Generalising Asymmetric Coordination with Resumptive Pronoun: A Syntactic Analysis of Certain Dislocations in Biblical Hebrew

Vincent DeCaen
University of Toronto, Canada
decaen@chass.utoronto.ca

Abstract

This study clearly distinguishes Biblical Hebrew topicalisation (fronting) from the hanging topic construction (extraposition) within the framework of the Minimalist Program. Topicalisation involves the movement of some constituent into [spec,TopP] resulting in a gap. In contrast, the hanging topic is not moved but rather base-generated in [spec,&P]. Thus, extraposition is simply a special case of asymmetric coordination. In addition, this study explains how and why these distinct constructions are easily and generally confused. On the one hand, verb movement into the left periphery may render the relative position of constituents opaque. On the other hand, and more importantly, Biblical Hebrew is a robust *pro*-drop language. Consequently, there may be some ambiguity between the gap resulting from clause-internal topicalisation and the apparent gap of a null subject pronoun resuming a clause-external hanging topic.

Keywords: syntactic analysis; pronoun; coordination; hanging topic

Introduction

Naudé (1990, 128) outlines a three-step research project on "certain dislocations" in Biblical Hebrew (BH) syntax. This project is already realised in part in DeCaen (1995). Cowper and DeCaen (2017) complete step three: the generative analysis of those "certain dislocations".

Step one: adopt as the foundation of the syntactic analysis the generative approach of Chomsky et al., then known as Government-Binding Theory or GB (Chomsky 1981; Cowper 1992; Naudé 2013), now updated in light of the Minimalist Program or MP (Chomsky 1995; Hornstein, Nunes and Grohmann 2005).

Step two: develop a generative analysis specifically of BH topicalisation, often referred to as the "fronting" of a major constituent (Van der Merwe 2013): "a movement strategy in which all the usual constraints on movement are obeyed" (Naudé 1990, 124). An analysis would explain in detail which constituent moves where, why, and how, and the nature of the resulting gap.

Step three: building on the initial analysis of BH[1] topicalisation, extend the analysis further to capture the superficially similar "dislocation" of the "casus pendens" or "hanging topic" (HT), also known as "extraposition" (Gross 2013): "a no-movement strategy using resumptive pronouns ([including] resumptive clitics), where all the usual constraints can be violated" (Naudé 1990, 124).

Naudé (1990) and Holmstedt (2009) assume that extraposed constituents are clausal adjuncts, but this cannot be correct. As Gesenius (1910, §112*mm*, §143*a-d*) notes, the conjunction *wāw* (and) serves formally and explicitly to isolate the HT in the left periphery, and so the extraposed constituent must be base-generated *outside* the clause, in the specifier of the conjunction phrase (&P). The conjunction *wāw* is employed as the diagnostic for what is in and, crucially, for what is not in the clause proper. The upshot of this analysis is that the HT construction is simply a special case of generalised asymmetric coordination (Cowper and DeCaen 2017).

This study[2] outlines an analysis that clearly distinguishes between fronting and extraposition to complete Naudé's project.[3] In addition, this study explains how and why these distinct constructions are easily and generally confused. On the one hand, DeCaen (1995; 1999) presents a dynamic model of verb movement, and so much hangs on determining where the finite verb actually is in the left periphery. On the other hand, and more importantly, BH is a robust *pro*-drop language (Holmstedt 2013): a pronoun may be "dropped" or "phonologically null" in the output. Consequently, there may be some ambiguity between the gap resulting from clause-internal movement and the *apparent* gap of a null subject pronoun resuming a clause-external HT.

---

1   Here by BH is meant primarily "Standard" BH as in DeCaen (1995): the corpus of Genesis through 2 Kings. Examples from Isaiah and Ezekiel have also been admitted.

2   An early version of this paper was presented to the Society of Biblical Literature (Boston, 2017). I would like to thank the organisers of the special linguistics section on the pronoun and those participants who offered valuable criticism. I would also like to thank the two referees for their feedback which has been incorporated in the final draft.

3   Referee F notes that the project has now been extended to the verbless clause in Naudé and Miller-Naudé (2017). Since the next stage of my research is to extend the present analysis to the entire database compiled by Gross (1987), the verbless clause will be directly addressed.

Generative Syntax

Naudé (1990) reviews the traditional or what he calls "taxonomic" approach to the BH left periphery (especially Gross 1987) and finds the approach wanting. He laments the lack of a theoretical "system" to capture the "underlying linguistic reality" (1990, 120). He selects GB as a model of the BH underlying reality. This GB proposal is implemented in DeCaen (1995; 1999). The approach assumed in the present study is also consistent with the more recent MP (Cowper and DeCaen 2017).

In addition, DeCaen (1995; 1999) adopts the realisational approach of Distributed Morphology or DM (Halle and Marantz 1993; 1994) *avant la lettre*. On this view, the BH verb is a complex syntactic object consisting of an acategorical root and a bundle of syntactic features. This hierarchical bundle of features is assembled by the operations of Merge and Move and realised at Spell-Out. In short, the sole generative system is the syntax, and it manipulates formal syntactic features only.

Topicalisation

Basic BH word order must be *verbzwei* or verb-second (V2), if by "basic" word order is meant "the order that occurs in stylistically neutral, independent, indicative clauses with full noun phrase … participants, where the subject is definite, agentive and human,[4] the object is a definite semantic patient, and the verb represents an action, not a state or an event" (Siewierska 1988, 8).[5] To be concrete, basic BH word order is instantiated in Gen 1:1 in (1). The fundamental claim of DeCaen (1995) is that the German translation[6] in (2) and the Yiddish translation[7] in (3) instantiate as a first approximation the identical clause structure, which is represented in (4). The pivotal verb in second position is marked in bold.

