Participle (Modern Hebrew)

Edit Doron (to appear in the Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics, Brill)

A participle can be characterized as a non-finite form of the verb inflected for a combination of nominal and verbal features. Both the nominal features and the verbal features of participles vary among languages. In Modern Hebrew, nominal features are: number and gender agreement but not person, state morphology: absolute/ construct/ emphatic, and lack of tense variation. The verbal features are: the obligatory projection of arguments, accusative marking of the direct object, adverbial modification, tense-marking, and morphological derivation within the verbal *binyan* system. It is the nominal features of the participle which account for its non-finite nature.

Participles are morphologically derived within the verbal *binyanim* system [cross reference: *binyanim*], and thus vary in form along the two dimensions of the verbal system: agency (simple/ intensive/ causative) and diathesis/ grammatical voice (active/ passive/ middle). The marked agency templates, intensive and causative, mark all their participles with the prefix -מ *m-*. This can be seen in the table below, which shows the participle templates together with their traditional Hebrew grammar appellations.

VOICE	Simple		Intensive		Causative	
Active	o-e a-e	*poʿel* *paʿel*	m+a-e	*mefaʿel*	m+(h)+a-i	*mafʿil*
Passive	a-u	*paʿul*	m+u-a	*mefuʿal*	m+(h)+u-a	*mufʿal*
Middle	n+i-a	*nifʿal*	m+t+ i-a	*mitpaʿel*	--	

The participles derived from the root בקע √ *bqʿ* 'breach' by all the different templates are shown in the following table. For most roots, the table is only partially filled:

VOICE	Simple	Intensive	Causative
Active	boqeaʿ 'breaking through'	mevaqeaʿ 'cracking (tr)'	mavqiaʿ 'breaching (tr)'
Passive	baquaʿ 'broken through'	mevuqaʿ 'cracked'	muvqaʿ 'breached'
Middle	nivqaʿ 'breaching (intr)'	mitbaqeaʿ 'cracking (intr)'	---

Participles may function in the clause as a predicate, both primary predicate (1a) and secondary predicate (1b), or as a nominal modifier (2a-b). The difference between the modifier and predicate function of participles is morphologically marked (Doron and Reintges 2010). Modifiers are always inflected with emphatic-state morphology (proclitic -ה *ha-*), whereas predicates are unmarked (absolute state). The emphatic-state inflection of the participial modifier functions as a marker of subordination, unlike in nouns and adjectives, where it typically functions as a definite article. In (2a), the participle modifies a definite nominal, קופות הגמל *qupot ha-gemel* 'the pension funds', and in (2b) it modifies an indefinite nominal, קופות גמל *qupot gemel* 'pension funds', yet in both cases, irrespective of definiteness, the participle is emphatic. Thus, in the participle, emphatic state does not mark definiteness. Emphatic-state inflection differs from the complementizer of relative clauses: participial modifiers are not clausal, and emphatic-state inflects the lexical participle itself rather than combining with a phrase like a complementizer.

(1) a. קופות הגמל **מציעות** את שיעורי הריבית הטובים ביותר.

  qupot   ha-gemel   **maṣiʿ-ot**   ʾet šiʿurey   ha-ribit
  funds-CNSTR the-pension **offer-PTCP.F.PL** ACC rates-CNSTR the-interest

  ha-tovim beyoter
  the-good most

  'Pension funds offer the best interest rates.'

  b. היא דיברה לאט, **מסבירה** את עצמה מיליון פעם.

  hi dibr-a   leʾaṯ, **masbir-a**   ʾet ʿaṣma
  she speak-PAST.3F.SG slowly, **explain-PTCP.F.SG** ACC herself

  milyon paʿam
  million time

  'She spoke slowly, explaining herself a million times.'

(2) a. אנו ממליצים על קופות הגמל **המציעות** את שיעורי הריבית הטובים ביותר.

  ʾanu mamliṣ-im   ʿal qupot   ha-gemel
  we recommend-PTCP.M.PL on funds-CNSTR the-pension

  ha-maṣiʿ-ot   ʾet šiʿurey   ha-ribit   ha-tovim beyoter
  EMPH-offer-PTCP.F.PL ACC rates-CNSTR the-interest the-good most

  'We recommend the pension funds offering the best interest rates.'

b. .אנו ממליצים על קופות גמל **המציעות** את שעורי הריבית הטובים ביותר

anu mamliṣ-im ʿal qupot gemel
we recommend-PTCP. M.PL on funds-CNSTR pension

ha-maṣiʿ-ot ʿet šiʿurey ha-ribit ha-tovim beyoter
EMPH-offer-PTCP.F.PL ACC rates-CNSTR the-interest the-good most

'We recommend pension funds offering the best interest rates.'

