The Structure of Interjections in Biblical Hebrew: Phonetics, Morphology, and Syntax

ALEXANDER ANDRASON

IRINA HORNEA

MARCUS JOUBERT

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ALEXANDER ANDRASON, IRINA
HORNEA & MARCUS JOUBERT
STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY, SOUTH AFRICA

1. INTRODUCTION—RESEARCH QUESTION AND RESEARCH PLAN

The present paper contributes to the holistic analysis of the lexical class of interjections in Biblical Hebrew (BH). Given the scarcity of studies dedicated to the form of BH interjections, we will particularly be concerned with their formal aspects, whether phonological, morphological, or syntactic. The study will be developed within the frame of canonical typology (Corbett 2005, 2007)—in our opinion, the most promising approach to studying linguistic categories that is fully compatible with a non-essentialist cognitive perspective on categorization (Janda 2015), to which we also adhere. Specifically, we aim to determine the extent with which the BH interjectional category conforms, in its entirety, to the formal profile associated with the prototype of an interjection in linguistic typology, and that prototype's extra-systematicity (Ameka 1992a, 2006; Nübling 2001, 2004; Ameka and Wilkins 2006; Stange and Nübling 2014; Stange 2016). In other words: Are BH interjections canonical representatives of the interjectional prototype as far as their phonology, morphology, and syntax are concerned, being thus formally extra-systematic? Or are their canonicity and extra-systematicity less manifest?[1]

To achieve this objective, the paper will be structured in the following manner. In section 2, we will explain the background of our study: First, we will introduce the framework underlying our research and, next, we will familiarize the reader with previous works dedicated to the formal properties of BH interjections. In section 3, we will present empirical evidence related to the phonology, morphology, and syntax of BH interjections. In

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[1] The terms 'canonicity' and 'canonical' refer to the (degree of) compliance with a prototype. The terms 'extra-systematicity' and 'extra-systematic' refer to (in our case, formal) irregularity, oddity, or abnormality in comparison to other components of the language (see section 2.1 for a detailed discussion).

section 4, this evidence will be evaluated within the adopted framework and the results of that analysis will be positioned within BH scholarship and the broader theory of interjections. In section 5, main conclusions will be formulated.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 THEORETICAL FRAME OF REFERENCE—THE FORMAL PROTOTYPE OF INTERJECTIONS[2]

Typological research demonstrates that the lexical class of interjections is heterogenous and internally complex. It comprises lexemes and constructions that differ considerably from a pragmatic, semantic, and structural perspective (Ameka 1992, 2006; Nübling 2004; Stange and Nübling 2014; Stange 2016). Given these differences, not all types of interjections entertain an equal status in the category. Some are central, while others are peripheral (Nübling 2004; Ameka 2006, 743; Stange and Nübling 2014, 1983; Stange 2016, 10, 13, 17–19).

Generally speaking, interjections are "conventionalised vocal gestures" (Ameka 1992, 106) that encode emotional states, mental attitudes and, in some models, communicative intentions (Wierzbicka 1991[2003], 290–91; 1992, 164; Ameka 1992a, 106–7, 110–13; 2006, 743–44; Stange and Nübling 2014, 1982; see also Nübling 2004, 17–18; Stange 2016, 20). Interjections expressing feelings and sensations experienced by a speaker, the so-called emotive interjections (Wierzbicka 1991, 302–25; 1992, 165–66; Ameka 1992a, 113; 2006, 744) are regarded as *core* or *proper* from a pragmatic-semantic perspective—they entertain the highest degree of interjectionality (Nübling 2004, 17; Ameka 2006, 743; Stange and Nübling 2014, 1983; Stange 2016, 13, 18–19). The interjectionality of the other types—cognitive, conative, and phatic—is lower (Nübling 2004, 17–19, 34–35; Stange and Nübling 2014, 1982–83; Stange 2016, 17–18). As a result, those three types are only viewed as "interjections formally speaking" (Stange 2016, 18–19), the latter two being occasionally denied membership in the interjectional category entirely. In case of cognitive interjections, which provide insights into the speaker's mental processes (Wierzbicka 1991, 326–36; Ameka 1992a, 113; Stange and Nübling 2014, 1983; Stange 2016, 13), interjectionality decreases only minimally (Stange and Nübling 2014, 1982–83; Stange 2016, 18). Therefore, they are usually treated jointly with emotive interjections, both being referred to as expressive

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[2] The present article has been developed within a wider research project dedicated to interjections in ancient North-West Semitic languages (see Acknowledgements). All papers written within that project—i.e. the current study devoted to Biblical Hebrew, as well as the studies devoted to Ugaritic (Andrason forthcoming), Canaano-Akkadian (Andrason and Vita forthcoming), and Aramaic (Andrason and Hutchison forthcoming)—share their theoretical foundations. Therefore, without being reproduced verbatim, the theoretical section of the present article (i.e. section 2.1) and the theoretical sections of the other articles are inevitably similar.

