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בשיח העברי הדבור

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Introduction and Framework

- 1 The aim of this paper is to discuss the complex syntactic sequence in spoken Hebrew discourse presented in the following scheme:

ze	(copula)	NP	she	Relative Clause
ze	Ø	davar	she	hu ktsat muzar
that	’s	a thing	which	is a bit strange

- 2 In the following I will argue that this sequence is frequently employed by speakers for a certain function in discourse—the expression of stance, and I will illustrate that in its function as a stancetaking device this sequence exhibits signs of being an *emergent construction*, i.e. “a more or less fixed templat[e], comprising some lexically open slots and some lexically fixed forms”¹ shaped and motivated by communicative practices.²

To explain this choice of topic, the general orientation of my discussion and the applied terminology, a few introductory words about the framework of this study are in order.

- 3 The current study is part of my dissertation project entitled “Relative Clauses in Spoken Hebrew Discourse from the Perspective of Pragmatic Typology”³ which aims at a comprehensive description of relative clauses (RCs) in Hebrew conversational discourse with regard to their pragmatic or interactional functions. There are various investigations and descriptions of RCs in both ancient and modern Hebrew.⁴ However, to date only a couple of studies have taken up this topic in spoken Hebrew and from a discourse-pragmatic point of view.⁵ To fill this void, I approach RCs, in my dissertation as well as in this study, in terms of Interactional Linguistics (IL) as a formal means, or a group of formal means, that is employed for the performance of certain social actions in discourse. Form-function correspondences of this sort lie at the heart of the research programme of IL, as has been noted by Couper-Kuhlen and Selting in their latest magisterial overview of this relatively new linguistic discipline: “Interactional Linguistics aims at a functional description of linguistic structures as *interactional resources* mobilized in practices designed for the accomplishment of *recurrent tasks in social interaction*.”⁶ As to the nature of the formal exponents of these correspondences they stress that “linguistic units such as sentences, clauses, phrases, etc., when used in interaction, are *situated accomplishments, actively produced and reproduced in real time, in a context-sensitive fashion*.”⁷ This is to say that linguistic units are not generated through an abstract, context-free set of rules, but are rather extracted from a linguistic “toolkit” containing bits and pieces of varying size, assembled in real-time as speech situations evolve to perform social interaction.⁸
- 4 Besides the evident appeal of a naturalistic, context-sensitive kind of linguistic analysis that does not detach linguistic output from speakers and their social environment, the interactional approach to linguistic data gains utmost importance for a realistic understanding of linguistic facts when we consider the latter’s emergent nature. As pointed out also by Couper-Kuhlen and Selting, since linguistic units are never fixed but produced and reproduced in interaction in a perpetual process, “these units must be conceived of as *emergent* in use.”⁹ This notion of Emergent Grammar (EG) has been put forward by Paul Hopper¹⁰ and “is meant to suggest that structure, or regularity comes out of discourse and is shaped by discourse in an ongoing process. Grammar is, in this view, simply the name for certain categories of observed repetitions in discourse.”¹¹ Following Hopper’s point, grammatical structure or structures in language are the outcome or epiphenomenon of communication rather than its prerequisite.
- 5 Having adopted the principles and priorities of IL and EG, the greater ambition of my description of RCs in spoken Hebrew discourse is to contribute a case study to a *Pragmatic Typology*¹² of RCs and related structures, i.e. to a typology of linguistic usage of RCs in interaction that is not restricted to structural aspects but also considers pragmatic and interactional usages of the linguistic exponents under scrutiny. In Dingemanse and Floyd’s words, the purpose of Pragmatic Typology is to find answers to the following main questions: “How is conversation structured, to what extent do its structures vary culturally and across various languages—and which interdisciplinary methods can contribute to resolving these questions?”¹³

6 Thus, the consecutive steps for the proposed kind of linguistic research and the respective heuristic process outlined by the set of ideas and objectives presented above can be summarised in the following schematic list:

- We need to systematically understand how language is used in communication and which linguistic strategies are employed to perform specific social actions. The recurrent performance of a social action through the same linguistic strategy results in the sedimentation of that strategy for that purpose and consequently leads to a more stable correspondence between a given function and a given, increasingly integrated structure.
- We need to understand form-function correspondences in interaction across languages by investigating both equatable social actions and comparable linguistic exponents. Hence we will be able to observe and describe regularities, similarities and differences between the world’s languages with regard to such correspondences.
- In a somewhat idealised way, as a result we would arrive at an understanding of the relations between the emergence of linguistic structures and the performance of social actions across languages. Such an understanding would make it possible to not only describe form-function correspondences in discourse but to also explain the sedimented structural properties of languages by way of being able to trace their emergence in interaction.

Relative clauses in spoken Hebrew discourse

7 As exemplified in Table 1, the syntactic sequence under discussion contains an RC, a fact which provides the main impetus for this present investigation. So before we proceed to the discussion of the entire sequence and its uses, we will first look at a general characterisation of RCs in spoken Hebrew discourse which is, I believe, a good idea in light of the scarcity of descriptive literature on this subject.

8 For the sake of explaining the structure of RCs of the type featuring in conversational Hebrew, I find it useful to characterise two structural parameters:¹⁴

- The syntactic means for integrating an RC into its matrix clause;
- The syntactic means for representing the antecedent inside the RC as one of its arguments.

