

Teaching the Classical Hebrew Stem System
(The *Binyanim*)

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Abstract

Proposes a solution to the problems involved in teaching the semantics of the Classical Hebrew stem system. Includes a history of research into the understanding of the stems. Includes an examination of methods previously used to teach the stem system. Includes a textbook for intermediate students. Teaching method is based on providing systematic English paraphrases for Hebrew stems. Uses an inductive approach to introduce semantic concepts. Relationship between the stems is diagrammed using an adaptation of the grid presented by Waltke and O'Connor (1990). Suggests a new understanding for the frequentative Piel: the Internal Piel which parallels the Internal Hifil.

Dedicated to my parents, without whom...

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Introduction

There are several problems connected with attempting to teach or learn the meaning of the Classical Hebrew stems (traditionally known as *binyanim*). The first of these problems is that the semantic functions of each of the stems and their relationship to the other stems has been poorly understood. The teachers or students are therefore uncertain of exactly what they are required to teach or learn. A subsequent problem is that introductory Hebrew grammars tend to pay little attention to the semantic functions of the stems, which gives students few resources to aid their studies. When beginner or intermediate students turn to a reference grammar they may be faced with the opposite problem: the reference grammar is comprehensive and swamps the students with too much information.

In this thesis I will attempt to provide a solution to the problems mentioned above. The first section of the thesis will be a brief history of the research into the meaning of the stems and their relationship to each other. In this way I will attempt to show how a clear understanding of the meaning of the stem system has been developed over the past century and a half. In the second section of the thesis I will examine some theories in language teaching and some examples of how the stem system has been taught in the past. I will use these studies to help develop my own method for teaching the stem system. The third section of the thesis will consist of an application of my method for teaching the stem system, presented in the form of a textbook designed for intermediate students.

Section 1

A Brief History of Research into the Nature of the Stem System

History

From medieval times it was generally agreed that each Classical Hebrew stem expressed a different nuance of the verbal root. Grammarians presented each stem atomistically, rather than relating them to the system as a whole. A stem could be ascribed a variety of semantic functions which were often not connected. There was agreement that Qal was simple, Hifil causative, Hofal a passive of Hifil, and this has remained unchanged. However, the understanding of the semantic function of Piel and Nifal was never as clear cut. From the mid nineteenth century attempts were made to come to a more systematic definition of the stems.

Earlier definitions allowed each stem to have a wide range of functions, and they left room for the functions of different stems to overlap. Later definitions described each stem as having a distinct semantic function vis-à-vis the other stems. Once these definitions were established the stems could be seen as relating to each other in a systematic way and made it possible to represent the relationships between the stems on a two dimensional diagram. The horizontal and vertical axes of such a diagram represent different semantic functions. Previously the use of the stems had appeared to some grammarians, such as Alexander Sperber,¹ to be arbitrary.

In this chapter, I will present a summary of the investigations which lead to the development of distinct definitions for each stem, and will present them in the following order: in the most detail **Piel** and its distinction from Qal and Hifil; a brief note on the semantic problems associated with a few roots in **Hitpael**; a short note on **Nifal** and its, apparently, wide range of semantic functions; and a brief note on the elimination of some semantically problematic forms in **Pual** and **Hofal** through the recognition of

¹Alexander Sperber, *Hebrew Grammar: A New Approach* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1943), 143-154.

these forms as Qal-Passives. I will then present a summary of the development of **the grid system** which shows the systematic relationship between the stems.

Defining Piel

The main definition of Piel was designated ‘intensive.’ A good definition of ‘intensive’ was provided by Gesenius:

The fundamental idea of Piel, to which all the various shades of meaning in this conjugation may be referred, is *to busy oneself eagerly* with the action indicated by the stem. This intensifying of the idea of the stem, which is outwardly expressed by the strengthening of the second radical, appears in individual cases as - (a) a *strengthening* and *repetition* of the action... [Qal] *to laugh*, Piel *to jest, to make sport* (to laugh repeatedly);... [Qal] *to ask*, Piel *to beg*; hence when an action has reference to *many*,... [Qal] *to bury* (a person)... Piel *to bury* (many)...²

The onomatopoeic type link drawn between morphological gemination and semantic intensification would not be given much credence today! However, the general meaning of ‘intensive’ is clear: either the action is done with greater enthusiasm or to more objects than would be implied by the Qal form of the verb.

Unfortunately, the Piel was also assigned declarative, denominative and causative functions which were not obviously in line with the ‘intensive’ function. The causative function was especially troublesome because it was indistinguishable from Hifil. Sometimes Piel and Hifil seemed to have no discernable difference, and to make matters worse, sometimes Piel and Qal had no discernable difference.

The following examples taken from BDB illustrate the problem:

שבר	Qal: to break	Piel: to break, to shatter
נקם	Qal: to avenge, to take vengeance	Piel: to avenge, to take vengeance
שמע	Piel: to cause to hear	Hifil: to cause to hear

²Wilhelm Gesenius & E. Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, 2nd ed., trans. A. E. Cowley (Oxford: Clarendon, 1910), §52 f.

אָבד Piel: to cause to perish, to destroy, to kill Hifil: to destroy, to put to death

In 1942 Albrecht Goetze successfully challenged the ‘intensive’ idea of the D-stem. He was primarily an Akkadian grammarian and his analysis was based on morphological factors. He found that the Akkadian B-stem statives could be divided into three sub-groups according to semantic function. Corresponding to the three sub-groups of the B-stem (also known as G-stem) statives, there were three functional sub-groups for the D-stem. Goetze’ thesis was that the B-stem statives referred to a quality, condition, or result, and that the D-stem signified putting something into the state indicated by that quality, condition, or result. This function is now commonly called **factive**. All but four attested Akkadian D-stems have corresponding B-stem statives attested. The following are extracts from Goetze which I have formatted in parallel columns for easier comparison:³

B-Stem	D-Stem
<p>(1) the durative stative. It denotes an inherent quality of a person or a thing. ...</p>	<p>It denotes “put a person or thing in the condition which the stative indicates.” ...</p>
<p>(2) the perfect stative. It denotes a condition which results from the subject’s own action with reference to a person or a thing... It is best translated by expressions which contain the English verbs “have” or “hold.” Examples are: “possesses” “has learnt” “has divided” ...</p>	<p>Corresponding with the transitive variety of the perfect stative we have verbs which denote “make somebody have something,” e.g. “make somebody instructed in something” “make somebody have (an estate) divided” ... With the intransitive variety verbs of the general meaning “put somebody in the state of rest which the stative specifies” correspond, [sic] e.g.</p>

³Albrecht Goetze, “The So-Called Intensive of the Semitic Languages,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* Vol. 62, No. 1 (March 1942): 5-6.

“bring somebody (or something) to rest”
 “sink (a ship)”

(3) the passive stative.

It denotes a state of affairs which results from another person’s action; but that the agent remains unspecified. This type always goes with transitive verbs; one may call it a passive participle in predicate use...

It is worthy of particular note that numerous forms may either belong to group (2) or (3); the presence or absence of an object makes distinction possible. ...

The meaning is “put a person or a thing in the state which the stative describes.” E.g. “make someone buried,” “make (a document) written,”...

The difference in meaning between D and B is very slight. With B the emphasis is laid on the action performed, with D, however, on the effect of the action. It is easily understood how the difference between “bury (a corpse)” and “make (a corpse) buried” could be felt as a difference between a basic verb and its “intensive.”

Although (apart from a few remaining participle forms) West Semitic lost the B-stem stative, Goetze suggested that the factitive function of the D-stem in Akkadian might also be the D-stem’s function in West Semitic. Stuart Ryder pointed out that D-stem forms derived from nouns also fit into the factitive function:

Since the stative verb is a nominal form, the basic function of the D-stem is then seen to be denominative. Wherever derived from adjectives [sic] the D-stem denotes ‘make a person or thing that which the adjective indicates’, i.e. it is factitive.⁴

In 1968 Ernst Jenni analysed the Piel forms occurring in the Hebrew Bible, concentrating especially on Qal-Piel and Piel-Hifil pairs. His theory was that Piel transforms a nominal clause into a factitive statement, the adjective of the nominal clause describes the state into which the object is put. Thus ‘he living’ (nominal clause) is transformed into ‘X makes him living’ (Piel verbal clause). His findings divided verbs according to the transitivity of their Qal forms.

⁴Stuart A. Ryder, *The D-Stem in Western Semitic*, Series Practica, no. 131 (The Hague: Mouton, 1974), 19.

Roots with intransitive Qal forms produced transitive forms in both Piel and Hifil. Jenni argued that the difference between Piel and Hifil lay at a deep structure level, that Piel forms were transformations from nominal clauses, and Hifil forms were transformations from verbal clauses. For Jenni this implied several distinctions between the Piel and Hifil: For example, the nominal clause and Piel represent a subjective statement, whilst the verbal clause and Hifil represent an objective statement. This difference can be demonstrated by the declarative use of the verb “to be righteous”: in Piel it would be a judgement in the mind of the narrator of a quality of a person which is not objectively apparent (i.e. the state is only perceived by the narrator, it could be real or imaginary); in Hifil it would be a statement about a quality of a person which is already objectively apparent (i.e. the state is real).

Roots with transitive Qal forms produce transitive Piel forms. Jenni proposed that Qal referred to the action and Piel to the result of the action. This results in several distinctions in the use of Qal and Piel: For example, the Piel indicates indirect action; “Caesar built bridges” implies that Caesar had bridges built, and not that he worked on them with his own hands as would be the case for Qal.⁵

In 1990, Bruce Waltke and Michael O’Connor based their description of the Piel on Jenni but also used Goetze, Ryder, and their own investigations. The following is my own summary of the semantic meaning of the Piel based on Waltke and O’Connor Chapter 24.⁶

Piel factitive verbs correspond to **Qal intransitives**. The Piel brings about the state indicated by the verbal root. The **declarative-estimative** function serves as a subset of the factitive function: true factitives refer to an objectively real situation experienceable by the senses; the declarative-estimative

⁵T. N. D. Mettinger, “The Hebrew Verbal System,” *Annual of the Swedish Theological Institute*, 9 (1973): 67-68.

⁶Bruce K. Waltke & Michael Patrick O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 396-417.

function is in use when the state is subjectively perceived in the mind. Whereas Hifil focuses on the action which causes a state, Piel focuses on the resultant state, and the means of achieving that state are not expressed.

Piel resultative verbs correspond to **Qal transitives**. The Piel puts the object into the state indicated by the verbal root. Whereas the Qal focuses on an action, the Piel focuses on the resultant state, and the means of achieving that state are not expressed.

Denominative Piel forms have either factitive or resultative meanings.

Defining Hitpael

The Hitpael is the reflexive of Piel. However, the Hitpael forms of several roots have meanings which are inconsistent with their Piel counterparts, and some forms have no Piel counterpart but do have a Qal counterpart. One solution to this problem was proposed by E. A. Speiser in 1955. Other Semitic languages have more than one *t*-prefixed/infix stem, whereas Hebrew only has Hitpael. Speiser compared the problematic Hebrew Hitpael forms with Akkadian *tn*-infix stems. He found that the semantic function of these Hitpael forms was consistent with the Akkadian *tn* durative-iterative function. Speiser was therefore able to suggest a set of roots whose Hitpael forms were not in fact tD forms, but fossilised forms derived from other *t*-prefix stems with iterative-durative functions.⁷ The elimination of these roots, for the purpose of defining the semantic function of the Hitpael, confirmed it as the reflexive of Piel. It also confirmed the restricted definition of the function of the whole D-stem.

⁷E. A. Speiser, "The Durative Hithpa'el: A tan-Form," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 75 (1955): 118-21.

Defining Nifal

The problems presented by the Nifal had much to do with the multiplicity of functions it appeared to perform. However, both Ernst Jenni and Thomas Lambdin held that whilst Indo-European translations of a Nifal could fall into several categories, the underlying Hebrew function was uniform.

In 1971, Lambdin listed four categories:

(1) *Incomplete passive*:... (2) *Middle*:... (3) *Reflexive*:... (4) *Resultative*:... These four categories have been defined on the basis of English. In Hebrew, however, they are one: the medio-passive as expressed by the Niphal form.⁸

In 1990, Waltke and O'Connor attempted to classify the species of the Nifal according to Hebrew nuances. They also had four categories:

The stem's specific meanings can be classified as (1) middle, (2) passive, (3) adjectival (simple adjectival, ingressive, gerundive), and (4) double status (reflexive, benefactive, reciprocal, tolerative, causative reflexive).⁹

From these specific uses of the Nifal they extracted a general semantic function: **medio-reflexive**. They found that the action or state expressed by the verbal root affected the subject (as in the middle voice) or the subject's interests (as in reflexive). Thus the primary notion of the Nifal is that **the subject is affected by the action**. In comparison with Qal, the object of a Qal form becomes the subject of a Nifal form.

A clear and distinct definition for Nifal, vis-à-vis the other stems, has been provided. However, whereas Pual forms the medio-passive of Piel, and Hitpaal the reflexive of Piel, Nifal forms both the medio-passive and reflexive of Qal. One explanation of this anomaly is that the Nifal may, historically, have begun as a reflexive, and subsequently expanded to cover the passive role; at the same time the Qal-Passive forms fell into disuse.

⁸Thomas O. Lambdin, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew* (New York: Scribner, 1971), 176-177.

⁹Waltke & O'Connor, 380.

Defining Pual & Hofal

F. Böttcher first recognised the Qal-passive stem in 1868.¹⁰ This discovery would be of significance for the semantic definition of Pual and Hofal, but it would be one hundred years before this was fully realised.

Remnants of the Qal-passive caused problems since they appeared to belong to other stems, yet had contextual meanings incompatible with those stems. Qal-Passives were archaic in Classical Hebrew, so someone reading an unpointed text could easily read Qal-Passives as some other passive form with which he/she was more familiar. The Masoretes pointed many Qal-Passives as Nifal and since the Nifal serves as a passive stem of Qal there is no way of identifying which apparent Nifals were originally Qal-Passive. However, because of the fact that the Nifal serves as a passive stem of Qal, this presents no problem for semantic analysis.

Some Qal-passive suffix conjugations were pointed as Pual and some prefix conjugations as Hofal. Hence there are forms pointed as Pual or Hofal which have no corresponding Piel or Hifil forms, or have meanings incompatible with their Piel and Hifil forms. In 1970, Ronald Williams identified sixteen such verbs with Hofal forms, and six with Pual forms. Forms with perfective aspect were pointed as Puals and forms with imperfective aspect were pointed as Hofals.¹¹ Once these forms were recognised as Qal-Passives, they could be discounted when considering the semantic function of Pual and Hofal. Pual and Hofal were confirmed as the passives of Piel and Hifil respectively. This also confirmed the restricted definitions for the whole of the D-stem and H-stem.

¹⁰Ronald J. Williams, "The Passive Qal Theme in Hebrew," in *Essays on the Ancient Semitic World*, ed. J. W. Weavers & D. B. Redford (Toronto: U of T, 1970),43.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 49.

There remain forms which are exceptions to the defined function of each stem. However, these can now be seen as truly being exceptions, i.e. they are small in number and do not obscure the main function of the stem. All real (as opposed to artificial) languages have exceptions to their grammatical (descriptive) rules.

The Grid System

The breakthrough which led to a systematic understanding of the relationships between the various stems came from work on Akkadian and Ethiopic. Perhaps Akkadian and Ethiopic grammarians had an advantage; since their field of study was new, they were not heavily influenced by a grammatical tradition as was the case for both Arabic and Hebrew, nor were they in danger of stepping on theological toes sensitive about changing the understanding of a holy text. A. Dillmann, in 1859, and F. Delitzsch, in 1889, each created a grid for describing the stem system of Ethiopic and Akkadian respectively. In 1883, F. Hommel devised a grid applicable to all Semitic languages.¹² The following is Dillmann's grid for Ethiopic.¹³

¹²M. H. Goshen-Gottstein, "The System of Verbal Stems in the Classical Semitic Languages," in *Proceedings of the International Conference on Semitic Studies* (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1969), 74-77.

¹³August Dillmann & Carl Bezold, *Ethiopic Grammar*, 2nd ed., trans. James A. Crichton (London: Williams & Norgate, 1907), 141.

	I. Ground Stems	II. Causative Stems	III. Reflexive- Passive Stems	IV. Causative-Reflexive Stems
1. Simple Stems	ragana/rabga	rabag'a	rabgata/baqa'ta	bakartas'a/qaharatas'a
2. Intensive Stems	matsafa	matsafa'a	matsafata	sanatsatas'a
3. Influencing Stems	karamá	saqalá'a	lafakáta	lafakátas'a

The importance of these grids was that they placed each stem systematically in relation to the other stems. The criteria for arranging the stems in the grids were morphological, as can be seen by comparing the transliterations of the Ethiopic in Dillmann's grid. However, it is significant that the labels used on Dillmann's grid are semantic labels. It turned out that the morphological organization of the grids corresponded to the semantic relationships of the stems.

In 1969, M. H. Goshen-Gottstein developed a grid for all classical Semitic languages. The complexities of this grid are too great to reproduce it here. He began his organisation of the stems on purely morphological grounds and later adapted them along semantic lines.¹⁴

To simplify matters I will skip to the Hebrew grid presented by Moshe Greenberg, in 1965. Although he does not give a specific rationale behind his ordering of the stems, it seems that they are arranged, primarily, according to semantic rather than morphological factors. He labels the vertical axis of his grid according to the voice properties *active*, *passive*, and *middle* but does not have such a

¹⁴Goshen-Gottstein, 80-91.

progression along one variable for his horizontal axis; instead he resorts to the discrete labels of *Qal group*, *Piel group*, and *Hifil group*.¹⁵

Hifil group	Piel group	Qal group	
Hifil	Piel	Qal	active
Hofal	Pual	Nifal	passive
	Hitpael	Nifal	reflexive

In 1990, Waltke and O'Connor improved on Greenberg's grid by the addition of labels to the horizontal axis, along with a new understanding of what the axes signified.¹⁶

		VOICE OF UNDERSUBJECT		
		Ø	<i>Passive</i>	<i>Active</i>
VOICE OF	<i>Active</i>	Qal	Piel	Hiphil
PRIMARY	<i>Middle/Passive</i>	Niphal	Pual	Hophal
SUBJECT	<i>Reflexive</i>	Niphal	Hithpael	Hiphil ("internal")

This grid describes the relationship of the stems according to two axes, the vertical axis for the voice of the primary subject and the horizontal axis for the voice of the secondary subject (undersubject) in a verb phrase. An example of such a verb phrase is as follows:¹⁷

¹⁵Moshe Greenberg, *Introduction to Hebrew* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1965), 42-43.

¹⁶Waltke & O'Connor, 358.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, 355.

John	cause		
subject 1	verb 1	cabbage	cook
		subject 2	verb 2

subject 1 = primary subject

subject 2 = undersubject

The terminology above is problematic since voice is not an attribute of a subject, but rather an attribute normally associated with the verb. In this instance voice should be thought of as an attribute of the verb phrases. In a private interview Prof. Waltke agreed with me on this and pointed out the definition of voice in the glossary of his book:¹⁸

voice an inflectional category of the verb referring to the relationship of the agent (actor) and patient (undergoer): in active voice the agent is the subject and the patient is the object; in passive voice the patient is the subject; in middle voice the agent is both subject and object

In my examples below I have separated the main and complement verb phrases:

Piel would render: verb phrase 1 = <i>Active</i> ; verb phrase 2 = <i>Passive</i>	John made <i>Active</i>	the cabbage (was) cooked <i>Passive</i>
--	----------------------------------	--

Pual would render: verb phrase 1 = <i>Middle/Passive</i> ; verb phrase 2 = <i>Passive</i>	The cabbage was made <i>Passive</i>	(the cabbage was) cooked <i>Passive</i>
--	--	--

Hitpaal would render: verb phrase 1 = <i>Reflexive</i> ; verb phrase 2 = <i>Passive</i>	The cabbage made itself (the cabbage was) cooked <i>Reflexive</i>	<i>Passive</i>
--	--	----------------------

Hifil would render: verb phrase 1 = <i>Active</i> ; verb phrase 2 = <i>Active</i>	John caused <i>Active</i>	the cabbage to cook <i>Active</i>
--	------------------------------------	--

Hofal would render: verb phrase 1 = <i>Passive</i> ; verb phrase 2 = <i>Active</i>	The cabbage was caused (the cabbage) to cook <i>Passive</i>	<i>Active</i>
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¹⁸Ibid., 694.

