of inflicting something upon someone, verbs of answering, commanding, asking and calling someone something, and appointing someone as something. With causative and factitive verbs one object is the object of the causative idea and the other is the object of the action. Both objects are second arguments.

If a di-transitive verb is transformed to a passive, the first object becomes the subject, but the second remains an object.

The traditional category of indirect object can also be expressed by a nominal complement, e.g. after verbs of giving or speaking to. Syntactically the difference between the direct object or other complement and the indirect object is that the former is the second argument or syntagm of the verb and the latter is the third. In the passive indirect objects remain indirect objects. (They are also distinguished on a semantic level: the indirect object is the receiver or addressee.)

And the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah sat each on his throne clothed with robes (complement) (2 Chron. 18:9)

Nominal adjuncts are optional, omissible noun phrases in the verb phrase which act as adverbials. They add additional information to the nucleus of the clause. They may be omitted without changing the basic meaning of the sentence, making the sentence ungrammatical or changing the classification of the main verb. Traditionally nominal adjuncts were described as "adverbial accusatives."26

And I will give this people grace (Ex. 3:21)

Because you gave me the land of the Nephilim (Josh. 15:19)

And they cried to you25 (object supposed) (Neh. 9:28)

Nominal adjuncts stay adjuncts in the passive.

A nominal direct object and nominal adjunct can occur, especially after verbs of making something out of something, doing something with something.

And it is published (3 m.sg.) upon them with the punishment (not subject - L) of all people (Num. 16:29)

And the boy was serving Yahweh (object) in the house / presence (adjunct) of Eli the priest (1 Sam. 2:11) (cf. 1 Sam. 7:16)

He made its posts (object) / of silver (adjunct) (cf. 1 Sam. 7:16)

And I will smite the land (object) / with a curse (adjunct) (Mal. 3:24) (cf. Judges 8:7)

Semantic aspects

On the semantic level a direct object can have various functions, namely the affected or effected patient, agent after a passive verb (rare) and role.

And Yahweh God took Adam (affected patient) (Gen. 2:15)

23 Indirect objects are normally expressed by preposition phrases (e.g. with ל), but this paper only deals with noun phrases in the indirect object function.

24 The indirect object must be selected as third argument by a verb and therefore be part of the nucleus of the verb phrase. If the interested party is added as additional information (extra-nuclear) it must be categorised syntactically as an adjunct.

25 Receiver = recipient.

26 Perhaps the object suffixes should rather be called complement suffixes.

27 An adjunct is a non-verbal, optional and omissible adverbial phrase in the verb phrase, which adds additional information to the nucleus of the clause. Adjuncts can also be expressed by other means such as preposition phrases, but this paper only deals with nominal adjuncts.

28 However, not all "adverbial accusatives" are adjuncts (cf. Waltke & O'Connor 1990, 169). Some are complements, e.g. after verbs of movement.

29 There is no absolute connection between the syntactic positions (of second and third argument or satellite) and the semantic functions in these positions. Therefore it comes as no surprise that the same semantic functions appear in different syntactic positions.

30 Compare Dix (1989, 101-105, 155-158, 206-208) and Dix (1978, 26) for the definitions of the semantic functions.

31 Patient = goal. The affected or effected patient can also be marked by the preposition ל, ל(ו), ל, "ל(ו), ל(ו), ל or ל (prep.). Such a preposition phrase is often called a "preposition object." This is a semantic use of the term object which should be reserved for a syntactic category. Preposition phrases marking the patient can be categorised syntactically as complements because they form part of the nucleus of the verb phrase. They cause the main verb to be categorised as a preposition verb. Some verbs can take either a direct object or a preposition complement (Waltke & O'Connor 1990, 165; Murtooks 1979, 428).

32 Role = quality, i.e. capacity, function, authority.

33 The affected patient exists before and apart from the action.
In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth (effected patient) (Gen. 1:1)

And he built the stones (effected patient) into an altar (effected patient) in the name of Yahweh (1 Kings 18:32)

You will not be forgotten by Me (agent) (Isa. 44:21)

And he appointed his sons as judges (role) over Israel (1 Sam. 8:1)

Internal objects do not exist apart from the action. However, semantically they can be classified as effected goals, although they do not exist concretely.

When I Daniel saw the vision (Dan. 8:15)

Cognate objects can be affected or effected patients.

You saw your seed (affected patient) (Deut. 1:10)

Let the earth produce vegetation (effected patient) (Gen. 1:11)

Objects can be internal and cognate.

Your old men shall dream dreams (affected patient) (Joel 3:1)

In the incomplete passive the patient is still marked by יָנָה, and the object of the active sentence is not transformed into the subject of the passive sentence.

And the words of Esau were told to Rebekah (Gen. 27:42)

The phenomenon that subjects of intransitive verbs and verbless clauses are sometimes marked by יָנָה/יָנָא is similar to this. Very often such subjects have the semantic function of processed or zero. Semantically there are close similarities between patient, zero and processed arguments; for example, they are treated in the same category by Fillmore. From this it can be concluded that יָנָה/יָנָא sometimes functions more as a semantic marker, marking [-control] semantic functions, although it is mainly used as a syntactic marker, marking direct objects.