9 With regard to these parameters, the data used for this study yields the following features:

- The RC is always integrated into its matrix clause by means of the invariable subordinating element *she-*;¹⁵
- The antecedent inside the RC is represented by a resumptive pronoun that is separate from the subordinator and not always applied or present.¹⁶

10 The following example illustrates these two features of RCs in spoken Hebrew discourse:

Exemple 1 [children's games]

- 31 Enav: ... 'oysh,
oh
...oh boy,
- 32 ..haya le-'iddo,
be.PST.3M.SG to-PN
..Iddo had,
- 33 'eyze tsa'atsua,
some toy
some toy,
- 34 ..**she**-pashut,
that-simple
..that I simply,
- 35 ratsiti lishbor 'ot-o.
want.PST.1SG break.INF OBJ-3M.SG
wanted to break.

- 11 In this instance, the antecedent 'eyze tsa'atsua [some toy] is expanded by the phrase *she-pashut ratsiti lishbor 'oto* [that I simply wanted to break, lit. that I simply wanted to break it]. The modifying RC is introduced by the invariable subordinator *she-* whereas the antecedent functions inside the RC as a direct object represented by the suffix object pronoun *-o* that is attached to *'ot-*, the proclitic alloform of the object marker *'et*.
- 12 Ex. 1, as well as all the other examples for this study, were taken from *The Haifa Corpus of Spoken Hebrew*.¹⁷ When I began this study, this corpus consisted of 243 audio-recorded mundane conversations between approximately 1 and 9 minutes, representing 701 different speakers at a total length of 11 hours. The conversations were recorded between the years 1986 to 2017 and fully transcribed using the transcription system developed by Chafe¹⁸ and Du Bois,¹⁹ according to which participants' talk is segmented into prosodically defined Intonation Units (IUs).

The sequence |ze (copula) NP *she*-Relative Clause|:

- 13 We will now move on to the composition of the entire sequence under discussion, already illustrated above in Table 1 (reproduced here):

Table 1

ze	(copula)	NP	she	Relative Clause
ze	∅	davar	she	hu ktsat muzar
that	's	a thing	which	is a bit strange

- 14 In this sequence, the RC (marked by darker shading) is only one of two structural components. The second feature that is common to all the investigated cases here is the

sentence pattern of the preceding matrix clause (marked by lighter shading). This sentence pattern is of the syntactic format |ze (copula)²⁰ N(oun) P(hrase)|. Ze- the masculine singular demonstrative pronoun -is the subject of such a clause, whereas the NP is the predicate, as, for example, in the sentence: *ze yahalom* [that's a diamond].

- 15 So, in total the complex sequence in Table 1 consists first of a clause of the syntactic format |ze (copula) NP| -*ze davar* [that's a thing], which is followed by an RC whose subject pronoun (*hu*) refers back to the NP predicate²¹ of the matrix clause -(*davar*) *she-hu ktsat muzar* [(a thing) which is (lit. it is) a bit strange]. Ex. 2 shows the sequence in Table 1 in its situational context:

Exemple 2 [avoiding changing the tire]

189 Yotam: 'ani mdaber 'al ze--,
I talk.PRS.M.SG about this.M.SG
I am talking about the fa--ct,
190 she
that
that
191 ..she.. ke'ilu,
that as if
..that.. like,
192 ...bixlal lo 'ala be-da'at-o,
at all NEG rise.PST.3M.SG in-mind-3M.SG
...it didn't cross his mind at all,
193 she-hu.. tsarix lihyot me'orav.
that-he must.PRS.M.SG be.INF involved
that he.. must be involved.
194 ...hu lo--,
he NEG
...he di--dn't,
195 ...ve-ze
and-this.M.SG
...and that's
196 ve-ze davar she-hu ktsat muzar,
and-this.M.SG thing that-it a little strange
and that's a thing which is a bit strange,
197 ..ki 'ani yodea,
because I know.PRS.M.SG
..because I know,

- 16 In this excerpt the speaker Yotam relates to his mother and his grandmother an episode in which his brother had to deal with a flat tyre. As Yotam expresses, his brother was reluctant or even indifferent towards participating in fixing this problem which strikes Yotam as awkward or strange. Now, I want to argue that in line 196, where Yotam says *veze davar shehu ktsat muzar*, [and that's a thing which is a bit strange,], the speaker employs a sequence of the mentioned format |ze (copula) NP she-RC| to express his stance. In other words, for the performance of the social act of stancetaking, this is the syntactic sequence or format of the speaker's choice.

The social act of stancetaking

- 17 To cut a long story short, "stance" is a widely discussed concept and a somewhat contested term in recent literature within different interactionally oriented strands of linguistics and adjacent fields in the social sciences.²² As Englebretson notes in his introduction to the monograph *Stancetaking in Discourse*,²³ one is bound to encounter a

certain lack of consistency in both the definition of *stance* and the respective descriptive practices of phenomena associated with the term. In Englebretson's own words, "[a] critical observer of the recent preponderance of work on stance may wonder what, exactly, the term *stance* refers to in the first place, and to what extent these various approaches may converge with each other overall."²⁴

- 18 In light of these questions, some surveys and definitions of *stance* have opted for taking up the challenge of pointing to those aspects that allow for a common conceptual or operational grounding for varying approaches towards stance in the literature.²⁵ In such an attempt, Du Bois analyses the basic components of the stance act and reaches the following definition for a unified framework for stance:

Stance is a public act by a social actor, achieved dialogically through overt communicative means, of simultaneously evaluating objects, positioning subjects (self and others), and aligning with other subjects, with respect to any salient dimension of the sociocultural field.²⁶