(Ameka 1992, 113; 2006, 744). In contrast, conative interjections, which convey wishes and commands, being uttered "to provoke a reaction on the part of the listener" (Wierzbicka 1992, 291–301; Ameka 1992a, 113; see also Ameka 2006, 744; Wierzbicka 1991; Stange and Nübling 2014, 1983; Stange 2016, 13) exhibit much lower degree of interjectionality. Consequently, they tend to be excluded from the lexical class of interjections and classified as attention getters, response elicitators (Kaltenböck, Keizer and Lohmann 2016, 1), or (parts of) vocatives (Meinard 2015, 153)—substantially different taxa of "parallel markers" (Fraser 1996, 176, 185). For phatic interjections, which are used to initiate, disrupt, or sustain contact through backchanneling (Ameka 1992a, 114; 2006, 744; Norrick 2009, 876; Stange and Nübling 2014, 1983), being also employed as means of apologizing, thanking, welcoming, and leave-taking (Velupillai 2012, 150), this exclusion is even more pervasive (see Wierzbicka 1991, 1992, who does not consider phatic interjections as members of the category at all) due to the minimal degree of their interjectionality (cf. Stange and Nübling 2014, 1983; Stange 2016, 18–19). Indeed, response words (yes/no), expressions of welcoming, leave-taking, apologizing, and thanking are commonly classified as routines or formulae (Ameka 1992b, 153; Kaltenböck, Keizer and Lohmann 2016, 1), while backchanneling devices are frequently included into the category of fillers (O'Connell, Kowal and Ageneau 2005).

Interjections also differ with regard to their grammaticalization status. This difference is reflected in a distinction commonly made in scholarship between primary and secondary interjections (Ameka 1992, 111; 2006, 744; Stange and Nübling 2014, 1982–83; Stange 2016, 9, 19). Primary interjections are elements that are exclusively employed as interjections. Some primary interjections have been used as such from the beginning of their grammatical life, having emerged as semi-automatic—sometimes onomatopoeic—reflexes (Nübling 2001; Stange and Nübling 2014, 1982, 1986–88; Stange 2016, 48–49). Other primary interjections derive from non-interjectional lexical classes and constructions. However, due to the entrenchment of their interjectional use(s), such input structures have been grammaticalized into interjections—or interjectionalized. At a final stage of interjectionalization, any relationship with the original non-interjectional lexical classes and non-interjectional uses is no longer recoverable. In contrast, for secondary interjections, the relationship with the non-interjectional input expressions remains largely transparent. Some of secondary interjections coincide formally with lexemes that belong to other lexical classes, and thus attest to a range of non-interjectional meanings and uses. Others may even exhibit phrasal or clausal structures. They are composed of several lexemes and/or morphemes and allow for compositional readings apart from the constructional one, typical of their interjectional usage (Nübling 2001; Ameka and Wilkins 2006, 3–4; Meinard 2015, 154; Norrick 2009, 867–69; Stange 2016, 18–19). Accordingly, the inclusion of secondary interjections in the interjectional class is problematic (Meinard

2015, 154). Instead of being included in the *lexical* category of interjections, at least some secondary interjections (especially those characterized by a lower interjectionalization degree) are viewed as instantiating a *functional* category of exclamations—a category that contains any lexical class or their combination into constructions when they are employed in an exclamatory manner (Ameka 1992).[3]

As a result of the above characterizations which typify contemporary scholarship, emotive (or sometimes, expressive) primary interjections are regarded as the most uncontroversial members of the interjectional lexical class (Nübling 2004, 17; Ameka 2006, 743; Stange and Nübling 2014, 1983; Stange 2016, 10, 19). They are the most common representatives of the interjectional category, being also the most salient among all interjectional lexemes. In contrast, the position of the other types of interjections is categorially unstable and largely depends on the model used. Therefore, in the remaining parts of this paper—whether describing the formal behavior of interjections across languages or studying them in Biblical Hebrew—interjections will be understood in this narrower sense, i.e. as emotive and primary.

Apart from being defined in semantic and pragmatic terms, interjections exhibit a number of formal properties pervasive across languages. By applying the principles of canonical typology (Corbett 2005, 2007), these properties are currently viewed as cumulatively depicting the formal prototype of an interjection. Drawing on Ameka (1992a, 2006), Nübling (2001, 2004), Ameka and Wilkins (2006), Stange and Nübling (2014) and Stange (2016), fifteen prototypical features relating to phonology (P), morphology (M), and syntax (S) can be posited.

PHONOLOGY:

P-1 Interjections contain sounds that are aberrant, odd, or anomalous from the perspective of the language in which they (i.e. those interjections) occur (Ameka 1992a, 112; 2006, 745; Nübling 2004, 25; Stange 2016, 34-35). Such sounds are either absent or rare outside the interjectional category itself. Some of them may be "non-speech" sounds, e.g. humming or whistling (Stange and Nübling 2014, 1985).

