

OT 404 / 704 – Week 5 Lecture

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Agenda

- **[Quiz]**
van der Merwe et al. 1999, 51–66
de Saussure 1998, 6–17, 65–70, 134–139
Payne 1997, 71–91
Bandstra 1992
Jones 1980
Robert D. Van Valin 2001, 1–20
- **[Reading Assignment]:** 90 pp.
Lowery 1999: 22 pp.
Lyons 1981, 100–135: 35 pp.
Chomsky 1957, 1–33: 33 pp.
- **[Lecture]**
- **[Praxis]**
Analyze Dt 26:17–19
- **[Assignment]**
Analyze Psalm 1

Analysis of Dt 26:17–19

This passage is actually just two long clauses, with the second clause crossing a verse boundary. It is also an example of “discontinuous” clauses, where one clause is cut up by another clause.

אֶת־יְהוָה הָאֱמֵרָתָּ הַיּוֹם לְהִיּוֹת לְךָ לְאֱלֹהִים
וְלָלַכְתָּ בְּדַרְכָיו
וְלִשְׁמֹר חֻקָיו וּמִצְוֹתָיו וּמִשְׁפָּטָיו
וְלִשְׁמֹעַ בְּקוֹלוֹ:
וַיְהִי הָאֱמִירָתָּ הַיּוֹם
לְהִיּוֹת לוֹ לְעַם סְגֻלָּה
כְּאִשֶׁר דִּבֶּר־לְךָ
וְלִשְׁמֹר כָּל־מִצְוֹתָיו:

וּלְתַתֵּן עֲלֵיוֹן עַל כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם
 אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה
 לְתַהַלָּה וּלְשֵׁם וּלְתַפְאֶרֶת
 וּלְהִתְדָּעַם קִדְשׁ לִיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ
 בְּאֲשֶׁר דִּבַּר:

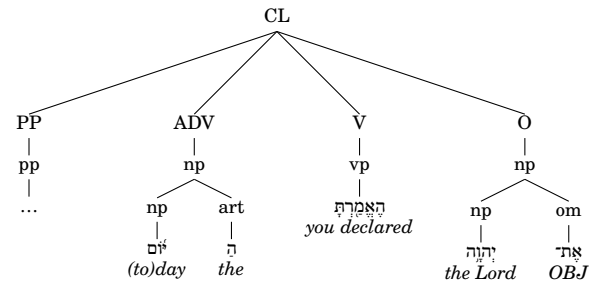
TREE 1 is found in direct speech. Thus we are not surprised to find the clause beginning with the direct object. There is no explicit subject, since the **S**, Moses' audience, has already been established earlier. The **V** is a perfect, with the action occurring in past time. Although יהוה, a proper noun, is as definite as one can get, it still is marked by את, the so-called direct object marker. It raises the question as to what the real function of את is. Certainly it is associated with definiteness. But does it mark definiteness as well as accusativity?

The **ADV** constituent is a noun with the article. There are many examples of anarthrous nouns functioning as **ADVs**, so we tentatively conclude that articular nouns are not a grammaticalization of the adverbial function.

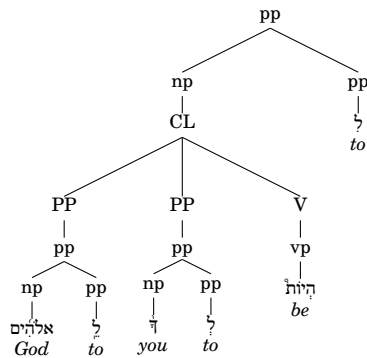
The **PP** constituent is actually a complex of four parallel **PP**. They are parallel because each prepositional object is an infinitival **CL** with ל as the preposition. Those prepositions modify the main **V**, הִאֲמַרְתָּ you declared. Each **PP** contains the content of what the Israelites “declared.”

The infinitival **CL** (Tree 2) uses the standard Hebrew idiom for the English *to have*: the verb היה plus the preposition ל.

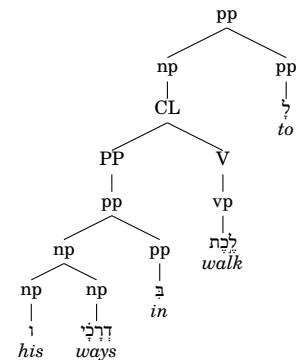
The three **NPs** in tree 4 that make up the **O** are definite nouns, since they are suffixed. Yet, strangely, there is no definite direct object marker. This suggests that את is not, first and foremost, a marker of definiteness. One can have a definite direct object without את.