(1) *bĕ-rē'šît*   **bārā'**   *'ĕlōhîm*   *'ēt haš-šāmayim wĕ-'ēt hā-'āreṣ*
in-beginning   create.PST.3MSG   God   ACC the-heavens and-ACC the-
earth[8]
In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth (Gen. 1:1)[9]

(2) *Am Anfang*   **schuf**   *Gott*   *Himmel und Erde*
on.the beginning   created   God   heaven and earth

---

4   Or divine, as the case may be.
5   Holmstedt (2009) compares and contrasts the many approaches to BH word order in some detail.
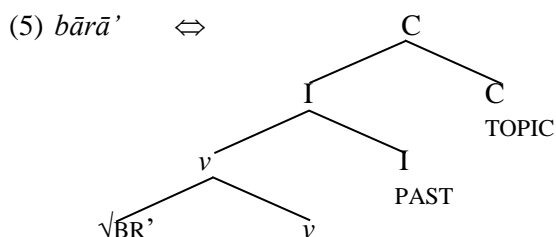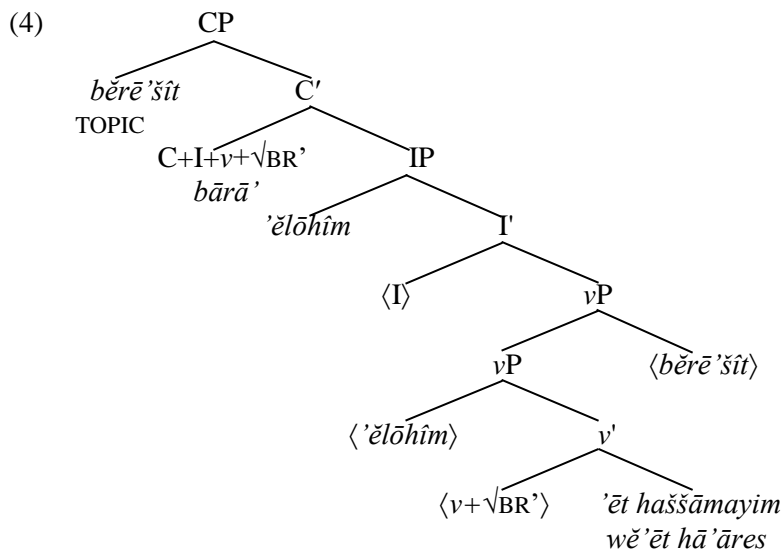6   Luther (1545).
7   Blumgarten (1941).
8   The *Leipzig Glossing Rules* are employed here. Note that the object marker or accusative marker *'et* is glossed as ACC(USATIVE).
9   King James (1611) is employed throughout, as both beautiful and hewing closer to the Hebrew.

(3) *in onheyb*   **hot**   *got*
   in beginning   have   God
   bashafn dem himl un di erd
   created the heaven and the earth

(4)

```
                        CP
              běrē’šît        C′
              TOPIC
                    C+I+v+√BR’        IP
                       bārā’
                            ’ĕlōhîm        I'
                                      ⟨I⟩        vP
                                            vP            ⟨běrē’šît⟩
                                    ⟨’ĕlōhîm⟩        v'
                                              ⟨v+√BR’⟩    ’ēt haššāmayim
                                                          wĕ’ēt hā’āreṣ
```

(5) *bārā’*   ⇔

```
                        C
                  I            C
                v      I      TOPIC
            √BR’    v   PAST
```

In the V2 analysis in (4), the grammatical subject *’ĕlōhîm* (God) must move to [spec,IP][10] to check a strong D feature on Infl. The topic *běrē’šît* (in the beginning) bearing the syntactic feature [TOPIC] moves to [spec,CP] to check the strong, uninterpretable [*u*TOPIC*] feature on Comp. In the verb-movement analysis here, the acategorical root √BR’ (create) is attracted by strong features in *v*, Infl and Comp to the position immediately following the grammatical topic. This hierarchical bundle of syntactic features in (5) is spelled out as *bārā’* (he created). (In what follows, the full verb form is only spelled out in the position in which it is pronounced.)

One fundamental difference between BH and the Germanic languages is that BH is a robust *pro*-drop language (Holmstedt 2013): pronominal constituents that must be
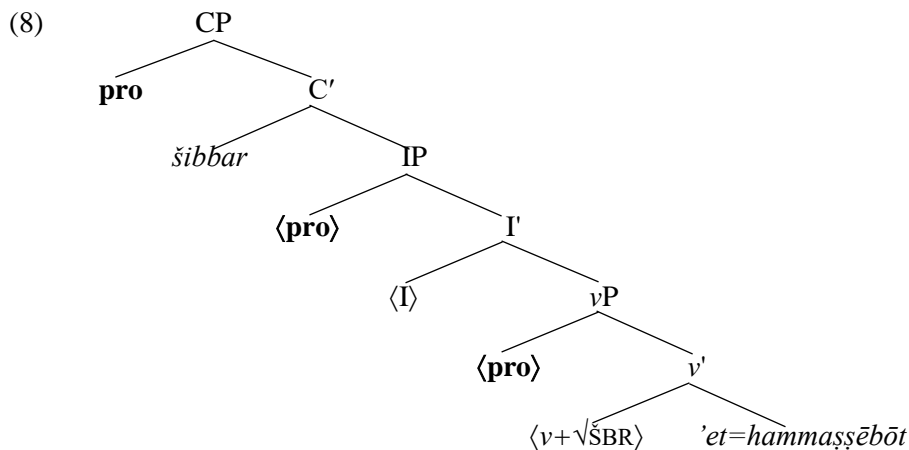
---

10   Abbreviations used beyond the Leipzig glosses: Asp: aspect; C(omp): complementiser; D: determiner; F: force; I(nfl): inflection; P: phrase; Spec: specifier; T: tense; Top: topic; *v* and V: verb.

present in the syntax may be "dropped" or "phonologically null" in the output. Such a pronoun is by convention indicated by *pro* in the syntactic representation. A minimal pair in 2 Kgs 18:4 is presented in (6) concretely captures the BH phenomenon.

(6) *hû'*   **hēsîr**   *'et=hab-bāmôt*
    3MSG   remove.PST.3MSG   ACC=the-high.places
    He removed the high places … (2 Kgs 18:4)

(7) *wĕ*-pro   **šibbar**   *'et=ham-maṣṣēbōt*
    and-3MSG   break.PST.3MSG   ACC=the-images
    … and brake the images (2 Kgs 18:4)

In (6), the overt subject pronoun *hû'* has moved past the finite verb into [spec,CP] as the grammatical topic. In the identical V2 construction in (7), the corresponding null subject pronoun *pro* has also moved past the finite verb as the grammatical topic. The analysis of (7) is presented as (8); the null *pro* is in bold **pro** for clarity.