P-2 Interjections contain sound combinations that are aberrant, odd, or anomalous (Nübling 2001, 23–24; 2004, 25; Ameka 2006, 745; Velupillai 2012, 149), thus transgressing the phonotactic rules and/or constraints of

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[3] As is typical of grammaticalization in general (Hopper and Traugott 2003), the process of interjectionalization is gradual and the line separating secondary interjections from primary interjections is fuzzy (for details, consult Nübling 2001 and Stange and Nübling 2014). Furthermore, interjections—whether primary or secondary—may be borrowed (Stange and Nübling 2014, 1987; Stange 2016, 49; Ameka and Wilkins 2006, 15). Overall, interjections constitute a renewable and "open-ended" class (Norrick 2009, 889).

the language in which they appear (Stange and Nübling 2014, 1982, 1985).

P-3 Interjections are vocalic in nature (Nübling 2001, 24; 2004, 26; Andrason and Dlali forthcoming).[4]

P-4 Interjections bear a full accent due to their exclamatory pronunciation characterized by increased energy, louder volume, or greater intensity (Nübling 2004, 22; Stange 2016, 20).

P-5 Interjections exhibit a simple phonetic structure. They are mostly mono-syllabic (Nübling 2001, 23; 2004, 24), either V or CV (Nübling 2004, 25).

P-6 Interjections that are not mono-syllabic exhibit harmonious patterns: reduplication and vocal harmony/consonantal (Nübling 2004, 26–27).[5]

P-7 Interjections are phonologically—and thus graphically—unstable. They exhibit a number of variants (Nübling 2004, 26; 2001, 24), being for instance lengthened or shortened (Nübling 2001, 23; 2004, 24).[6]

MORPHOLOGY:

M-1 Interjections exhibit a simple morphological structure (Ameka 1992a, 111; 2006, 744). They are mono-morphemic (Ameka 1992a, 111; 2006, 743–44; Nübling 2001, 24; 2004, 29; Velupillai 2012, 149; Stange and Nübling 2014, 1985), and thus indivisible into more fragmentary meaningful components (Stange and Nübling 2014, 1985). They "resist […] all morphological processes" (Stange 2016, 36) which may otherwise be available in the language, whether

M-1(a) inflection

M-1(b) derivation

M-1(c) or compounding (Nübling 2001, 24; 2004, 29; Ameka 2006, 743–44; Stange and Nübling 2014, 1985; Stange 2016, 36).

M-2 Interjections are morphologically anomalous (Ameka 2006, 744). They have no lexical structure—they are lexically opaque (Nübling 2001, 24–25; 2004, 29; cf. Stange 2016, 50; Swearingen 2017, 302).

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[4] However, non-vocalic interjections are also common across languages.

[5] The role of reduplication is not morphological but phonological (Nübling 2004, 26-27).

[6] Additionally, interjections may exhibit "a fair amount of sound symbolism," some being onomatopoeic (Ameka 1992, 112; see also Nübling 2001; 2004). They may also be marked for tones (Nübling 2001, 22; 2004, 22-23). In some interjections, tones may have a functional/phonemic role (Nübling 2001, 22-23).

SYNTAX:

S-1 Interjections are holophrastic—they are non-elliptical (not shortened), complete (self-contained), and autonomous (independent) utterances fully equivalent to genuine sentences (Ameka 1992a, 107–8; 2006, 743–44; Nübling 2001, 25; 2004, 20, 30; Velupillai 2012, 150; Stange and Nübling 2014, 1982–83; Stage 2016, 20, 48).

S-2 Interjections may be used as words, appearing in a sentence (Ameka 2006, 745). In such cases, however, they fail to be integrated syntactically in that sentence/clause's grammar—or their integration is "loose" (Ameka 1992a, 108, 112; 2006, 745; Nübling 2001, 25; 2004, 31; Stange 2016, 48). That is, they "do not form an integral part of sentences or clauses" (Stange and Nübling 2014, 1985), nor are they assigned a specific syntactic function (Stange 2016, 20).[7]

S-3 Interjections do not participate in syntactic operations such as negation or interrogation (Nübling 2001, 25; 2004, 30).

S-4 Interjections do not form constructions with other elements (Ameka 1992a, 112; 2006, 743–44), the sole exception being other interjections themselves (Nübling 2001, 25; 2004, 31; see also Norrick 2009).

S-5 Interjections that are associated with a sentence or clause, are found in left or—albeit less commonly—right periphery, thus occupying an initial or a final position (Nübling 2001, 25; 2004, 31; Nordgren 2015, 44).

S-6 Interjections are separated from the remaining parts of the sentence by "extrametrum": pause, intonation, or contouring (Nübling 2001, 25; 2004, 30; Nordgren 2015, 45). They constitute, therefore, a separate prosodic or intonational entity (Ameka 1992a, 108; 2006, 745; Nübling 2004, 30).

Overall, in light of the features listed above, the prototype of interjection is viewed as linguistically extra-systematic (or, even, para-linguistic) (Ameka 2006, 745; see also Nübling 2004; Stange and Nübling 2004, 1986), i.e. "peripheral to language as a whole" (Ameka 1992, 112; Stange 2016, 6).[8]

Canonical typology allows one to test systematically language-specific interjections, as well as the entire interjectional category, for their—in this case, formal—interjectionality, and to ultimately position them in the possible interjectional categorial space. That is, depending on a greater or lesser compliance

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[7] They are however fully integrated in discourse (Norrick 2009, 888-89).