- 19 which in its informal variant reads: "I evaluate something, and thereby position myself, and thereby align with you."²⁷
- 20 Towards this definition, Du Bois notes on the practice of stancetaking that "[s]tance is realized, in the usual case, by a linguistic act which is at the same time a social act. The act of taking a stance necessarily invokes an evaluation at one level or another, whether by assertion or inference. [...] Via specific acts of stancetaking, value can be focused and directed at a precise target, as locally relevant values are activated to frame the significance of participant actions."²⁸ As to the thing evaluated he continues, "the evaluative target may be called the object of stance [...]."²⁹ In general terms, evaluation can be defined as the process whereby a stancetaker orients to an object of stance and characterizes it as having some specific quality or value."³⁰ Equipped with the conceptual and terminological background of Du Bois's definition, we can now go back to the expression in line 196 of ex. 2 (reproduced here) and view it in terms of the components involved in the act of stancetaking:

Example 3 [avoiding changing the tire]

- 21 First of all, in this example the demonstrative subject pronoun *ze* of the nominal sentence in line 196 refers anaphorically to the preceding chunk of discourse in lines 192-193. This pronoun is followed by the semantically light or empty noun *davar*

[thing] which, according to Du Bois's terminology, constitutes the object of stance, or in this case in fact a placeholder object of stance. Thereafter, the RC supplies the evaluation of the object in form of its content *hu ktsat muzar* [it's a bit strange]. Thus, I want to argue that in cases like the above, the syntactic sequence |ze (copula) NP *she-RC*| is used as a stancetaking device that incorporates the components in the act of stancetaking in its different syntactic positions.

- 22 However, although one might get such an impression from the above presentation, I do not intend to claim that there is a fixed connection between this sequence and the social act of stancetaking. I will rather argue in the remainder of this article that such a connection appears to exist to some extent, but it is by no means an inherent or necessary one. The contrast between the evaluative and the non-evaluative use of the |ze (copula) NP *she-RC*|-sequence is exemplified in the following example:

Example 4 [children's games]

```

11 Pnina: ....ze      toste--r,
           this.M.SG toaster
           ....that's a toaste--r,

12      ...she-samim    bateriyo--t,
           that-put.PRS.3PL battery.PL
           ...where (into which) you put (insert) batterie--s,

13      ..ve-hu menage--n      ga--m,
           and-it play(_music).PRS.M.SG too
           ..and it a--lso plays mu--sic,

14      ..ve-kofe--ts,
           and-jump.PRS.3M.SG
           ..and ju--mps,

15      (3.2) shave.
           worthy
           (3.2) cool.

16 Amos: ...lo.
           NEG
           ...no.

17      ze      mi-sug    ha-dvarim    she--,
           this.M.SG from-kind DEF.ART-thing.PL that
           this is the kind of thing whi--ch,

18      ..horim    lo 'ohavim.
           parent.PL NEG like.PRS.3PL
           ..parents don't like.
    
```

- 23 In this excerpt, which provides two instances of the |ze (copula) NP *she-RC*| sequence (in lines 11-12 and 17-18), we encounter a part of a conversation on children's games between the interlocutors Pnina and Amos. Pnina refers to a certain item, apparently some sort of gadget-toaster, and explains it to Amos by saying:ze toste--r, ...shesamim bateriyo--t, ..vehu menage--n ga--m, vekofe--ts, [This is a toaster where (into which) you put (insert) batteries and it also plays music and jumps]. Pnina concludes her explanation by stating shave [cool]. To that Amos responds in disagreement: ...lo. ze misug hadvarim she--..horim lo 'ohavim. [No (not cool). This is (belongs to) the kind of thing(s) whi--ch ..parents don't like.].
- 24 In terms of stancetaking, the second instance in lines 17-18 may be an ambiguous case, but it arguably expresses Amos's stance rather than indicating a purely factual piece of information. At any rate, the first instance in lines 11-12 is clearly unrelated to stance

and thus serves to demonstrate that there is no fixed or inherent connection between the sequence |ze (copula) NP *she*-RC| and the act of stancetaking. In fact, among the cases of this sequence that I collected in the corpus there are way more instances that do not express stance than instances that do express stance.

- 25 From my database³¹ I collected the entirety of about 1000 instances of RCs. Within this dataset, I found 58 instances of the syntactic sequence |ze (copula) NP *she*-RC|, out of which only 16 can be classified as evaluative cases, as opposed to 42 non-evaluative cases:

Table 2

RCs	~1000	
ze (copula) NP <i>she</i> -RC	58	
	Evaluative	Non-evaluative
	16	42

Quantitative contrastive survey of evaluative vs. non-evaluative uses of the sequence |ze (copula) NP *she*-RC|

- 26 So as to understand if and what differences we can uncover between the evaluative and the non-evaluative uses of the sequence |ze NP *she*-RC|, I found it useful to contrast the two groups on a quantitative basis according to three parameters:
- 27 Semantic type of antecedent of the RC;
- Prosodic integration of the sequence;
 - Completedness in the production of the sequence.
- 28 The choice of these three parameters results from preliminary observations of recurrent and apparently significant differences between the two uses and adduce the following kind of linguistic evidence:
- Lexical evidence;
 - Positive evidence for degree of formal cohesion;
 - Negative evidence for degree of formal cohesion.