The Waltke and O'Connor system has the great advantage that the two axes of the grid refer to the same kind of factors: *Ø-Active-Middle/Passive-Reflexive* voice properties of two different verbs making up one verb phrase. The scales on the horizontal and vertical axes of the diagram above (page 19) are clearly related to each other; Waltke and O'Connor can not be accused of comparing apples with oranges.¹⁹ Problems in the system arise from the fact that the verb and subject in each slot are not lexically constant for all stems, i.e. sometimes verb 1 is "cause," sometimes it is "make." I find this causes confusion when attempting to identify subject 1, verb 1, etc.

After one and a half centuries of research we have an integrated and systematic description of the semantic functions of the Classical Hebrew stems. It provides a conceptual framework that allows us to perceive the nuances in meaning of a Hebrew verb in any particular stem. A perceptual framework also gives the student an invaluable aid in learning the system. While the nuances may be lost once they are translated into another language, the reader of Hebrew is able to perceive the nuances, and the translator is able to translate with the Hebrew nuance clearly in mind.

¹⁹The relationship between Dillmann's *Ground-Causative-Reflexive-Causative/Reflexive* and *Simple-Intensive-Influencing* axes (page 17) was not so obvious.

Section 2

Methods for Teaching the Stem System

Chapter 2: Teaching Theory

Methods of teaching Classical Hebrew fall into two basic categories, the Grammar Translation Method and the Inductive Reading Method. In this chapter I will present a brief outline of these two methods and the theories behind them.

The Grammar Translation Method

One should first learn the grammar of the language in question thoroughly so as to produce the most accurate translation possible. So goes the argument for the Grammar Translation Method, which is also known as the Classical Method. It has been used for centuries in teaching classical languages, and for classroom teaching of modern languages. However, it consists of endless rote memorization, and in terms of modern language learning, it does little to enhance the student's communicative abilities. Humans have the ability to memorize small amounts of non-context based information but this applies to short term memory only. Only information made meaningful by context can be absorbed and integrated, so that it becomes part of the student's thinking system. In addition to the limitations of short term memory, memorizing grammatical details is boring, which is in itself detrimental to the learning process.²⁰ Under this method students could spend most of their first year of studies memorizing paradigms, and they would have little exposure to the language as a meaningful system of communication. Despite such drawbacks, Grammar Translation has remained the primary method for teaching classical languages.

²⁰H. Douglas Brown, *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*, 3rd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall Regents, 1994), 16-17.

Modern Language Inductive Methods

Modern teaching methods tend to be inductive; they try to copy some of the ways in which we learn our first language. Students are exposed to a large amount of communication in the target language; in a classroom this is controlled to help the students focus on certain aspects of the language. If the students are in a target language environment outside of class, they are exposed to a huge amount of uncontrolled input, as are children learning their first language. The learners form hypotheses about how the language is used, then test and refine these hypotheses. At some point the learners will start communicating, and will get feedback on their output, which will aid in refining their hypotheses. For example: learners of English might hypothesize that plurals are formed by the addition of /s/ to the noun, such as in “cats” /kæts/. They would discover that this does not always hold and might further hypothesize that /s/ is added when the noun ends in a voiceless sound and /z/ when it ends in a voiced sound, such as in “dogs” /dɒgz/. They would eventually work out the rather more complex rule for the use of the plural form /əz/ as in “bushes” /bʌʃəz/, and exceptions such as “oxen” and “sheep.”²¹

The hypothesizing process may be conscious or subconscious; for children learning their first language it is subconscious. Adults learning a foreign language will tend to formulate conscious rules concerning the target language, and more so in the case of syntax and agreement rules than in the case of phonetic rules as in the example above. These self-generated rules form a system of thinking which is much more integrated than rote memorized grammar book rules. This thinking system, called an *interlanguage*,²² grows and develops as the student develops theories and makes errors using those theories, causing them either to refine the original theories, or to abandon them completely in favour of

²¹Adapted from: Adrian Akmajian, et al, *Linguistics: An Introduction to Language and Communication* (Cambridge Mass.: MIT, 1990), 71-74.

²²Brown, *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*, 203-204.

new theories. Interlanguage is based initially on the structure of the student's first language and as time goes on comes more and more to resemble the structure of the target language.

Inductive methods have the advantage that the students, from the start, are involved in meaningful communication. They can immediately make use of what they learn, and learning can be purposeful and interesting.

It must be pointed out here that Grammar Translation methods usually contain some elements of inductive methods. Students are given meaningful texts to read as soon as possible. Although grammar comes first and reading second, the reading is an inductive procedure for integrating the grammar. Inductive methods often make use of deductive features found in Grammar Translation, features such as verb paradigms and explicit explanations of grammar points. Teachers tend to use whatever they think will work.

The Inductive Reading Method

The case of classical languages presents some problems for the inductive teaching method. Modern language learning, be it first or second language, is primarily concerned with two way spoken communication. Reading and writing are important, but usually (and for first languages always) build on a spoken language base. For classical languages the primary, or even exclusive, task is reading and communication is one way: from the text to the reader. There are no native speakers to consult when one wishes to test out ones interlanguage hypotheses. However, certain features of inductive learning can be incorporated into the study of classical languages. Indeed, inductive methods for teaching Hebrew have

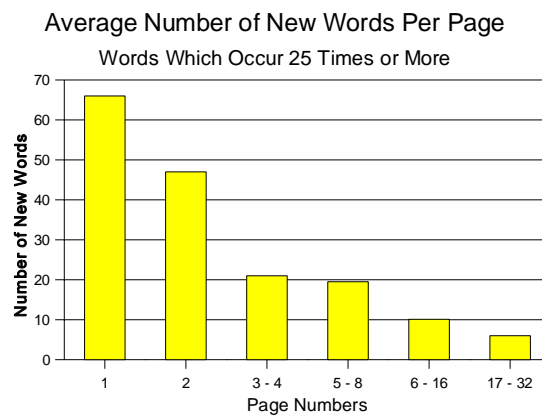
been in use in university situations for over a century; William Rainey Harper first published his introductory grammar, *Introductory Hebrew Method and Manual*, in 1881.²³

The Inductive Reading Method starts with reading the text and concentrates on the meaning of clauses and sentences. Some Inductive Reading textbooks use assorted texts so as to start the student with either grammatically simple structures, or with the most common structures. Others follow one text, and this has the advantage of holding the interest of the student with an unfolding story. To begin with, word for word translations are often provided in order to give the student an initial idea of the syntax. The student will read the most common structures of the language over and over again and will quickly learn to understand them; less common structures will be absorbed at a slower rate. This applies to vocabulary and morphology as well as syntax. Explanations of grammatical points may be given as they crop up in the text, and these explanations will be similar to those used in Grammar Translation. However, explanations are kept to a minimum and are intended as pointers to aid the student to induce the meaning of the text. Verb paradigms are useful for students since they consciously form frameworks with which to analyse information and the verb paradigm will help them to see patterns which might otherwise take them a long time to realize.

William Sanford LaSor provides examples for learning the vocabulary of the Greek New Testament and suggests that a student should read at least 32 pages in order to learn all the words which occur 25 times or more. There are 533 words which occur more than 25 times making up 10.17% of the vocabulary, but these account for 117 586 words, 85.62% of the text. A very common word such as *autos* occurs, on average, 8 times per page and might be learnt by the end of the first page. A less

²³William Rainey Harper, J.M. Powis Smith, *Introductory Hebrew: Method and Manual*, revised ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959).

common word like *hina* occurs, on average, once per page, it might take 8 or more pages to learn this item. The following graph is based on LaSor's figures and shows the average number of new words per page, for words which occur more than 25 times in the New Testament. As can be seen the number of occurrences of new common words, and so the number of new words to learn, drops rapidly. Common words continue to appear frequently and reinforce the student's learning of those words.



LaSor suggests that twelve to fifteen chapters of prose would need to be read in a first year Hebrew course. He encourages his students to create their own paradigms and other features which one would expect to find in a Grammar Translation book. The students create such structures in order to consciously demonstrate their interlanguage; they are not produced in order to be memorized by rote.²⁴

²⁴William Sanford LaSor, "The Inductive Method of Teaching Hebrew - Its advantages and pitfalls," *Hebrew Abstracts* 15 (1974): 108-119.

Chapter 3: Teaching Examples

In this chapter I will make some comments on how teaching grammars have approached the stem system. I will outline some inadequacies in these presentations, which are often due more to the content than to the method of their teaching.

The teaching grammars I have reviewed are as follows according to their methodological leanings: **Grammar Translation:** Davidson, Kelly, Lambdin, Ross, Seow. **Inductive Reading:** Kittel et al., LaSor, Harper, Sawyer, Sellers. Greenberg falls at the midpoint between the two extremes. (See Bibliography for full listings.)

To begin the chapter I will make some **general comments** about how the stem system has been taught, demonstrating inadequacies in the approach of the majority of introductory grammars. Then I will give examples of the teaching methods used by two specific introductory grammars, those of **Lambdin** and **Greenberg**, who provide the best descriptions of the stem system but are not without their faults. To end the chapter I will examine the **order of presentation** of the stems in the introductory grammars, and give an explanation of the order which I will use.

General Comments

In general the teaching grammars surveyed provide a poor resource for the student who wishes to learn the semantic relationships between the stems. All except one of the above mentioned grammars teach the stem system atomistically, and do not show the relationships of each stem to all the others. For

example, in Seow's description of the Hitpael, he does not mention the relationship between Hitpael (which I describe as the reflexive of Piel) and Piel.²⁵

The standard presentation consists of a brief description of the function of the stem followed by examples with English translations. The derived stems are usually compared with the Qal. This seems to be a logical pattern for presentation; however, the semantic descriptions tend to be much too short, since, including examples, they average only about one page per stem.

For many the problem lies with the definition of the stems and how they relate to each other, not with the teaching itself. For example, Sawyer's inductive teaching method seems sound, and clearly has a theoretical base: the first half of his book presents a basic grammar, and the second half concentrates on syntax and word-formation. However, he fails to distinguish any semantic difference between the D and H-stem and several times has statements such as follows:

H-stem and D-stem forms of many verbs frequently have a causative function by means of which a simple non-causative sentence ("Goliath died") is embedded in a more complex causative sentence ("David caused Goliath to die": i.e. "David killed Goliath").²⁶

Most teaching grammars present the Piel as being 'intensive,' although some give this as one of a number of options. Kelly presents the Piel as primarily 'intensive,' even after having recommended Waltke and O'Connor's grammar in his preface.²⁷ His secondary meaning for Piel is causative, and he

²⁵Choon Leong Seow, *A Grammar for Biblical Hebrew* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1987), 227-228.

²⁶John F. A. Sawyer, *A Modern Introduction to Biblical Hebrew* (Stocksfield, Northumberland: Oriel, 1976), 123.

²⁷Page H. Kelley, *Biblical Hebrew: An introductory Grammar* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1992), xiv.

also leaves some Piels unclassified. Even accepting his definitions, his explanations of these semantic functions are inadequate; his explanation of ‘intensive’ consists only of the following:

The most common use of the Pi'el is as the intensification of the Qal.

Examples:

<u>Qal</u>	<u>Piel</u>
he kissed	he kissed repeatedly
he broke	he shattered ²⁸

I doubt that any student would be clear as to the definition of ‘intensive’ based on such an ‘explanation.’

Often a number of optional functions are given for each stem, and no attempt is made to show how or why the stem represents those diverse functions. For example, Kittel, Hoffer & Wright describe the semantic function of Piel as being primarily dependant on the lexicalisation of individual verbs. Whilst admitting that some of these verbs fall into groups, they make no attempt to relate these groups to each other.

The change from Qal to Pi'el varies from one verb to another but there are a few common relationships:

A. **Transitives:** Many verbs which are intransitive in the Qal have a transitive force in Pi'el...

B. **Denominatives:** Some Pi'els seem to have been formed from nouns...

C. **Strengthening, repetition, or intensification** of action (“pluralization”) seems to be a pattern in other Pi'el verbs...

D. **Others:** There are some Pi'el verbs for which Biblical Hebrew has no Qal. In other cases, Qal and Pi'el forms are both extant, but we do not know how to express the intended difference, if any, between the two...²⁹

They have not defined the semantic function of Piel, but have maintained that the meaning of a verb in Piel depends on the definition of the particular verbal root. Again, the lack of coherence in defining the

²⁸Ibid., 109.

²⁹Bonnie Pedrotti Kittel, Vicki Hoffer & Rebecca Abts Wright, *Biblical Hebrew: A Text and Workbook* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1989), 73-74.

function of the stem is a defect, which probably has its roots in an inadequate understanding of the stem, rather than in the teaching method itself.

I have chosen Lambdin and Greenberg to give as more extensive examples of teaching methods. I have chosen them since I consider them to have given the best presentation of two features of the stem system: Lambdin gives the best presentation of the stems as unified wholes, and Greenberg gives the best presentation of the relationship between the stems. However, even they are not without pedagogical defects.

Lambdin

In general Lambdin is the best of the grammars surveyed with regard to treating each stem as having functional integrity. He shows diverse functions as derivations from the basic function for the stem, or as phenomena which appear in translation. His description of Nifal, already presented in my chapter on History, is most explicit as to the unity of the stem (see page 15).

Lambdin has no introductory chapter to the stems, but merely one paragraph of introduction in which he names the six derived verb stems. He has a chapter for each stem and begins each of these chapters with a description of the stem's meaning. At the end of each chapter he has translation exercises from Hebrew to English and English to Hebrew, which make use of the stem introduced in that lesson.

His explanation of the meaning of Piel (Lesson 40) can be summarized as follows:

The Piel is a derived stem, i.e. it is secondary to some other form in the language, such as a verb in Qal, a noun, or an adjective. The following groups represent the types of derivation:

“**a. Factitive (*transitivizing*)**” The most consistent use of Piel. A transitive active Piel from a root which appears as intransitive or stative in Qal:

“Qal (to be sound) → Piel (to make sound)

Qal (to be great) → Piel (to magnify)”

May also be causative from a transitive form in Qal:

“Qal (to learn) → Piel (to teach; i.e. to cause to learn)”

“**b. Denominative.**” Piel is closer to the meaning of a noun or adjective than to a Qal verb.

“**c. Intensive.**” In many cases the Piel indicates pluralization of Qal action. Lambdin discounts the traditional ‘intensive’ definition, stating that “Many of the so-called intensive Piel seem more to be stylistic variations of the Qal verb (most likely denominative in origin) used in poetry, probably for variation rather than intensification.”

“**d. Unclassified.**” There are some Piel whose origins are not clear, eg. to scatter, to drive away, to seek, to hurry.

The function of Piel is factitive-denominative-intensive, the particular nuance depending on the particular verb.³⁰

Lambdin does quite well in describing his subcategories of Piel as part of a single factitive-denominative-intensive meaning which is a secondary form to some other form of the language. Yet, I do have some criticisms of his pedagogy in that he does not provide sufficient explanation of his terms.

³⁰Lambdin, 193-195.

He gives no explanation for the meaning of “factitive,” and relies only on the examples for the student to work it out. I would deem greater explanation necessary especially since the examples are not made explicit, eg. his “Qal (to be great) → Piel (to magnify)” example lacks the intermediate stage “to make great” which would be needed to make the factitive notion clear to the reader. A further general criticism of his book is that he gives no presentation of the stem system as a whole.

Greenberg

Greenberg gives the most thorough presentation of the systematic relationships between the stems. He has a whole chapter (chapter 8) devoted to introducing the stem system. He explains how Hebrew works on a tri-consonantal root system, and that morphological variations on the roots create different nuances on its basic meaning. He introduces the names and 3ms strong forms of the stems. They are related to each other according to the following grid:

Hifil group	Piel group	Qal group	
Hifil	Piel	Qal	active
Hofal	Pual	Nifal	passive
	Hitpael	Nifal	reflexive

He then explains the semantic functions of Piel (as intensive) and Hifil. Finally he provides exercises which include 15 questions where the student is given the meaning of a word in one stem and asked to provide the meaning in another stem. His first inductive reading follows this chapter.³¹

³¹Greenberg, 41-44.

He also has individual chapters on the stems which begin with an explanation of the meaning of the stem, and conclude with translation exercises from Hebrew to English and English to Hebrew; the exercises make use of the stem introduced in that lesson. Before the stem is presented in the grammar, the student will already have come across it in the reading passages.

His introduction to the meaning of Piel (chapter 12) can be summarized as follows:

The Piel modifies the Qal in a number of ways, each case is unpredictable. It may be intensive. It may be causative, especially with stative Qal counterparts. It is the most common denominative stem. Some Piel have no Qal counterpart.³²

Greenberg is good at emphasising the relationship between the various stems. His exercises, giving a root in one stem and asking its meaning in another stem, ensure that the student is an active participant in the learning process. However, the major fault is that his descriptions of the individual stems are too brief, and, as can be seen from the Piel example above, he does not provide a unified description of the semantic function of each stem.

Order of Presentation

Harper and LaSor use an Inductive Reading approach and read through Genesis and Esther respectively; for this reason they present the stems in the order in which they crop up in their reading texts. The remaining grammars present the major stems, with occasional variations, in one of two basic orders: either Qal, Piel, Hifil, Nifal, Pual, Hofal, Hitpael or Qal, Nifal, Piel, Pual, Hitpael, Hifil, Hofal.

³²Ibid., 58.

The logic of these two orders can be seen if the movement between them is diagrammed alongside Waltke and O'Connor's grid (see page 19ff); the order is either first row, second row, third row or first column, second column, third column.

			Voice of Undersubject						
1→	2→	3✓	Voice of Primary Subject	Qal	Piel	Hifil	1↓	3↓	6↓
4→	5→	6✓		Nifal	Pual	Hofal	2↘	4↓	7
	7				Hitpaal			5↘	

Although none of the teaching grammars surveyed make reference to this grid, they seem to be intuitively aware of the voice properties which form the axes of the grid and dictate the ordering of the stems. My point is that they have ordered their presentation of the stems according to a theoretical principle of how the stems relate to each other. The orders of presentation given above are therefore logical according to semantic-theory principles; however, the main concern for ordering the stems in my presentation will be pedagogical. Therefore, I intend to present the stems in the following order:

			Voice of Undersubject			
1	3✓	←2	Voice of Primary Subject	Qal	Piel	Hifil
4→	5→	6✓		Nifal	Pual	Hofal
	7				Hitpaal	

8. Minor stems

My reasons are as follows:

The distinction between Qal and Hifil, between simple and causative, is relatively simple to explain. The function of Piel is harder to explain, and must be distinguished from both Qal and Hifil, as was demonstrated in my chapter on History (see page 10). Therefore, the description of Piel will follow that of Qal and Hifil.

The remaining stem with a direct relationship to Qal is Nifal. Therefore, despite the apparent complexity of the Nifal, it make sense to treat it next.

The remaining major stems will complete the grid. The passive and reflexive functions will not require a great deal of explanation since they will have been covered under Nifal. Likewise, the causative and factitive functions will have been described under Hifil and Piel.

The minor stems need only be described as morphological variants of the major stems.

In my presentation I will make use of features found in the teaching grammars surveyed: a grid system as used by Greenberg; deductive explanations of unified functions for each stem, with only a few exceptions, as presented by Lambdin; examples, in both English and Hebrew, to provide the student with an opportunity to learn inductively; exercises transposing from one stem to another, which cause the student to actively take part in the learning process; and examples and exercises taken from the Hebrew Bible.