(8)

```
                CP
         ┌──────┴──────┐
       pro            C′
               ┌───────┴───────┐
            šibbar            IP
                        ┌──────┴──────┐
                     ⟨pro⟩           I′
                             ┌────────┴────────┐
                           ⟨I⟩               vP
                                       ┌───────┴───────┐
                                    ⟨pro⟩             v′
                                             ┌─────────┴─────────┐
                                        ⟨v+√ŠBR⟩         'et=hammaṣṣēbōt
```
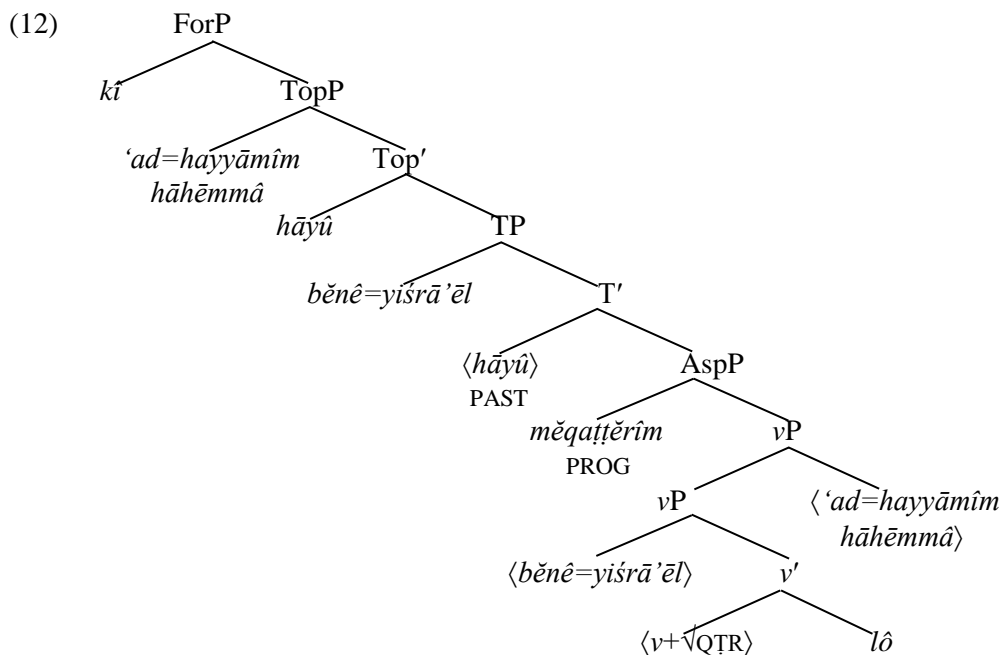
We arrive at the curious analysis of a BH V2 structure that is *superficially* spelled out as a verb-first (V1) construction. Here the silent constituent *pro* moves twice, leaving two gaps. Cowper and DeCaen (2017) refer to this scenario as "pseudo-verb-first" or pseudo-V1. While it may appear odd at first blush and unlikely to be instantiated cross-linguistically, a syntax that is both V2 and *pro*-drop is found, e.g., in the medieval Romance dialects, especially Old French (as detailed in Cowper and DeCaen 2017).

The tidy picture sketched thus far cannot handle either the overt complementiser *kî* (for) or the overt aspect of the BH periphrastic verb-form *hāyû mĕqaṭṭĕrîm* (were burning incense) (split up here by an overt subject) that obtains in (9). Though slightly different constructions, the basic word order in the left periphery in (10) and (11) is consistent with the BH.

(9) *kî*   *'ad=hay-yāmîm hā-hēmmâ*   **hāy-û**
     for   to=the-days the-those.MPL   be.PST-3MPL
     běnê=yiśrā'ēl   *měqaṭṭěr-îm*   *l-ô*
     sons.of=Israel   smoke.PROG.PTCP-MPL   to-3MSG
     for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it (2 Kgs 18:4)

(10) *denn*   *bis zu der Zeit*   **hatten** *ihr*
     for   until to the time   have to.it
     die Kinder Israel   *geräuchert*
     the children of.Israel   smoked

(11) *vorum*   *biz yene teg*   **flegn**
     for   until those days   used.to
     di kinder fun yisrael   *reykhern*   *tsu ir*
     the children of Israel   to.smoke   to it

The added complexity in (9)–(11) calls for the unbundling of For(ce) and Top(ic) in the left periphery, and also inflectional T(ense) and Asp(ect), as shown in (12).

(12)   ForP
         ┌───────┴───────┐
       kî   TopP
            ┌────────────┴────────┐
     'ad=hayyāmîm   Top′
       hāhēmmâ   ┌───────┴────────┐
                     hāyû   TP
                          ┌─────────────┴────────┐
                   běnê=yiśrā'ēl   T′
                                  ┌───────────┴──────────┐
                              ⟨*hāyû*⟩   AspP
                                PAST   ┌───────┴────────┐
                                      měqaṭṭěrîm   *v*P
                                        PROG   ┌────────┴────────┐
                                                  *v*P   ⟨*'ad=hayyāmîm*
                                          ┌─────────┴────────┐   *hāhēmmâ*⟩
                                    ⟨*běnê=yiśrā'ēl*⟩   *v*′
                                                     ┌──────┴──────┐
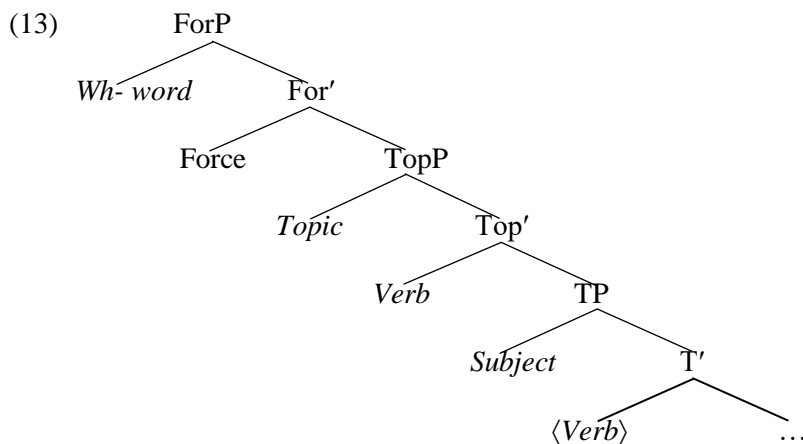   ⟨*v*+√QṬR⟩   *lô*

The morphosyntax and semantics of the BH verb follows DeCaen (1995; 1999). In (12), the verb climbs to the Asp head to encode [PROG(RESSIVE)] aspect and is spelled out

there as *mĕqaṭṭĕrîm*; no further movement is possible. The [PAST] feature on T[11] is effectively "stranded", and the "dummy" or "semantically null" auxiliary √HYH is employed to realise the otherwise stranded feature (DeCaen 1999, Cowper and DeCaen 2017, §2.5). With the introduction of the Topic Phrase, a strong [TENSE] feature must be introduced to draw the finite verb *hāyû* (were) all the way to Top.