[8] Compare with Norrick (2009, 888) who argues that interjections "are not […] loosely integrated into the linguistic system." On the contrary, according to Norrick, interjections "are fully integrated into the system of everyday spoken language" due to their profound lexicalization and the ability to structure information in discourse (ibid.).

with the formal prototype, language-specific instantiations of interjections may be more canonical or less canonical as far as their form is concerned. The more features listed above are fulfilled, the more canonical an interjectional token—or its particular use—is. Inversely, the fewer features are met, the less canonical a given interjection is. Overall, canonical interjections are extra-systematic, while the extra-systematicity of non-canonical interjections may be minimal. The summation of such individual canonicity and extra-systematicity ranges makes it, in turn, possible to assess the canonicity and extra-systematicity of the entire interjectional lexical class, first locally (in phonology, morphology, and syntax separately) and next globally (in the three modules jointly).

2.2 THE FORMAL PROFILE OF INTERJECTIONS IN BIBLICAL HEBREW SCHOLARSHIP

Interjections are probably the least researched lexical class in Biblical Hebrew. Sections dedicated to interjections in BH grammars, as well as encyclopedias and learning manuals, usually do not exceed one or two pages.[9] More importantly, they neither provide a holistic view of the category nor do they offer an explanatory analysis of the data attested. That is, the interjectional category is not approached in its integrity—it is not regarded as an internally coherent, albeit certainly diverse, phenomenon. This lack of coherence concerns the meaning of interjections (and thus their pragmatics and semantics) as well as their formal aspects (whether phonology, morphology, or syntax). Instead, scholars tend to adopt a taxonomical perspective, confining the analysis to a mere list of interjectional lexemes and their respective meanings and uses (Davidson 1901[1976], 162–63; Gesenius 1910, 307–8; Joüon 1947, 105–6; Bauer and Leander 1922[1962], 652–54; Davidson and Mauchline 1966, 212; Joüon-Muraoka 2006, 321–22; Di Giulio 2013, 875; van der Merwe and Naudé 2017, 483–845). The systemic marginalization of interjections is evident in the denial of their categorial individuality. In BH grammars, primary emotive interjections are not only treated indiscriminately with secondary interjections[10] and interjections only formally (cf. Stange 2016, 19) but are also regularly grouped with exclamations and/or vocatives (Richter 1980, 158), being sometimes considered their sub-class (Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 681–83). Even more questionably, the category of interjections includes—or is considered jointly with—routines, particles, and/or discourse markers (Bauer and Leander 1922[1962], 652–54; Gesenius 1910, 307–8; Brockelmann 1956, 6, 8, 28, 54,

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[9] A symptomatic case is the chapter dedicated to Biblical Hebrew in the volume on Semitic languages edited by Weninger (2011). In that chapter, the mention to interjections is limited to one sentence enumerating two interjections (Edzard 2011, 502).

[10] The only potential mention to primary interjections is made by Murtonen (1990) and Jenni (1997, 483), who distinguish "pure interjections" (Murtonen 1990, 32) or "pure exclamations" (Jenni 1997a, 483; 1997b, 117) from those that are derived from other lexical classes.

55, 95, 151; Richter 1980, 158; Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 683; Joüon-Muraoka 2006; van der Merwe and Naudé 2017).[11]

When describing the lexical class of interjections, the semantic and pragmatic properties are generally given prominence, while those relating to phonology, morphology, and syntax are either ignored (Bauer and Leander 1922[1962], 652–54; Davidson and Mauchline 1966, 212; Di Giulio 2013, 875; Joüon-Muraoka 2006, 321–22) or treated marginally (Davidson 1901[1976], 162–63; Gesenius 1910, 470; Brockelmann 1956, 8; van der Merwe and Naudé 2017, 483). Indeed, the analysis of formal aspects typifying the interjectional category in its entirety can be confined to a few phonological and syntactic observations. With regard to phonetics, interjections are viewed as "vocal gestures" (Gesenius 1910, 307). They allegedly contain "natural" (ibid.) or "odd sounds" (Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 683), which leads to their phonological extra-systematicity (ibid.). An equivalent extra-systematic behavior apparently characterizes the syntax of interjections (ibid.). That is, interjections are loosely bound (Richter 1980, 158). On the one hand, they "do not form part of […] a clause" (van der Merwe and Naudé 2017, 483) nor do they entertain a syntagmatic role in a sentence (Richter 1980, 158). On the other hand, they do not modify and complement constituents (van der Merwe and Naudé 2017, 483), being overall unable to enter into constructions with other grammatical elements (Richter 1980, 158). The syntactic extra-systematicity of interjections is related to their ability to appear isolated, i.e. without a complementing sentence or a sentence-substitute (Richter 1980, 158) or to form their own—in such a case, "incomplete" (Gesenius 1910, 470–71)—sentences. The only morphological generalizations pertinent to primary interjections are the lack of morphological derivability and unstable orthography (Jenni 1997b, 117).