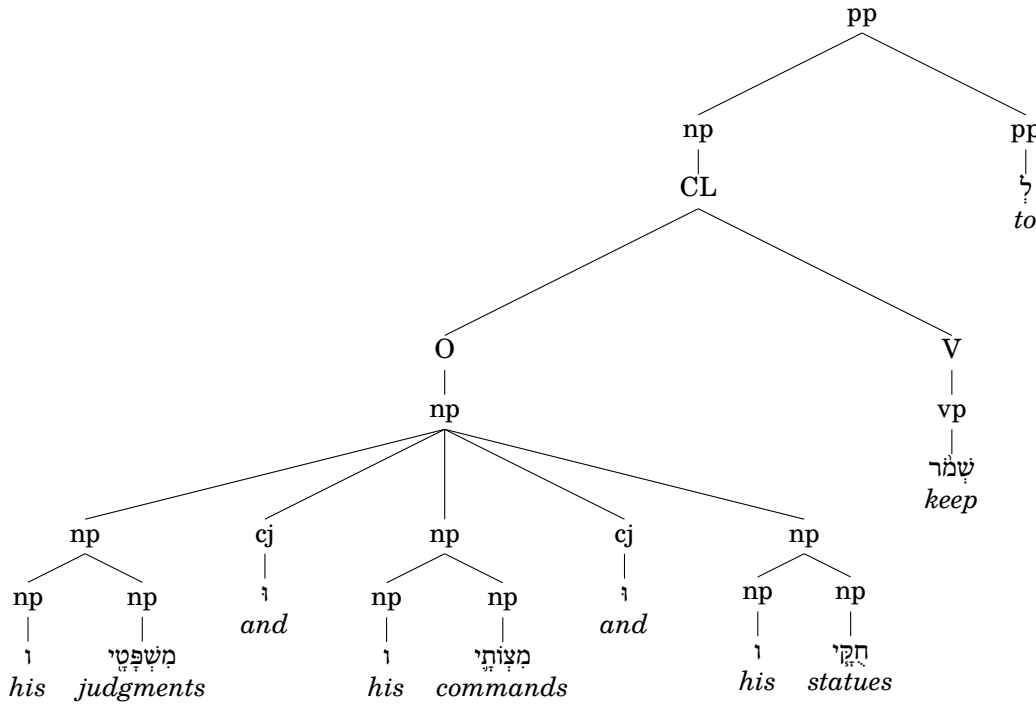
Tree 1: Dt 26:17a



Tree 2: Dt 26:17b

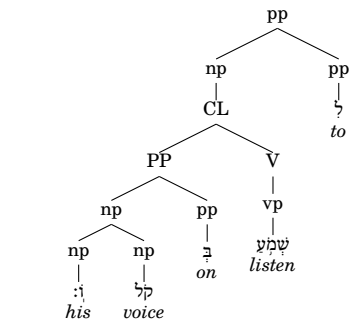


Tree 3: Dt 26:17c



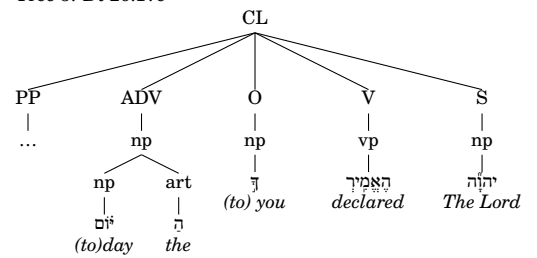
Tree 4: Dt 26:17d

The **V** in tree 5 is a good illustration of mapping from one language's syntax to another. In English we would say either *listen to his voice*, or understanding this construction to be an idiom translate it as *obey his voice*. In the first instance, the verb takes the preposition *to*; in the second, it takes the object only without a preposition. In Hebrew, however, the verb takes the preposition **ב**, which is not intuitive. But we should not conclude that **ב** is a marker of the direct object! It is still a preposition and it is a very ordinary **PP**.