The structure in (12) shows that the grammatical subject *bĕnê=yiśrā'ēl* (Israelites) does in fact move out of the *v*P past the participle to [spec,TP]. Since the grammatical subject must move into [spec,TP] to check the strong D feature now on T, the somewhat odd splitting up of the periphrastic verb-form *hāyû mĕqaṭṭĕrîm* (were burning incense) must follow. Such is also the case in the Yiddish word order above in (3): an overt grammatical subject *got* (God) also breaks up the periphrastic *hot bashafn* (created).

In summary, the foundation of the BH clause is topicalisation as described above: the "fronting" of some constituent within the clause with a resulting gap in the output. The intercalated Topic Phrase is the beating heart of the BH clause. At least one and at most one constituent XP[12] must slot into [spec,TopP] as the grammatical topic, wedged between the complementiser and the finite verb as the basic BH word order. (The finite verb may be required to subsequently move higher to check other syntactic features in the left periphery.) When the grammatical subject is not also the topic, the subject appears immediately after the finite verb. The proposed analysis is presented schematically in (13). Here and subsequently, the structure below TP will be abbreviated by ellipsis.

(13)

ForP
 ├── *Wh- word*
 └── For′
      ├── Force
      └── TopP
           ├── *Topic*
           └── Top′
                ├── *Verb*
                └── TP
                     ├── *Subject*
                     └── T′
                          ├── ⟨*Verb*⟩
                          └── …

---

11 N.B. that there is no PERFECTIVE aspect feature in this analysis, nor in the analogues of English, Hungarian or Swahili, for example. Rather, as DeCaen (1995) explains, BH perfective aspect is *derived* as the default but defeasible implicature in the absence of the overt PROGRESSIVE aspect feature spelled out by the participle.

12 Surprisingly, this constituent may also be the infinite absolute treated as a full phrasal constituent in its own right: thus DeCaen (2014), Cowper and DeCaen (2018).

Hanging Topic

To repeat, the so-called "casus pendens" or "hanging topic" (HT) in the left periphery is "dislocated" or "extraposed", crucially not "fronted". "Extraposition" is literally placing the nominative *extra* "outside" the clause. Wherever the theoretical clause-boundary is, the HT is "outside" that boundary. The HT is an "absolute" constituent in this sense: it is hanging *completely* outside the clause (Waltke and O'Connor 1990, §4.7*b*). Consequently, the HT is found at the extreme left edge of the string, necessarily in initial position.[13]

Crucially, since extraposed, the HT cannot have any role to play *within* the clause. Instead of the gap resulting from mandatory topicalisation, as explained above, there must be some "resumptive" constituent, typically a "resumptive pronoun". While grammars will say that resumption is "optional", that cannot be the case by definition. If resumption were optional, there would be a true ungrammatical gap within the clause. Rather, it is consistent with the analysis developed to this point to claim instead that some resumptive pronoun is "dropped" or "phonologically null".[14]
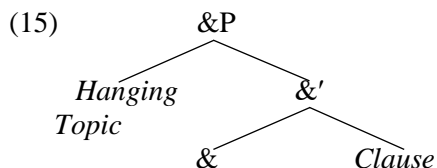
Finally, the HT is to the left even of the conjunction *wāw* that is typically present. Thus, the "isolation and prominence of the principal subject is in this case still more marked" (Gesenius 1910, §143*d*). In this light, the HT must simply be a special case of BH asymmetric[15] coordination (Cowper and DeCaen 2017). In (14), the conjunction first merges with some constituent XP, and then some other constituent YP may or may not be merged. The special case of the HT is represented schematically in (15). Where there is no overt conjunction, the strong claim still is that the HT construction is always the one in (15).

(14)

&P
(YP)   &′
       &   XP

---
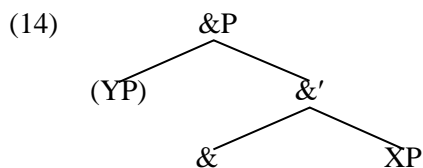
13   On the other possibility of the extreme right of the string, hence "right dislocation", see the detailed consideration in Holmstedt (2014).

14   While it appears that a BH null pronoun is universally a *subject* pronoun, Holmstedt (2013) posits instead that BH also has at the least a phonologically null *object* pronoun.

15   The asymmetry follows from the binary branching nature of the Minimalist bare phrase structure. Contrast this binary branching with an earlier flat structure in Cowper (1992, 43):
$X^i \rightarrow X^i * \text{CONJ } X^i$.

(15)

```
                    &P
         _____/ _____
        /                         \
   Hanging                        &'
   Topic                    _____/ _____
                           /               \
                          &               Clause
```

To see how this works, consider a paradigmatic example in (16). Here the basic V2 word order obtains: *likbôdî* (for my glory) has been topicalised within the main clause, resulting in a gap in the output. In addition, the main clause or ForP is conjoined by *wĕ* (and)[16] with an "absolute" nominal hanging *kol hanniqrā' bišmî* (everyone called by my name) in initial position.

(16) [*kol han-niqrā' bi-šm-î*]_i   *wĕ-*   *li-kbôd-î*   *bĕrā'-tî-w*_i   pro

        all the-called by-name-my   and-   to-glory-my   create.PST-1SG-3MSG   1SG

        Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory

        (Isa 43:7)

(17) *alle, die mit meinem Namen genannt sind,*

        all those with my name called are,

        nämlich die ich geschaffen habe zu meiner Herrlichkeit

        namely all those I created have to my glory

(18) *itlekhn vos wert gerufn mit mayn nomen, ...*

        everyone who is called with my name, …

        un vos ikh hob far mayn kvod bashafn

        and who I have for my glory created

---

[16]   While some manuscripts and versions delete the conjunction, surely *lectio difficilior potior* must apply. However, Referee B notes that a possible dittography here (with confusion of *yôd* and *wāw*) vitiates this claim. Note that without the conjunction, the structure becomes a simple verb-third clause (V3) analogous to (28) below.

