

Stative (iii) Modern Hebrew

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The stative-dynamic contrast is one of the aspectual distinctions among verbs. Stative verbs denote situations which involve neither agentivity nor change over time (Vendler 1957, Dowty 1979). Distinguishing stative from dynamic verbs is complicated by the fact that some stative verbs can also be interpreted as inchoative or agentive, i.e., as non-stative. Examples are כעס *ka'as* 'be angry' (also inchoative 'get angry'), הפריע *hifria* 'disturb' (also agentive), רכב *raxav* 'ride' (also agentive); the stative "be in a riding position" interpretation of the latter is illustrated in the sentence החדש החדש רוכב על בסיס הישן *ha-binyan ha-xadaš roxev 'al bsis ha-yašan* 'the new building rides on top of the old one'.

Stative verbs are derived in all *binyanim*. Listed below are some classes of Modern Hebrew stative verbs, starting with mental verbs and spatial verbs, which denote parallel relations in two different domains, and continuing with various other classes of verbs.

(1) Mental verbs

a Mental position

אהב *ahav* 'love', קינא *qine* 'be jealous', כיבד *kibed* 'respect', ידע *yada* 'know', חשב *xāšav* 'think', האמין *he'emin* 'believe', פחד *paḥad* 'fear', בטח *baṭaḥ* 'be secure', כאב *ka'av* 'ache', נכסף *nixsaf* 'yearn'

b Mental effect

משך *mašax* 'attract', דחה *daxa* 'repel', ריתק *riteq* 'fascinate', העיק *he'iq* 'burden', הכביד *hixbid* 'weigh', קשה *qaša* 'be difficult', נעם *na'am* 'please', שעמם *ši'amem* 'bore'

(2) Spatial verbs

a Spatial position

ישב *yašav* 'sit', עמד *amad* 'stand', שכב *šaxav* 'lie', תלה *tala* 'hang', שכן *šaxan* 'dwell', שרר *sarar* 'prevail', הוסיף *histarea* 'extend', הציג *hitnoseš* 'be on display', עלה *hitnase* 'rise', בלט *balat* 'be prominent', חי *xay* 'live', נחה *naxax* 'be present', שהה *šaha* 'spend time'

b Spatial effect

חסם *ḡasam* 'block', חיבר *ḡiber* 'connect', חצה *ḡaṣa* 'cross', השלים *hišlim* 'complete', הקיף *hiqif* 'surround', עטף *ataf* 'wrap', מילא *mile* 'fill', גדש *gadaš* 'stuff', כלל *kalal* 'include', גבל *gaval* 'border', חלש *ḡalaš* 'control', תמך *tamax* 'support'

(3) Comparison verbs

עלה על *ala* 'al' 'surpass', נפל מ- *nafal me-* 'be inferior to', קדם *qadam* 'precede', דמה *dama* 'resemble', נבדל *nivdal* 'differ', השתווה *hištava* 'equal'

(4) Measure verbs

עלה *ala* 'cost', שקל *šaqal* 'weigh', ארך *arax* 'last'

(5) Constitutive verbs

מלך *malax* 'rule', שלט *šalaṭ* 'govern', כיבב *kixev* 'star', שימש *šimeš* 'serve', פאר *pe'er* 'glorify', קישט *qišeṭ* 'adorn', הגן *hegen* 'protect', סיכן *siken* 'endanger', אפיין *ifyen* 'characterize', היווה *hiva* 'constitute'

(6) Aspectual/modal verbs

היה *haya* 'be', המשיך *himšix* 'continue', יכול *yaxol* 'can', הצטרך *hištarex* 'had to'

(7) Emission verbs

זהר *zahar* 'glow', הבריק *hivriq* 'shine', הבהיק *hivhiq* 'sparkle', נצץ *našaš* 'glitter', קרן *qaran* 'radiate', האיר *he'ir* 'illuminate', הסריח *hisriax*/ הבאיש *hiv'iš*/ הצחין *hišxin* 'stink', רעש *ra'aš* 'be noisy', פרה *paraḡ* 'blossom'

In some languages, the stative/ dynamic distinction is morphologically expressed. In Biblical Hebrew, many stative verbs lack ordinary participles, maybe for the same reason that English lacks such participles: *be knowing, *be fearing, *be wanting (Hatav 1997); the participles of these stative verbs are derived in many cases in an adjectival pattern, e.g., , ירא *yāre* 'be afraid', חָפֵץ *ḡāfeš* 'want'. In Modern Hebrew, there is no morphological characterization of stative verbs. The replacement of present participles by adjectives, which characterizes Biblical Hebrew stative verbs, is found in Modern Hebrew for some stative verbs, but equally for dynamic verbs as well and thus cannot serve to morphologically distinguish stative from dynamic verbs. The stative verbs רעב *ra'av* 'hungered', חסר *ḡasar* 'was missing', שמח *samax*

'rejoiced', נעם *na'am* 'pleased', קשה *qaša* 'was difficult' indeed have no ordinary participles, only corresponding adjectives: רעב *ra'ev* 'hungry', חסר *xaser* 'missing', שמה *sameax* 'glad', נעים *na'im* 'pleasant', קשה *qaše* 'difficult'. But the same is true for the dynamic verbs רפה *rafa* 'loosened', שמן *šaman* 'fattened', עבה *ava* 'thickened', יפה *yafa* 'became beautiful', יבש *yavaš* 'dried', מלא *mala* 'filled', which have no active participles either, only the corresponding adjectives רפה *rafe* 'loose', שמן *šamen* 'fat', עבה *ave* 'thick', יפה *yafe* 'beautiful', יבש *yaveš* 'dry', מלא *male* 'full'. Similarly, the *i-a* vowel pattern which characterizes imperfective stative verbs in Biblical Hebrew is found in Modern Hebrew with some stative verbs (ישכב *yiškav* 'will lie', ירכב *yirkav* 'will ride'), but is also found with dynamic verbs (יקטן *yiqtan* 'will shrink', ילמד *yilmad* 'will study', יגבר *yigbar* 'will vanquish'). The disappearance of the morphological distinctions is due to the diachronic reinterpretation of many stative verbs as dynamic change of state verbs.