Tree 5: Dt 26:17e

THE SECOND CLAUSE (Tree 6) of this passage uses exactly the same **V** as the first clause. It is long and complex, for it crosses the verse boundary between v 18 and v 19. This is not rare, but is unusual. Its structure is almost exactly the same as clause 1, with the same constituents in the same order, with only the addition of an explicit **S** at the clause-initial slot instead of the **O**.



Tree 6: Dt 26:18-19a

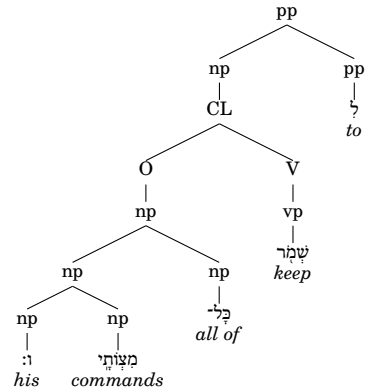
normally a position filled by a nominal. The relative introduces a finite verbal clause using the perfect, in this case. We have a construct *nomen regens* in **np**. A common use of the *nomen rectum* (that is, the noun in the absolute state following the construct noun) is to use that noun as an attributive to the *nomen regens*. So *people of possession* becomes *possessed people* (in contrast to a people who are not claimed by the Lord).

Tree 8 parallels Tree 4 except that the **O** has only one **NP** instead of three. The infinitival clause is parallel to the previous clause with the same verb.

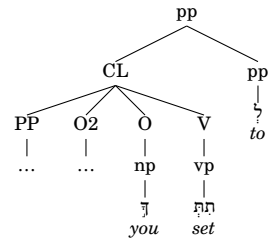
Tree 9 is an example of a **V** that takes two objects. Regardless of the semantic roles and their mapping to English prepositional phrases, these two phrases are simply added to the stream of clause constituents. Although **O2** could be adverbial, the semantics of **np** *to give* suggests a **PATIENT**, that is, *what is given*.

Again we observe the use of a relative clause in Tree 10, where the pronoun sits in the attributive slot, giving a further specification of **np** *nations*. The use of a **PP** to modify **np** *high* is also noteworthy. It is tempting to promote the **PP** to **ADJP**, but we resisted.

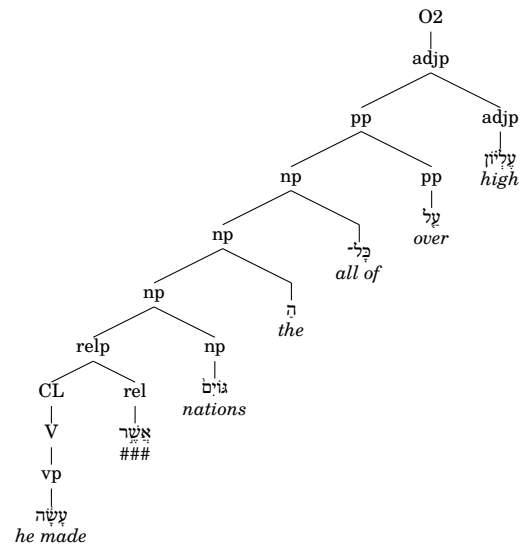
Tree 11 is a continuation of Tree 9. The three **PPs** are grouped together because they are exactly the same except for their lemmas. This is a common practice in creating trees, to make such repetitions explicit in the analysis. We have seen enough conjunctions now to be able to give a definition — or at least a description — of the conjunction **and**: this conjunction is used at both the phrase and clause levels. It's function is to coordinate two “equal” syntactic units. It has no other function, meaning or purpose.