Evaluative vs. non-evaluative use: Semantic type of antecedent

- 29 Regarding the first parameter of the quantitative survey, the semantic type of the antecedent of the RC, we find that with the evaluative use 56% of cases have a full lexical item as antecedent, as opposed to 44% of cases with a semantically light noun. “Semantically light noun” refers to any kind of noun that has little to no semantic specificity, such as *davar* [thing], *makom* [place], etc.
- 30 Compared to that, the distribution of the non-evaluative cases is 69% (full lexical items) to 31% (light nouns):

Table 3

	evaluative		non-evaluative	
tokens (total)	16 (100%)		42 (100%)	
type of antecedent	lexical item	light noun	lexical item	light noun
	9 (56%)	7 (44%)	29 (69%)	13 (31%)

- 31 Considering the small number of examples in total, these numbers are far from being conclusive, but I think that they are indicative of a significant difference between the two uses. For the sake of discussion, let us first look at two more instantiations of our sequence:

Example 5 [old czech clock]

24 Yaakov: 'ani shamat
I hear.PST.[1]SG
I hear[d]

25 ...yesh /nidme l-i/ ta'arix,
there_is seem.PRS.M.SG to-1SG date
...there is /I think/ a date,

26 shel e--,
of uh
of u--h,

27'elef,
thousand
...one thousand,

28 ...e--,
uh
...u--h,

29 ...'elef shmona me'o--t [shmonme'ot],
thousand eight hundred.PL
...eighteen hundre--d,

30 ...shiv'im ve-mashehu--.
seventy and-something
...seventy so--mething.

31 Liat: ...ken,
yes
...yes,

32 ze ha-ta'arix she-hu--,
this.M.SG DEF.ART-date that-he
that's the date [on] whi--ch,

33 niftar b-o,
pass_away.PST.3M.SG in-3M.SG
he passed away,

34 'ani xoshevet
I think.PRS.F.SG
I think

Exemple 6 [uneducated]

111 Sarit: *brai--yen,*
 PN
 Bri--an,

112 */koxav 'elyon/.¹*
 star supreme
 /superstar/.

114 Rona: ... (laugh sigh)

115 Nili:ze *kvar,*
 this.M.SG already
 that’s already,

116 *lefaxot mashehu,*
 at_least something
 at least something,

117 ...*she-mekubal liro--t!*
 that-accepted see.INF
 ...which is accepted to wa--tch!

¹ *Brian koxav 'elyon* ‘Brian superstar’ is the Hebrew title of *Monty Python’s Life of Brian*.

- 32 We can see here in the first instance (ex. 5) a full lexical item *ta'arix* [date] as antecedent, whereas in the second, evaluative case (ex. 6) we get an antecedent that has no lexical content - *mashehu* (“something”). Now, my survey yields that the evaluative cases apparently always refer to an already established discourse entity, either by repeating a lexical item or by referring to it in the form of a semantically light, or empty, noun, or a pronoun.
- 33 Accordingly, I want to argue that the sequence |ze (copula) NP *she*-RC| as a stancetaking device is characterised by its text-internal referential nature, whereas in its non-evaluative uses it may also point to objects in the physical world, as could be the case with the “toaster” in ex. 4. This difference is, I think, the reason for the higher percentage of semantically light, or empty, antecedents with the evaluative use.
- 34 This higher rate of a small set of semantically light nouns or pronouns also accounts for a diminished degree of lexical variation among the evaluative uses which brings them closer to being a *construction* in the sense of Couper-Kuhlen and Thompson (p. 445) mentioned above.

Evaluative vs. non-evaluative use: Prosodic integration

- 35 By the term “prosodic integration” I intend to describe here whether at least the subordinator *she*- (if not the entire RC) is produced in the same IU as the antecedent. Now, unlike the distribution in 5.1. we can observe in this context a striking difference: 69% of the—admittedly few—evaluative cases are prosodically integrated, as opposed to only 24% of non-evaluative cases:

Table 4

	evaluative		non-evaluative	
tokens (total)	16 (100%)		42 (100%)	
prosodic integration	integrated	unintegrated	integrated	unintegrated
	11 (69%)	5 (31%)	10 (24%)	32 (76%)

- 36 The distinction between a prosodically unintegrated non-evaluative case and a prosodically integrated evaluative case can be observed in the following two excerpts:

Example 7 [erotic dream]

122 Merav: ve-'az hi 'omeret,
and-then she say.PRS.F.SG
and then she says,

123 'ani mekava she-lo kara,
I hope.PRS.F.SG that-NEG happen.PST.3M.SG
I hope that it didn't happen,

124 ma she-xashavti she-kara,
what that-think.PST.1SG that-happen.PST.3M.SG
what I thought that happened,

125 Daniel: @@@

126 Merav: ve-'ani 'omeret l-a,
and-I say.PRS.F.SG to-3F.SG
and I tell her,

127 lo lo,
NEG NEG
no no,

128 ..ze stam yadid shel-i,
this.M.SG just friend of-1SG
..that's just a friend of mine,

129 she-lo ra'iti mizman,
that-NEG see.PST.1SG since long ago
which I haven't seen in a while,

130 bla bla bla,
blah blah blah
blah blah blah,

Exemple 8 [rabbits]

102 Shir: ...yitaxen,
it is possible
...maybe,

103 ...she-zot xaya sh-po'elet,
that-this.F.SG animal that-function.FRS.F.SG
...that's an animal which functions,

104 ..ra-k 'al 'instinkti--m?
only on instinct.PL
..o--nly on i--n instincts,

105 Liad: 'eyfo ze niftax?
where this.M.SG be opened.FRS.M.SG
where does this open?

106 (noise of opening a zipper)

107 Shir: ..'in/

108 Liad: zot xaya she-lo po'elet.
this.M.SG animal that-NEG function.FRS.F.SG
that's an animal which doesn't function.

109 ..(noise of opening a zipper)

110 zo xaya
this.M.SG animal
that's an animal

she-'en l-a taxli--t,
that-there isn't to-3F.SG purpose
which doesn't have a pu--rpose,

111 'en l-a mashma'u--t,
there isn't to-3F.SG meaning
it doesn't have a mea--ning,

112 ...(sound of strumming)