And the iron (processed) fell into the water (2 Kings 6:5)

וַיָאֵשׁ אפִּיךָ לְרָאשׁ (Num. 5:10)

Proper infinitives, which syntactically serve as objects of the main verb, carry the main predicate semantically, while the main verb is to be interpreted semantically as an operator.

We cannot speak to you anything good or bad (Gen. 24:50)

Other complements can have the semantic functions of content, material, location, direction, source, route and interested party.

Your hands are full of blood (content) (Isa. 1:15)

The pastures are clothed with small cattle (material) (Ps. 65:14)

And he sat at the entrance of the tent (location) (Gen. 18:1)

And they came to the land of Canaan (direction) (Gen. 45:25)

They went out of the city (source) (Gen. 44:4)

Your going through this large wilderness (route) (Deut. 2:7)

And I will be an enemy for your enemies (interested party - disadvantaged) (Ex. 23:22)

Indirect objects can fulfill the semantic functions of receiver and addressee.

And I will give this people (receiver) favor (Ex. 5:21)

37 A subgroup of regard (or reference).
38 A subgroup of instrument.
39 Route = path.
40 Interested party = beneficiary. However, the interested party can be the advantaged or disadvantaged.
Who will give me (receiver) thorns and weeds? (Isa. 27:4)

And they cried to you (addressee) (object supposed) (Neh. 9:28)

Nominal adjuncts can fulfill the semantic functions of interested party, location, direction, time when, duration, measure, cause, instrument, medium, manner, material, regard, and purpose.

Did you really fast on my behalf (interested party - advantaged) (Zech. 7:5)

And the voice was heard in the house (location) of the pharaoh (Gen. 45:16)

The famine will pursue you into Egypt (direction) (Jer. 42:16)

This year (time when) you will die (Jer. 28:16)

Six days long (duration) you shall work (Ex. 20:9)

The water rose upwards, fifteen cubits (measure) (Gen. 7:20)

You will not come there for fear of briars and thorns (cause) (Isa. 7:25)

Each hunts his brother with a net (instrument) (Mic. 7:2)

God anointed you with oil (medium) (Ps. 45:6)

Do you judge people with uprightness (manner)? (Ps. 58:2)

An internal nominal adjunct is an omissible noun which is governed directly by a verb and which has almost the same meaning as the verb. It does not exist apart from the action. It is used to emphasise the verbal idea. It can fulfill semantic functions such as manner, instrument, location, purpose. It is very often qualified by an adjective.

You know with understanding (manner) (Job 38:4)

The internal adjunct after verbs of speaking and crying has the semantic function of instrument.

And they cried in my ears with a loud voice (Ezek. 8:18)

A cognate adjunct can have semantic functions such as location or manner.

He will be buried in the grave (location) with the burial (manner) of an ass (Jer. 22:19)

Adjuncts can be internal and cognate.

For he loved him with the love (manner) of his soul (= as himself) (1 Sam. 20:17)

There they feared (with a fear) (Ps. 14:5)

And he was lying down for the noonday rest (purpose) (2 Sam. 4:5)

Conclusion

As an alternative to the traditional category of "accusative" in BH, every noun which is governed directly by a verb can be analysed and categorised morphologically, syntactically and semantically. Morphologically such nouns can appear with or without the marker רַמַּיִּים. (As with all other nouns they can be singular, plural, dual: masculine, feminine; status absolutus, constructus, determinatus or pronominalis.) Syntactically these nouns can be direct objects, other complements, indirect objects and adjuncts. Semantically
they can fulfill the functions of patient (affected/effected), receiver, addressee, location, direction, source, regard, content, measure, interested party, instrument, material, medium, manner, role, route, time, duration, purpose and cause, and it is possible that even more semantic functions could be fulfilled by them. Such nouns can thus be analysed in a clause as follows:

And they will bring back to us a word (= answer) concerning the path (Deut. 1:22)

Morphology: יָשָׁב + def. noun יָשָׁב + indef. noun יָשָׁב + 1 pl.
Syntactic function: adjunct direct object indirect object
Semantic function: regard patient receiver

Bibliography

GKC. See Gesenius.
Summary

This volume contains the contributions of the Hebrew grammar section: The Next Generation of Projects of the International Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature (SBL) 1996 in Dublin. Papers mainly from the younger generation deal here with hebraistic problems and debate them closely within the context of general linguistics and semitic studies. The individual papers cover a variety of hebraistic and linguistic research fields: in addition to syntax, semantic questions as well as text-linguistic and pragmatic aspects are discussed. The present volume thus provides an overview of main problems of current research on hebraistic grammar.

Zusammenfassung

In diesem Band liegen die Beiträge der Section Hebrew Grammar: The Next Generation of Projects des International Meeting der Society of Biblical Literatur (SBL) 1996 in Dublin vor.