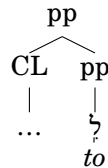
Tree 8: Dt 26:18-19c



Tree 9: Dt 26:18-19d



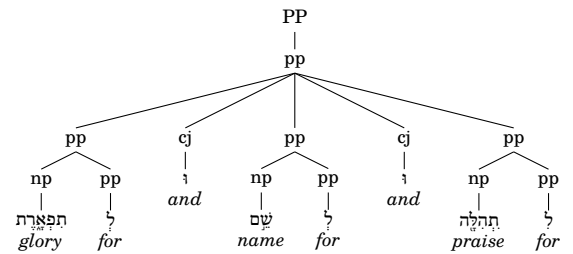
Tree 10: Dt 26:18-19e



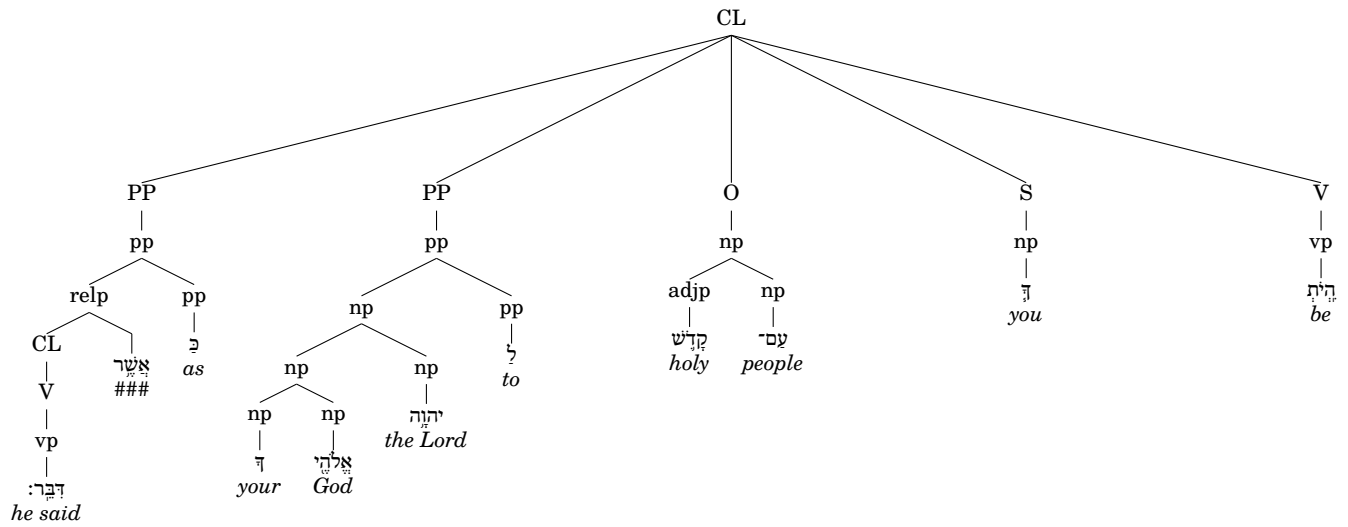
Tree 12: Dt 26:18-19g

WITH TREE 12 we move up one level of nesting and return to the last of the infinitival clauses in the **PP** of Tree 6.

There are two ways of understanding the **CL** of Tree 13. We can, as it stands, understand it to mean *...that you may be a holy people to the Lord your God....* Alternatively, *...that you may be a holy to the Lord your God people....* In this case, the



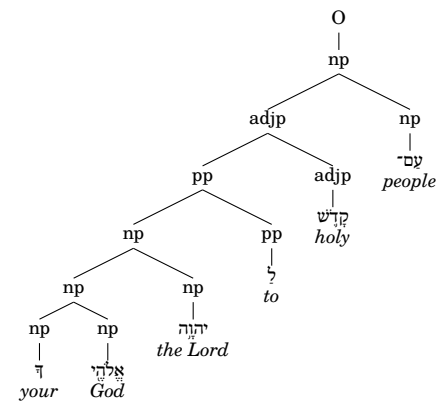
Tree 11: Dt 26:18-19f



Tree 13: Dt 26:18-19h

tree changes to Tree 14.

The difference in meaning is subtle, but not insignificant. Tree 14 shows a **DEEP STRUCTURE** clause that is realized on the surface as an **ADJP** consisting of an **ADJ** modified by a **PP**. The underlying meaning is approximately *...a people that is holy to the Lord your God (and not holy to some other God)*. The alternate understanding of Tree 13 is something like *...that you may be to the Lord your God a holy people*. In this understanding, the idea of Israel being holy to Yahweh and not Ba'al, Dagon, Marduk or some other deity is not highlighted. On what grounds may we make a choice between these two analyses? The only criterion I have yet to adduce is that of adjacency: Tree 14 is to be preferred, highlighting the exclusivity of Israel to Yahweh alone.



Tree 14: Dt 26:18-19i

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