

COGNATE OBJECTS IN MODERN AND BIBLICAL HEBREW*

1. INTRODUCTION: WHAT ARE COGNATE OBJECTS?

This paper is part of a larger project of comparative research on cognate objects; some previous findings are presented in Pereltsvaig (1999a, b). It is also a continuation of decades-long research on cognate objects in both traditional and Generative linguistics. In (1) and (2) below, I give some examples of cognate objects (COs) in familiar languages such as English and French (these languages are quite well-studied in terms of their cognate object constructions). Here and below, COs are in bold.

- (1) a. Dan smiled a ***(happy) smile**.
Maria slept a ***(peaceful) sleep**.
Karen laughed a ***(merry) laugh**.
- b. Paul danced a **(slow) dance**.
Bill drank a **(poisoned) drink**.
Louise sang a **(beautiful) song**.
- (2) a. Il a dansé **une grande danse**.
he has danced a grand dance.
'He danced a grand dance.'
- b. Elle a chanté **une (belle) chanson**.
she has sung a beautiful song
'She sang a beautiful song.'

As can be seen from the above examples, COs are noun phrases containing a noun which is morphologically related to the verb. In English, this noun is sometimes the exact copy of the verb (as in the case of *smile a smile*, *laugh a laugh* and *dance a dance*). However, in some cases a non-zero morphological derivation is involved, as in the case of *sing a song*. In French, the majority of cognate object nouns are derived by non-zero affixation. The second often-noted property of COs is that the adjectival modification inside the cognate object phrase is optional (as indicated by parentheses in (1a) and (2b)). It should be noted, however, that even

though optionality of modification is often said to be a defining property of COs, not all COs allow such optionality (as shown in (1a)).¹ Additionally, as can be seen in (1) and (2), the cognate object phrase appears in a postverbal position, as do non-cognate direct objects. Last, but not least, COs are said to be possible only with unergative and the so-called optionally transitive verbs, but not with unaccusative or passive verbs.

These four properties are usually cited as the ones defining the concept of COs (cf. Zubizarreta (1987), Jones (1988), Moltmann (1989), Massam (1990), Hale & Keyser (1993), Lefebvre (1994), Macfarland (1995), Matsumoto (1996), Pham (1999), Mittwoch (1998)). And they are, indeed, characteristic of COs in an impressive number of languages (such as English, French, Italian, Spanish, both European and Brazilian Portuguese, Swedish, German, Dutch, both Classical and Modern Greek, Turkish, Bulgarian, and Japanese, among others). However, this narrow definition misses interesting facts about COs in such languages as Hebrew (as will be discussed throughout this paper) and Russian (see Pereltsvaig (1999b)).

The central theoretical focus of most of the previous research on COs is the question of whether they are arguments or adjuncts. I will address this question in this paper as well. Previous studies can be divided into two camps: some claim that COs are thematic and/or underlying arguments of their predicates (cf. Hale & Keyser (1993) for English, Macfarland (1995) for English and French, Massam (1990) for English, Matsumoto (1996) for English and Japanese, Pham (1999) for Vietnamese) or a realization of the Davidsonian event argument of the predicate (cf. Lefebvre (1994) for Fongbe, Mittwoch (1998) for English and Modern Hebrew); others maintain that COs are adjuncts (cf. Jones (1988) for English, Moltmann (1989) for English and German, Zubizarreta (1987) for English).

In this paper, I discuss data concerning COs from Modern Hebrew (MHeb) and Biblical Hebrew (BHeb), and argue for the following proposal: the two approaches to COs mentioned above are each right in a way; crucially, a distinction should be drawn between two types of CO: argument COs (arg-COs) and adverbial COs (adv-COs). These two types of CO have different properties. However, not all languages allow both types. For instance, the more familiar languages, such as English and French, allow only arg-COs, whereas other languages such as MHeb and BHeb allow both arg-COs and adv-COs.²

Following the analysis of Russian COs in Pereltsvaig (1999b), I maintain here that arg-COs are none other than normal direct objects, whose noun head happens to be cognate to the verb. In contrast, adv-COs are more interesting (and therefore, a larger proportion of this paper is dedicated to them) in that they have properties characteristic of predicative nominals. The analysis proposed in this paper represents this observation structurally by associating adv-COs with a structure similar to that of secondary predication constructions.

Another question addressed in this paper is why adv-COs are used in Hebrew (whereas they do not occur in other languages, such as English). I propose that MHeb and BHeb employ adv-COs for different purposes: MHeb uses adv-COs for manner modification, whereas BHeb uses them mainly for focus. These different functions of adv-COs correlate with their different properties; for example, in MHeb adv-COs must contain a modifier, whereas in BHeb there is no such requirement for COs used for focus.

Since adv-COs are used in BHeb (and to a lesser extent in MHeb) for focus, I will briefly discuss the position of focused elements in the two languages. I argue that the position of Focus Phrase (FocP) in MHeb is structurally lower than in BHeb.