Chapter 4:

A Proposed Method for Teaching the Stem System

The complexities and subtleties of the Classical Hebrew stem system make a purely Inductive Reading approach to teaching impossible. However, I will attempt to make my method for teaching the stem system as inductive as possible.

I will begin my presentation of each stem with examples of how the stem would be translated into English. By giving the examples in English the students will be exposed to the nuance of the stem's meaning in a language with which they are more familiar. I will ask the students to examine the examples in order to identify, for themselves, the semantic function served by the stem. To ensure that they have paid sufficient attention to studying the examples I will then ask them to complete exercises (again in English) which will require them to make use of the observations they have just made. If they have difficulty in answering the exercise questions then they can go back to the examples for further guidance. I will then give a deductive explanation of the stem in question in order to reinforce the students' inductive learning and to fill in any points which they may have missed. The deductive explanation will also provide the students with the terminology needed to talk about the semantic function of the stem.

I will then repeat the process using Hebrew examples, but this time concentrating on the Hebrew syntax used to express the semantic function already learnt in English.

The various nuances of the basic semantic function will be explained in a manner that attempts to show how they are derivative of the basic semantic function. Exceptions to the semantic function or syntax of the stem will also be described, and where possible attempts will be made to explain why they are exceptional.

My explanation of the stem system will hinge on providing a specific English paraphrase for each stem. Each paraphrase will be consistent with the paraphrase used for related stems. So, for example, all stems with a factitive function will have paraphrases which contain *to put into a state of having been VERBed*, and all stems which have a reflexive function will have a reflexive pronoun as the object of the first verb in the paraphrase. Specific verbs, subjects and object will fit into slots in the paraphrase; for example the Hitpael of any regular verb could be expressed with the following paraphrase:

SUBJECT *put itself into a state of having been VERBed*

SUBJECT

VERB

the fish

to cook

the fish put itself into a state of having been cooked

the chair

to paint

the chair put itself into a state of having been painted

This system will provide the students with a set of paraphrases which they can apply to any verb. It will also provide translations which allow the semantic function of the stem in question to be expressed in English in a consistent manner. Idiomatic English translations often disguise the meaning of the Hebrew stem and so I will recommend that the students produce them after having produced a translation using my paraphrase method.

I will take many of the Hebrew examples and exercise questions from the book of Ruth, since this is a book which is often read as part of an intermediate course and therefore the students will already be familiar with the material. In this way I hope that the students will be able to concentrate on the point I am trying to make with the example and not be distracted by vocabulary or other grammatical forms with which they are unfamiliar. For the same reason I will provide English glosses under the Hebrew

words in the examples and exercises; students who find they have to use a dictionary to look up half the vocabulary used in an example will quickly learn to skip over the examples. Since the examples are central to my teaching method I must do everything to prevent this from occurring.

Section 3

A Textbook for Teaching the Stem System

Chapter 5: Textbook Introduction

Do the Classical Hebrew *Binyanim* appear somewhat mysterious to you? In my first year course I learnt that Hifil was causative, Piel was something like causative but different, and Nifal did several different things. Of course my instructor's explanations were much better than what I ended up with in my head, but it was already quite congested with paradigms for hollow verbs and mnemonic devices for remembering the Hebrew word for tent, copper and blood. I thought I'd worry about the exact meaning of those *Binyanim* things later on. Well, I then spent most of my second year Hebrew course relying on the dictionary for the various meanings of Hebrew verbs. This probably left me more confused because often the dictionary gave the same meanings for different *Binyanim*. The following definitions are taken from BDB:³³

שבר	Qal: to break	Nifal: to be broken	Piel: to break, to shatter
	Hifil: to cause to break out		Hofal: to be broken, to shatter
נקם	Qal: to avenge, to take vengeance	Nifal: to avenge oneself	
	Piel: to avenge, to take vengeance	Hofal: to be avenged	
	Hitpael: to avenge oneself		
שמע	Qal: to hear	Piel: to cause to hear	Nifal: to be heard
	Hifil: to cause to hear		

³³Francis Brown, S. R. Driver & Charles A. Briggs, *The New Brown - Driver - Briggs - Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon: With an Appendix Containing the Biblical Aramaic* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1979).

אָבַד Qal: to perish, to die Piel: to cause to perish, to destroy, to kill

Hifil: to destroy, to put to death

Even the most modern dictionaries show the same problem, eg. Clines, *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*:³⁴

אָבַד Qal: to die, to be destroyed, to disappear Piel: to kill, to destroy

Hifil: to destroy, to kill

It wasn't until my third year of Hebrew that I started to understand how the *Binyanim* system works. Oh! I've been using the word "*Binyanim*" up to now since it's the traditional Hebrew term and nobody objects to it. However, it's a bit of a mouthful in English so I'm going to use the term "stem" from now on. Some people might object to "stem" since they want to use the word for some other purpose such as referring to the three letter Hebrew root. If you haven't noticed by now, everyone seems to have their own set of terms for referring to Hebrew grammar!

Now, where was I? Ahh, it wasn't until my third year of Hebrew that I started to understand how the stem system works. In that course I was reading through Waltke and O'Connor's *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*³⁵ and analyzing a Hebrew text according to their models. Now let me tell you about Waltke and O'Connor's book: it's very comprehensive and thorough, and I think it's an excellent reference book, but light reading it isn't. For me it formed the basis of an advanced Hebrew course, and I also had the advantage of that course being a directed study with Professor Waltke. Students in their

³⁴David J.A. Clines, ed., *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), vol. 1, *Aleph*.

³⁵Bruce K. Waltke & Michael Patrick O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1990).

first or second year would most likely be swamped by the amount of information presented; I know my class was when, near the end of our first year course, we were given the chapter on Hitpa'el to read.

So my aim here is to provide a more accessible description of the stem system. Much of what I will say will be similar to the material found in Waltke and O'Connor, but my intention is to present it in a user-friendly format for intermediate students. If you find you want more information on the stems than is presented in my book then I would recommend Waltke and O'Connor. At some points my description will diverge from that of Waltke and O'Connor according to my own research into the subject. My book is aimed primarily at students who have completed one year of Hebrew and are therefore already familiar with the morphology of the stem system. It could be used as part of a second year course, at the end of a first year course as a way to revise what has already been learnt about the stem system, or as part of a first year course using my chapter on each stem as a supplement to the presentation of that stem in the first year textbook. Since I assume the morphology has already been taught I will be concentrating on the semantic functions of the stems, i.e. what they mean.

A word of warning: in order to make the stems easy to learn I have presented them in a very systematic manner but in reality there will always be exceptions which do not fit into the system.

In an attempt to make the process as painless as possible, if not fun, I'll be using lots of examples. I'll try to take many of those examples from Ruth since it is a very common book for second year students to be reading. I'll also ask you to come up with your own translations for verbs in various stems, again taken where possible from Ruth. In this way I hope to get you actively involved in the learning process. I'll explain the meaning of the stems using English examples first, so you stand a better chance of grasping the concept. For my Hebrew examples, I'll provide English glosses under the

Hebrew words so that you can concentrate on the point I'm trying to make, and not have to worry about looking up words in a dictionary. I'll also have lots of diagrams, because they look good (and they might be helpful).

If you're using this book in a classroom situation, and people don't mind making fools of themselves, you might want to try acting out some of the stems. I've included acting suggestions and included them in the *Further Exercises* chapter. You don't have to wait until finishing all the other chapters before trying these acting exercises; you can use some of them to compare the Qal and Hifil meaning and then come back to them after you have studied the Piel, etc.

I hope instructors will adapt this book to meet their own needs and the needs of their class; I have even found it possible to adapt the material to a class which had only a minimal exposure to Hebrew. I gave a crash course, one and a half hours long, to some students who were just finishing the second week of a three week intensive course at Vancouver School of Theology. I gave all my examples in English, until the last five minutes when I gave them some Hebrew verbs to try out. I didn't give any explanation of the syntax but the students quickly caught on to using my English paraphrases for the stems. I filled in my diagram as the class progressed, adding one new element at a time, and I asked the students for verbs to try out as examples and fitted them into all the stems we had covered up to that point. I also had students act out doing the same verb in different stems. They all said they had enjoyed the class, and thought they had learnt something. They also asked intelligent questions as the class went on, and were able to anticipate the meanings of the later stems introduced.

Good luck with your studies, and please remember don't skip over the examples and exercises since they are very important to the teaching method of this book.

Chapter 6: Qal

English Examples

Each chapter in this book will begin with a set of English examples to demonstrate the meaning of the stem in question. Instead of using a lot of words to tell you what the stems mean, I want you to make your own observations based on the examples and develop your own explanation for the meaning of the stem. If you do the work needed to come up with your own explanation, then you are more likely to have a better grasp of the concepts involved and be able to remember them better.

Study the following English examples. Observe the subjects, objects and verbs used and see if you can divide the examples into three groups according to your observations.

Qal

David cooked the fish.

John broke the chair.

Baruch wrote a letter.

Jane went home.

The queen died.

The bomb exploded.

I'm hungry.

You are wise.

Greek is boring.

Hint: Count the objects associated with each verb and decide if under semantic definition they really are objects, i.e. do they undergo the action of the verb?

Hint: Does the verb imply that an action is done?

English Exercises

For each chapter, in order to help you test whether your explanation of the English examples is along the right lines, the examples will be followed up by a set of English exercises. If you have difficulties with the English exercises then you might need to refine your explanation.

Fit each of the following sentences into one of the groups you have derived from the English examples.

1. The people ate the manna.
2. Samson was strong.
3. Joshua ran.
4. Delila was beautiful.
5. Moses struck the rock.
6. Balaam went to sleep.

Don't move on to the Hebrew examples until you have attempted to identify the three groups of Qal verb.

Hebrew Examples

At this point in each chapter I will present some Hebrew examples of the stem and ask you to study the Hebrew syntax of the verb stem.

Study the following Hebrew examples; observe the Qal verb, its subject and object. See if you can fit the Hebrew examples into the same categories that you derived from the English examples.

The translations of **Qal verbs are in bold**, *objects are in italics* and subjects are underlined.

Ruth 2:2
 אֶמְצֵא־
 חַן בְּעֵינָיו

in his eyes | *favour* | **I will find**

Qal: to find *something*

Ruth 2:14
 וַתִּבְלַת
 פַּתֶּיךָ בַחֲמִין

in the sause | *your piece (of bread)* | and **dip**

Qal: to dip *something*

Ruth 2:3
 וַתָּבֹא וַתֵּלֶךְ

and she **came** | and she **went**

Qal: to go

Qal: to come

Ruth 2:7
 מֵאִזְ הַבֶּקֶר וַתַּעֲמֹד

from the time of the morning | and she **stood**

Qal: to stand

Ruth 2:9
 וְהָלַכְתָּ אֶל-הַכֵּלִים וְצָמְתָּ

to the (water) bottles | then go | if you **are thirsty**

Qal: to be thirsty

Ruth 3:7

וַיֹּאכַל בְּעֵז וַיִּשְׂתֶּה וַיֵּטֵב לְבוֹ

his heart | and **was good** | and drank | Boaz | and ate

Qal: to be good

Don't move on to my explanation of the Qal stem until you have attempted to work out your own definition for the three categories of the Qal verb in both English and Hebrew.

Explanation

In each chapter I will present my own explanation of the stem in question. This will back up your own observations, provide some terminology, and point out significant details relating to the meaning of the stem.

The English verbs used in the English examples do not necessarily correspond to any Hebrew verb, but are intended to represent the semantic and syntactic concepts involved using English grammar. So, for example, I have used the English verb *to cook something* without having any particular Hebrew verb (אָפַד, בָּשַׁל, etc.) in mind. I will also transform this English example into all the major stems, although very few Hebrew verbs occur in all the major stems.

By this point you may be asking why I have insisted on dividing Qal verbs into three different categories. These categories may not seem particularly important in the context of Qal verbs but they will be very important for comparing the Qal stem with the other major stems. Therefore, the work done in this chapter will form a base for subsequent chapters.

Fientive verbs are verbs that refer to the **performing of an action**, as opposed to **stative** verbs which refer to **being in a state**. Some examples of fientive verbs in English are *to run*, *to eat something*,

to wash something, to fall over, and to grumble. Some examples of stative verbs in English are *to be poor, to be fat, and to be angry.*

Transitive verbs are verbs that **have an object**, as opposed to **intransitive** verbs which **do not have an object**. Stative verbs are always intransitive. Fientive verbs can be transitive (*to eat something, to wash something*) or intransitive (*to run, to fall over, to grumble*).

Qal Fientive-Transitive Verbs

SUBJ1 ⇒ OBJ1

SUBJ1 *does* VERB *to* OBJ1

David cooked the fish.

John broke the chair.

Baruch wrote a letter.

Notice that transitive verbs have a direct object (OBJ1)

SUBJ1 and OBJ1 do not refer to the same thing

SUBJ1 performs the action of VERB

OBJ1 undergoes the action of VERB

SUBJ1 and OBJ1 are variable names which I will use throughout the book. SUBJ1 is the subject in Qal but in other stems it may function as a secondary subject and/or an object. In order for you to trace the transformation from Qal to another stem it will still be called SUBJ1 even if it acts as an object in that other stem.

Go back to the English Exercises and see if you originally put all the fientive-transitive verbs into the same group.

The syntax of the Qal stem in Hebrew is similar to the syntax of its English translation. The Qal verb has one direct object.

The translations of **Qal verbs are in bold** and *objects are in italics*

Ruth 2:2
 בְּעֵינָיו חַן אֶמְצָא־

in his eyes | *favour* | **I will find**

Qal: to find *something*

Ruth 2:14
 בַּחֲמוֹץ פִּתִּיךָ וְטַבַּלְתָּ

in the sauce | *your piece (of bread)* | and **dip**

Qal: to dip *something*

Qal Fientive-Intransitive Verbs

SUBJ1 ⇒

SUBJ1 *does* VERB

Jane went home.

The queen died.

The bomb exploded.

Notice that intransitive verbs have **no** object³⁶

SUBJ1 performs the action of VERB

Go back to the English Exercises and see if you originally put all the fientive-intransitive verbs into the same group.

The syntax of the Qal stem is similar in Hebrew to the syntax of its English translation. The Qal verb has no object.

The translations of **Qal verbs are in bold**

Ruth 2:3
 וַתָּבֹא וַתֵּלֶךְ

and she **came** | and she **went**

Qal: to go

Qal: to come

³⁶'Home' in the sentence 'Jane went home' may appear to be an object. However, in terms of semantics (i.e. meaning) it does not serve the function of an object since it does not undergo any action. The function of 'home' is locative, i.e. it is a verb complement designating a location related to the action of the verb.

מֵאֶזְ הַבֶּקֶר

Ruth 2:7
וַתַּעֲמֹדfrom the time of the morning | and she **stood**

Qal: to stand

Qal Stative Verbs



SUBJ1

SUBJ1 *is* VERB

I'm hungry.

You are wise.

Greek is boring.

Notice that stative verbs are also intransitive, i.e. they have **no** object

SUBJ1 is in the state designated by VERB

VERB is expressed in English by *to be* and **an adjective**

Go back to the English Exercises and see if you originally put all the stative verbs into the same group.

The syntax of the Qal verb in Hebrew is not the same as the syntax of its English translation.

VERB is not expressed by *to be* and an adjective but appears as a single verb. (In theory the English

phrase “I am hungry” could be translated into Hebrew as a stative verb רָעַבְתִּי or as a noun/pronoun + adjective אָנִי רָעַב. Here we are interested in the translation of a Hebrew stative verb into English *to be* + adjective.)

The translations of **Qal stative verbs are in bold**

Ruth 2:9
וְהָלַכְתָּ אֶל-הַכֵּלִים וְצָמְתָּ

to the water bottles | then go | if you **are thirsty**

Qal: to be thirsty

Ruth 3:7
וַיֹּאכַל בְּעֵז וַיִּשְׂתֶּה וַיֵּטֵב לְבוּ

his heart | and **was good** | and drank | Boaz | and ate

Qal: to be good

Problems

Assumed Objects

At times you might have problems deciding whether a verb is transitive or intransitive since the object may be gapped; that is, the object may be assumed from the context and not appear explicitly. This is a phenomenon which occurs both in Hebrew and English; the words which are placed in square brackets can be omitted in the English translation as they are in Hebrew.

Qal fientive-transitive, object gapped

Proverbs 24:32
וַיִּחַזֵּה אֲנִי

I | and **saw** [*it*]

Qal: to see *something*

Qal fientive-transitives, objects gapped

Ruth 3:7
וַיֹּאכַל וַיִּשָּׂא בֶּעֶז

and **drank** [*something*] | Boaz | and **ate** [*something*]

Qal: to eat *something*

Qal: to drink *something*

Gapping may result not only in fientive-transitive verbs appearing to be fientive-intransitive, but also fientive-transitive verbs appearing to be stative (remember statives are always intransitive).

Qal fientive-transitive

Numbers 14:9
אֶל-תִּירְאוּ אֶת-עַם הָאָרֶץ

the people of the land | **fear** |do not

Qal: to fear *something*

Qal fientive-transitive with an English translation that appears to be stative

Genesis 3:10
כִּי-עֵירַם אֲנִי כִּי

because I was naked | and **I feared** [*you*]
⇒ I was afraid

Qal: to fear *something* ⇒ to fear [*something*] ⇒ to be afraid

(An alternative analysis is that some verbs may be either transitive or intransitive depending on context.)

Prepositional Objects

Some verbs take a prepositional object rather than a direct object. Whilst these verbs are strictly intransitive according to their surface morphology, semantically they may appear to be transitive and may also be transitive in English translation. For example נִשַּׁק can be transitive with a direct object, but 17

out of 29 occurrences in Qal have a prepositional object governed by ל. Either way, the English translation would have a direct object.

Ruth 1:14
וַתִּשָּׁק עֲרַפָּה לְחַמּוֹתֶיהָ

her mother-in-law | Orpah | and **kissed**

Qal: to kiss

If you have doubts as to whether a particular occurrence of a verb is transitive or intransitive, fientive or stative, then examine the context and consult a Hebrew dictionary to help you make your final decision.

Hebrew Exercises

For the following Hebrew phrases:

Identify whether the Qal verb is fientive-transitive, fientive-intransitive, or stative

Identify the object of the fientive-transitive verbs

Provide an idiomatic English translation for the whole phrase

Ruth 1:1
וַיֵּלֶךְ אִישׁ מִבֵּית לְחָם יְהוּדָה לְגוּר בְּשָׂרֵי מוֹאָב

in the Moab country | | from Bethlehem in Judah|a man| |

Qal: to go

Qal: to live as a temporary resident

Ruth 1:3

וַיָּמָת אֱלִמֶלֶךְ

Elimelech |

Qal: to die

Ruth 1:9

וַתִּשָּׂק לָהֶן וַתִּשְׂאֲנָה קוֹלָן וַתִּבְכְּינָה׃

| | their voices | | them | |

Qal: to kiss

Qal: to lift *something*, to raise *something*

Qal: to weep

Ruth 1:12

כִּי זָקְנָתִי

| | for

Qal: to be old

Summary Grid

	Simple		
Active	Qal קָבַב David cooked the cabbage		

I will use this grid in each chapter to show the relationship between the stems that have been covered. The stem I'm describing in each chapter will be left white, whilst the rest will be coloured grey. Each cell in the table will contain the name of the stem; an example of the pointing for the strong 3ms suffix conjugation form of that stem, and an English phrase demonstrating the meaning of the stem. I used ק as dummy letter to stand for the letters of the verbal root; that way you can concentrate on the vowel patterns and affix elements of the stems, and not worry about the letters of the root itself. The English example phrase will always be the same one and the only changes made will be due to the change of stem; that way you can see the similarities and differences between the stems.

I will begin by filling in the top row which will be all the active stems, then I will fill in the left column which will be all the simple stems.³⁷ Once these stems have been covered you will have learnt all the basic semantic functions of the stem system. The remaining stems will not require much work since their meanings consist of combinations of the basic functions. Therefore, don't worry if you take a long time to work through the next three chapters, because when you have finished them you will then have done about eighty percent of the work involved in the whole book.