Modern Hebrew participles convey temporal information in much the same way as finite verb forms. Though there is no temporal variation in the participle, temporal reference is nevertheless encoded. Participles which function as primary predicates of main clause receive a present tense interpretation. Participles which function as secondary predicates and as modifiers are interpreted according to the rules of sequence of tense (Sharvit 2003). For example, the participle מסבירה *masbira* 'explaining' which functions as a secondary predicate in example (1b) above is interpreted as simultaneous with the past-tense interpretation of the main verb דיברה *dibra* 'spoke'. Sequence of tense rules are different for modifiers. In the second sentence of example (3) below, the modidying participle היושבים *ha-yošvim* 'sitting' is interpreted as temporally overlapping speech-time, and not simultaneously with the past-tense interpretation of the main verb נפצעו *nifṣeʿu* 'were wounded'. Pragmatically, a simultaneous reading for the participle would be preferred in the context of the first sentence in (3). Nevertheless, the only possible reading for the participle is with speech-time interpretation.

(3) .אתמול פגעה רכבת במכונית. אנשים **היושבים** במכונית נפצעו בתאונה

ʾetmol pagʿ-a rakevet be-mexonit.
yesterday hit-PAST.3F.SG train.F.SG at-car

ʾanašim **ha-yošv-im** b-a-mexonit nifṣeʿ-u
people-M.PL **EMPH-sit-PTCP.M.PL** in-the-car wound-PAST.3M.PL

b-a-teʾuna
in-the-accident

'A train hit a car yesterday. People sitting (now) in the car were wounded in the accident.'

In addition to participles, Modern Hebrew also has adjectives (and nouns) derived from participles. This derivation is possible for many, though not all, participles. Passive participles, for example, only allow the derivation of adjectives for verbs which have states associated with them (Doron 1999). In the case of dynamic verbs, these are resultative states. The examples in (4) illustrate verbs with a resultative state, and thus both participles and participial adjectives are derived from the verb. The verbs in (5) have no resultative state, and thus have participles but no participial adjectives.

(4)   a.   **מוקלט**

            muqlaṭ
            record.PASS-PTCP.M.SG

            'being recorded'   Participle interpretation

            'recorded'   Participial Adjective interpretation

    b.   **מיושם**

            meyusam
            implement.PASS-PTCP.M.SG

            'being implemented'   Participle interpretation

            'implemented'   Participial Adjective interpretation

(5)   a.   **מוזרם**

            muzram
            make-flow.PASS-PTCP.M.SG

            'being made to flow'   Participle interpretation

            * 'having been made to flow' no Participial Adjective interpretation

    b.   **מחוזר**

            mex̲uzar
            court.PASS-PTCP.M.SG

            'being courted'   Participle interpretation

            * 'having been courted'   no Participial Adjective interpretation

In some cases (practically for all verbs in the simple *binyan*), passive participial adjectives are derived in the participle template independently of the the existence of a corresponding participle. This is illustrated in (6a). In the marked *binyanim* as well,

there are attested cases, e.g.(6b), of adjectives derived in the participle template with non-existing related participles.

(6) a. **כתוב**

      katuv
      write.PASS-PTCP.M.SG

      * 'being written'   no Participle interpretation

      'written'   Participial Adjective interpretation

    b. **משוגע**

      mešugaʿ
      mad.PASS-PTCP.M.SG

      * 'being maddened'   no Participle interpretation

      'mad'   Participial Adjective interpretation

Missing participle interpretations of passive participles are expressed by the corresponding middle-voice participles. For example, the missing participle interpretations in (6a-b) above are expressed by the participles of the simple middle *binyan* נכתב *nixtav* 'being written' and the intensive middle *binyan* משתגע *mištageʿa* 'turning/acting mad' respectively. The adjectivalization of the passive participle is spreading within Modern Hebrew (Rosén 1956); for example, the intensive passive participle מבושל *mevušal* 'cooked', among many others, is now being derived as an adjective only, and has lost its participle interpretation – now expressed by the intensive middle-voice participle מתבשל *mitbašel* 'be cooking (intrans.)'. As a result, the semantic contrast between the passive and the middle *binyanim* has been obliterated within the participle: unlike the finite verb בושל *bušal* 'was cooked', which is passive, the participial adjective מבושל *mevušal* 'cooked' is not necessarily passive, in the sense that it does not imply an implicit agent, rather the cooking could have happened spontaneously. This historical process is limited to the simple and intensive *binyanim*, since there is no middle-voice *binyan* among the causative *binyanim*. Accordingly, causative passive participial adjectives are still semantically passive, e.g. מולבש *mulbaš* is not interpreted as 'dressed' but as 'having been dressed'.

Participial adjectives and nouns have nominal features beyond those of the participles: they are not interpreted as tensed, they cannot be modified by certain adverbs, they do not mark their direct objects as accusative (or oblique), they can be marked as construct-state, and their emphatic state is typically interpreted as definiteness. The additional nominal features of participial adjectives are illustrated below.