113 'en l-a
there isn't to-3F.SG
it doesn't have

114(knock)

115 ...siba--
reason

- 37 In ex. 7 we observe a prosodic break within the sequence that starts in line 128 and continues in line 129 with the RC beginning a new IU—...ze *stam yadid sheli, shelo ra'iti mizman*, [..that’s just a friend of mine, which I haven’t seen in a while,]. As opposed to that, ex. 8 contains three prosodically integrated instances of our sequence, according to the definition of prosodic integration introduced above. In all three cases (lines 103-104, 108 and 110) the subordinator *she-* is produced in the same IU as the antecedent: the first case is a non-evaluative one in which the speaker Shir hypothesises about the decision-making process of a certain domestic animal (ferret). In her statement not the entire sequence is prosodically integrated as the RC stretches over two IUs (103-104)—[yitaxen, ...she]-zot³² xaya sh³³-po'elet, ..ra-k 'al 'instinkti--m? [[maybe,] ...that’s an animal which functions, ..o--nly on i--n instincts?]. However, the two remaining instances express Liad’s stance towards ferrets and Shir’s preceding assumption. These evaluative cases are produced as one coherent prosodic unit in a single IU each, e.g. *zot xaya she-lo po'elet*. [that’s an animal which doesn’t function.].
- 38 In light of the inverse distribution of prosodic integration between the two uses, I propose to regard the high frequency of prosodic integration in evaluative |ze (copula) NP *she-RC*-sequences as an indication for their character as instantiations of an *emergent construction* in discourse specialised for the act of stancetaking. This formal argument is also related to the third parameter, “completedness,” that tests the degree of formal integration of both uses of the sequence by way of negative evidence.

Evaluative vs. non-evaluative use: Completedness

- 39 By investigating the parameter of “completedness” I intend to illustrate, for each use, the ratio between completed instances of the |ze (copula) NP *she-RC*-sequence and

instances that are abandoned prior to completion, and I will suggest that both these ratios as well as a qualitative analysis of the abandoned cases supply some further, in this case negative, evidence for a higher degree of formal integration with the evaluative use of the sequence.

- 40 First of all, most instances of both uses are complete and only a minority of cases are abandoned. Still, the 25% of abandoned cases in an evaluative environment outnumber quite clearly the mere 10% of abandoned non-evaluative cases:³⁴

Table 5

	evaluative		non-evaluative	
tokens (total)	16 (100%)		42 (100%)	
completedness	complete	abandoned	complete	abandoned
	12 (75%)	4 (25%)	38 (90%)	4 (10%)

- 41 Ex. 9 shows an abandoned case of the |ze (copula) NP *she*-RC|-sequence in an evaluative environment:

Example 9 [the paper]

119 Avner: .../harey 'asu/ tmuna,
indeed make.PST.3PL picture
.../well they took/ a picture,

120 she-yihye sham /'et/ kol ha-xevre,
that-be.FUT.3M.SG there OBJ all DEF.ART-gang
so the whole gang will be there,

121 ..ma--,
what
..wha--t,

122 .ma la'asot.
what do.INF
..what can you do.

123 Iddo: tetsalem 'eser tmun
take.picture.IMP ten pictu[re.PL]
take ten pictu

124 ..ze tmuna she-'i--m--.. sk
this.M.SG picture that-/?????/
..that's a picture which /?????/

125 ...tmuna gru'a me'o--d!
picture bad very
...a ve--ry bad picture!

- 42 This excerpt is part of a conversation between several speakers discussing various newspapers. In this sequence the interlocutors Avner and Iddo exchange opinions on a certain picture in one of the papers. In line 124 we get the beginning of an instance of the sequence |ze (copula) NP *she*-RC|, including the beginning of an RC which is abandoned after some indistinguishable fragmentary talk. Instead, we get the evaluative NP ...*tmuna gru'a me'o--d!* [...a ve--ry bad picture!] following the abandoned

RC. In other words, at the end of Iddo’s turn we understand that his intention apparently was to express his stance on the object *tmuna* “picture,” which he eventually does, but only after reformulating it in a different syntactic format after initially opting for the |ze NP *she*-RC|-sequence.

- 43 Based on this and other documented abandoned instantiations of our syntactic sequence followed by an evaluative expression, I want to argue that |ze (copula) NP *she*-RC| appears in these cases as some sort of default construction for performing the social act of taking a stance. It is the speaker’s first choice, but then abandoned and replaced by an evaluative expression in a different syntactic format. Hence, I regard these cases as negative evidence and as a further indication for the |ze (copula) NP *she*-RC|-sequence’s emergent character as a more integrated syntactic unit when it is used for the purpose of stancetaking.
- 44 In conclusion I want to discuss the significance of scrutinising the stancetaking use of the |ze (copula) NP *she*-RC|-sequence. First of all, this sequential format and its uses are part and parcel of a comprehensive discourse-pragmatic description of RCs in spoken Hebrew discourse and hence deserve to be noticed as part of this endeavour. But much more importantly, my proposed analysis of an admittedly limited but nonetheless systematic use of RCs for the expression of stance in colloquial Hebrew bears specific implications for the cross-linguistic study of RCs in particular and, consequently, on the study of clause-combining in discourse in general.
- 45 These implications become clearer when we look at the common functional and semantic classifications of RCs in spoken language found in the literature, which usually present RCs by way of a basic dichotomy of two main functional types. Thus, after analysing spontaneous oral narratives, Bernardo introduced a dichotomy between “informative relative clauses” and “non-informative relative clauses,” the latter of which he further divides into “identificatory” and “specificatory relative clauses.”³⁵ Out of the same concern for understanding “the semantics, or the kind of information that is encoded in relative clauses in both the spoken and written narratives,”³⁶ Beaman adopts mainly Bernardo’s distinction between an “information-bearing” and an “identificatory” type, which she exemplifies by reproducing examples from Bernardo’s pear-story narratives in English:
- 46 The following example illustrates the information-bearing type:
- “There was a man who was picking pears,” where the RC provides new information about its antecedent;
 - whereas the identificatory type of RCs is exemplified by the following case:
 - “and the man who was picking pears comes down from his ladder,” where the RC specifies the antecedent so as to distinguish its referent from every other possible referent in the text.³⁷
- 47 The same main distinction is also applied by Maschler in her studies on RCs in spoken Hebrew discourse.³⁸
- 48 Similar dichotomies can be found in various studies of RCs in (different) spoken language(s). Thus, Sankoff and Brown distinguish between “identifications” and “characterizations” as the most prominent, albeit not exclusive, functions of RCs in their study on Tok Pisin relatives,³⁹ whereas Fox and Thompson use a distinction between RCs that provide “a characterization or description of a New Head NP