³⁷'Simple' is difficult to define except negatively; the simple stems do not have any secondary subjects. Qal is simple and active, which means that it does not have any of the modifications to the basic meaning of its verbal root which will be covered in subsequent chapters.

Chapter 7: Hifil

English Examples

Study the following English examples, observe the subjects, objects, and verbs used in the Hifil, and see how they relate to the subjects, objects and verbs used in the Qal. Attempt to work out your own explanation of the meaning of Hifil and its relationship with Qal.

Qal

David cooked the fish.

John broke the chair.

Jane went home.

The queen died.

I'm hungry.

You are wise.

Hifil

The chef caused David to cook the fish.

I caused John to break the chair.

The teacher caused Jane to go home.

The king caused the queen to die.

You cause me to be hungry.

I cause you to be wise.

English Exercises

What do you think would be the Hifil meaning of the verbs with the following Qal meaning:

1. The people ate the manna.
2. Moses struck the rock.
3. Joshua ran.
4. Balaam went to sleep.

5. Samson was strong.
6. Delila was beautiful.

Don't move on to the Hebrew examples until you have attempted to work out your own definition for the meaning of Hifil.

Hebrew Examples

Study the following Hebrew examples, observe the Hifil verb and its objects, and compare them with the meaning of the Qal verb and its objects. Attempt to work out your own explanation of the syntax of Hifil and its relationship to Qal.

The English translations of **Hifil verbs are in bold**, *objects are in italics* and subjects are underlined

Joshua 1:6

כִּי אֶתְּחִיל אֶת־הָעָם הַזֶּה אֶת־הָאָרֶץ

the land | *this people* | **will cause to inherit** | you | for

Qal: to inherit *something*

Hifil: to cause *someone* to inherit *something*

Song of Songs 2:14

הֲרֵאֵינִי אֶת־מַרְאֵיךָ הַשְּׂמִיעֵנִי אֶת־קוֹלֵךְ

your voice | **cause me to hear** | *your appearance* | **cause me to see**

Qal: to see *something*

Hifil: to cause *someone* to see *something*

Qal: to hear *something*

Hifil: to cause *someone* to hear *something*

Ruth 1:21

וְרִיקָם יִהְיֶה
הַשִּׁבְיָנִי

YHWH | **has caused me to return** | but empty

Qal: to turn, to return

Hifil: to cause *something* to turn, to cause *something* to return

Ruth 2:18

וַתֵּצֵא... אֶת אֲשֶׁר-הוֹתֵרָה מִשְׂבַּעָה:

what she had left over from her satisfying meal | so she **caused to go out**

Qal: to go out

Hifil: to cause *something* to go out

Ruth 1:20

קָרָאֵן לִי מָרָא כִּי-הִמַּר שָׂדֵי לִי מְאֹד:

very | *me* | Shadai | for **has caused to be bitter** | call me bitter

Qal: to be bitter

Hifil: to cause *someone* to be bitter

Ruth 3:10

חֲסִדָּךְ הָאֲחֵרֹן מִן-הָרִאשׁוֹן הֵיטִיבָהּ

from the first | *your last kindness* | you **have caused to be good**

Qal: to be good

Hifil: to cause *something* to be good

Don't move on to my explanation of the Hifil until you have attempted to work out your own explanation of both the meaning of Hifil and its syntax in Hebrew.

Explanation

The Hifil stem is **active** and **causative**. A Hifil can always be expressed in English as *someone causes someone to do/be something*, or *someone causes someone to do something to something*. Notice that the **first verb** is *to cause* and the **second verb** is in the **infinitive**.

The examples above will be repeated below, along with the addition of alternative renderings in idiomatic English. These idiomatic renderings are of the sort that would appear in the final draft of a translation but they disguise the nuance of the Hebrew stem. Only the first item in the Hifil list is meant to express the nuance of the Hifil meaning.

Hifils Corresponding to Fientive-Transitive Qals

SUBJ1 ⇒ OBJ1	SUBJ2 <i>causes</i> SUBJ1 ⇒ OBJ1
Qal	Hifil
SUBJ1 <i>does</i> VERB <i>to</i> OBJ1	SUBJ2 <i>causes</i> SUBJ1 <i>to do</i> VERB <i>to</i> OBJ1
David cooked the fish.	The chef caused David to cook the fish. ⇒ The chef had David cook the fish.
John broke the chair.	I caused John to break the chair. ⇒ I made John break the chair.

Notice that OBJ1 remains the object of VERB in Hifil.

SUBJ1 remains the subject of VERB.

SUBJ1 is also now the object of *to cause*.

To cause did not appear in the Qal form.

SUBJ2 the subject of *to cause* did not appear in the Qal form.

Remember that SUBJ1 is a variable name; it corresponds to the subject of the verb in Qal but not necessarily the subject of the verb in other stems.

Go back to the English Exercises numbers 1 & 2 and see if your original answers agree with the description above. Also, if necessary add an idiomatic English translation.

The syntax of a Hebrew Hifil is different from the syntax of its English translation. The SUBJ1 of the English translation corresponds to an object of the Hifil in Hebrew syntax.

A Qal form with one object corresponds to a Hifil with two objects.

The objects may be direct objects or prepositional objects.

Two definite direct objects marked by תָּ

Joshua 1:6

אֶת־הָעָם הַזֶּה | אֶת־הָאָרֶץ | תִּנְחִיל | כִּי אֶתֶּה

the land | *this people* | **will cause to inherit** | you | for

Qal: to inherit *something*, to receive *land*

Hifil: to cause *someone* to inherit *something*, to cause *someone* to receive *land*

In some cases one of the two objects will be assumed and only the other will appear in the text. The Hifil of ילד is often used in this manner, especially in genealogies, with the meaning “to father.” (Another verb which often does this is שמע; Qal: to hear *something*, Hifil: to cause *someone* to hear *something* ⇒ to inform *someone*.)

Ruth 4:18
 אֶת־הַפֶּרֶץ הוֹלִיד
 אֶת־הַחֲזָרוֹן

Hetsron | **caused** [*his wife*] **to bear** | Peretz
 ⇒ fathered

Qal: to bear *a child* (subject is a woman)
 Hifil: to cause *a woman* to bear *a child* ⇒ to father *a child*

Hifils Corresponding to Fientive-Intransitive Qals

SUBJ1 ⇒	SUBJ2 <i>causes</i> SUBJ1 ⇒
---------	-----------------------------

Qal

SUBJ1 *does* VERB

Jane went home.

The queen died.

Hifil

SUBJ2 *causes* SUBJ1 *to do* VERB

The teacher caused Jane to go home.
 ⇒ The teacher took Jane home.

The king caused the queen to die.
 ⇒ The king killed the queen.

Notice that SUBJ1 remains the subject of VERB in Hifil.

SUBJ1 is also now the object of *to cause*.

To cause did not appear in the Qal form.

SUBJ2 the subject of *to cause* did not appear in the Qal form.

Go back to the English Exercises numbers 3 & 4 and see if your original answers agree with the description above. Also, if necessary add an idiomatic English translation.

The syntax of a Hebrew Hifil is different from the syntax of its English translation. The SUBJ1 of the English translation corresponds to an object of the Hifil in Hebrew syntax.

A Qal form with no objects corresponds to a Hifil with one direct object. The object is not usually a prepositional object.

One direct object as an object suffix

Ruth 1:21
וְהִקָּם
הַשִּׁבְנִי
יְהוָה

YHWH | **has caused me to return** | but empty
⇒ has brought me back

Qal: to turn, to return

Hifil: to cause *something/one* to turn, to cause *something/one* to return

One definite direct object marked by אֵת

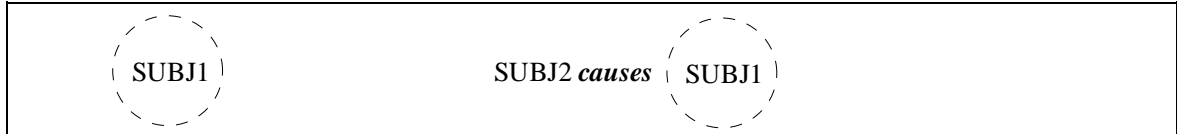
Ruth 2:18
וַתֵּצֵא
אֵת אֲשֶׁר-הוֹתִירָהּ מִשִּׂבְעָהּ:

what she had left over from her satisfying meal | so she **caused to go out...**
⇒ she brought out

Qal: to go out

Hifil: to cause *something* to go out ⇒ to bring *something* out

Hifils Corresponding to Stative Qals

**Qal**SUBJ1 *is* VERB

I'm hungry.

You are wise.

HifilSUBJ2 *causes* SUBJ1 *to be* VERBYou cause me to be hungry.
⇒ You starve me.I cause you to be wise.
⇒ I enlighten you.

Notice that SUBJ1 remains the subject of VERB in Hifil.

SUBJ1 is also now the object of *to cause*.

To cause did not appear in the Qal form.

SUBJ2 the subject of *to cause* did not appear in the Qal form.

Go back to the English Exercises numbers 5 & 6 and see if your original answers agree with the description above. Also, if necessary add an idiomatic English translation.

The syntax of a Hebrew Hifil is different from the syntax of its English translation. The SUBJ2 of the English translation corresponds to an object of the Hifil in Hebrew syntax.

A Qal form with no objects corresponds to a Hifil with one direct object. The object is not normally a prepositional object.

One direct object

חֲסִדֶיךָ הָאֲחֵרֹן מִן־הָרִאשׁוֹן

Ruth 3:10

הִיטֵבְתָּ

than the first | *your last kindness* | **you have caused to be good**
 ⇒ *your last kindness is better* than your first

Qal: to be good

Hifil: to cause *something* to be good ⇒ to treat *someone* well, to cause *something* to be better

One prepositional object

שָׁדַי לִי מְאֹד:

כִּי־הִמְרָ

קָרָאנִי לִי מְרָא

Ruth 1:20

very | *me* | Shadai | for **has caused to be bitter** | call me bitter

Qal: to be bitter

Hifil: to cause *someone* to be bitter

Other Nuances of Causative

Notice that the causative notion can sometimes be taken as **permissive**. ‘Permissive’ means *to allow someone to do something*. In Song of Songs 2:14 the meaning is most probably permissive since the verb is in the imperative and one of the objects is the first person; “cause me to do something” makes little pragmatic sense.

that is in good idiomatic English. In this way you will take account of the causative meaning of the Hifil whilst making your translation.

Look back over the idiomatic English translations in the *Explanation* section above, and try to get a feel for how the causative notion might be altered by attempts to produce a translation that reads well in English.

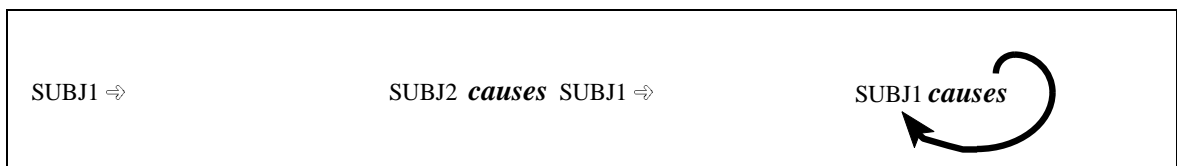
Exceptions

The Internal Hifil

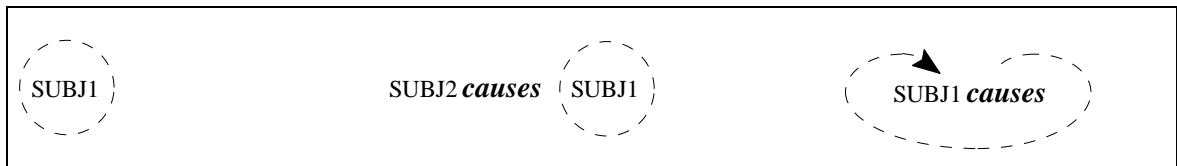
Some Hifil forms are unusual in that they have no external objects, either explicit or assumed (see page 64 and page 53 for assumed objects). Instead the object is regarded as being internal to the verb and semantically the forms are reflexive. ‘Reflexive’ means that the subject does the action to itself rather than to a separate object.

The Internal Hifil is **causative** and **reflexive**, i.e. it is the **reflexive of Hifil**.

Explanation



Qal	Hifil	Internal Hifil
SUBJ1 <i>does</i> VERB	SUBJ2 <i>causes</i> SUBJ1 <i>to do</i> VERB	SUBJ1 <i>causes itself to do</i> VERB
Jane went home.	The teacher caused Jane to go home.	Jane caused herself to go home.
The Queen died.	The king caused the queen to die.	The queen caused herself to die.

**Qal**SUBJ1 *is* VERB

I'm hungry.

You are wise.

HifilSUBJ2 *causes* SUBJ1 *to be* VERB

You cause me to be hungry.

I cause you to be wise.

Internal HifilSUBJ1 *causes itself to be* VERB

I cause myself to be hungry.

You cause yourself to be wise.

Notice that:

The Internal Hifil corresponds only to intransitive Qal forms

The *to cause* verb is reflexive whilst VERB remains active in the Internal Hifil

SUBJ1 undergoes the action of VERB or is put into the state resulting from VERB, in both Hifil and Internal Hifil

SUBJ2 does not appear in the Internal Hifil

The morphological form of the Internal Hifil verb is identical to the form of the Hifil verb. The syntax of the Internal Hifil and the Hifil are different in that the Internal Hifil is intransitive. The Internal Hifil can be distinguished from the Hifil by the fact that it appears with no object, either explicit or assumed.

In Hebrew syntax there is **no reflexive pronoun** since the **reflexive notion is part of the verb**.

The English translation of **Internal Hifil verbs are in bold** and subjects are underlined

Some Internal Hifils correspond to fientive-intransitive Qals

Exodus 14:10
וַיִּפְרָעָה הַקָּרִיב

caused himself to approach | and Pharaoh

Qal: to approach

Hifil: to cause *someone/thing* to approach

Internal Hifil: to cause oneself to approach

Some Internal Hifils correspond to stative Qals

Psalms 35:26
יִלְבָּשׁוּ-בִשְׂתֵּי וּכְלִמָּה הַמְגַדִּילִים עָלַי

over me | those who **cause themselves to be great** | may they be clothed in shame and disgrace
⇒ those who make themselves greater than me

Qal: to be great

Hifil: to cause *someone* to be great

Internal Hifil: to cause oneself to be great

Translating the Internal Hifil

To begin with, when making your own translations, I would advise first producing a translation which includes *to cause* and a **reflexive pronoun**, and after that producing a translation that is in good idiomatic English. In this way you will take account of the causative and reflexive meaning of Internal Hifil whilst making your translation. It may be easier to work out the Hifil meaning of the verb before working on the Internal Hifil meaning.

Look back over the idiomatic English translations in the *Explanation* section above, and try to get a feel for how the causative-reflexive notion might be altered by attempts to produce a translation that reads well in English.

Hebrew Exercises

For the following Hebrew phrases:

Identify the objects of the Hifil verb

If the verb form is an Internal Hifil identify the subject of the verb

Identify whether the verb corresponds to a fientive-transitive, fientive-intransitive, or stative Qal

Provide a literal meaning for the Hifil verb which has its Qal meaning supplied

Provide an idiomatic English translation for the whole phrase

Ruth 1:21
 הָרַע לִי וְשָׂדַי

me | | and Shadai

Qal: to be bad, to be worthless

Ruth 4:5
 עַל-נַחְלָתוֹ: שֵׁם-הַמֵּת לְהִקְיָם

on his estate | the name of the dead man | in order...

Qal: to get up, to rise

Exodus 18:20
 וְהוֹרַעְתָּ לָהֶם אֶת-הַדֶּרֶךְ

the way | them |

Qal: to know *something*

Ruth 4:14

בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה יְהִנֵּה אֲשֶׁר לֹא הִשְׁבִּית לְךָ גֹּאֵל

a redeemer | from you | | who did not | blessed is YHWH

Qal: to cease, to rest, to stay away

Ruth 4:15

וְהָיָה לְךָ לְמִשִּׁיב נַפְשׁ

life | | to you | and he will become

Qal: to turn, to return

Exodus 8:11

וְהִכְבִּיד אֶת-לְבוֹ

his heart | and (Pharaoh) ...

Qal: to be heavy, to be burdensome

Genesis 37:23

וַיִּבְשִׁטוּ אֶת-יֹסֵף אֶת-כְּתָנָתוֹ

his coat | Joseph |

Qal: to take *something* off

Genesis 44:4

הֵם יָצְאוּ אֶת-הָעִיר לֹא הִרְחִיקוּ

| | not | they went out of the city

Qal: to be distant

Psalms 139:12

גַּם-חֹשֶׁךְ לֹא-יִחְשֶׁךְ יְהוָה בְּמַנְהֵךְ

for you | | not | even the dark

Qal: to be dark

Summary Grid

	Simple		Causative
Active	Qal קָבַב David cooked the fish		Hifil הִקְבִּיב the chef caused David to cook the fish

Chapter 8: Piel

English Examples

Study the following English examples, observe the subjects, objects, and verbs used in the Piel and see how they relate to the subjects, objects and verbs used in the Qal. Attempt to work out your own explanation of the meaning for Piel and its relationship with Qal.

The examples marked with an asterisk are verbs of motion which have a slightly different syntax to other Piel forms; you may wish to ignore these examples whilst formulating your explanation.

Qal	Piel
David cooked the fish.	David put the fish into a state of having been cooked. / David had the fish put into a state of having been cooked.
John broke the chair.	John put the chair into a state of having been broken. / John had the chair put into a state of having been broken.
Jane went home.	Jane was in a state of going home.*
The child fell.	The child was in a state of falling.*
The queen died.	The king put the queen into a state of being dead. / The king had the queen put into a state of being dead.
I'm hungry.	You put me into a state of being hungry. / You have me put into a state of being hungry.
You are wise.	I put you into a state of being wise. / I have you put into a state of being wise.

English Exercises

What do you think would be the Piel meaning of the verbs with the following Qal meaning:

1. The people ate the manna.
2. Moses struck the rock.
3. Joshua ran.*
4. Balaam went to sleep.
5. Samson was strong.
6. Delila was beautiful.

Don't move on to the Hebrew examples until you have attempted to work out your own definition for the meaning of Piel.

Hebrew Examples

Study the following Hebrew examples, observe the Piel verb and its object, compare them with the meaning of the verb in Qal and its object. Attempt to work out your own explanation of the syntax of Piel and its relationship with Qal.

The English translations of **Piel verbs are in bold**, *objects are in italics* and subjects are underlined

בְּשֶׂבֶלִים

וְאֶלְקָטָהּ

הַשָּׂדֶה

Ruth 2:2
אֶלְכָה-נָא

the ears of wheat | and **I will put into a state of having been gathered** | *to the fields* | I will go
Qal: to gather *something*
Piel: to put *something* into a state of having been gathered

Ruth 3:4

מִהִגְלִיתָיו

וְהִגְלִיתָ

וּבֵאתָ

his feet | and **put into a state of having been uncovered** | comeQal: to uncover *something*Piel: to put *something* into a state of having been uncovered

כָּל־דָּבָר

לְקִיּוֹם

Ruth 4:7
... וְזֵאתָ*every matter* | in order **to put into a state of having been raised up** | and this was...