Despite featuring in highly influential works on the BH language (Gesenius 1910; Richter 1980; Waltke and O'Connor 1990; van der Merwe and Naudé 2017), the phonological, morphological, and syntactic generalizations presented above cannot be viewed as reliable. On the contrary, their validity may seriously be questioned. First, each of those generalizations is limited to one or two enigmatic sentences (e.g. van der Merwe and

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[11] For instance, all lexemes referred to by Brockelmann (1956) as interjections are in reality particles, discourse markers, or routines. Inversely, no example involves an emotive primary interjection. The treatment dedicated to interjections in the most comprehensive comparative grammar of the Semitic language family authored by Kienast (2001) is analogous. Kienast (ibid. 401) dedicates to interjections less than half a page, limiting the discussion to a list of a few interjectional lexemes found in Akkadian, Biblical Hebrew, and Arabic—several of them being particles and discourse markers rather than genuine interjections. It should be noted that in modern linguistics (Ameka 1992), interjections are treated as a category that is distinct from particles, both modal particles and pragmatic particles (discourse markers) (for a discussion related to Semitic languages, consult Andrason (forthcoming) and Andrason and Vita (forthcoming)).

Naudé 2017, 483; Jenni 1997b, 117) often relegated to supplementary remarks (Gesenius 1910, 470) or footnotes (Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 683). Second, none of the above-mentioned generalizations is supported by original empirical data. Third, most of them lack even references to previous studies that would substantiate the respective claims (Gesenius 1910, 470; van der Merwe and Naudé 2017, 483; and Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 683 as far as phonological statements are concerned). Fourth, in cases where such references are provided (Richter 1980), these draw on dated works in which Biblical Hebrew interjections are dealt with minimally, and again with no further evidence supporting the bold statements sufficiently. The view of interjections as syntactically extra-systematic illustrates this perfectly. Richer (1980), who is its author and the more fervent proponent, fails to offer empirical evidence, instead referring the reader to Lambert (1897) and Brockelmann (1913[1961], 35). However, those grammarians—apart from being theoretically obsolete—either fail to provide original data related to Biblical Hebrew, or the evidence provided does not support what is being claimed. Subsequently, Richter's views were restated without questioning by Waltke and O'Connor (1990) and van der Merwe and Naudé (2017), at the end acquiring an authoritative character.[12]

The alleged extra-systematicity of BH interjections is even more problematic in light of the analyses dedicated to individual interjectional lexemes. To begin with, while holistic treatments of the interjectional category are scarce, individual interjectional lexemes—in particular הוֹי and אוֹי—have been studied relatively extensively. Such studies comprise entries in dictionaries (Zobel 1978; Jenni 1997a), journal articles (Gerstenberger 1962; Janzen 1965; Wanke 1966; Clifford 1966; Williams 1967; Krause 1973; Wolff 1977; Vermeylen 1978; Hillers 1983; Del Barco and Seijas 2010; Slager and Zogbo 2014), and chapters in monographs (Westermann 1967; Weir 1971; Janzen 1969; 1972). As usual, the analysis of meaning has been in focus (e.g. Gerstenberger 1962; Zobel 1987; Jenni 1997a; Del Barco and Seijas 2010; Slager and Zogbo 2014), although determined formal aspects—related exclusively to syntax—have also received certain attention (Wanke 1966; Wolff 1977).[13] Nevertheless, the syntactic properties observed are generally understood in a flat linear manner, thus failing to make use of structural hierarchical representations.

To be exact, several studies have demonstrated that הוֹי tends to be juxtaposed with nominals: nouns, adjectives, and especially (active) participles (Gerstenberger 1962, 251; Wanke 1966; Wolff 1977, 242–43; Zobel 1987, 359–60; Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 682; Jenni 1997a, 483; Del Barco and Seijas

[12] This is an excellent example of academic "gossips"—not an uncommon practice among scholars—whereby a claim unsupported by evidence becomes a "fact" due to grammars echoing one another.

[13] Most studies (Wanke 1966; Zobel 1987; Jenni 1997a; Del Barco and Seijas 2010; Slager and Zogbo 2014) focus on dissimilarities between הוֹי and אוֹי and the semantic disambiguation of these two lexemes.

2010, 163, 173; Slager and Zogbo 2014, 4–5). The nominal fol-
lowing הוֹי may also be headed by a preposition, e.g. עַל, אֶל, and
לְ, although this occurs only sporadically (Wanke 1966; Williams
1967; Wolff 1977, 242; Zobel 1987, 359–60; Jenni 1997a, 483;
Del Barco and Seijas 2010, 164; Slager and Zogbo 2014, 5). With
אוֹי, the situation is inverse. אוֹי appears mostly with the preposi-
tion לְ preceding a nominal element, typically a pronominal suffix
(Wanke 1966; Wolff 1977, 242; Zobel 1987, 359–60; Jenni
1997a, 483; Del Barco and Seijas 2010, 163; Slager and Zogbo
2014, 5). Less frequently, a noun phrase is juxtaposed to אוֹי di-
rectly (Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 682). The nominal element
juxtaposed to הוֹי and/or אוֹי is usually analyzed as a vocative
(Gesenius 1910, 470; Hillers 1983, 187; Waltke and O'Connor
1990, 682) marked by the definite article (Janzen 1972, 13, 19–
23). Both the sequences composed of הוֹי and אוֹי can be ex-
panded by larger syntactic structures, in particular verbal clauses
(Wanke 1966; Zobel 1978, 360; Del Barco and Seijas 2010, 173;
Slager and Zogbo 2014, 5). With אוֹי, such further verbal elabo-
rations typically involve causal כִּי clauses (Wanke 1966; Zobel
1978, 360), also understood in terms of strong affirmation
(Slager and Zogbo 2014, 5). Other types of constructions are in-
dependent main clauses, interrogative clauses, or infinitival con-
structions (Wanke 1966; Zobel 1978, 360). Sporadically, הוֹי is
used independently with no words accompanying it (Wolff 1977,
242–43), while אוֹי may, on the contrary, be combined with par-
ticles, in particular נָא (Slager and Zogbo (2014, 5). As far as its
position is concerned, הוֹי occurs "oracle-initially" (Del Barco
and Seijas 2010, 167, 174), typically at the beginning of a phrase,
sentence, or "une unité littéraire" (Slager and Zogbo 2014, 4, 10–
12). Sporadically, it closes "une unité littéraire," whether a stro-
phe or section (ibid. 12).