Lack of tense is shown in (7b), where the participial adjective determines a non-temporal property characterizing a particular class of objects, unlike the temporal property denoted by the corresponding participle in (7a):

(7) a. **Participle**

אוטובוסים הפולטים עשן

ʾotobus-im **ha-polt-im**   ʿašan
bus-3PL   **EMPH-emit-PTCP.M.PL** smoke

'buses emitting smoke'

b. **Participial Adjective**

אוטובוסים פולטי עשן

ʾotobus-im **polt-e**   ʿašan
bus-3PL   **emit-PTCP.CNSTR.M.PL** smoke

'smoke-emitting buses'

In example (8a) below, the oblique marking (-ב *b-* 'in') of the participle's complement האולימפיאדה *ha-ʾolimpyada* 'the Olympics' is missing from the complement of the participial adjective/ noun in (8b). Moreover, because of the sequence of tense rule, the participle in (8a) is not interpreted as simultaneous with the past tense interpretation of the main verb, but as temporally located at speech time, thus making the example potentially contradictory, as it asserts both that the athletes have left the games and that they are competing during speech time. The participial adjective /noun in (8b) does not give rise to any contradiction.

(8) a. **Participle**

מאות הספורטאים המשתתפים באולימפיאדה עזבו את בייג'ין.

me'ot   ha-sporta'i-m   **ha-mištatf-im**   b-a-'olimpyada
hundreds   the-athlete-M.PL   EMPH-participate-PTCP.M.PL   in-the-Olympics

ʿazv-u   'et Beijing
leave-PAST.3PL   ACC Beijing

'The hundreds of athletes participating in the Olympics left Beijing.'

b. **Participial Adjective/ noun**

מאות משתתפי האולימפיאדה עזבו את בייג'ין.

me'ot   **mištatf-e**   ha-'olimpyada
hundreds **participate-PTCP.CNSTR.M.PL** the-Olympics

ʿazv-u   'et Beijing
leave-PAST.3PL   ACC Beijing

'The hundreds of participants in the Olympics left Beijing.'

The temporal interpretation of participles correlates with their co-occurrence with temporal adverbs, e.g., לעתים קרובות le'itim qrovot 'often', as illustrated in (9a) below. Such adverbs cannot appear with the corresponding participial adjective/ noun, as shown by the ungrammaticality of example (9b):

(9) a. **Participle**

ספורטאים המשתתפים באולימפיאדה לעתים קרובות

sporta'i-m   **ha-mištatf-im**   b-a-'olimpyada   le'itim qrovot
athlete-M.PL   **EMPH-participate.PTCP-M.PL**   in-the-Olympics   often

'athletes who often participate in the Olympics'

b. **Participial Adjective /noun**

*משתתפי האולימפיאדה לעיתים קרובות

***mištatf-e**   ha-'olimpyada   le'itim qrovot
participate-PTCP.CNSTR.M.PL   the-Olympics   often

* 'participants often in the Olympics'

Additional discussion of the participle in Modern Hebrew is found in the references below.

Edit Doron (The Hebrew University in Jerusalem)

References

Berman, Ruth A. 1987. "Productivity in the lexicon: New-word formation in Modern Hebrew". *Folia Linguistica* 21:425-461.

Doron, Edit. 1999. "The Passive Participle" (in Hebrew). *Balshanut Ivrit* 47:39-62.

Doron, Edit and Chris Reintges. 2010. "On the syntax of participial modifiers"". ms.

Faust, Noam. in preparation. *La morpho-syntaxe nominale de l'hébreu moderne*. Thèse de doctorat université Paris VII.

Hazout, Ilan. 2001. "Predicate Formation: The Case of Participial Relatives". *The Linguistic Review* 18:97-123.

Livnat, Zohar. 2009. "The real or the Ideal? The participle in modal generic sentences" (in Hebrew). *Helkat Lashon* 41:36-46.

Meltzer, Aya. 2006. "Adjectival Passives and Adjectival Decausatives in Hebrew". *Proceeding of IATL* 22 [http://linguistics.huji.ac.il/IATL/22/Meltzer.pdf]

Merkin, Reuven. 1966. "*mefoʿal* pattern" (in Hebrew). *Lešonénu* 32:140-152.

Rosén, Haiim B. 1956. "*mefoʿal* in Israeli Hebrew" (in Hebrew). *Lešonénu* 20:139-148.

----1977. *Contemporary Hebrew*. The Hague: Mouton.

Schwarzwald (Rodrigue), Ora. 2002. *Studies in Hebrew morphology* (in Hebrew). Tel Aviv: The Open University.

Sharvit, Yael. 2003. "Embedded tense and Universal Grammar". *Linguistic Inquiry* 34:669-681.

Siloni, Tal. 1995. "On Participial Relatives and Complementizer D^0: A Case Study in Hebrew and French". *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 13:445-487.

Taube, Dana. 2009. "The passive participle in Modern Hebrew". *Egyptian, Semitic and General Grammar*, ed. by Gideon Goldenberg and Ariel Shisha-Halevy, 317-336. Jerusalem: The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities.

Zewi, Tamar and Yael Reshef. 2009. "The active participle and temporal expressions in Hebrew" (in Hebrew). *Lešonénu* 71:315-344.