Qal: to get up, to rise

Piel: to put *something* into the state of having been raised up

יְהוָה פָּעֵלְךָ

Ruth 2:12
יְשָׁלֶם*your deeds* | YHWH | **may put into a state of being complete**

Qal: to be complete, to be at peace

Piel: to put *something* into the state of being complete, ...at peace

לְאָכְלִי

כִּלְתָּו

Ruth 3:3
עַד*eating* | his **putting into a state of having been finished** | until

Qal: to be finished

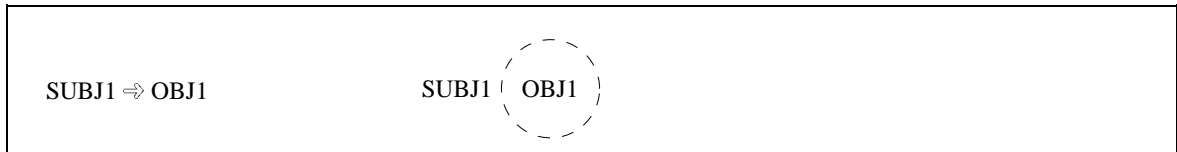
Piel: to put *something* into the state of having been finished

Don't move on to my explanation of the Piel until you have attempted to work out your own explanation of both the meaning of Piel and its syntax in Hebrew.

Explanation

The Piel is **active** and **factitive**. ‘Factitive’ means *to put into a state*, with the emphasis lying on the state resulting from the execution of an action, rather than the action itself. The means by which the state is achieved is not expressed. This can be demonstrated by the English sentence “Hadrian built a wall.” One interpretation of this sentence is that Hadrian mixed the mortar and laid the stones with his own hands; however, since we know that Hadrian was a Roman Emperor and the wall which he built stretches across the width of Britain, a much more likely interpretation is that Hadrian gave the order and had others build the wall for him. Since a Piel does not express the details of how a state came about, either of these interpretations would be possible.

Piels Corresponding to Fientive-Transitive Qals



Qal

Piel

SUBJ1 *does* VERB *to* OBJ1

SUBJ1 *puts* OBJ1 *into the state resulting from the action of* VERB

David cooked the fish.

David put the fish into a state of having been cooked.
/ David had the fish put into a state of having been cooked.
⇒ David cooked the fish. / David had the fish cooked.

John broke the chair.

John put the chair into a state of having been broken.
/ John had the chair put into a state of having been broken.
⇒ John broke the chair. / John had the chair broken.

Notice that instead of VERB acting on OBJ1, OBJ1 is now in the state which results from the action of VERB.

SUBJ1 is the agent in both Qal and Piel.

The idiomatic English translation of Piel can appear to have the same meaning as Qal, but Qal concentrates on the action of VERB whilst Piel concentrates on the resulting state into which OBJ1 is placed. So the following two questions and answers would have the verb in different stems:

What did John do yesterday? (i.e. what action did John do?) He broke (Qal) chairs.

Who broke (Piel) these chairs? (i.e. who put these chairs into a state of being broken?) John did.

Go back to the English Exercises numbers 1 & 2 and see if your original answers agree with the description above. Also, if necessary add an idiomatic English translation.

In Hebrew syntax as in the English translation the object is put into the state resulting from the action of the verb. The Piel has one object which normally appears as a direct object.

Direct object marked with תָּ

שָׁם יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֶת-הָאָרֶץ

Joshua 18:10
וַיַּחֲלֶק-

the land | Joshua | there | and **put into a state of having been apportioned**
⇒ apportioned

Qal: to apportion *something*

Piel: to put *something* into a state of having been apportioned ⇒ to apportion *something*

Direct object

מִרְגְּלָתָיו

וַיַּגְלִית

Ruth 3:4
וַבָּאָת

his feet | and **put into a state of having been uncovered** | come
⇒ uncovered

Qal: to uncover *something*

Piel: to put *something* into a state of having been uncovered

In some cases the object will be assumed and not appear in the text.

בְּשָׂדֵה

וַתִּלְקַט

Ruth 2:3

וַתָּבוֹא

in the fields | and she **put into a state of having been gathered** [*the ears of wheat*] | and she came
 ⇒ she gathered

Qal: to gather *something*

Piel: to put *something* into a state of having been gathered ⇒ to gather

Piels Corresponding to Fientive-Intransitive Qals



Qal

Piel

SUBJ1 *does* VERB

SUBJ2 *puts* SUBJ1 *into the state resulting from* VERB

The queen died. The king put the queen into a state of being dead.

/ The king had the queen put into a state of being dead.

⇒ The king killed the queen.

/ The king had the queen killed.

Notice that SUBJ2 did not appear in any form in Qal.

SUBJ1 is in the state which results from the action of VERB.

Many Qal fientive-intransitive verbs can have intransitive Piel forms and these will be treated below under Exceptions.

Go back to the English Exercise number 4 and see if your original answers agree with the description above. Also, if necessary add an idiomatic English translation.

The syntax of a Hebrew Piel corresponding to a fientive-intransitive Qal is different from the syntax of its English translation. The SUBJ1 of the English translation corresponds to an object in Hebrew syntax. The Piel has one object which normally appears as a direct object.

Direct object

כָּל-דָּבָר

לְקַיֵּם

Ruth 4:7
וְזָאת . . .

every matter | in order **to put into a state of having been raised up** | and this was...

⇒ to establish

⇒ to confirm

Qal: to get up, to rise

Piel: to put *something* into the state of having been raised up ⇒ to establish ⇒ to confirm

Direct object

מַיְרֵדָתָם

Ezekiel 25:4
וְיָשְׁבוּ

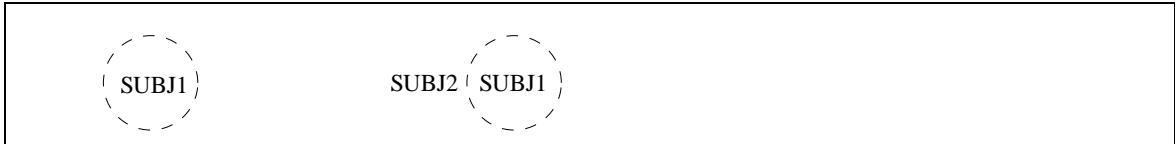
their camp | and they **will put into a state of having been sat down**

⇒ will set up

Qal: to sit down

Piel: to put *something* into the state of having been sat down ⇒ to set *something* up

Piels Corresponding to Stative Qals



Qal

Piel

SUBJ1 *is* VERB SUBJ2 *puts* SUBJ1 *into the state of being* VERB

I'm hungry.

You put me into a state of being hungry.
 / You have me put into a state of being hungry.
 ⇒ You starve me. / You have me starved.

You are wise.

I put you into a state of being wise.
 / I have you put into a state of being wise.
 ⇒ I enlighten you. / I have you enlightened.

Notice that SUBJ2 did not appear in any form in Qal.

SUBJ1 is in the state of being VERB.

The Piel form corresponding to a Qal stative has the same form as that which corresponds to a Qal fientive-intransitive.

Go back to the English Exercises 5 & 6 and see if your original answers agree with the description above. Also, if necessary add an idiomatic English translation.

The syntax of a Hebrew Piel corresponding to a fientive-intransitive Qal is different from the syntax of its English translation. The SUBJ1 of the English translation corresponds to an object in Hebrew syntax. The Piel has one object which normally appears as a direct object.

Direct object

יְהוָה פָּעַלְךָ

Ruth 2:12
יְשַׁלְּמֶם

your deeds | YHWH | **may put into a state of being complete**
⇒ may reward

Qal: to be complete, to be at peace

Piel: to put *something* into the state of being complete, ...at peace ⇒ to recompense for *something*

The object of the following example is marked by a preposition; this is an exception caused by the fact that the object is an infinitive construct.

לְאֹכַל

כִּלְתּוֹ

Ruth 3:3
עַד

eating | his **putting into a state of having been finished** | until
⇒ he has finished

Qal: to be finished

Piel: to put *something* into the state of having been finished ⇒ to finish *something*

Exceptions

The Internal Piel (The So Called Frequentative Piel)

Many fientive-intransitive Qal verbs can have corresponding intransitive Piel forms. These verbs also belong to the lexical categories of verbs of physical motion, voice projection, or expectation. Verbs in these categories tend to be attested only as Internal Piel forms and not as standard Piel forms. This contrasts with the case of Hifil and Internal Hifil in which specific verbs can occur in either form.

Explanation

The Internal Piel is **factitive** and **reflexive**.



Qal	Piel	Internal Piel
SUBJ1 does VERB	SUBJ2 <i>puts</i> SUBJ1 <i>into the state resulting from</i> VERB	SUBJ1 <i>puts itself into the state resulting from</i> VERB
Jane went home.	(John put Jane into a state of going home.)	Jane put herself into a state of going home. ⇒ Jane was going home.
The child fell.	(The horse put the child into a state of falling.)	The child put itself into a state of falling. ⇒ The child was falling down.

The Piel forms in brackets would not exist in Hebrew since the verbs used would only have Internal Piel forms.

Notice that:

The *to put* verb has a reflexive pronoun as its object in Internal Piel

SUBJ2 does not appear in the Internal Hifil

Waltke and O'Connor regard these forms as exceptions to the Piel's factitive meaning and describe them as frequentative, i.e. the action is either iterative over time or plural through space. I regard them as syntactic exceptions, but still within the factitive meaning.

Verbs of motion are intransitive in Qal but a physical action can clearly be observed; if we were to regard the thing undergoing the physical action as an object, then we could regard the verb as reflexive since this object is also the subject.³⁸ The Qal to Internal Piel comparison would then be as follows:

Qal	Internal Piel
SUBJ1 <i>does</i> VERB	⇒ SUBJ1 <i>puts itself into the state resulting from</i> VERB
Jane went home.	Jane put herself into a state of going home. ⇒ Jane was (in the process of) going home
The child fell.	The child put itself into a state of falling. ⇒ The child was falling down.

It might be harder to perceive an “object” for the verbs of voice projection and expectation, but I would suggest that they follow the same syntactic structure as the verbs of motion.

Qal	Internal Piel
David cried, “My son, my son!”	David put himself into the state of crying, “My son, my son!” ⇒ David was crying out, “My son, my son!”
David hoped that he would beat Goliath.	David put himself into a state of hoping that he would beat Goliath. ⇒ David was hoping that he would beat Goliath.

It is easy to see how these verbs could be perceived as frequentative: since the state that the subject is placed in is the state of performing a fientive verb, which implies that the subject is continuing to perform the action of that fientive verb.

Compare the meaning of a verb derived by my description and that derived from Waltke and O’Connor’s frequentative explanation:

And the two of them **went** (Qal) together. Genesis 22:6

³⁸The assignment of a reflexive meaning to intransitive Piel forms is also supported by analogy with intransitive Hifil forms (Internal Hifils) whose reflexive meaning is widely recognised by Hebraists.

They (the defrauded poor) **go about** (Piel) without clothes. Job 24:10 ³⁹
 My explanation:

Qalthey **go****Piel**they put *themselves* into a state of **going**⇒ they are in a state of **going**⇒ they are **going about**

This semantic function may be better described as ‘durative’ rather than ‘frequentative,’ i.e. the action is ongoing over a period of time rather than repetitive. I will refer to this type of Piel as the **Internal Piel**; the label is short and refers to the idea that the object of the verb is internal to the verb-subject construction and does not appear as an externally realised object. This label also parallels the name of the well established ‘Internal Hifil’ which also lacks any external objects.

Go back to the English Exercise 3 and see if your original answers agree with the description above. Also, if necessary add an idiomatic English translation.

The determination of which Piel forms are Internal Piels will be apparent in a text since they will not have an associated object. The reflexive pronoun of the English translation does not occur in Hebrew since the reflexive function is part the verb form.

אֲמַן וַיְהִי כִשְׁמֹעַ אַחָאָב אֶת-הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה ... וַיְהִי לְוַיְהִי

1 Kings 21:27

despondently |and he **put himself into a state of going** | and when Ahab heard these words

³⁹Waltke & O’Connor, 415.

⇒ he went about

Qal: to go, to walk

Piel: to put oneself into a state of going ⇒ to go about

פָּסַח כָּאֵיִל

יִדְלֹג

Isaiah 35:6

אֲזַי

a lame man | like a deer | **will have put himself into a state of leaping** | then

Qal: to leap

Piel: to put oneself into a state of leaping

Translating the Internal Piel

To begin with, when making your own translations, I would advise first producing a translation which includes *puts itself into a state of being something*, and after that producing a translation that is in good idiomatic English. In this way you will take account of the factitive-reflexive meaning of Internal Piel whilst making your translation.

Look back over the idiomatic English translations in the *Explanation* section above, and try to get a feel for how the factitive notion might be altered by attempts to produce a translation that reads well in English.

Denominatives

Denominatives are verbs derived from some other part of speech such as a noun or adjective.

Examples of denominatives in English are:

to fish

to wolf down food

to needle

to lase (from laser)

to surf

to weed

A strict definition of denominative would require that the verb be secondary, i.e. that the verb be derived from the noun and not the noun is from the verb, a determination which is often difficult to make. For my purposes I will use ‘denominative’ to mean *a verb which appears in a derived stem and does not have an attested Qal form but does have a related nominal form.*

Denominatives can occur in Qal (under the strict definition), Hifil, and Nifal but they are especially common in Piel. The factitive nature of the Piel accounts for this use since it is easy to create a verb from a noun by producing the verb *to put something into the state of being a noun or adjective.*

NOUN

SUBJ1 *puts* OBJ1 *into the state of being associated with* NOUN

SUBJ1 *is in the state of being associated with* NOUN

A Piel denominative can designate producing the noun:

אֶלֶּיהָ:

לְדַבֵּר

Ruth 1:18
וַתִּחַדֵּל

to her | from **being in a state of making words** | and she stopped
⇒ speaking

Noun: דָּבָר word

Piel: to be in a state of making words ⇒ to speak

A Piel denominative can designate removing the noun:

Ezekiel 43:22

אֶת־תֵּהֱמִינִיבָהּ

וְהִטְהַרְתִּי

the altar | and they **removed the sinful state from**
⇒ purified

Noun: חַטָּאת sin

Piel: to remove a sinful state from *something/one* ⇒ to purify *something/one*, to cleanse *something/one*

This verb also occurs in Qal but it seems to be a separately derived denominative from the same noun, since it has the meaning of *to commit a sin*.

A Piel denominative can designate an action associated with an already existing noun:

Exodus 40:13

וְהָיָה לִי

and he **will serve me as a priest**

Noun: כֹּהֵן priest

Piel: to act as a priest

Other Nuances of Factive

The factitive meaning can sometimes be taken as **estimative**. ‘Estimative’ means that the speaker believes that something is in a certain state. As far as the speaker is concerned the object of the verb has been put into the state, but this may not be true in reality. Context can be used to decide whether the nuance of the Piel verb is estimative or not.

Qal

You are angry.

Piel

I put you into a state of being angry.

⇒ In my own mind I put you into a state of being angry.

⇒ I believe that you are angry.

בְּאִיּוֹב חָרָה אַפּוֹ עַל-צְדִיקוֹ נִפְשׁוֹ מֵאֱלֹהִים:

rather than God |*himself* |his **having put in a right state** |on account of |he became angry|with Job
 ⇒ him thinking of himself as righteous rather than God

Qal: to be right

Piel: to put *someone* into the state of being right

⇒ to believe *someone* to be in a right state

⇒ to think of *someone* as righteous

Translating the Piel

To begin with, when making your own translations, I would advise first producing a translation which includes *puts something into a state of being something*, and after that producing a translation that is in good idiomatic English. In this way you will take account of the factitive meaning of Piel whilst making your translation.

Look back over the idiomatic English translations in the *Explanation* section above, and try to get a feel for how the factitive notion might be altered by attempts to produce a translation that reads well in English.

Comparison of Piel and Hifil

The difference between a Piel and Hifil corresponding to a Qal intransitive form can be somewhat subtle. I will outline distinctions which seem to fit for many cases although in other cases the exact nuance is uncertain.

Piels and Hifils Corresponding to Fientive-Intransitive Qals



Piel

SUBJ2 *puts* SUBJ1 *into the state resulting from* VERB

The king put the queen into a dead state.
/ The king had the queen put into a dead state.

⇒ The king killed the queen.
/ The king had the queen killed.

Hifil

SUBJ2 *causes* SUBJ1 *to do* VERB

The king caused the queen to die.

⇒ The king killed the queen.

The difference between a Piel and a Hifil corresponding to a Qal fientive-intransitive is that whilst Hifil concentrates on an action, Piel concentrates on the final state resulting from an action. So the following two sentences use different stems:

The king had the queen executed (Piel). (i.e. put the queen into a dead state in some unexpressed manner)

The king took a knife and murdered (Hifil) the queen. (i.e. caused the queen to die with his own hands)

Here is a comparison of the Hifil and Piel forms corresponding to the Qal verb *to cross*.

Piel, final state centred

לְפָנַי הַדְּבִיר בְּרִתְּיֻקוֹת זָהָב

1 Kings 6:21
וַיַּעֲבֵר

in front of the inner sanctuary | *gold chains* | and he **put into a state of crossing**
 ⇒ extended
 ⇒ stretched

Piel: to put *something* into a state of crossing

Hifil, action centred

עַל-הָאָרֶץ רִיחַ אֱלֹהִים

Genesis 8:1
וַיַּעֲבֵר

over the earth | *a wind* | God | and **caused to cross**
 ⇒ pass

Hifil: to cause *something* to cross

Piels and Hifils Corresponding to Stative Qals



Piel

SUBJ2 *puts* SUBJ1 *into the state of being* VERB

I put you into a state of being wise.
 / I have you put into a state of being wise.

⇒ I enlighten you. / I have you enlightened.

Hifil

SUBJ2 *causes* SUBJ1 *to be* VERB

I cause you to become wise.

⇒ I enlighten you

The difference between a Piel and a Hifil corresponding to a Qal stative is that, whilst Hifil concentrates on the action which brings about the state, Piel concentrates on the final state itself.

Thus the following two utterances would be used by different people and would use different stems.

Chancellor of the University: We will educate (Piel) you. (i.e. put you into a state of being wise in some unexpressed manner)

Lecturer: I will be instructing (Hifil) you this term. (i.e. causing you to become wise by my own teaching)

Here is a comparison of the Hifil and Piel forms corresponding to the Qal verb *to be great*.

Piel, final state centred

יְהַדִּיר אֶת־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ

Joshua 4:14
גָּדֹל

Joshua | YHWH | **put into a state of being great**
⇒ made great

Piel: to put *someone/thing* into a state of being great

Hifil, action centred

אָמַרְתָּ:

הַגְדִּילְתָּ . . .

Psalms 138:2
כִּי־

your sayings | he **has caused to be great...** | for
⇒ made great

Hifil: to cause *someone/thing* to be great

Hebrew Exercises

For the following Hebrew phrases:

Identify the objects of the Piel verb

Identify whether the verb is denominative, or corresponds to a Qal fientive-transitive, fientive-intransitive or stative

Identify cases where the Piel is an Internal Piel

Provide a literal meaning for the Piel verb which has its Qal or noun meaning supplied

Provide an idiomatic English translation for the whole phrase

Ruth 2:4

וַיֹּאמְרוּ לֹא יְבָרְכֶךָ יְהוָה:

YHWH | | to him | and they said

Qal: to be blessed

Ruth 1:13

הֲלֵהֶן תְּשִׁבְרֵנָה עַד אֲשֶׁר יִגְדְּלוּ

until they are grown | | therefore

Noun: hope

Ruth 2:15

וַיֵּצֵא בֹעַז אֶת־נְעָרָיו

his workers | Boaz |

Noun: order, commandment

Isaiah 59:9
בְּאֵפְלוֹת נְהַלְקֶה:

| | in darkness

Qal: to go, to walk

Ruth 2:21
עַד אֶם- כָּלוּ אֶת כָּל-הַקְּצִיר

all the harvest | | until

Qal: to be finished

Ruth 3:7
וַתָּבֵא בַלַּט וַתִּגַּל מִתַּלְתָּיו

his feet | | and she came in secret

Qal: to uncover *something*

Psalms 88:10
שִׁמְחֹתַי אֵלֶיךָ כַּפְּי:

my hands | to you |

Qal: to spread *something*

Summary Grid

	Simple	Factitive	Causative
Active	Qal קָבַב David cooked the fish	Piel בָּבַב David put the fish into a state of having been cooked	Hifil הִבְבִּיב the chef caused David to cook the fish

Chapter 9: Nifal

The Nifal stem is somewhat unusual because it has two different meanings; so as not to prejudice your examination of the examples I won't give you names for these meanings until I get to the *Explanation* section. For the moment I'll call them *Meaning 1* and *Meaning 2*. Towards the end of the chapter I'll provide a reason why the Nifal has two different meanings.