The formal properties of the remaining interjections are
barely noticed. The interjection אֲהָהּ appears in three construc-
tion types. It can be used independently; it can be juxtaposed to
a (vocative) noun; or it can be followed by a prepositional phrase
composed of לְ and a noun (Gesenius 1910, 470; Waltke and
O'Connor 1990, 683). The same types of constructions (inde-
pendent, vocative, and prepositional) are grammatical with אָח
and הֶאָח (Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 683; Jenni 1997a, 483–
84). The interjection אַלְלַי partakes in a single syntactic construc-
tion, being followed by the preposition לְ and a pronominal suf-
fix (Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 683). Similarly, אִי combines
with a prepositional phrase composed of לְ and a suffixed pro-
nominal, being additionally followed by a vocative, itself quali-
fied by a relative clause (ibid. 682–83). Lastly, אָנָּא/אָנָּה exhibits
a composite morphology (Jenni 1997b, 117).

Given the absence of evidence that would support the
claim of the formal extra-systematicity of the lexical class of in-
terjections in Biblical Hebrew and, on the contrary, given the
availability of evidence suggesting that, at least, some specific in-
terjectional lexemes need not be extra-systematic, our research
will address the following issue: How extra-systematic is the lex-
ical class of BH interjections? To respond to this question, we

will use the framework outlined in section 2.1, thus studying how canonical BH interjections are, first locally in the three language modules separately and next globally in all of them combined. By answering to the research question and in particular by analyzing the compliance of BH interjections with the typological prototype, we will provide a comprehensive, principled, and holistic formal profile of the interjectional category in Biblical Hebrew.

3. EVIDENCE

For the purpose of this research we have identified twelve lexemes that, given their treatment in scholarly literature and despite certain discrepancies with regard to their meaning, can be viewed as the most reliable primary emotive interjections.

A. אֲבוֹי *'ăḇôy*[14]—interjection of intimidation (Joüon-Muraoka 2006, 322), pain (BDB 1906, 5), and sorrow (NASB). Translated as 'ah, woe' (Jenni 1997a, 484; HALOT 1994-2000; Slager and Zogbo 2014, 4), 'alas' (Clines 1993, 102), 'oh' (BDB 1906, 5) and 'oy' (Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 682).[15]

B. אֲהָהּ *'ăhā̆h*—interjection of sorrow (Joüon-Muraoka 2006, 321), regret (Di Giulio 2014, 875)—or both sorrow and regret (van der Merwe and Naudé 2017, 483)—fear (Jenni 1997b, 117; HALOT 1994-2000), and alarm (Murtonen 1990, 32), uttered in the context of lamentation and prayers (Jenni 1997b, 117). Translated as 'alas' (BDB 1906, 13; Clines 1993, 142), 'oh' (van der Merwe and Naudé 2017, 483), and 'ah' (Jenni 1997b, 117; Joüon-Muraoka 2006, 321).

C. אוֹי *'ôy*—interjection of grief and despair (BDB 1906, 17), anxiety (Wanke 1966; Wolff 1977, 242; HALOT 1994-2000; del Barco and Seijas 2010, 164), complaint (Jenni 1997a, 484), anguish (Zobel 2014, 361), intimidation (Joüon-Muraoka 2006, 322), pain (Murtonen 1990, 32), dismay (Clines 1993, 150), and threat (Jenni 1997a, 484; Zobel 2014, 361; HALOT 1994-2000). Translated as 'woe' (Gesenius 1910, 307; BDB 1906, 17; Clines 1993, 150; van der Merwe and Naudé 2017, 483), 'alas' (Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 682; HALOT 1994-2000), 'ah' (HALOT 1994-2000) and 'ho' (Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 682).

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[14] We will follow the transcription system used by Edzard (2011, 482–84) with the distinction of the word-final *mater lectionis*, which will be noted with the circumflex, as is traditionally done in Hebrew studies (Lambdin 1971, xxv; Fox 2003, xvii; van der Merwe and Naudé 2017, 21). The word-final א and ה will not be noted as consonants (i.e. as *'* and *h* respectively) since they were not pronounced as such (van der Merwe and Naudé 2017, 17, 22–23; see also Edzard 2011, 484).