This paper is organized as follows: sections 2 and 3 focus on COs in MHeb. In particular, in section 2, I argue for a distinction between arg-COs and adv-COs. In section 3, I propose a structural analysis for adv-COs that accounts for their properties mentioned in section 2 (and some additional properties described in section 3). Section 4, dedicated to COs in BHeb, starts with a description of some differences between adv-COs in MHeb and BHeb and propose an analysis of adv-COs in BHeb. Then, I address the issue of the position of focused elements. Section 5 concludes the paper.

2. EVIDENCE FOR TWO TYPES OF CO

2.1. *Distribution across predicate types*

In this section, I provide evidence for there being two types of CO: arg-COs and adv-COs. The first striking fact about COs in languages such as MHeb is that they can occur with a wide range of predicates. This was noticed by Mittwoch (1998); however, she draws no distinction between two kinds of CO.

In MHeb, COs can occur not only with unergative verbs, as in (3), but also with transitive verbs that have an overt direct object (italicized in (4)).³

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>(3) Dani xiyex xiyux same'ax.
 Danny smiled smile happy
 'Danny smiled a happy smile.'</p> | <p>(4) hezinu 'oto hazana melaxutit.
 (they) fed him feeding artificial
 'They fed him artificially.'
 (Mittwoch (1998:314))</p> |
|--|---|

In addition, COs can appear in passive counterparts of transitive verbs, as illustrated in (5).

- (5) hu nifca **pci'a kaša.**
 he was-wounded wound serious
 lit. 'He was wounded a serious wound.'

COs are likewise possible with some ditransitive verbs, as in (6). There is some variation among speakers as to the acceptability of such examples.

- (6) ?hu šalax lanu mixtav **šlixa bilti 'axrait.**
 he sent to-us letter sending non responsible
 'He sent us a letter in an irresponsible way.'

As shown in (7), the meaning of COs which occur with ditransitives can be distinguished from the meaning of PP adverbials in the same context.

- (7) a. hu natan la sefer **matana.** b. hu natan la sefer [pp be-/ke-matana].
 he gave her book gift he gave her book in as gift
 'He gave her a book for free.' 'He gave her a book as a gift.'

Moreover, COs are possible even with unaccusative and 'psych'-verbs, as shown in (8) and (9), respectively.

- (8) hu nafal **nefila kaša.**
 he fell falling hard
 'He had a heavy fall.'

(Mittwoch (1998:314))

- (9) a. 'ani poxedet mi- klavim **paxad mavet.**
 I fear from-dogs fear death
 'I fear dogs (with a deadly fear).'
- b. klavim mafxidim 'oti **paxad mavet.**
 dogs frighten me fear death
 'Dogs give me a deadly fright.'

In addition to verbal predicates, COs can appear with adjectival predicates, as illustrated in (10).

- (10) hu 'axrai **'axra'yut 'elyona...**
 he responsible responsibility supreme
 'He has supreme responsibility.'

(Mittwoch (1998:314))

Moreover, COs can occur with such predicates as statives (11a) and individual-level predicates (11b), which are argued by Katz (1997) and Kratzer (1995), respectively, not to have an event argument.

- (11) a. hu mevin 'ota **havana** **muxletet**.
 he understands her understanding complete
 'He understands her completely.'
- b. 'eyn hu mofi'a **hofa'a** **taxbirit** ba- mišpat.
 not it appears appearance syntactic in-the-sentence
 'It does not appear syntactically in the sentence.'

(Mittwoch (1998:314))

Likewise, COs can appear with predicates from all aspectual classes: activities (12a), accomplishments (12b), states (see (11a) above) and achievements (12c).⁴

- (12) a. hu rac **ricat** **boker** **memušexet**.
 he ran running morning prolonged
 'He ran a long morning run.'
- b. hem banu 'et ha- bait **bnia** **yesodit**.
 they built ACC the-house building thorough
 'They built the house thoroughly.'
- c. ha- xole met **mavet** **pit'omi**.
 the-patient died death sudden
 'The patient died a sudden death / suddenly.'

(Hagit Borer, p.c.)

The fact that COs can occur with almost any type of predicate is problematic for the hypothesis that all COs are arguments of a verb.⁵ Thus, at least some COs in MHeb are not selected, and there is no restriction on the occurrence of COs in terms of the argument structures of the predicates. Thus, it seems that COs are adverbial in their distribution. Some COs that appear with optionally transitive verbs, however, have properties of argument NPs. It is important to notice here that arg-COs appear only with optionally transitive and unergative verbs in MHeb, just as in English and other languages. To keep the following discussion clear, I will compare COs appearing with transitive verbs (i.e., adv-COs) with those which appear with optionally transitive and unergative verbs (i.e., arg-COs). In the next two sections, I will present the properties that distinguish the two types of COs.

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