referent” and RCs that help “to identify a Given Head NP referent” in their investigation of the grammar of RCs in English conversation.⁴⁰

- 49 Against the background of these categorisations of RCs and their functions, I thus suggest that from a pragmatic and interactional point of view a dichotomy along the lines of “information-bearing” vs. “identificatory” type of RC is not sufficient, at least for Hebrew, and that evaluation in the act of stancetaking is to be considered yet another recurrent function of RCs in spoken Hebrew discourse.
- 50 In this regard it is crucial to stress that, at least, both Bernardo and Beaman base their analyses and definitions of RCs exclusively on narratives, i.e. they do not consider interactional usage of RCs and their functional profile in discourse. The case of the evaluative RCs in uses such as exemplified above points to the essential importance of interactional analyses in the search for a realistic and comprehensive understanding of a structural exponent in any given language and the communicative functions performed through it.
- 51 Towards achieving the objectives of a Pragmatic Typology of RCs, it remains to be seen whether RCs or relatable constructions in additional languages share this evaluative function in the act of stancetaking or not, and what other recurrent functions of RCs can be identified from studying naturally occurring conversation. As far as the research of stancetaking is concerned, the present discussion falls squarely into place with the programme formulated by Englebretson, who emphatically advocates that grammatical descriptions of languages should henceforth make an effort to capture how grammar is both employed for as well as shaped by the ubiquitous enactment of stance.⁴¹ As Englebretson beautifully puts it, “[o]ne of the reasons why reference grammars have generally not included categories such as stancetaking is likely due to pervasive (mis)conceptions of grammar as being primarily a cognitively-oriented, propositional system for information coding. But when grammar is also understood as simultaneously being firmly rooted in social interaction, we see that much of what has previously been ascribed to meaning and information coding can, in addition, also be understood as social and interactional in nature.”⁴² I can but conclude by expressing the hope that my discussion of evaluative |ze (copula) NP *she*-RC|-sequences in spoken Hebrew discourse can contribute to this ambitious and fascinating project.

Summary

- 52 To sum things up, I want to reiterate the following central insights and conclusions from the previous analysis and discussion:
- the syntactic sequence |ze (copula) NP *she*-RC| shows prosodic and some lexical features of an *emergent construction* in discourse when it is used for the social act of stancetaking;
 - evaluation in the act of stancetaking is yet another recurrent pragmatic function of RCs in spoken Hebrew discourse, in addition to their generally acknowledged functions;
 - a discourse-pragmatic functional classification of RCs needs to be sensitive for specific uses of RCs in larger, complex syntactic sequences, such as the sequence |ze (copula) NP *she*-RC| in Hebrew.

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NOTES

1. COUPER-KUHLEN & THOMPSON, 2008, p. 445.
2. For a discussion of the notion of *emergent construction* and related notions cf. AUER & PFÄNDER’s introduction (2011b) to the monograph *Constructions: Emerging and Emergent* (AUER & PFÄNDER, 2011a), as well as HOPPER’s contribution to the same volume (2011).
3. I conduct this project under the supervision of Prof. Yael Maschler at the Department of Hebrew Language at the University of Haifa. The present study as well as my dissertation are part of the collective research project headed by Prof. Maschler “The Emergent Grammar of Clause-Combining from a Cross-linguistic Perspective as a Contribution to Pragmatic Typology”. I would like to thank Prof. Maschler as well as my fellow project-participants Gallit Aghion, Yotam Michael Ben Moshe, Ophir Fofliger and Hilla Polak-Yitzhaki for their comments on an earlier version of this paper. I also want to thank my friends Lukas Meißel and Philip Podolsky, my brother Andreas Wildner and, above all, my partner Alla Rabinovich for their face-saving corrections and helpful suggestions.
4. Cf., e.g., PERETZ, 1967, GOLDENBERG, 1998a, ZEWI, 2013, HOLMSTEDT, 2016.
5. RCs in spoken Hebrew were first addressed by ARIEL (1999) from the perspective of accessibility theory (cf. ARIEL, 2001), followed by a corpus-based study by SHAER (2007) that was subsequently developed by MASCHLER (2011a, 2011b).
6. COUPER-KUHLEN & SELTING, 2017, p. 16; my emphasis.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17; my emphasis.
8. HOPPER, 2011.
9. COUPER-KUHLEN & SELTING, 2017, p. 17; my emphasis.
10. Cf., e.g., HOPPER, 1998.
11. HOPPER, 1998, p. 156.
12. Cf. DINGEMANSE & FLOYD, 2014.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 448.
14. This is, of course, an approach that has both its limitations as well as a bias towards languages with an RC that consists of a finite clause introduced by some separate element, be it a relative pronoun (e.g. German *der/die/das*, Latin *qui/quae/quod* or Arabic *alladī/allatī*) or some other form of invariable subordinating element (e.g. Amharic *yä-* and its allomorphs (cf. GOLDENBERG, 1998c, pp. 370-371; LESLAU, 1995, pp. 81-83). To

