Temporal adverbial expressions (Modern Hebrew)

Temporal adverbial expressions have been classified in various ways, depending on which of the Reichenbachian temporal intervals they modify: event time E (the time of the described event / state) or reference time R (the time which the statement is about) (→ Tense) (Reichenbach 1947, Hornstein 1990, Klein 1994).

Temporal adverbial expressions modifying R are referred to as positional adverbs, if they refer to points in time, and as frame adverbs (Bonomi 1995), if they refer to intervals. They can be deictic, e.g., עכשיו *ʿaxšav* 'now', היום *hayom* 'today', מחר *maxar* 'tomorrow', הבוקר *haboqer* 'this morning', or context dependent, e.g., ביום שני *beyom šeni* 'on Monday', בשעה תשע *bešaʿa tešaʿ* 'at 9 o'clock'. Adverbial expressions modifying R also include expression which are neither deictic nor strictly context dependent, e.g., באלפיים ושתים-עשרה *beʾalpayim ušte(y)m-ʿesre* 'in 2012', בצעירותה *beṣeʿiruta* 'in her youth', כש- *kše-* 'when'-clauses. The extent of R, the reference time interval, can be measured by adverbial expressions such as: "זמן"-...-במשך *bemešex-…-"zman"* 'for-X-"time"', e.g., במשך שעתיים *bemešex šaʿataim* 'for two hours'.

Temporal adverbial expressions modifying E can be locational, i.e., locate the time of the described event. These adverbial expressions are distinct from those modifying R:

(1)   a.   ?...ומה עשית אחרי-הצהריים

              ve-ma   *ʿasi-t*   *ʾaxare-ha-ṣohorayim*

              and-what   do.PAST-2FS.   after.GEN-the-noon

'…and what did you do in the afternoon?'

b.　רצתי בפארק מחמש.

raṣ-ti　　　*ba-parq*　　*mi-xameš*

run.PAST-1CS.　　in.the-park　from-five

'I ran in the park from five o'clock.'

In this example, מחמש *mi-xameš* 'from five o'clock' indicates the time E took place. The first part of the dialog (1a) fixes the reference time as the afternoon of the day the dialog took place.

　　Adverbial expressions modifying the extent of the described event or phases thereof have been mentioned in the entry on Aspect (→Aspect, section 2), and consist in: "זמן"-...-במשך *bemešex-...-"zman"* 'for-x-"time"', "זמן"-...-תוך *tox-...-"zman"* 'in-x-"time"'. Whether the adverbial expression "זמן"-...-במשך *bemešex-...-"zman"* 'for-x-"time"' measure E or R depends on context but also, to some extent, on word order:

(2)　a.　רצתי בפארק במשך שלוש שעות.

raṣ-ti　　*ba-parq*　　*bemešex šaloš šaʿot*

run.PAST-1CS. in.the-park　for three hours

'I ran in the park for three hours.'

b.　במשך שלוש שנים, רצתי בפארק

bemešex šaloš šanim, raṣ-ti　　*ba-parq*

for three years,　run.PAST-1CS. in.the-park

'For three years, I ran in the park.'

c.　במשך שלוש שנים, רצתי בפארק שלוש שעות (כל יום).

bemešex šaloš šanim, raṣ-ti　　*ba-parq*

for three years,   run.PAST-1CS. in.the-park

bemešex šaloš šaˤot   (kol yom)

for three hours   (every day)

'For three years I ran in the park for three hours (every day).'

Example (2a) illustrates a clause final measure adverbial, which is most readily understood as measuring the time of running. In (2b), the measure adverbial is most readily understood as providing the reference time; the adverbial expression in this case indicates a time span about which the assertion is made. It doesn't directly measure the event time. This example can be understood habitually, where repeated running occurred during a period of three years. Finally, in (2c), two measure adverbial expressions can be combined in the same clause, each modifying a different time interval: the length of an episodic event of running, and the length of the interval about which the assertion is made.

Adverbial expressions can also count occurrences of the same event, e.g., פעמיים *paˤamayim* 'twice'; or quantify over them: תמיד *tamid* 'always', בדרך-כלל *bederex-klal* 'usually', לעתים-קרובות *leˤitim-qrovot* 'often', פעם בשבוע *paˤam bešavuˤa* 'once a week' (de Swart 1993).

Finally, there are perfect-level adverbial expressions such as כבר *kvar* 'already', מאז... *meˀaz...* 'since', מזה-....-"זמן" *mize-X-"zman* "'for-x-time', בדיוק (*bidiyuq) ˤaxšav* '(just) now', הרגע *haregaˤ* 'this minute', which trigger the perfect interpretation (→Aspect, section 5).

For a detailed exemplification of temporal adverbial expressions throughout the Modern Hebrew temporal system see Glinert (1989), Muchnik (1989), Tsivoni (1993).

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