(19)

&P
[kōl …]ᵢ &′
wĕ ForP
For TopP
likbôdî Top′
bĕrā'tî + wᵢ TP
pro T′
⟨bĕrā'tîw⟩ …
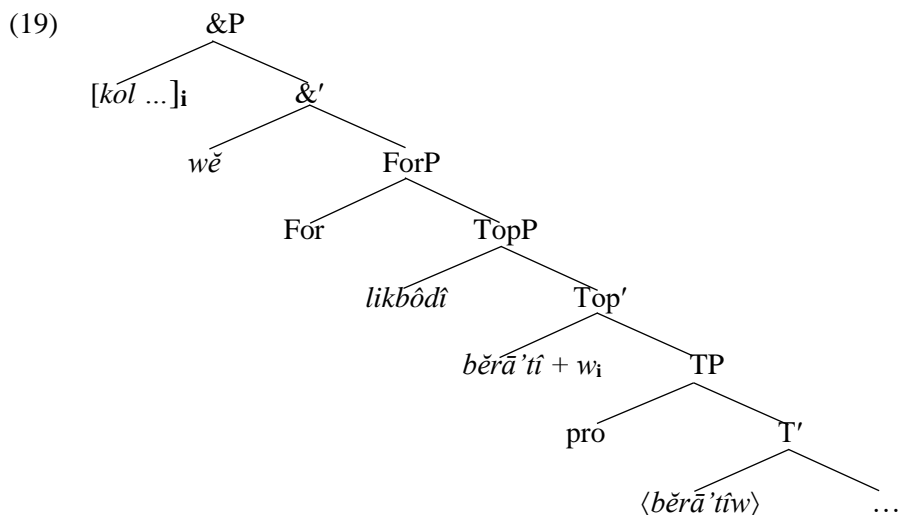
In (19), the HT in [spec,&P] is coreferential with the resumptive object clitic pronoun—
w (him) (coreference is indicated here and throughout by the subscripted index i). The
grammatical subject in this case must be a null subject pronoun raised into [spec,TP].
The English translation best captures the BH construction. In stark contrast in (17) and
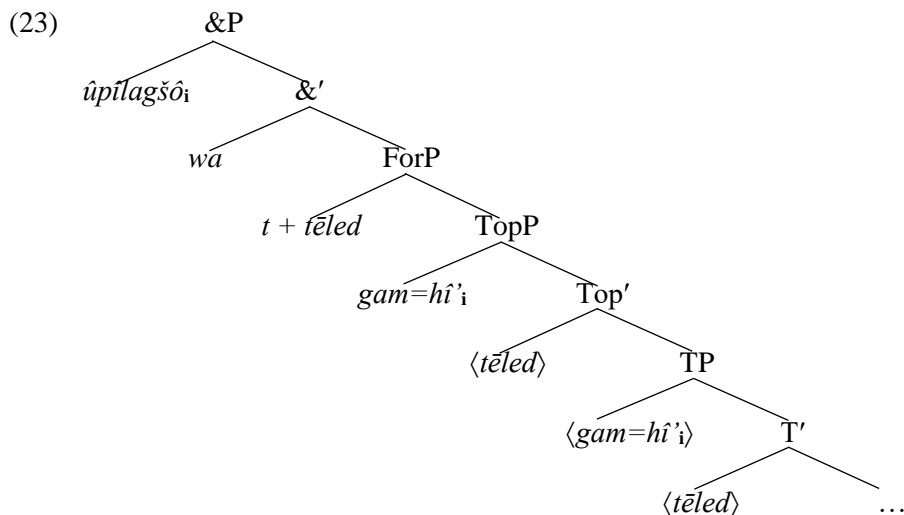(18), the BH main clause is converted into an appositive subordinate clause.

It is rare to find an overt subject pronoun in [spec,TopP] resuming the HT and at the
same time separated by the conjunction wāw, but such is the case in (20). Unlike the
German in (21), the Yiddish in (22) does include a corresponding resumptive emphatic
pronoun *zi oykh* (even she). The analysis follows in (23).

(20)	û-[pîlagš-ô …]ᵢ[17]	wa-t-t-ēled	gam=hî'ᵢ
	and-concubine-3MSG	and-then-3FSG-give.birth.NPST	even=3FSG
	'et=ṭebaḥ …		
	ACC=Tebah		
	And his concubine … she bare also Tebah … (Gen 22:24)		

(21)	*Und sein Kebsweib …*	*gebar auch, nämlich den Theba …*
	and his concubine …	bore also, namely the Tebah

(22)	*un zayn kepsvayb …*	*zi oykh hot geborn tevkhn …*
	and his concubine …	she even has born Tebah …

---

17 It is assumed here that *ûpîlagšô ûšmāh rĕ'ûmâ* forms a single constituent (And his concubine, whose
name was Reumah): thus Gross (1987, §5.1.1.1). On this view, there is a hanging topic *pîlagšô*
within the hanging topic [û- [*pîlagšô* [û- [*šmāh rĕ'ûmâ*]]]]. The analysis of the phenomenon with the
verbless clause is beyond the scope of this study. See n. 3.

(23)

```
                    &P
            ┌───────┴───────┐
        ûpîlagšô_i          &'
                      ┌──────┴──────┐
                      wa          ForP
                            ┌───────┴───────┐
                        t + tēled          TopP
                                      ┌──────┴──────┐
                                  gam=hî'_i        Top'
                                            ┌───────┴───────┐
                                        ⟨tēled⟩            TP
                                                     ┌──────┴──────┐
                                              ⟨gam=hî'_i⟩          T'
                                                              ┌─────┴─────┐
                                                          ⟨tēled⟩        …
```