exemplify languages with a fundamentally different strategy for attributing a predication to a nominal referent suffice it to refer here to Middle Egyptian with its participles and “relative forms” (cf. GARDINER, 1957, pp. 270-316) or to Tamil with its “relative participles” (in Tamil terminology “pēyar ēccam” = “residue of a noun” [SHULMAN, 2016, pp. 8-9]) (cf. ARDEN, 1942, pp. 203-216).

15. So far, I have found no evidence for any other connector between RC and matrix clause in my data. This means that of all the known connecting strategies for RCs in Modern Hebrew (cf. ZEVI, 2013), only the one using the subordinator *she-* is actually attested in interactional data. I should stress that this statement is based on my data alone (MASCHLER *et al.*, 2017).

16. For the present purpose this cursory characterisation of the resumptive pronoun as “not always applied or present” is sufficient. To be sure, the presence or absence of resumptive pronouns in RCs in spoken Hebrew discourse is a fascinating topic in its own right that calls for further research. According to normative Hebrew grammar, the resumptive pronoun is obligatory if the antecedent is not the direct object of a transitive verb inside the RC. (Antecedents which are the subject of a verb inside the RC are implicitly represented within the verbal complex, cf. GOLDENBERG, 1998b). However, as MASCHLER has shown in two articles (2011a, 2011b), in spoken Hebrew discourse this is regularly not the case with antecedents indicating time or space.

17. MASCHLER *et al.*, 2017.

18. CHAFFE, 1994

19. DU BOIS (forthcoming)

20. An explicit copula would be present only in the past and future tenses. As in Hebrew there is no form of the copula in the present tense, the predicative link between two nominal constituents in this case is marked by Ø, as demonstrated by the example in Table 1.

21. It is problematic, to say the least, to term this entity “predicate” in the present context to the extent that in the discussed sequence this entity is followed, by definition, by an RC that contains the main point of the sequence. However, for the lack of a better alternative I use, *nolens volens*, the term “predicate” to refer here merely to the respective position in the sequence rather than to its value in terms of information structure.

22. This focus on stance is reflected by a series of monographs: HUNSTON and THOMPSON, 2000; GARDNER, 2001; MUSHIN, 2001; KÄRKKÄINEN, 2003; WU, 2004; ENGLEBRETSON, 2007a and JAFFE, 2009.

23. ENGLEBRETSON, 2007a.

24. ENGLEBRETSON, 2007b, p. 2. One survey that illustrates the wide range of terms denoting different types of stancetaking can be found in Jaffe’s introductory chapter (2009, 4-6).

25. As ENGLEBRETSON further notes on this issue, “[t]he lack of consistent definition of *stance* poses a conundrum for anyone wishing to summarize the state of the field [...]. Such a writer is faced with essentially two possibilities. One approach would be to present a clearly operationalized definition of *stance*, and consequently to exclude from the purview of stance research anything which does not meet this definition. Such an approach would border on academic imperialism, and would likely end up excluding

much of what has been published under the rubric of stance research [...]. [...] A second, more inclusive approach would be to adopt a broader, ethnographically-informed conception of *stance*; to seek to understand how stance researchers conceive of *stance* in their own work, and to begin to develop a model which recognizes the heterogeneous and multifaceted nature of stancetaking” (2007b, p. 2). Similarly, DU BOIS opines that “[b]uilding a more unified understanding of stance has the advantage of avoiding a limitless proliferation of stance types. Such an approach would seek to interpret the diversity of stances not as distinct types of stance, but simply as different facets of a single unified stance act” (2007, p. 145). I tend to share and adopt these views of Englebretson and Du Bois and use the concept “stance” as an overarching term for a group of heterogeneous linguistic acts that share a common identifiable and stateable basis nevertheless.

26. DU BOIS, 2007, p. 163.

27. *Ibid.*

28. *Ibid.*, p. 141, my emphasis.

29. As JAFFE stresses, “[i]t is important to note that Du Bois’s ‘stance objects’ are not just material: in fact, ‘salient dimensions of the sociocultural field’ can include language and stancetaking itself, [...]” (2009, p. 5).

30. DU BOIS, 2007, p. 143, my emphasis.

31. MASCHLER *et al.*, 2017.

32. *zot* is the feminine equivalent of the masculine singular demonstrative pronoun *ze*. A second variant of the feminine singular pronoun *zot* is *zo* which appears in ex. 8 in line 110.

33. *Sh-* is an apocopated form of the subordinator *she-*. This form is exclusive to spoken Hebrew and its distribution has, to the best of my knowledge, not been investigated so far.

34. One has to ask, of course, how can I tell the difference between the uses in abandoned cases? For making this distinction I obviously rely on indirect evidence: if an abandoned case is followed by an evaluative expression of some other syntactic format, I consider it as an abandoned evaluative case due to the speaker’s apparent intention to express an evaluation and *vice versa*. Thus, the results achieved through this procedure cannot be proven beyond doubt, but still I find the indirect or negative evidence of the present kind instructive nonetheless, as I hope to be able to demonstrate through the discussion of ex. 9.