Nifal Meaning 1

English Examples

Study the following English examples, observe the subjects and verbs used in the Nifal and see how they relate to the subjects, objects and verbs used in the Qal. Attempt to work out your own explanation of the meaning of Nifal and its relationship to Qal.

Qal

David cooked the fish.

John broke the chair.

Noah is opening the door.

The cat chased the mouse.

The scribe wrote a book. A book was written.

Nifal

The fish cooked. / The fish was cooked.

The chair broke. / The chair was broken.

The door is opening. / The door is being opened.

The mouse was chased.

English Exercises

What do you think would be the Nifal meaning of the verbs with the following Qal meaning:

1. The people ate the manna.
2. Moses struck the rock.
3. Joshua sounded the trumpet.
4. Balaam chastised his donkey.

Don't move on to the Hebrew examples until you have attempted to work out your own definition for this meaning of Nifal.

Hebrew Examples

Study the following Hebrew examples, observe the Nifal verb and its subject, and compare them with the meaning of the Qal verb, its subject and object. Attempt to work out your own explanation of the syntax of Nifal and its relationship to Qal.

The translations of the **Nifal verbs are in bold**, *objects are in italics* and subjects are underlined

Ruth 1:17

בְּאֲשֶׁר תָּמוּתִי אָמוּת וְשָׁם אֶקְבֹּר

I will be buried | and there | I will die | wherever you die

Qal: to bury *someone*

Nifal: to be buried

Rut 1:19

וַתְּהַרְגֵם כָּל-הָעִיר עֲלֵיהֶן

concerning them | all the city | and **was stirred up**

Qal: to stir *something* up

Nifal: to be stirred up

Ruth 3:3

אֶל-תִּנְדָּעִי לְאִישׁ

to the man | **be known** | do notQal: to know *something/one*

Nifal: to be known

Numbers 16:31

וַתִּבְקַע הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר תַּחֲתֵיהֶם:

which was under them | the ground | and **split**Qal: to split *something*

Nifal: to split

Exodus 21:28

וְלֹא יֵאָכֵל אֶת-בְּשָׂרוֹ

its meat | **will be eaten** | and notQal: to eat *something*

Nifal: to be eaten

Don't move on to my explanation of the Nifal until you have attempted to work out your own explanation of both the meaning of Nifal and its syntax in Hebrew.

The Medio-Passive Nifal

Explanation

The first meaning (Meaning 1) of the Nifal stem is **medio-passive**. 'Medio-passive' can have two related translations in English: either middle voice or passive voice. Both of these voices are similar in that no agent of the action is expressed; for example in both the following phrases we do not know who or what opened the door:

Middle Voice

The door opened.

Passive Voice

The door was opened.

Not all English verbs which occur in passive voice can also occur in middle voice; the lexical properties of individual verbs determine which can occur in middle voice. In the following example "The book wrote" is not middle but rather active voice and conjures up a vision we would only expect to see in cartoons.

Not Middle Voice

The book wrote.

Passive Voice

The book was written

The **medio-passive Nifal** corresponds only to the **fientive-transitive Qal**.

SUBJ1 ⇒ OBJ1	OBJ1 ⇐
--------------	--------

Qal**Nifal**SUBJ1 *does* VERB *to* OBJ1OBJ1 *undergoes the action of* VERB

David cooked the fish.

The fish cooked. / The fish was cooked (by David).

John broke the chair.

The chair broke. / The chair was broken (by John).

Notice that:

OBJ1 undergoes the action in both Qal and Nifal.

SUBJ1 does not appear in Nifal.

For the Passive:

VERB appears as *to be* and a **past participle**.

In Nifal the **agent** of the action (the subject in Qal) may be expressed by adding *by someone/thing*. The addition is not part of the verb phrase, but rather a separate prepositional phrase.

SUBJ1 *does* VERB *to* OBJ1OBJ1 *is* VERBED (*by* SUBJ1)

For the Middle:

VERB appears in the same form as it appears in Qal:

David **is cooking** the fish.The fish **is cooking**.David **will cook** the fish.The fish **will cook**.

Go back to the English Exercises and see if your original answers agree with the description above. Hint:

number 3 can be middle.

The passive meaning is the most common English translation for the Hebrew medio-passive but it may also be middle.

Passive

Ruth 1:17

בְּאֲשֶׁר תָּמוּתִי אָמוּת וְשָׁם אֶקְבֹּר

I **will be buried** | and there | I will die | wherever you die

Qal: to bury *someone*

Nifal: to be buried

Passive

Rut 1:19

עַלֵיהֶן כָּל-הָעִיר וַתִּהְיֶה

concerning them | all the city | and **was stirred up**
⇒ was in a commotion

Qal: to stir *something* up

Nifal: to be stirred up ⇒ to be in a commotion

Middle

Numbers 16:31

וַתִּפְּקַע הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר תַּחְתֵּיהֶם:

the ground which was under them | and **split**

Qal: to split *something*

Nifal: to split

The **subject** of a Nifal may be marked by תַּחְתֵּי. Since this marker normally occurs with definite objects we might generalise its function and say that it marks the (definite) **goal** of the verb, i.e. *that which*

undergoes the action. A Nifal subject marked with תָּנִי would correspond to a Qal object marked with תָּנִי.

Qal fientive-transitive. Object marked by תָּנִי.

Exodus 12:8
וְאָכְלוּ אֶת־הַבָּשָׂר

the meat | and **they ate**

Qal: to eat *something*

Nifal Passive. Subject marked with תָּנִי

Exodus 21:28
וְלֹא יֵאָכַל אֶת־בְּשָׂרוֹ

its meat | **will be eaten** | and not

Nifal: to be eaten

The agent of the passive verb may be marked with בּ, ל, or the instrument by מִן. An agent is a person who performs an action whilst an instrument is something which that person uses to perform the action. For example: *he was killed by the assassin* (agent); *he was killed with a knife* (instrument).

Agent marked with בּ

Deuteronomy 33:29
עַם נֹשַׁע בְּיַהְוָה

by YHWH | **saved** | a people

Qal: Not Attested

Nifal: to be saved

Agent marked with ל

Exodus 12:16

אֲשֶׁר יֵאָכֵל לְכָל-נֶפֶשׁ

by all living things | **is eaten** | that which

Qal: to eat *something*

Nifal: to be eaten

Instrument marked with מן

Genesis 9:11

וְלֹא-יִכָּרֵת כָּל-בֶּשֶׂר עוֹד מִמַּי הַמַּבּוּל

by the waters of the flood | again | all creatures | **will be cut** | and not
⇒ will be cut off

Qal: to cut *something* off

Nifal: to be cut off

Other Nuances of Medio-Passive

The medio-passive notion may be realised in English as **tolerative**. The idiomatic translation of the passive *to be VERBed* becomes *allow oneself to be VERBed*.⁴⁰

Passive

Ruth 3:3

אֶל-תִּנְדָּעִי לְאִישׁ

to the man | **be known** | do not
⇒ make yourself known

Qal: to know *something/one*

Nifal: to be known ⇒ to allow oneself to be known

⇒ to make oneself known

⁴⁰Waltke & O'Connor (389-390) describe 'tolerative' as a nuance of the reflexive meaning of Nifal; I disagree with them for the following reason: If the Nifal verb is translated as a pure passive the meaning of the translation is clear and appropriate in context: *do not be known to the man*. However, if the Nifal verb is translated as a pure reflexive its meaning is not appropriate to the context: *do not know yourself to the man*. *To allow yourself to be known* is a circumlocution for *to be known* not for *to know yourself*. *To know yourself* would imply self awareness rather than the awareness of your presence by another. Also, contrary to Waltke & O'Connor (390) I regard this example to be action centred so that it could be paraphrased *do not come out of hiding* rather than factitive *do not put yourself into a state of being known*.

Passive. Agent marked with ל

Isaiah 19:22

לָהֶם

וַיַּעֲתָר

by them | and he was entreated
→ he responded to them

Qal: to entreat *someone*

Nifal: to be entreated ⇒ to allow oneself to be entreated

⇒ to respond

The third masculine singular form (3ms) of a verb in Nifal may be used as an **impersonal construction**. ‘Impersonal constructions’ in English usually make use of the dummy pronoun *it* or *they* (more formally *one*).

I think it's going to rain. They say the economy's slowing down.

Numbers 21:14

עַל־כֵּן יֵאָמֵר בְּסִפְרֵי מִלְחָמֹת יְהוָה

in the book of the wars of YHWH | it is said | thus

Qal: to say *something*

Nifal: to be said

Exceptions

Some roots which occur in Nifal have corresponding Qal forms which are not transitive; such anomalies may be due to changes in the use of particular verbs over time. In the following example the Nifal corresponds to a stative Qal.

Qal stative

1 Samuel 30:13
 כִּי חָלִיתִי הַיּוֹם שְׁלֹשָׁה:

three days ago | I **became sick** | for

Qal: to be sick

Nifal medio-passive

Amos 6:6
 וְלֹא נִחְלְוּ עַל-שִׁבְרֵי יוֹסֵף:

over the ruin of Joseph | they **have become sick** | but not

Nifal: to be sick? (Exact nuance unknown)

Translating the Medio-Passive Nifal

To begin with, when making your own translations for the **passive** Nifal use the verb *to be* in the correct tense and a **past participle**. For the **middle** Nifal use the same form of the verb **as the active** form but **without an object**.

Summary Grid

	Simple	Factitive	Causative
Active	<p>Qal קָבַב David cooked the fish</p>	<p>Piel בָּבַב David put the fish into a state of having been cooked</p>	<p>Hifil הִבְבִּיב the chef caused David to cook the fish</p>
Medio-Passive	<p>Nifal נִבְבַּב the fish cooked /the fish was cooked (by David)</p>		

Meaning 2

English Examples

Study the following English examples. Observe the subjects and verbs used in the Nifal and see how they relate to the subjects, objects and verbs used in the Qal. Attempt to work out your own explanation of the meaning of Nifal and its relationship to Qal.

Qal

David cooked the fish.

John broke the chair.

The dove woke Noah.

The cat chased the mouse.

Nifal

The fish cooked itself.

The chair broke itself.

Noah woke himself.

The mouse chased itself.

English Exercises

What do you think would be the Nifal meaning of the verbs with the following Qal meaning:

1. Noah opened the door.
2. Moses lit a fire.
3. Joshua sounded the trumpet.
4. Balaam chastised his donkey.

Don't move on to the Hebrew examples until you have attempted to work out your own definition for the meaning of Nifal.

Hebrew Examples

Study the following Hebrew examples. Observe the Nifal verb and its subject, and compare them with the meaning of the Qal verb, its subject and object. Attempt to work out your own explanation of the syntax of Nifal and its relationship with Qal.

The translation of **Nifal verbs are in bold**, *objects are in italics* and subjects are underlined

Ruth 3:8

וַיִּלְפַּת וַיְהִי בַּחֲצִי הַלַּיְלָה . . .

and he **twisted himself** | and it was in the middle of the night

Arabic: to twist *something*

(Qal: to grasp *something* {only one occurrence})

Nifal: to twist oneself

Deuteronomy 15:12

כִּי-יִמְכַר יְהוּדִי אֶל-אֶחָיו הָעִבְרִי

your Hebrew brother | to you | **sells himself** | if

Qal: to sell *something*

Nifal: to sell oneself

Isaiah 1:24

וְאֶנְקַמָּה כִּי אֶנְקַמָּה

on my enemies | and I **will avenge myself**

Qal: to avenge *someone*

Nifal: to avenge oneself

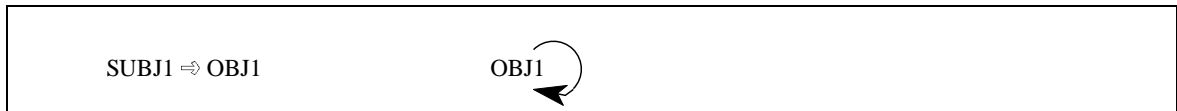
Don't move on to my explanation of the Nifal until you have attempted to work out your own explanation of both the meaning of Nifal and its syntax in Hebrew.

The Reflexive Nifal

Explanation

The second meaning (Meaning 2) of the Nifal stem is **reflexive**. 'Reflexive' means that the subject of the verb does the action to itself rather than to an external object.

The **reflexive Nifal** corresponds only to **fientive-transitive Qals**.



Qal

SUBJ1 *does* VERB to OBJ1

David cooked the fish.

John broke the chair.

The dove woke Noah.

The cat chased the mouse.

Nifal

OBJ1 *does* VERB *to itself*

The fish cooked itself.

The chair broke itself.

Noah woke himself.
⇒ Noah woke up.

The mouse chased itself.

Notice that OBJ1 undergoes the action in both Qal and Nifal.

SUBJ1 does not appear in Nifal.

VERB appears in the same form in both Qal and Nifal.

The object of VERB in Nifal is a reflexive pronoun.

Go back to the English Exercises and see if your original answers agree with the description above.

In the English translation a reflexive pronoun appears as the object of the verb; in Hebrew syntax there is **no reflexive pronoun** since the **reflexive notion is part of the verb**.

Ruth 3:8

וַיִּלְפַּת . . . וַיְהִי בַּחֲצִי הַלַּיְלָה . . .

and he **twisted himself** | and it was in the middle of the night
⇒ he rolled over

Arabic: to twist *something*

(Qal: to grasp *something* {only one occurrence})

Nifal: to twist oneself

Deuteronomy 15:12

כִּי- וַיִּמְכַּר לְךָ אֶחֱיוֹת הָעִבְרִי

your Hebrew brother | to you | **sells himself** | if

Qal: to sell *something*

Nifal: to sell oneself

Isaiah 1:24

וַיִּנְקַמָּהּ מֵאֹיְבָיִ:

on my enemies | and **I will avenge myself**

Qal: to avenge *someone*

Nifal: to avenge oneself

Verbs which are reflexive in Hebrew may not necessarily correspond to reflexive forms in English; hence, an idiomatic English translation may not include a reflexive pronoun.

Judges 16:26
 וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁמְשׁוֹן . . . אֶשְׂעַן עֲלֵיהֶם:

against them (the pillars) | and I **will lean myself** | and Samson said...
 ⇒ I will lean

Nifal: to lean oneself ⇒ to lean

Other Nuances of Reflexive

The reflexive notion may be taken as **benefactive**, that is, instead of the subject doing something to itself, it does something on its own behalf.

Joel 1:18
 מַה נִּאֲנָחָה בַּמָּה . . . כִּי אֵין מִרְעָה לָהֶם

for them | pasture | for there is no | the cattle... | **groan (for themselves)** | how

Qal: Not Attested

Nifal: to groan (for oneself)

When the **subject** of the Nifal verb is **plural** the reflexive nuance can become **reciprocal**, that is, the subjects do something to each other.

Qal

Nifal

The cat chased the mice. The mice chased themselves.

⇒ The mice chased each other.

1 Samuel 17:10

יָחַד:

וְנִלְחָמָה

תָּנִן-לִי אִישׁ

together | and we **will fight each other** | give me a man

Qal: Not Attested

Nifal: to fight themselves

⇒ to fight one another

Translating the Reflexive Nifal

To begin with, when making your own translations I would advise first producing a translation which includes a **reflexive pronoun**, and after that producing a translation that is in good idiomatic English. In this way you will take account of the reflexive meaning of the Nifal whilst making your translation.

Summary Grid

	Simple	Factitive	Causative
Active	Qal כָּבַב David cooked the fish	Piel כִּבֵּב David put the fish into a state of having been cooked	Hifil הִכְבִּיב the chef caused David to cook the fish
Medio-Passive	Nifal נִכְבַּב the fish cooked /the fish was cooked (by David)		
Reflexive	Nifal נִכְבַּב the fish cooked itself		

Why Two Meanings?

At one time the Medio-Passive function corresponding to the Qal stem was served by a Qal-passive stem (see page 146 for more on the Qal-passive). The Nifal stem probably began as a purely reflexive stem, but as the Qal-passive stem fell into disuse the Nifal also took on the medio-passive function. The expansion of the Nifal to cover both reflexive and medio-passive functions would have been facilitated by the fact that neither of these functions require an external object (the reflexive pronoun of the English translation is not an object in Hebrew but part of the meaning of the verb).

Reflexive

The fish cooked itself.

Medio-Passive

The fish cooked. / The fish was cooked.

Context will determine whether a Hebrew Nifal form should be translated as medio-passive or reflexive.

Deuteronomy 15:12

פִּי־ יִמְכַר לְךָ אֶחָיֶךָ הָעִבְרִי

your Hebrew brother | to you | **sells himself** | if

Isaiah 52:3

חִנָּם נִמְכַרְתֶּם

you **were sold** | for nothing

Qal: to sell *something*

Nifal: to sell oneself / to be sold

Hebrew Exercises

For the following Hebrew phrases:

Identify the subject of the Nifal verb

Decide from context whether the Nifal verb is medio-passive or reflexive

Provide a literal meaning for the Nifal verb which has its Qal meaning supplied

Provide an idiomatic English translation for the whole phrase

Ruth 3:14

אֵל-יִנְדַע פִּי-בָאָה הָאִשָּׁה הַגֵּרָה:

that a woman came to the threshing floor | | not

Qal: to know *something*

Ruth 4:10

וְלֹא-יָכַרְתָּ שֵׁם-הַמֵּת

the name of the deceased | | and not

Qal: to cut *something* off

Ruth 4:14

וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל:

in Israel | his name |

Qal: to call *something*

Amos 3:3

הִיִּלְכוּ שְׁנַיִם יַחְדָּו בְּלִתֵּי אֵם- נֹעְדוּ:

? | | unless | do two walk together

Qal: to know *something*

Exodus 23:13

וּבְכָל אֲשֶׁר-אָמַרְתִּי אֵלֵיכֶם תִּשְׁמְרוּ

| | and with regard to all which I have said to you

Qal: to keep *something*, to guard *something*

Ezekiel 33:22

וַיִּפְתַּח פִּי וְלֹא נִאֲלַמְתִּי עוֹד:⁴¹

and I was no longer speechless | my mouth |

Qal: to open *something*

⁴¹נִאֲלַמְתִּי is also in Nifal. אֵלֵם Qal: Not Attested; Piel: to put *something* (*sheaves*) into the state of having been bound; Nifal: to be bound speechless.

Chapter 10: Pual

At this point you have already learnt all the basic functions (active factitive and causative, and simple medio-passive and reflexive) used in the stem system. The remaining major stems use combinations of these basic functions so I don't need to teach them to you again. Instead I'll tell you what combination of functions each stem uses, at which point you should be able to provide examples of the use of the stem yourself.

	Simple	Factitive	Causative
Active	Qal קָבַב David cooked the fish	Piel קָבַב David put the fish into a state of having been cooked	Hifil הִקְבִּיב the chef caused David to cook the fish
Medio-Passive	Nifal נִקְבַּב the fish cooked /the fish was cooked (by David)	Pual קָבַב the fish was put into a state of having been cooked	
Reflexive	Nifal נִקְבַּב the fish cooked itself		

The Pual stem is **factitive** and **medio-passive**, that is, the Pual is the **passive of Piel**.

English Exercises

From the information above you should be able to work out how the meaning of the Pual would be expressed in examples. Therefore, I'll skip supplying you with examples and ask you to produce your own through the following exercises.

What do you think would be the Pual meaning of the verbs with the following Piel or Qal meanings:

1. Piel: John put the chair into a state of having been broken.
2. Qal: The people ate the manna.
3. Piel: The king put the queen into a state of being dead.
4. Qal: Balaam went to sleep.
5. Piel: You put me into a state of being hungry.
6. Qal: Delila was beautiful.