Again, the essential difference in (23) is that the resumptive pronoun is now both the grammatical subject and topic. In passing, note here the verb-movement analysis of the so-called *wāw* consecutive that is set forth in DeCaen (1995). On this view, in addition to the overt conjunction *wa-* there is in fact an overt complementiser "then" that draws the finite verb higher (resulting in a true verb-first or V1 as output). In form, this particular complementiser is an underspecified consonant that is realised as gemination.
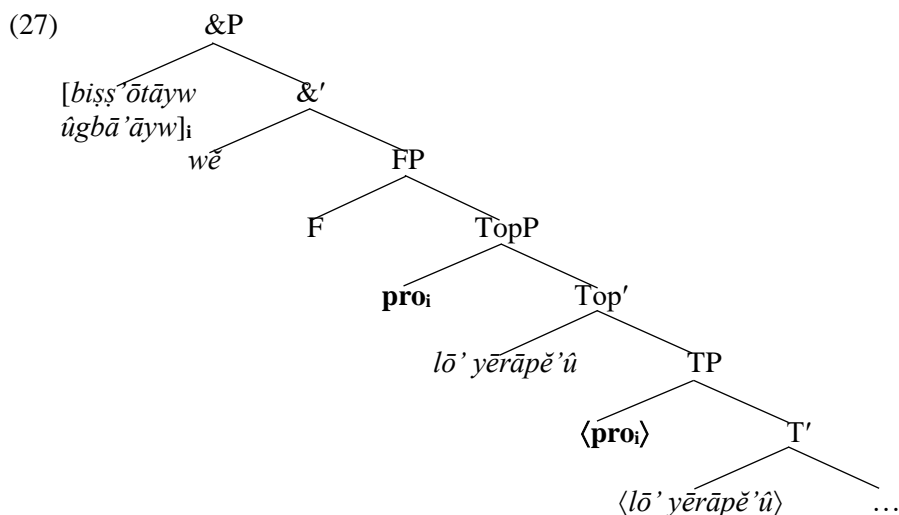
The BH twist on the HT construction in (23) is the presence of a phonologically null subject pronoun in the topic position. A BH example is offered in (24), with translations in (25) and (26), and the formal analysis in (27).

(24) [*biṣṣ'ōt-āyw*[18] *û-gbā'-āyw*]_i   *wĕ-* pro_i   *lō' yē-rāpĕ'-û*
      swamps-3MSG and-marshs-3MSG   and   3MPL   not 3M-be.healed.NPST-PL
      But the miry places thereof and the marishes thereof shall not be healed (Ezek 47:11)

(25) *Aber die Teiche und Lachen daneben warden nicht gesund werden*
      but the ponds and pools thereof will not healthy become

(26) *aber zayne zumpn un zayne vasergriber veln nit gezunt gemakht vern*
      but its swamps and ditches will not healthy made be

---

18 Written singular *biṣṣāt-ô* (swamp-3MSG) but read plural *biṣṣōt-āyw* (swamps-3MSG).

(27)

```
                        &P
             ┌───────────┴──────────┐
    [biṣṣ'ōtāyw              &'
     ûgbā'āyw]ᵢ        ┌──────┴──────────┐
            wĕ                FP
                       ┌───────┴────────┐
                       F              TopP
                              ┌─────────┴────────┐
                            proᵢ              Top'
                                        ┌────────┴──────┐
                                  lō' yĕrāpĕ'û         TP
                                                ┌───────┴──────┐
                                             ⟨proᵢ⟩          T'
                                                      ┌────────┴──────┐
                                                ⟨lō' yĕrāpĕ'û⟩        …
```
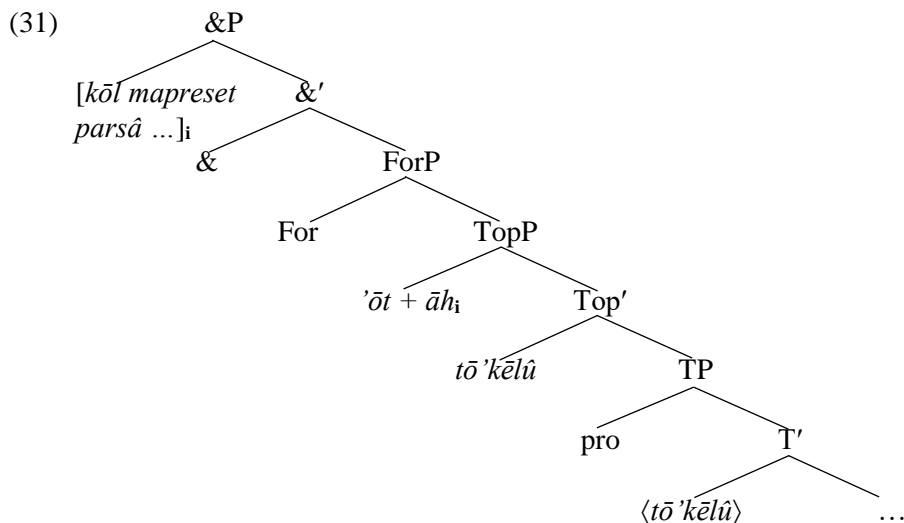
The reasoning runs as follows. The "isolation and prominence" of the nominal *biṣṣ'ōtāyw ûgbā'āyw* is overtly marked by the conjunction *wĕ*: this nominal phrase is extraposed, it is clearly in [spec,&P]. Consequently, the main clause would be without a grammatical subject if there were no null subject pronoun. Further, that coindexed null subject pronoun must also be the grammatical topic, since the basic BH word order is always V2: there is always a constituent fronted to [spec,TopP]. Note in passing that the finite verb *yĕrāpĕ'û* (will be healed) is realised at Topic, consistent with both the non-jussive semantics of the verb and the clitic *lō'* (not) instead of the jussive *'al*.[19]

Syntactic landmarks may be missing. Given the analysis to this point, what would one expect to find in the presence of an overt topic but in the absence of both an overt conjunction and an overt complementiser? One would expect to observe a BH "verb-third" or V3 order, as it were, in which the HT (extraposition) always precedes the mandatory topic proper (fronting), followed immediately by the finite verb. The V3 word order in (28) is consistent with these expectations. The translations in (29)-(30) are strikingly consistent as well (the relevant finite verbs are again in bold). The asymmetric coordination is captured in (31).

(28)   [*kōl mapreset parsâ* …]ᵢ   *'ōt-āh*ᵢ   **t-ō'kēl-û** pro
        all divide.PTCP.FSG hoof   ACC-3FSG   2M-eat.NPST-PL 2MPL
        Whatsoever parteth the hoof …   that   shall ye eat (Lev 11:3)

(29)   *Alles, was die Klauen spaltet*, …   *das*   **sollt** *ihr essen.*
        everything what cloven hooves has …   that   may you eat

---

(30)   *Itlekhe vos iz bakloyt mit kloyen,* …   *zi*   **megt** *ir esn*
       everything what is split with hooves …   that   may you eat

(31)

```
                          &P
                 _____/  _____
                /                    \
      [kōl mapreset                   &'
       parsâ …]ᵢ              _____/ _____
                            /                    \
                           &                     ForP
                                         _____/  _____
                                        /                    \
                                      For                    TopP
                                                     _____/  _____
                                                    /                    \
                                               'ōt + āhᵢ                 Top'
                                                             _____/  _____
                                                            /                    \
                                                        tō'kēlû                  TP
                                                                        _____/  _____
                                                                       /                    \
                                                                     pro                    T'
                                                                                  _____/ _____
                                                                                 /                   \
                                                                            ⟨tō'kēlû⟩               …
```

Finally, what would one expect if all the clause signposts were missing: the conjunction, complementiser *and* the subject pronoun, crucially in topic position, were *all* missing in the output? The order would have to be an apparent V2 in the output: a "pseudo-V2", as it were, consistent with the terminology employed here. One could be forgiven for rejecting the possibility, but see Gross (1987, §§1.1.1.2, 1.2.1.2-3, etc.). Consider then the token in (32) in which these conditions are met. Of course, the pronouns in (33)–(34) must all be overt, yet analogous word order obtains.[20] Notice that the German right dislocation can be normalised as in (33)′.