35. BERNARDO opts for a two-way distinction between “informative” and “non-informative” RCs as he concludes from his analysis that “[s]pecificatory and identificatory relative clauses are similar in that they are integral parts of a noun phrase description, whereas informative relative clauses express information that could just as well have been expressed in an independent declarative clause” (1979, p. 547).

36. BEAMAN, 1984, p. 72; my emphasis.

37. *Ibid.*, pp. 72-73.

38. MASCHLER, 2011a, pp. 177-178; 2011b, pp. 304-305.

39. SANKOFF & BROWN, 1976, pp. 653-656.

40. FOX & THOMPSON, 1990, pp. 301-302.

41. ENGLEBRETSON, 2007c, pp. 69-72.

42. *Ibid.*, pp. 71-72.

ABSTRACTS

In this article I explore a complex syntactic sequence in spoken Hebrew discourse that is composed of a deictic subject pronoun (*ze*) followed by a predicative phrase consisting of a noun phrase (NP) and a relative clause (RC) which is introduced by the general subordinator *she-*, schematically |*ze* (copula) NP *she*-RC|. I demonstrate that this sequence is regularly used by speakers to perform the social act of stancetaking and that in these cases the functional content of the RC is evaluative with regard to the preceding NP. My analysis is supported by quantitative evidence from a survey contrasting evaluative with non-evaluative uses of this sequence, from which I conclude that when it is used as a stancetaking device the sequence |*ze* (copula) NP *she*-RC| shows signs of an *emergent construction*. My discussion of this phenomenon contributes to the research of RCs in conversational Hebrew and across languages to the extent that it recognises an evaluative use of RCs, which adds to the most frequently employed and widely acknowledged uses of RCs in discourse, i.e. (1) providing new information concerning a referent or (2) facilitating an interlocutor in identifying a previously mentioned referent. Moreover, this article is also a contribution to the study of how grammatical means are used for and shaped by the ubiquitous enactment of stance in naturally occurring discourse.

Dans cet article j’examine une séquence syntaxique dans le discours en hébreu parlé, composée du pronom sujet déictique (*ze*) suivi d’un syntagme prédicatif comprenant un syntagme nominal (SN) et une proposition relative (RC) introduite par la conjonction générale de subordination *-she*, représentée schématiquement ainsi |*ze* (copule) SN *she*-PR|. J’y démontre que cette séquence est régulièrement utilisée par les locuteurs pour réaliser l’acte social de prise de position. Dans ces cas, le contenu de la proposition relative apporte une évaluation sur le SN. Mon analyse est étayée par des preuves quantitatives d’une étude contrastant des usages évaluatifs et non évaluatifs de cette construction, concluant que quand cette construction |*ze* (copule) SN *she*-PR| est utilisée comme moyen d’exprimer une opinion, elle peut être qualifiée comme construction émergente. Mon analyse de ce phénomène contribue conjointement à l’étude des relatives dans le discours en hébreu parlé et dans d’autres langues car elle identifie une fonction évaluative aux relatives, qui s’ajoute aux fonctions déjà évoquées pour les relatives dans le discours parlé, à savoir (1) donner une information nouvelle sur un référent ou (2) aider le destinataire à identifier un référent mentionné auparavant. De plus, cet article contribue à l’étude des moyens linguistiques servant à exprimer l’évaluation dans un discours naturel.

במאמר זה אני בוחן רצף תחבירי בשיח העברי הדבור הכולל נושא כינויי דאיקטי (זה) וצירוף פרדיקטיבי המורכב מצירוף שמני (צ'ש) ופסוקית זיקה הפותחת בקשר ש', סכמטית: |זה (אוגד) צ'ש ש-פסוקית זיקה|. אני מראה שדוברי עברית משתמשים ברצף זה באופן תדיר על מנת לבצע את הפעולה החברתית של נקיטת עמדה ושבמקרים אלו התוכן הפונקציונלי של פסוקית הזיקה הנו אוולואטיבי ביחס לצ'ש הקודם לפסוקית. ניתוחי שואב ראיות כמותניות מסקירה קונטרסטיבית המגידה שימושים אוולואטיביים ולא-אוולואטיביים של אותו הרצף שממנה אני מסיק כי כאשר הרצף |זה (אוגד) צ'ש ש-פסוקית זיקה| משמש כאמצעי לנקיטת עמדה הנו מראה סימנים של תבנית מתהווה. הדיון שאני עורך בתופעה זו תורם לחקר פסוקיות הזיקה בשיח העברי הדבור ובמבט המשווה בין שפות כאחד במידה שהוא מזהה תפקיד אוולואטיבי של פסוקיות זיקה, דבר שמוסיף לתפקידים השכיחים והמוכרים ביותר של פסוקיות זיקה בשיח דבור, כלומר (1) לספק מידע חדש אודות רפרנט או (2) לעזור לנמען לזהות רפרנט שהוזכר קודם לכן. נוסף לכך, מאמר זה מהווה גם תרומה לחקר השאלה כיצד הפונקציה של נקיטת עמדה הרווחת ביותר בשיח טבעי מבוצעת על ידי אמצעים דקדוקיים וכיצד היא מעצבת אותם.

INDEX

Mots-clés: discours en hébreu parlé, proposition relative, constructions en discours parlé, prise de position, linguistique interactionnelle, grammaire émergente, typologie pragmatique

שיח עברי דבור, פסוקיות זיקה, תבניות בשיח דבור, נקיטת עמדה, בלשנותמילות מפתח:

האינטראקציה, דקדוק מתהווה, טיפולוגיה פרגמטית

Keywords: spoken Hebrew discourse, relative clauses, constructions in discourse, stancetaking, interactional linguistics, emergent grammar, pragmatic typology

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