A matter of time: tense, mood and aspect in spontaneous Spoken Israeli Hebrew
Dekel, N.

Citation for published version (APA):
8. Summary, conclusions and recommendations

8.1. Review of the research questions

The findings of this study are presented below in the framework of the research questions addressed in Section 1.

- **TMA categories in SIH**
  
  TMA categories fully exist in SIH, i.e. all three categories, tense, mood and aspect, are present. These categories are found in various distributions, whereby aspect is the most widespread and dominant category, followed by mood. Tense is found in this study, but its occurrences are limited to a very few structures. This is in complete contradiction to all the traditional theories, which refer to the Modern Hebrew verb system as a tense system with three tenses.

- **TMA expressions in SIH**
  
  All three TMA categories are grammaticalized to different degrees, aspect to the highest degree and tense to the lowest degree. The degree of grammaticalization is determined according to the following criteria:
  
  - The distance of the category marker from the verb;
  - The need for peripheral means to express the category;
  - The distribution of the semantic category in the language.

  All linguistic means are used to express TMA categories in SIH: morphological, syntactic and lexical. The morphological and syntactic means and the interface between them are factors in the determination of the degree of grammaticalization of the semantic category in the language. Lexical means add information, but are not considered as part of the TMA system.
• **Differences between linguistic realizations of tense, aspect and mood in SIH**

Aspect and mood in SIH are primarily expressed by morphological means, i.e. verb patterns and inflections. They can also be expressed by syntactic structures, i.e. combinations of verbs and complements, but these are rare. Syntactic structures, which are found in this study, include several types of verb phrases (constructions), such as combinations of two verbs in a sequence or a sequence of a verb and an infinitive. Aspect and mood are linguistically realized by morphological means in the verb system. Both categories also appear in syntactic structures. Tense is realized by one morphological pattern combined with a specific consonantal root; in all other cases it is mainly lexical.

• **Relations between semantic categories and linguistic structures**

In general, a specific morphological or syntactic structure always denotes the same TMA category, with the exception of one structure, which is the *hjj* 'be' + participle, that expresses both the habitual past (aspect-tense) and the counterfactual (mood) categories. In the latter case, the distinction between the two meanings is made according to the context. Aspect is expressed mainly morphologically by suffixed form and participles. Mood is expressed mainly by prefixed forms, imperative forms (phonologically-derived) and some additional syntactic combinations. Tense in a few instances is expressed by the root *hjj* 'be’ in the *Qal* pattern. Otherwise – it is expressed lexically.

• **Interaction between semantic categories**

The role of verbal construction constituents in relation to TMA categories is strictly defined and is very clear. In case of multiple TMA categories in a verbal construction, each construction constituent bears only one TMA meaning, where the same type of constituent will always bear the same TMA meaning. The combination of two constituents with two TMA meanings (one meaning each) yields a
multiple TMA meaning. For example, the structure representing the habitual past, which expresses both aspect (habitual) and tense (past), has two constituents: the root *hjj* ‘be’ and a participle. The former is always inflected for tense. The latter is always inflected for aspect. Together they form the combined meaning of the habitual past. Very few constructions of this type were found in the study. Most of the time each verb is inflected for only one TMA category; combinations are rare.

- **Differences between populations**

  No significant differences between populations are found in this research. There are, however, recommendations for further studies, where correlation coefficients between the various populations is lower than 0.99. See Section 7 for details.

### 8.2. Conclusions

The main conclusion of this study is the claim that IH is an aspect-prominent language, and not a tense-prominent language, as most approaches have previously claimed. See Section 5 for details.

Additional conclusions regarding the IH verb system, which are derived from this study, are the existence of five, and not seven, verbal patterns in IH, the absence of passive forms in IH speech and the different ways in which imperative forms are derived in IH (phonologically-motivated) as opposed to Hebrew (morphologically-motivated). All these conclusions are in contradiction to traditional approaches, which perceive IH / MH as having seven verbal patterns, as well as passive and imperative forms. See Sections 4 and 5 for further details and data on this topic.

### 8.3. Summary and Recommendations

The findings in this study show that the verb system of Israeli Hebrew is completely different from the Hebrew one, as perceived by normative
views. IH presents a different verb system than traditional Hebrew, has less verbal patterns, as well as different functions for these patterns. Although aspectual like previous Hebrew layers, IH aspects are represented by other patterns than those in previous Hebrew layers.

The verb system is one of the core systems in a language. Israeli Hebrew has many other differences, both phonological and syntactic, as compared with traditional Hebrew, apart from the verb system differences presented in this thesis. Also, in light of the findings of this research and the discontinuity of almost 2000 years between Hebrew and IH, I would consider adopting Zuckermann’s terminology (2006, 2008), and use the name ‘Israeli’ for the language spoken in Israel, as opposed to ‘Hebrew’, which is the traditionally employed entity.