(32)   [*mî 'ăšer ḥāṭā'=lî*]ᵢ   **pro**   *'e-mḥ-en-nûᵢ*
        who that sin.PST.3MSG=to.me   1SG   1SG-blot.NPST-IND-3MSG
        mis-sipr-î
        from-book-my
        Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book (Exod 32:33)

(33)   **Ich** *will den aus meinem Buch tilgen, den an mir sündigt.*
       I will him out.of my book erase, he against me sins

---

20 Note that the German *ich* appears in the position corresponding to BH *pro*. However, there is inversion in the Yiddish pronouns: *im* now appears in topic position, not *ikh*. Presumably the difference is in discourse function, but discourse analysis goes beyond the current study.
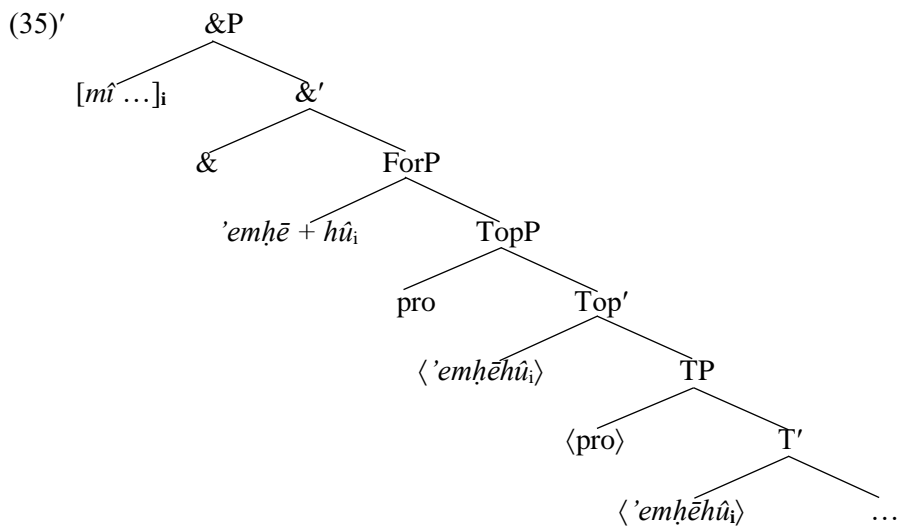
(33)′   *Den an mir sündigt,* **ich** *will den aus meinem Buch tilgen.*[21]

(34)   *Ver es hot gezindikt tsu mir, im vel* **ikh** *oysmekn fun mayn bukh.*
       who there has sinned to me, him will I remove from my book

(35)
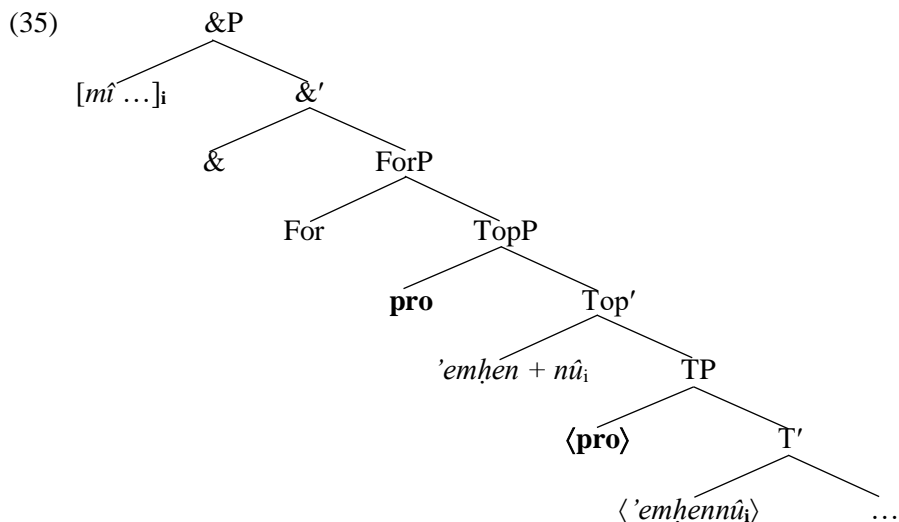
The representation in (35) must be the case. First there is the matter of the object clitic pronoun /hu:/ → *nû* (him) that is obviously coreferential with the phrase *mî 'ăšer ḥāṭā'=lî* (he who sinned against me). Consequently, this nominal phrase must be a HT, and the clitic pronoun is its resumptive pronoun. Further, there is no grammatical subject unless it is the null *pro* that moves to [spec,TP]. This null subject pronoun must also be the topic, since some constituent must move to [spec,TopP]. (Note that if the intention were instead that the object be the topic, then the independent pronoun *'ōtô* (him) would obtain instead (see the fronted *'ōtāh* in (31)).) Lastly, the form of the finite verb plus its object clitic dictates that the verb stays home at Topic. In this case, the longer indicative form *'emḥennû* /'əmḥi-n-hû/ (I will blot him out) with its infix /-n-/ contrasts with a shorter subjunctive form *'emḥēhû* /'əmḥi-hû/ (May I blot him out!) without the infix. If the verb had moved subsequently from Topic to Force, it is the shorter subjunctive form that would surface (DeCaen 1995; 2003), crucially without the infix /-n-/. The subtle contrast is reflected in (35)′.

---

21 The subtle differences between accusative *den an mir sündigt* versus nominative *der an mir sündigt*, between the resumptive pronouns *den* versus *ihn*, and again the placement of *ihn/den*, is briefly reviewed in the excursus in Cowper and DeCaen (2017, §4.2).