[15] Some postulate that אֲבוֹי could be a noun meaning 'discomfort' (Clines 1993, 102).

D. אוֹיָה *'ôyâ*—a lengthened or expanded form of אוֹי *'ôy* (Jenni 1997a, 483; see also BDB 1906, 17 and HALOT 1994-2000) expressing lamentation and translated as 'woe' (Gesenius 1910, 307; Clines 1993, 151; HALOT 1994-2000).

E. אָח *'āḥ*—interjection of "joyous excitement" (Jenni 1997a, 483) or, on the contrary, of sorrow (Joüon-Muraoka 2006, 321), pain, and grief (Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 683). Translated as 'alas' (BDB 1906, 25; Clines 1993, 178–79; HALOT 1994-2000) and 'ah' (Gesenius 1910, 307).

F. אִי *'î*—interjection translated as 'alas' (BDB 1906, 33; Clines 1993, 204) or 'woe' (Gesenius 1910, 307; Klein 1987, 20; Jenni 1997a, 483–84; HALOT 1994-2000).

G. אַלְלַי *'aləlay*—interjection of intimidation (Joüon-Muraoka 2006, 322) translated as 'woe' (BDB 1906, 47; HALOT 1994-2000), 'alas' (BDB 1906, 47; Clines 1993, 204).

H. הֶאָח *heʾāḥ*—interjection of joy (BDB 1906, 210; Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 683; HALOT 1994-2000; Joüon-Muraoka 2006, 321; Edzard 2011, 502; Di Giulio 2014, 875) and "joyous excitement" (Jenni 1997a, 483), satisfaction (Clines 1995, 484–85), and "malicious delight" (Murtonen 1990, 32). Translated as 'aha' (Gesenius 1910, 307; BDB 1906, 210; Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 683; HALOT 1994-2000) and 'ah' (Joüon-Muraoka 2006, 321).

I. הָהּ *hāh*—interjection of sorrow (Joüon-Muraoka 2006, 321), regret (Di Giulio 2014, 875), or woe (BDB 1906, 214). Translated as 'alas' (BDB 1906, 214; Clines 1995, 493; HALOT 1994-2000).

J. הוֹ *hô* (found in the sequence הוֹ־הוֹ *hô-hô*)—a variant of הוֹי *hôy* (BDB 1906, 214; Slager and Zogbo 2014, 4; see below) expressing pain (Slager and Zogbo 2014, 3), used in the contexts of lamentation and mourning (BDB 1906, 214). Translated as 'alas' (Clines 1995, 493; HALOT 1994-2000) and 'ah' (BDB 1906, 214).

K. הוֹי *hôy*—interjection of funerary lamentation (Janzen 1972; Hillers 1983; Wanke 1966; Wolff 1977, 242; Jenni 1997a, 483; del Barco and Seijas 2010, 164; Zobel 2014, 361) expressing grief (HALOT 1994-2000), reprimand and criticism (Zobel 2014, 361), pain (BDB 1906, 222; Murtonen 1990, 32; Slager and Zogbo 2014, 3), sadness and compassion (ibid. 6), dissatisfaction (BDB 1906, 222), intimidation (Joüon-Muraoka 2006, 322), as well as excitement and exhortation (Wolff 1977, 242; Jenni 1997a, 484), and according to some, satisfaction (Slager and Zogbo 2014, 6). It is translated as 'alas' (BDB 1906, 222–23; Clines 1995, 503–4; HALOT 1994-2000), 'ah' (BDB 1906, 222–23), 'ha' (BDB 1906, 222; Gesenius 1910, 307), 'ho' (Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 682) and

'woe' (Waltke and O'Connor 1990; Joüon-Muraoka 2006, 322; van der Merwe and Naudé 2017, 484).[16]

L. Additionally, we include in our list אָנָּא/אָנָּה *ʾā̆nnâ*, commonly treated as an interjection (Gesenius 1910, 307; Joüon-Muraoka 2006, 323; Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 683-84; Jenni 1997b, 117) being aware of its semantic and morphological peculiarity. אָנָּא/אָנָּה *ʾā̆nnâ* is an interjection of pain and complaint (Jenni 1997b, 117) also implying request and entreaty (BDB 1906, 58; Jenni 1997b, 117; Joüon-Muraoka 2006, 323). It is translated as 'ah' (Gesenius 1910, 307), 'ah now (I/we pray!)' (BDB 1906, 58; Klein 1987, 37), or 'oh! (please!)' (Clines 1993, 333).