Don't move on to my explanation of the Pual until you have attempted the English exercises above.

Explanation



Qal

Transitive

David cooked the fish.

John broke the chair.

Piel

SUBJ1 *puts* OBJ1 *into the state resulting from the action of*
VERB

David put the fish into a state of having been cooked.

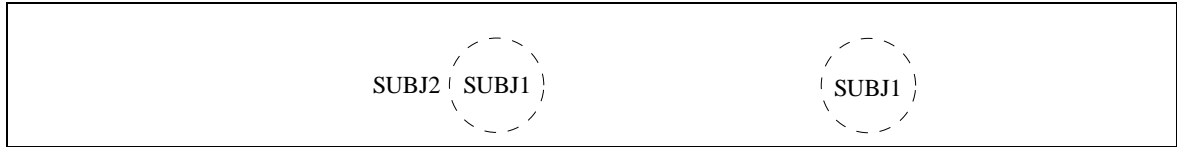
John put the chair into a state of having been broken.

Pual

OBJ1 *is put into the state resulting from the action of*
VERB

The fish was put into a state of having been cooked.

The chair was put into a state of having been broken.

**Qal****Piel****Pual****Intransitive**

SUBJ2 puts SUBJ1 into the state resulting from the action of VERB

SUBJ1 is put into the state resulting from the action of VERB

The queen died.

The king put the queen into a state of being dead.

The queen was put into a state of being dead.

I'm hungry.

You put me into a state of being hungry.

I have been put into a state of being hungry.

You are wise.

I put you into a state of being wise.

You have been put into a state of being wise.

Notice that:

The Piel is always transitive irrespective of whether it corresponds to a Qal fientive-transitive, fientive-intransitive or stative. Since the Pual is the passive of Piel it is always intransitive irrespective of the type of Qal to which it corresponds.

For forms corresponding to the Transitive Qal

In both Piel and Pual OBJ1 is put into the state resulting from VERB.

SUBJ1 does not occur in the Pual.

For forms corresponding to the Intransitive Qal

In both Piel and Pual SUBJ1 is put into the state resulting from VERB.

SUBJ2 does not occur in the Pual.

In Hebrew syntax the OBJ1 of the English translation appears as the subject of the Pual verb.

The English translation of **Pual verbs are in bold** and subjects are underlined

אֲבְרָהָם וְשָׂרָה

קָבְרָה

Genesis 25:10

וְשָׂרָה

Abraham and Sarah | **were put into a state of having been buried** | there

⇒ were buried

Qal: to bury *someone*

Piel: to put *someone* into a state of having been buried

Pual: to be put into a state of having been buried

הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ

Genesis 2:1

וַיֵּשְׂרֹף

the heavens and the earth | and **were put into a state of having been finished**

⇒ were finished

Qal: to be finished

Piel: to put *something* into a state of having been finished

Pual: to be put into a state of having been finished

Many occurrences of the Pual are participles.

מֵיָדַע

Ruth 2:1

וַיֵּדְעֵנִי

was one who had been put into a state of being known | and to Naomi

⇒ one was known

Qal: to know *something/one*.

Piel: to put *something/one* into a state of being known

Pual: to be put into a state of being known

As in the Nifal with passive meaning, the agent of the action may appear marked by a preposition. However, this is much less common for Pual than for Nifal. In the following example the agent (or more accurately the instrument) is marked by בּ.

תְּחַלֵּק

בְּחַבֵּל

Amos 7:17
וְאֶדְמַתְּךָ

will be put into a state of having been apportioned | by a (measuring) line | and your land
⇒ will be apportioned

Qal: to apportion *something*

Piel: to put *something* into the state of having been apportioned

Pual: to be put into the state of having been apportioned

Denominatives

As with Piel, the Pual may be denominative.

מִשְׁלֹשֶׁת

עֵגְלָה

Genesis 15:9
קָחָה לִי

one which has been put into a state of being three (years old) | a calf | to me | bring
⇒ a three year old one

Adjective: מִשְׁלֹשֶׁת three

Piel: to put *something* into a state of being three

Pual: to be put into a state of being three

Pual denominatives need not necessarily correspond to Piel denominatives.

מִזְמַנִּים

לְעֵתִים

Ezra 10:14
יָבֹא

ones which have been put into a state of being an appointed time | at times | he will come
⇒ appointed

Noun: מִזְמַן season, appointed time

Piel: Not Attested

Pual: to be put into the state of being an appointed time

Puals Corresponding to the Internal Piel

With one exception there are no Pual forms which correspond to the internal Piel (or so called frequentative Piel). That exception is יָרַן Qal: *to give a ringing shout*.

Internal Piel

Isaiah 26:19

וְרָנְנוּ

הַקִּיצוֹ

and **put yourselves into the state of making a ringing shout** | wake up

⇒ give a ringing shout

Piel: to put oneself into the state of giving a ringing shout

Isaiah 16:10

יִרְנָן

לֹא-

וּבְכַרְמֵי

will a ringing shout be given | not | and in the vineyards

Pual: Exact nuance uncertain

Comparison with Nifal

As an idiomatic English translation of Piel can appear to have the same meaning as a fientive-transitive Qal, an idiomatic English translation of Pual can appear to have the same meaning as Nifal.

As with the Qal-Piel comparison, the Nifal focuses on the action of the verb and the Pual on the resulting state. So the following two questions and answers would have the verb in different stems:

What happened to the chairs? (i.e. what was done to the chairs?)
They were broken (Nifal).

What was wrong with the chairs? (i.e. what was wrong with the state that the chairs were in?)
They were broken (Pual). (i.e. they had been put into a state of having been broken)

Nifal, action centred

Genesis 35:19
וַתִּקְבֹּר וַתַּחַל וַתָּמָת

and **was buried** | Rachel | and died

Qal: to bury *someone*

Nifal: to be buried

Pual, state centred

Genesis 25:10
שָׂפוּהוּ קָבְרוּ אֶבְרָהָם וְשָׂרוּהָ

Abraham and Sarah | **were put into the state of having been buried** | there
⇒ were buried

Qal: to bury *someone*

Piel: to put *someone* into a state of having been buried

Pual: to be put into a state of having been buried

Exceptions

The Masoretes pointed several Qal-passive forms as Puals (see page 146 for more on the Qal-passive stem). The following list has been adapted from R. J. Williams, and gives verbs which are pointed as Pual but are actually Qal-passives. Unless otherwise noted, the forms in question are suffix conjugation.⁴²

אכל	Nehemiah 2:3,13; Nahum 1:10; PC:	דחן	Psalms 36:13
	Isaiah 1:20	הגן	Abs Inf: Isaiah 59:13
אסר	Isaiah 22:3	הגור/ר	2 Samuel 20:13
בזז	Jeremiah 50:37		

⁴²Ronald J. Williams, "The Passive Qal Theme in Hebrew" in, *Essays on the Ancient Semitic World*, ed. J. W. Weavers & D. B. Redford (Toronto: U of T, 1970), 46-49. Williams also includes the root קבר at Genesis 25:10, which I have used as an example of Pual. His reason is that the form is not plurative as is the Piel of that verb. I disagree with him on two counts: first, the form in question has two subjects, and therefore would fit into a plurative definition; second, as I define the D stem it is not plurative but factitive, so such an argument is irrelevant.

הרי	Job 3:3; Abs Inf: Isaiah 59:13	זני	Ezekiel 16:34
זור	Isaiah 1:6	זרע	Isaiah 40:24
		זרק	Numbers 19:13, 20
		חצב	Isaiah 51:1
		חקק	Ptc: Proverbs 31:5
		טרף	Genesis 37:33, 44:28
		ילד	Genesis 4:26; Judges 18:29; etc.
		יצר	Psalms 139:16
		כרת	Judges 6:28
		לקח	Genesis 18:4; Job 28:2; etc.
		מרט	Ezekiel 21:15f; Ptc: 1 Kings 7:45
		מרק	Leviticus 6:21
		נמש	Isaiah 32:14
		נקח	Job 20:26
		עבד	Deuteronomy 21:3; Isaiah 14:3
		עוב	Isaiah 32:14
		עשו/י	Psalms 139:15
		קרא	Isaiah 48:8; Ezekiel 10:13; etc.; Ptc: Isaiah 48:12
		קרצ	Job 33:6
		ראי	Job 33:21

שרף Leviticus 10:16

שפך Zephaniah 1:17; Numbers 35:33;

שגל Jeremiah 3:2

Psalms 73:2

שתף Leviticus 6:21

Translating the Pual

To begin with, when making your own translations, I would advise first producing a translation which includes *to be put into a state of being something*, and after that producing a translation that is in good idiomatic English. In this way you will take account of the factitive and passive meaning of Pual whilst making your translation.

Look back over the idiomatic English translations in the *Explanation* section above, and try to get a feel for how the factitive notion might be altered by attempts to produce a translation that reads well in English.

Hebrew Exercises

For the following Hebrew phrases:

Identify the subject of the Pual verb

Provide a literal meaning for the Piel verb which has its Qal or noun meaning supplied

Provide an idiomatic English translation for the whole phrase

Genesis 7:19
 וַיִּכְסֹּף כָּל־הַחַיָּוִּים

all the mountains | |

Qal: to cover *something*

Genesis 44:3
 הַבֹּקֶר אֹרַח וְהָאֲנָשִׁים שָׁלוּחַ

| | and the men | the morning was light

Qal: to send *someone* away

Ezekiel 22:24
 אֲתָ אֶרֶץ לֹא מְטֹהֶרֶת הִיא וְלֹא גִשְׁמָה

| | and not | is it | | not | you are a land

Qal: to be ritually clean

Noun: גֶּשֶׁם rain

Hosea 14:1
 עַל־לִבָּם יִרְטָשׁוּ וְהָרִיזוּתוֹ יִבְקְעוּ

| | and their pregnant women | | their little children

Qal: to dash *someone* to pieces

Qal: to split *something*

Chapter 11: Hofal

	Simple	Factitive	Causative
Active	Qal כָּבַב David cooked the fish	Piel כִּבְּב David put the fish into a state of having been cooked	Hifil הִכְבִּיב the chef caused David to cook the fish
Medio-Passive	Nifal נִכְבְּב the fish cooked /the fish was cooked (by David)	Pual כִּבְּב the fish was put into a state of having been cooked	Hofal הִכְבְּב David was caused to cook the fish
Reflexive	Nifal נִכְבְּב the fish cooked itself		

The Hofal stem is **causative** and **medio-passive**, that is, the Hofal is the **passive of Hifil**.

English Exercises

What do you think would be the Hofal meaning of the verbs with the following Hifil or Qal meanings:

1. Hifil: I caused John to break the chair
2. Qal: The people ate the manna.
3. Hifil: The king caused the queen to die
4. Qal: Balaam went to sleep.
5. Hifil: You cause me to be hungry.
6. Qal: Delila was beautiful.

Don't move on to my explanation of the Hofal until you have attempted the English exercises above.

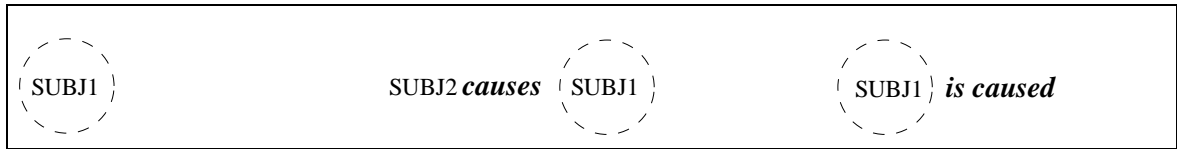
Explanation

SUBJ1 ⇒ OBJ1	SUBJ2 <i>causes</i> SUBJ1 ⇒ OBJ1	SUBJ1 <i>is caused to</i> ⇒ OBJ1
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Qal	Hifil	Hofal
SUBJ1 <i>does</i> VERB <i>to</i> OBJ1	SUBJ2 <i>causes</i> SUBJ1 <i>to do</i> VERB <i>to</i> OBJ1	SUBJ1 <i>is caused to do</i> VERB <i>to</i> OBJ1
David cooked the fish.	The chef caused David to cook the fish.	David was caused to cook the fish
John broke the chair.	I caused John to break the chair	John was caused to break the chair

SUBJ1 ⇒	SUBJ2 <i>causes</i> SUBJ1 ⇒	SUBJ1 <i>is caused to</i> ⇒
---------	-----------------------------	-----------------------------

Qal	Hifil	Hofal
SUBJ1 <i>does</i> VERB	SUBJ2 <i>causes</i> SUBJ1 <i>to do</i> VERB	SUBJ1 <i>is caused to do</i> VERB
Jane went home.	The teacher caused Jane to go home.	Jane was caused to go home.
The queen died.	The king caused the queen to die.	The queen was caused to die.



Qal

Hifil

Hofal

SUBJ1 *is* VERB

SUBJ2 *causes* SUBJ1 *to be* VERB

SUBJ1 *is caused to be* VERB

I'm hungry.

You cause me to be hungry.

I am caused to be hungry.

You are wise.

I cause you to be wise.

You are caused to be wise.

Notice that:

The *to cause* verb is passive in Hofal whilst VERB remains active

SUBJ1 is always the subject of *to cause* in Hofal

Since the Hofal is passive, SUBJ1 also undergoes the causation

SUBJ2 does not occur in the Hofal

In Hebrew syntax the SUBJ1 of the English translation also appears as the subject of the Hofal verb.

The English translation of **Hofal verbs are in bold**, *objects are in italics* and subjects are underlined

Some Hofals correspond to fientive-transitive Qals

מִלְקוֹחֵי

מִדְּבַק

Psalms 22:16

וּלְשׁוֹנִי

my palate | **is caused to stick to** | and my tongue

Qal: to stick to *something*

Hifil: to cause *something* to stick to *something*

Hofal: to be caused to stick to *something*

Hifil forms which have objects marked by a preposition may have corresponding Hofal forms which have an object marked by a preposition. As with the Nifal, the subject of a Hofal may be marked by תָּ in which case it would correspond to a Hifil object.

Genesis 27:42
וַיִּגְדַּל

לְרִבְקָה אֶת־דְּבָרֵי עֵשָׂו

the words of Esau | *Ribkah* | **and was caused to be conspicuous to**
⇒ have been told to

Qal: Not Attested

Hifil: to cause *something* to be conspicuous to *someone* ⇒ to tell *someone something*

Hofal: to be caused to be conspicuous to *someone* ⇒ to be told to *someone*

Hofals most commonly correspond to fientive-intransitive Qals

Genesis 39:1
וַיִּזְסַף

מִצְרַיִם הַיָּרְד

to Egypt | **was caused to go down** | and Joseph
⇒ was taken down

Qal: to go down

Hifil: to cause *something/one* to go down

Hofal: to be caused to go down

Genesis 42:28
הוֹשִׁב

כֶּסֶפִּי

my money | **has been caused to return**
⇒ has been returned

Qal: to return

Hifil: to cause *something/one* to return

Hofal: to be caused to return

Hofal forms corresponding to Qal-stative forms are rare.

Ezekiel 26:2

יֵעַן אֲשֶׁר-אָמְרָה צָר . . . הִחָרַבְתִּי:

she has been caused to be desolate | because of what Tyre has said...
⇒ she was destroyed

Qal: to be desolate

Hifil: to cause *something* to be desolate

Hofal: to be caused to be desolate

Exceptions

The Masoretes pointed several Qal-passive forms as Hofals. The following list has been adapted from R. J. Williams, and gives verbs which are pointed as Hofal but are actually Qal-passives (see page 146 for more on the Qal-passive). Unless otherwise noted, the forms in question are prefix conjugation.⁴³

אָרַר	Numbers 22:6	נָקַם	Genesis 4:15; Exodus 21:21
דָּוַשׁ	Isaiah 28:27	נָתַן	1 Kings 2:21; Leviticus 11:38; etc.
חָוַל	Isaiah 66:8	נָתַן	Leviticus 11:35
חָנַן	Isaiah 26:10; Proverbs 21:10	נָתַשׁ	Ezekiel 19:12
חָקַק	Job 19:23	עָמַם	Lamentations 4:1
יָצַר	Isaiah 54:17	שָׂיַם	Genesis 24:33; Genesis 50:26
יָקַשׁ	PTC: Ecclesiastes 9:12	שָׂדַד	Hosea 10:14; Isaiah 33:1
יָשַׁב	Isaiah 44:26	שָׂיר	Isaiah 26:1
לָקַח	Genesis 18:4; Job 28:2; etc.	שָׂיַת	Exodus 21:30

⁴³Ronald J. Williams, "The Passive Qal Theme in Hebrew," in *Essays on the Ancient Semitic World*, ed. J. W. Weavers & D. B. Redford (Toronto: U of T, 1970), 46-49.

Translating the Hofal

To begin with, when making your own translations, I would advise first producing a translation which includes *to be caused to* plus a **verb**, and after that producing a translation that is in good idiomatic English. In this way you will take account of the causative and passive meaning of Hofal whilst making your translation. It may be easier to work out the Hifil meaning of the verb before working on the Hofal meaning.

Look back over the idiomatic English translations in the *Explanation* section above, and try to get a feel for how the causative-passive notion might be altered by attempts to produce a translation that reads well in English.

Hebrew Exercises

For the following Hebrew phrases:

Identify the subject of the Hofal verb

Provide a literal meaning for the Hofal verb which has its Qal or Hifil meaning supplied

Provide an idiomatic English translation for the whole phrase

Genesis 26:11

הַנִּיגַע בְּאִישׁ הַזֶּה וּבְאִשְׁתּוֹ מוֹת יָמוֹת:

Qal: to die

| | dying | whoever touches this man or his wife

Ruth 2:11

הַגִּדְ לִי כֹל אֲשֶׁר-עָשִׂיתָ

everything that you have done | me |

Hifil: to cause *something* to be conspicuous to *someone*

Genesis 28:12

סֵלֶם מֵצָב

| | a ladder

Hifil: to cause *something* to be set up

Genesis 38:25

הִוא מוֹצֵאתָ

| | she

Qal: to go out

Genesis 33:11

קַח-נָא אֶת-בְּרִכְתֵּי אֲשֶׁר הִבָּאתָ לָּךְ

to you | | which | take my gift

Qal: to come

Chapter 12: Hitpael

	Simple	Factitive	Causative
Active	Qal כָּבַב David cooked the fish	Piel כִּבְּב David put the fish into a state of having been cooked	Hifil הִכְבִּיב the chef caused David to cook the fish
Medio-Passive	Nifal נִכְבְּב the fish cooked /the fish was cooked (by David)	Pual כִּבְּב the fish was put into a state of having been cooked	Hofal הִכְבְּב David was caused to cook the fish
Reflexive	Nifal נִכְבְּב the fish cooked itself	Hitpael הִתְכַּבֵּב the fish put itself into a state of having been cooked	

The Hitpael stem is **factitive** and **reflexive**, that is, the Hitpael is the **reflexive of Piel**.

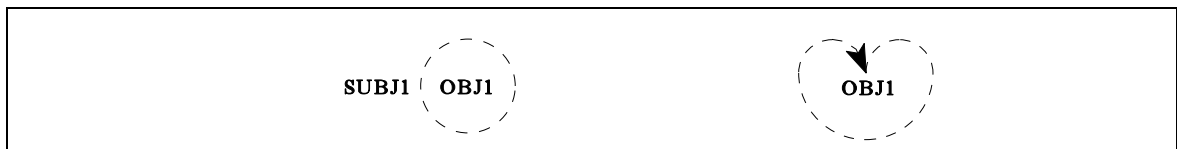
English Exercises

What do you think would be the Hitpael meaning of the verbs with the following Piel or Qal meanings:

1. Piel: John put the chair into a state of having been broken.
2. Qal: The people ate the quails.
3. Piel: The king put the queen into a state of being dead.
4. Qal: Balaam went to sleep.
5. Piel: You put me into a state of being hungry.
6. Qal: Delila was beautiful.