Nevertheless, stative verbs are definitely distinguished from dynamic verbs within the grammar of Modern Hebrew. Temporal adverbials of various sorts are interpreted differently in the environment of stative and dynamic verbs. These differences follow from the semantic differences between the verbs. Stative verbs denote situations which do not involve change in time. As such, any instant at which the state holds must be preceded and followed by other instants where the state holds as well. Accordingly, states do not have initial or terminal points (Smith 1997). In A and B below, the implications are discussed for the interpretation of punctual adverbials. Moreover, stative verbs can always be interpreted imperfectively; the implications for the interpretation of frame adverbials is discussed in C.

A. States do not have initial points

All dynamic verbs allow punctual adverbials (at midnight, at 2:00, punctual *when*-clauses) to be interpreted as the initial time of the event; verbs disallowing such interpretation are all stative (Boneh and Doron 2008). The following examples show that the dynamic verb חייך *xiyex* 'smile' can be understood with the punctual adverbial 'when Dani entered' coinciding with the initial point of the smiling event. The stative verb שרר *sarar* 'prevail' cannot be interpreted with the adverbial as point-initial, and is only interpreted with the adverbial denoting a point of time internal to the state. This interpretation is also available for the progressive reading of the dynamic verb.

(8) a dynamic verb 'smile'

כשדני נכנס, רותי חייכה.

kše- dani nixnas, dina xiyxa
when-Dani enter-PAST Dina smile-PAST

Initial point:

'When dani entered, Dina smiled'.

Internal point:

'When dani entered, Dina was smiling'.

b stative verb 'prevail'

כשדני נכנס, שרר שקט.

kše- dani nixnas, sarar šeqeṭ
when-Dani enter-PAST prevail-PAST silence

No "initial-point" reading:

*'When Dani entered, silence prevailed'.

Internal point:

'When Dani entered, silence was prevailing'.

B. States do not have terminal points

This test is based on the adverb כבר *kvar* 'already', which denotes a perspective time on the described event (Sevi 2008). Dynamic past-tense verbs require the termination of the event before the perspective time, and can be inflected in the past tense even in case the perspective overlaps speech time. Stative verbs do not have a termination point, and thus must internally include the perspective time. For the tense to be past, the perspective time cannot be interpreted as overlapping speech time, but as a (contextually given) earlier time.

The following example shows the dynamic verb דיבר *diber* 'speak', though unbounded in nature (atelic), must be interpreted as terminated when modified by the adverb כבר *kvar*, whereas the stative verb חצה *xāša* 'cross' in (1b) forces the interpretation of כבר *kvar* not as speech-time but as a (contextually given) prior time.

(9) a dynamic verb 'speak'

דני כבר דיבר

dani kvar diber

Dani already speak-PAST

termination: (*kvar* interpreted at speech-time)

'Dani has already spoken'.

b stative verb 'cross'

נהר הסן כבר חצה את פריס

nehar ha-Seine kvar xaša 'et Paris

river the-Seine already cross-PAST ACC Paris

no termination: (*kvar* interpreted prior to speech-time)

'(At that contextually given point in time) The Seine already crossed Paris'.

C. States can always be viewed imperfectively

All stative verbs can be interpreted imperfectively, i.e., they allow frame adverbials (last month, in 1980) to be properly included within the described situation. All verbs which require a perfective reading, where the described situation is properly included in the frame adverbial, are dynamic (Boneh and Doron 2009).

In the following example, the dynamic verb can only describe an event which is temporally included with the frame adverbial 'in the nineties'. The stative verb describes a state which can stand in any type of overlap relation with the frame adverbial (Kamp and Reyle 1993), and in particular can properly include it.

(10) a dynamic verb 'build'

מוזיאון גוגנהיים בבילבאו נבנה בשנות התשעים.

muze'on Guggenheim be-Bilbao nivna bi-šnot-ha-tiš'im

museum Guggenheim in-Bilbao be-built-PAST in-years-the-nineties

Perfective reading required:

'The Guggenheim museum in Bilbao was built within the nineties'.

b stative verb 'enjoy'

בילבאו נהנתה מפיתוח מואץ בשנות התשעים.

Bilbao nehenta mi-pituax mu'aš bi-šnot-ha-tiš'im

Bilbao enjoy-PAST from-development accelerated in-years-the-nineties

Imperfective reading allowed:

'Bilbao enjoyed accelerated development all through the nineties'.

In sum, stative and dynamic verbs induce different interpretations of temporal adverbials. These differences can serve to distinguish pairs of stative/ dynamic verbs of similar meanings, e.g., נצץ *naṣaṣ* 'glitter' (stative)/ ניצנץ *niṣneṣ* 'flicker' (dynamic).

Edit Doron (The Hebrew University in Jerusalem)

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