(35)′

&P
├── [mî̂...]ᵢ
└── &′
    ├── &
    │   └── 'emḥē + hûᵢ
    └── ForP
        └── TopP
            ├── pro
            │   └── ⟨'emḥēhûᵢ⟩
            └── Top′
                └── TP
                    ├── ⟨pro⟩
                    └── T′
                        ├── ⟨'emḥēhûᵢ⟩
                        └── …

Conclusion

Recall the point of departure of this study: the three-step research program into "certain dislocations" outlined in Naudé (1990). Naudé's own conclusion reads in part as follows:

> A movement analysis involving topicalisation cannot account for dislocation despite the superficial similarities between these two phenomena … The structure/sentence positions of the dislocated constituent and its resumption need to be studied further in the light of the different subsystems and their interaction, especially binding theory. (Naudé 1990, 128)

Step one, "the different subsystems … especially binding theory": adopt the Minimalist Program of Chomsky et al. Check.

Step two, "a movement analysis involving topicalisation": isolate the landing site of the grammatical topic within the left periphery. The [spec,TopP] is proposed here as that unique landing site. Check.

Step three, "the structure/sentence positions of the dislocated constituent": find another unrelated position for a base-generated hanging topic that must be resumed within the clause. The novel proposal in Cowper and DeCaen (2017) is that the different position is [spec,&P]. Check.

A consideration of the BH examples presented shows how distinct syntactic structures can easily be confused. On the one hand, it is a subtle but not trivial question as to where exactly the finite verb is in the left periphery. Not just (35) versus (35)′, but also tokens in (23) and (27) indicate how the position of the finite verb may in part dictate the

analysis of the preceding constituent. On the other hand, in the absence of syntactic landmarks in the left periphery in (35), there is possible ambiguity between a fronted constituent and its gap versus the hanging topic and a resumptive null subject pronoun. And again, if a resumptive null pronoun is present, where is it, in [spec,TP] or in [spec,TopP]? Presumably the null pronoun's position would have a direct bearing on discourse analysis. A detailed analysis of the invaluable database assembled by Gross (1987) will clarify and answer such questions.

References

Blumgarten, Yehoash Solomon (transl.). 1941. *Torah, Nevi'im, u-Khetuvim.* New York: Yeho'ash Farlag Gezelshaft.

Chomsky, Noam. 1981. *Lectures on Government and Binding*. Dordrecht: Foris.

Chomsky, Noam. 1995. *The Minimalist Program.* Cambridge MA: MIT Press.

Cowper, Elizabeth. 1992. *A Concise Introduction to Syntactic Theory: The Government-Binding Approach*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226160221.001.0001

Cowper, Elizabeth and Vincent DeCaen. 2017. "Biblical Hebrew: A Formal Perspective on the Left Periphery." *Toronto Working Papers in Linguistics* 38.

Cowper, Elizabeth and Vincent DeCaen. 2018. "A Unified Account of the Infinitive Absolute in Biblical Hebrew." Second Workshop of the Biblical Hebrew Linguistics and Philology Network, Hebrew University.

DeCaen, Vincent. 1995. "On the Placement and Interpretation of the Verb in Standard Biblical Hebrew Prose." PhD thesis, University of Toronto.

DeCaen, Vincent. 1999. "A Unified Analysis of Verbal and Verbless Clauses Within Government-Binding Theory," in *The Verbless Clause in Biblical Hebrew: Linguistic Approaches*, edited by Cynthia Miller, 109–31. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.

DeCaen, Vincent. 2003. "Moveable *nun* and Intrusive *nun* in Biblical Hebrew: The Nature and Distribution of Verbal Nunation in Joel and Job." *Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages* 29 (1): 121–32.

DeCaen, Vincent. 2007. "The Scope of the Negative lo' in Biblical Hebrew by F.P.J. Snyman (review)." *Hebrew Studies* 48: 362–65. https://doi.org/10.1353/hbr.2007.0020

DeCaen, Vincent. 2014. "On the Syntax and Semantics of the Biblical Hebrew Infinitive Absolute." Lecture presented at Society of Biblical Literature, San Diego.

Gesenius, Wilhelm. 1910. *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar.* 2nd edition. Oxford: Clarendon.

Gross, Walter. 1987. *Die Pendenskonstruktion im biblischen Hebräisch.* St. Ottilien: EOS Verlag.

Gross, Walter. 2013. "Extraposition: Biblical Hebrew," in *Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics*, edited by G. Khan, volume 1, 892–93. Leiden: Brill.

Halle, M. and A. Marantz. 1993. "Distributed Morphology and the Pieces of Inflection," in *The View from Building 20: Essays in Linguistics in Honor of Sylvain Bromberger*, edited by K. Hale and S. J. Keyser, 111–76. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Halle, M. and A. Marantz. 1994. "Some Key Features of Distributed Morphology." *MIT Working Papers in Linguistics* 21: 275–88.

Holmstedt, Robert. 2009. "Word Order and Information Structure in Ruth and Jonah: A Generative-Typological Analysis." *Journal of Semitic Studies* 54 (1): 111–39. https://doi.org/10.1093/jss/fgn042

Holmstedt, Robert. 2013. "Pro-drop," in *Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics*, edited by G. Khan, volume 3, pp. 265–7. Leiden: Brill.

Holmstedt, Robert. 2014. "Critical at the Margins: Edge Constituents in Biblical Hebrew." *Kleine Untersuchungen zur Sprache des Alten Testaments und seiner Umwelt* 17: 109–56.

Hornstein, Norbert, Jairo Nunes and Kleanthes K. Grohmann. 2005. *Understanding Minimalism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511840678

Naudé, Jacobus. 1990. "A Syntactic Analysis of Certain Dislocations in Biblical Hebrew," *Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages* 16: 115–30.

Naudé, Jacobus. 2013. "Government and Binding," in *Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics*, edited by G. Khan, volume 2, 72–76. Leiden: Brill.

Naudé, Jacobus and Cynthia Miller-Naudé. 2017. "At the Interface of Syntax and Prosody: Differentiating Left Dislocated and Tripartite Verbless Clauses in Biblical Hebrew." *Stellenbosch Papers in Linguistics* 48: 223–38. https://doi.org/10.5774/48-0-293

Siewierska, A. 1988. *Word Order Rules.* London: Croom Helm.

Van der Merwe, Christo H.J. 2013. "Fronting: Biblical Hebrew," in *Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics*, edited by G. Khan, volume 1, 931–95. Leiden: Brill.

Waltke, Bruce and Michael O'Connor. 1990. *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax.* Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.