Don't move on to my explanation of the Hitpaal until you have attempted the English exercises above.

Explanation



Qal	Piel	Hitpaal
Transitive	SUBJ1 <i>puts</i> OBJ1 <i>into the state resulting from the action of</i> VERB1	OBJ1 <i>puts itself into the state resulting from the action of</i> VERB1
David cooked the fish.	David put the fish into a state of having been cooked	The fish put itself into a state of having been cooked
John broke the chair.	John put the chair into a state of having been broken	The chair put itself into a state of having been broken



Qal	Piel	Hitpaal
Intransitive	SUBJ2 <i>puts</i> SUBJ1 <i>into the state resulting from</i> VERB1	SUBJ1 <i>puts itself into the state resulting from the action of</i> VERB1
The queen died.	The king put the queen into a state of being dead	The queen put herself into a state of being dead
I'm hungry.	You put me into a state of being hungry	I put myself into a state of being hungry
You are wise.	I put you into a state of being wise	You put yourself into a state of being wise

Notice that for Hitpael corresponding to:

Transitive Qals

OBJ1 is the subject of VERB

OBJ1 is put into the state resulting from VERB
VERB
in both Piel and Hitpael

SUBJ1 does not appear in Hitpael

Intransitive Qals

SUBJ1 is the subject of VERB

SUBJ1 is put into the state resulting from
VERB
in both Piel and Hitpael

SUBJ2 does not appear in Hitpael

Since the Hitpael is factitive the focus of the verb is on the resulting state rather than the action itself. Therefore, the following type of translation is also possible:

The fish had itself put into a state of having been cooked.

The queen had herself put into a state of being dead.

In Hebrew syntax as in English the subject of the Hitpael verb puts itself into the state resulting from the action of the verb.

The English translation of **Hitpael verbs are in bold** and subjects are underlined

Some Hitpael correspond to transitive Qals

בְּתוֹךְ אֹהֶל־הָאֵלֹהִים׃

Genesis 9:21
וַיִּתְגַּלֵּל

within his tent | and he **put himself into a state of having been uncovered**
⇒ uncovered himself

Qal: to uncover *something*

Piel: to put *something* into a state of having been uncovered

Hitpael: to put oneself into a state of having been uncovered

Some Hitpael forms correspond to intransitive Qal forms

Ruth 1:18

הָיָא מִתְאַמְצֶת כִּי- וַיִּתְרָא

she | **had put herself into a state of being strong** | that | and she saw
⇒ was determined

Qal: to be strong

Piel: to put *someone* into a state of being strong

Hitpael: to put oneself into a state of being strong ⇒ to be determined

A Hitpael may have the **estimative** nuance of factitive (see page 89). In Hitpael the estimative nuance often connotes *to pretend to be in a state*.

2 Samuel 13:5

וַהֲתַחֵל שָׁכַב עַל-מִשְׁכְּבֵהָ

and **put yourself into a state of being sick** | lie down on your bed
⇒ pretend to be sick

Qal: to be sick

Piel: to put *someone* into a state of being sick [other meanings are also attested]

Hitpael: to put oneself into a state of being sick ⇒ to regard oneself as being in a sick state
⇒ to pretend to be in a sick state

A Hitpael may have the **reciprocal** nuance of reflexive if it has a plural subject (see page 112).

Genesis 2:25

וַיִּתְּבוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם עָרוֹמִים . . . וְלֹא יִתְּבֹשׁוּ:

were putting themselves into a state of being ashamed | but not | and the two of them were naked...
/each other
⇒ were ashamed of each other

Qal: to be ashamed

Piel: Not Attested

Hitpael: to put oneself into a state of being ashamed

A Hitpael may have the **benefactive** nuance of reflexive (see page 83). In this case the Hitpael may also have an object.

אִתּוֹ	הִצְטַיְדָנוּ	חָם	Joshua 9:12 זֶה לֶחֶמֶנוּ
--------	---------------	-----	------------------------------

it | we put into a state of being provisions for ourselves | it was hot | this is our bread

Pual: to be carved

Hitpael: to carve for oneself

Exceptions

Hitpael Corresponding to Internal-Piel Forms, and Durative Hitpael

The semantic function of the Hitpael is the same as that of the Internal-Piel, except that the Internal-Piel can only be used with a restricted set of roots. As I argued for the Internal Piel above (see page 112) a Hitpael could be perceived as frequentative/durative since the subject is placed into the state of performing an action, which implies that the subject continues to perform the action on itself.

Two stems serving the same function spoils the systematic relationship between the stems; however, in any natural language there will always be exceptions to the descriptive rules. The use of both the Internal-Piel and Hitpael in this way may be a matter of style, and it is worth noting that roots which occur in both stems are attested more frequently in Hitpael than Internal-Piel.⁴⁴

⁴⁴For example הִלַּךְ occurs 64 times in Hitpael with 20 (31%) of those occurrences being in poetry, but only occurs 24 times in Internal-Piel with 19 (79%) of those occurrences being in poetry.

Internal Piel

אָמַ:

וַיִּהְיֶה

1 Kings 21:27
וַיִּשְׁכַּב בַּשֶּׁקַּת

dejectedly | and **put himself into a state of walking** | and he lay in sackcloth
 ⇒ went about

Hitpael

בְּגַן

מִתְהַלֵּךְ

Genesis 3:8
אֶת־קוֹל יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים
וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ

in the garden | **who had put himself into a state of walking** | and they heard the sound of YHWH God
 ⇒ walking about

Qal: to go, to walk

Piel: to put oneself into a state of walking/going

⇒ to walk/go about

Hitpael: to put oneself into a state of walking/going

⇒ to walk/go about

Other Hitpael forms may have a durative nuance; E. A. Speiser identified several verb forms as having a durative meaning in Hitpael. He hypothesised that those Hitpael forms were actually remnants of another *t*-affix similar to durative *tan* forms in Akkadian. Such verb forms may have their origins in an otherwise lost stem, but it could also be argued that the durative notion is within the bounds of the Hitpael as I have described it: the Hitpael corresponding to a fientive Qal puts the subject into the state of performing an action on itself, which implies that the subject continues to perform the action on itself. In the following example the durative nuance is required by the complement רָבִים רָבִים and not necessarily by the Hitpael verb.⁴⁵

⁴⁵E. A. Speiser, "The Durative Hithpa'el: A tan-Form," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 75 (1955): 118-21.

Genesis 37:34

עַל-בְּנוֹ יָמִים רַבִּים:

וַיִּתְאַבֵּל

for many days | over his son | and he **put himself into a state of mourning**
 ⇒ mourned continually

Qal: to mourn

Piel: Not Attested

Hitpael: to put oneself into a state of mourning ⇒ to mourn continually

Passive Hitpael

Sometimes the context of Hitpael forms requires them to be passive rather than reflexive. This phenomenon is more common in later writings, suggesting that a process similar to the replacement of Qal-Passive with Nifal was taking place.

Ecclesiastes 8:10

בְּעִיר אֲשֶׁר כִּן-עָשׂוּ

וַיִּשְׁתַּכְּחוּ

where they did thus | in the city | and they **have been forgotten**

Qal: to forget *something*Piel: to put *something* into a state of having been forgotten

Hitpael: to have been forgotten

Translating the Hitpael

To begin with, when making your own translations, I would advise first producing a translation which includes *to put into a state* and a **reflexive pronoun**, and after that producing a translation that is in good idiomatic English. In this way you will take account of the factitive and reflexive meaning of Hitpael whilst making your translation. It may be easier to work out the Piel meaning of the verb before working on the Hitpael meaning.

Look back over the idiomatic English translations in the *Explanation* section above, and try to get a feel for how the factitive-reflexive notion might be altered by attempts to produce a translation that reads well in English.

Hebrew Exercises

For the following Hebrew phrases:

Identify the subject of the Hitpaal verb

Provide a literal meaning for the Hitpaal verb which has its Qal, Piel, or noun meaning supplied

Provide an idiomatic English translation for the whole phrase

Genesis 16:9

וְהִתְעַנִּי תַּחַת יְדֵיהָ: שׁוּבִי אֶל-גְּבֻרָתְךָ

under her hand | | return to your mistress

Piel: to put *someone* into a state of having been humiliated / humbled

Genesis 22:18

כָּל גּוֹיֵי הָאָרֶץ בְּזַרְעֶךָ וְהִתְבָּרַכּוּ

all the nations of the world | by your descendants | |

Qal: to be blessed

Genesis 24:65

וַתִּתְכַסֶּה הַצֵּעִיר וַתִּקַּח

| | the veil | and she took

Qal: to cover *something*

Jonah 2:2
וַיִּתְפַּלֵּל יוֹנָה אֶל־יְהוָה

to YHWH | Jonah | |

Noun: תְּפִלָּה prayer

Genesis 42:1
לָמָּה תִּתְרָאוּ:

| | why

Qal: to see *something*

Summary Grid

	Simple	Factitive	Causative
Active	Qal כָּבַב David cooked the fish	Piel כִּבְּב David put the fish into a state of having been cooked	Hifil הִכְבִּיב the chef caused David to cook the fish
Medio-Passive	Nifal נִכְבַּב the fish cooked /the fish was cooked (by David)	Pual כִּבְּב the fish was put into a state of having been cooked	Hofal הִכְבַּב David was caused to cook the fish
Reflexive	Nifal נִכְבַּב the fish cooked itself	Hitpael הִתְכַּבַּב the fish put itself into a state of having been cooked	Internal Hifil הִכְבִּיב {David caused himself to be hungry}

Forms corresponding to a Qal stative are enclosed by {curly brackets}

This grid represents the semantic functions and relationships between all the major stems. For easy reference it is reprinted on the last page of the book.

Notice that I have completed the grid by putting the Internal Hifil (see page 69) in the causative-reflexive box; the Internal Hifil is the only form which is causative and reflexive so even though it is an exceptional function of Hifil it has been given its own box. Since the Internal Hifil only corresponds to intransitive Qal forms, the English paraphrase provided uses a different phrase from that used for the other stems.

Qal

Hifil

Internal Hifil

David was hungry

the chef caused David to be hungry

David caused himself to be hungry

Chapter 13: Minor Stems

The following table includes minor stems which are morphological variants of the major stems but have the same semantic functions. These stems are rare, some being attested in only one root and just one or two attested forms. **בטל** has been used as a model root so that the reduplication of root consonants can be observed. Those stems which occur only with hollow or geminate roots are marked with an asterisk and have **בול**, **ביל**, or **בלל** as a model root.

	Simple	Factitive	Causative
Active	Qal בָּבַב David cooked the fish	Piel בִּבְּבַב David put the fish into a state of having been cooked Poel בִּטְטַל Polel* בִּלְלַל Palal בִּטְטַלְלַל Pealal בִּטְטַלְטַל Pilel בִּטְטַלְלַל Pilpel* בִּלְלַלְלַל	Hifil הִבְבִּיב the chef caused David to cook the fish

	Simple	Factitive	Causative
Medio-Passive	<p>Nifal נִבְבַּב the fish cooked /the fish was cooked (by David)</p> <p>Qal-passive כְּטוּל (participle)</p>	<p>Pual בִּבְבַּב the fish was put into a state of having been cooked</p> <p>Poal בִּטַּל</p> <p>Polal* בִּלַּל</p> <p>Polpal* כִּבְבַּל</p> <p>Poalal כְּטַלַּל</p> <p>Pulal כְּטַלַּל</p> <p>Hotpael הִתְכַּטַּל</p>	<p>Hofal הִבְבַּב David was caused to cook the fish</p>
Reflexive	<p>Nifal נִבְבַּב the fish cooked itself</p>	<p>Hitpael הִתְבַּבַּב the fish put itself into a state of having been cooked</p> <p>Hitpoel הִתְבַּטַּל</p> <p>Hitpolel* הִתְבַּלַּל</p> <p>Hitpalel* הִתְבַּלַּל</p> <p>Hitpalal* הִתְבַּלַּל</p> <p>Hitpalpel* הִתְבַּלְבַּל</p>	<p>Internal Hifil הִבְבַּיב {David caused himself to be hungry }</p> <p>Hishtafel הִשְׁתַּכַּטַּל (הִשְׁתַּחַוּוּה)</p>

The Hishtafel

Hishtafel occurs only with the root הִשָּׁפַע *to be bowed*, and was identified as such on the basis of the more productive Hishtafel stem in Ugaritic. Another possible analysis treats the forms as Hitpaels of הִשָּׁפַע and gives them the same meaning.

The Qal Passive

The Qal-passive was the original passive stem corresponding to Qal which was later replaced by the passive Nifal. The passive Nifal served the same semantic function and since many unpointed Qal-passive forms could be read as Nifals it is not possible to determine which of these forms were originally Qal-passives. Some Qal-passives were pointed as Puals and Hofals and are distinguishable as Qal-passives by the fact that the forms in question do not have a factitive or causative meaning. For a list of Qal-passive forms pointed as Puals and Hofals see pages 123 and 131 in the respective Pual and Hofal chapters.

Only the participle forms of the Qal-passive have morphologically distinct forms which allows them to be identified in the text. The participle form also remained productive throughout the period of Classical Hebrew. (Qal-passive participles will appear in this chapter's Hebrew exercises.)

When translating Qal-passive participles or the Qal-passives pointed as Puals and Hofals, give them the same meaning as the passive Nifal (see page 100).

Hebrew Exercises

For the following Hebrew phrases:

Identify the stem of the verb and the major stem to which it corresponds

Provide a literal meaning for the verb which has its Qal or other meaning supplied

Provide an idiomatic English translation for the whole phrase

Ruth 2:19

בְּרִיךְ מִכִּיֶּיךָ יְהִי

| |the one who noticed you | may he be

Noun: בְּרִכָּה a blessing

Jonah 2:6

סוּף חֲבוּשׁ לְרִאשִׁי:

to my head | | weed

Qal: to twist *something*

Genesis 2:23

לְקַחָהּ - זֹאת: מֵאִישׁ כִּי יִקְרָא אִשָּׁה

she | | from man | because | she will be called woman

Qal: to take *something*

Numbers 22:6

יִאָרֵר יְאֹר וְאִשֶּׁר

| | you curse | and whoever

Qal: to curse *someone*

Ruth 2:10

וְתִשְׁתַּחוּ אֶרְצָה עַל-פְּנֵיהָ וְתִפֹּל

to the ground | | on her face | and she fell

Ugaritic: to be bowed

Judges 9:54

וּמִזֶּה תִּתְּנִי שֶׁלֶף חַרְבְּךָ

| | draw your sword

Qal: to die

Isaiah 9:4

מְגֹלְלָה בְּדָמַיִם וְשִׁמְלָה

in blood | | and [every] garment

Qal: to roll *something*

2 Samuel 20:12

וַעֲמָשָׂא מִתְגַּלְגֵּל בַּדָּם

in blood | | and Amasa

Qal: to roll *something*

Job 30:14

תַּחַת שְׂאֵה הַתְּגַלְגָּלוֹ:

| | under a storm

Qal: to roll *something*

Jeremiah 51:25

וַיִּגְלַגְלֵתִיךְ מִן־הַסְּלָעִים

from the cliffs | |

Qal: to roll *something*

Chapter 14: Further Exercises

Acting Exercises

Try acting out the following verbs in as many different stems as you think they will fit, you may have to use additional props such as books or other people to enact the more complex stems. You can probably think up some more verbs to act out.

Qal: to go

Qal: to eat the chocolates

Qal: to scream

Qal: to fall asleep

Qal: to be asleep

Qal: to tear the paper

Act out a wedding assigning different roles to different people in the class. As you go along identify which verbs are being used and what stems they are in. If you change the character who is the subject of the verb then you may find that the verb can be used in other stems.

For example:

The groom arrives. (Qal) The best man brings the groom (causes the groom to arrive) (Hifil)

See how many different stems you can use each verb in. If you're creative you can probably put the verb *to marry* into lots of different stems.

Hebrew Exercises

These exercises should help you to apply your knowledge of the relationships between the stems.

For the following Hebrew phrases:

Identify the stem of the verb

Identify the verbs subject and objects where applicable

Provide a literal translation for the verb in the relevant stem
(its meaning will be given in some other stem)

Provide an idiomatic English translation for the whole phrase

Genesis 3:8

וַיִּתְחַבֵּא הָאָדָם וְאִשְׁתּוֹ

the man and his wife | |

Pual: to be put into a state of being hidden

2 Samuel 17:23

וַיִּתְחַבֵּא וַיָּמָת

| | |

Piel: to put *prey* into a state of having been strangled

Hofal: to be caused to die

Ruth 1:3

וַתָּשָׂא רְחֵלָה אִישׁ נַעֲמִי אֶלְיִמֶלֶךְ אִישׁ נַעֲמִי

| Elimelech, husband of Naomi, |

Polel: to put into a state of being dead

Hifil: to cause *something* to be left behind

Ruth 2:5

וַיֹּאמֶר בְּעֵז לְנַעֲרוֹ הַנֹּצֵב עַל-הַקּוֹצְרִים . . .

| over | Boaz to his servant |

Hifil: to cause *someone* to say *something*

Hifil: to cause *something* to be set up

Noun: קָצִיר harvest

Ruth 2:13

כִּי נַחֲמָתָנִי

| for

Nifal: to be sorry, to be comforted

Ruth 2:15

וְלֹא תִכְלִימוּהָ:

| and not

Nifal: to be put to shame

Ruth 3:4

וְהָיָא יְגִיד לְךָ אֵת אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשֶׂיךָ:

what you should do | you | | and he

Hofal: to be told

Ruth 4:6

לֹא אוּכַל לְגַאֲוֹל-לִי בְּיָד-אֲשֶׁחִית אֶת-נַחְלָתִי

my inheritance | | lest | for myself | | I am not able

Nifal: to be bought back

Piel: to put into a state of having been ruined

The verb פָּקַד has many different meanings, I have attempted to choose the following examples so that one of those meanings can be transformed and make sense in all of the stems in which פָּקַד is attested.

Check a modern translation to find out how the forms are translated idiomatically.

פָּקַד Qal: to call *someone/thing* to account

Jeremiah 6:15

בְּעֵת-פְּקֻדָּתָם יִכָּשְׁלוּ

they will stagger | | at the time

Isaiah 24:22

וַיִּמְרָב יָמֵם וַיִּפְקְדוּ:

| and after many days

Isaiah 13:4
 יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת מְפַקֵּד צְבָא מִלְחָמָה:

an army for war | | YHWH of armies

Isaiah 38:10
 בְּשַׁעַר שְׁאוֹל פְּקֻדֹתַי יֵתֵר שְׁנוֹתַי:

for the rest of my years | | at the gates of Sheol

Judges 20:15
 וַיִּתְּפְקְדוּ בְנֵי בְנֵימִן בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא

on that day | the Benjaminites | |

1 Kings 20:27
 וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הִתְּפַקְדוּ

| and the Israelites

Jeremiah 40:7
 כִּי- הַפְּקִיד מֶלֶךְ-בָּבֶל אֶת-גְּדַלְיָהוּ בֶן-אֲחִיקָם בְּאֶרֶץ

(in) the land | Gedalyahu son of Achikam | the king of Babel | | for

2 Kings 22:9

הַמְּלָאכָה הַמְּפַקְדִים בֵּית יְהוָה:

the house of YHWH |

| the workers

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Summary Grid

	Simple	Factitive	Causative
Active	Qal בָּבַב David cooked the fish	Piel בִּבְבַב David put the fish into a state of having been cooked	Hifil הִבְבִּיב the chef caused David to cook the fish
Medio-Passive	Nifal נִבְבַב the fish cooked /the fish was cooked (by David)	Pual בִּבְבַב the fish was put into a state of having been cooked	Hofal הִבְבַב David was caused to cook the fish
Reflexive	Nifal נִבְבַב the fish cooked itself	Hitpael הִתְבַּב the fish put itself into a state of having been cooked	Internal Hifil הִבְבִּיב {David caused himself to be hungry}

Forms corresponding to a Qal stative are enclosed by {curly brackets}