3.1 PHONETICS

BH interjections do not contain sounds that would be phonologically or phonetically anomalous (see feature P-1). First, interjections do not make use of non-speech sounds. This fact may however—at least, to an extent—be related to the written character of the Bible, which practically precludes the presence of sounds that could not be represented with the language's standard orthography. To put it simply, sounds non-representable in Biblical Hebrew would either not have been represented at all or would have been represented with systematic sounds, being thus adapted to the standard phonetic inventory of the language. Second, interjections do not host sounds that would be rare in other parts or modules of Biblical Hebrew, in particular in other lexical classes. On the contrary, all the consonants (i.e. א *ʾ* [ʔ], ה *h* [h], ח *ḥ* [ħ], ל *l* [l], נ *n* [n], ב *ḇ* [v]; see Khan 1997, 86–87, 99; Edzard 2011, 482), vowels (*î* [iː], *ô* [oː], *â* [aː], *ā̂* [ɔː], *a* [a], *ɛ* [ɛ], *ă* [a], *ə* [ə/a]; see Khan 1997, 91, 95, 97, 100; Edzard 2011, 484), and vocalic glides (see *y* [j] in diphthongs in *ôy* [oːj] and *ay* [aj]; see Khan 1997, 87, 99; van der Merwe and Naudé 2017, 18–19, 24–25) used in interjections are common features of the BH sound system in general, being present in all the remaining lexical classes (see Khan 1997, 86–100; Edzard 2011, 482–85; van der Merwe and Naudé 2017, 13–26).[17]

It is not only the sounds used in interjections that are fully systematic, the same holds true of sound combinations. That is,

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[16] Sometimes, an additional emotive interjection is postulated, namely הִי *hî* (Schökel and Holm 2000, 9), which is rendered by 'woe' in HALOT (1994-2000) and by the Greek interjection οὐαί in LXX. This BH hapax legomenon is most likely a noun "echoing a cry of pain" (Block 1997, 125) and signifying 'lamentation', 'wailing' and 'mourning' (BDB 1906, 223; Lee Petter 2009, 70). הא *hê*(ʾ) could be another primary emotive interjection (see Duke 2013). However, the exact meaning of this lexeme is obscure (Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 684). In fact, most scholars analyze it in terms of a presentative or demonstrative particle equivalent to 'lo' and 'behold' (BDB 1906, 210).

[17] We follow the phonetic transcriptions proposed by Khan (1997, 86–100) and Edzard (2011, 483–85) for the Tiberian tradition of Biblical Hebrew.

interjections do not contain sound combinations that would transgress phonotactic rules and/or phonotactic constraints operating in Biblical Hebrew (see feature P-2). First, the combinations of consonants and vowels exhibited in interjections occur commonly in other parts of the BH grammar. Second, the syllable structures present in interjections are also regular, appearing in all the other lexical classes. To be exact, the syllables found in interjections exhibit mainly the structure CV. The vocalic component may be a short vowel (e.g. the first syllables in הֶאָח *hɛ'ā́ḥ*, אֲהָהּ *'ăhā́h*, אֲבוֹי *'ăḇôy*; and the second syllable in אַלְלַי *'alǝlay*), a long vowel (e.g. אִי *'î*, הוֹ *hô*) or a diphthong (e.g. הוֹי *hôy* and אוֹי *'ôy*; see also the last syllable in אַלְלַי *'alǝlay* and אֲבוֹי *'ăḇôy*). In fewer instances, interjections exhibit the structure CVC, typically with a long vowel (e.g. הָהּ *hā́h* and אָח *'ā́ḥ*; the first syllable in אָנָּא/אָנָּה *'ā́nnâ*, as well as the second syllables in הֶאָח *hɛ'ā́ḥ*; אֲהָהּ *'ăhā́h*). Both types, i.e. CV(:) and CV(:)C, are fully systematic in Biblical Hebrew, constituting the most common types of syllables in this language (Edzard 2011, 487). Even though complex onsets (e.g. CCV) and complex codas (e.g. VCC) are possible in Biblical Hebrew, they are highly uncommon, the former type being virtually limited to a single lexeme, i.e. שְׁתַּיִם *štayim* 'two' (ibid.). This means that the absence of complex onset or coda structures in interjections is not significant from the BH system's perspective.

The only significant—in our view—divergence from Biblical Hebrew, as far as sound combinations are concerned, is the presence of the consonant ה *h* [h] in coda in a word-final position, attested by two interjections: הָהּ *hā́h* and אֲהָהּ *'ăhā́h*. This usage is exceptional in other types of lexemes. That is, with a few exceptions, lexemes do not usually end in ה *h* [h] in Biblical Hebrew.[18]

Interjections in Biblical Hebrew are vocalic in nature (see feature P-3). The interjectional lexemes examined exhibit a rich variety of vowels, both as far as their quality and quantity is concerned. To be exact, seven different types of vowels—long, short, and extra-short—are used. These are presented here in order of their frequency: *ā́* [ɔ:]—6x: הֶאָח *hɛ'ā́ḥ*, אֲהָהּ *'ăhā́h*, הָהּ *hā́h*, אָח *'ā́ḥ*; אָנָּא/אָנָּה *'ā́nnâ* and אוֹיָה *'ôyâ*; *ô* [o:]—5x: הוֹ *hô*,

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Such exceptions are the very few forms of the equally limited roots with the consonantal *h* as the third radical, e.g. גָּבַהּ 'be high' (see also the derived nominal forms גֹּבַהּ and גְּבוֹהַּ 'height'), כָּמַהּ 'long for, fain', מָהַהּ '(in hithpalpel) tarry, delay', נָגַהּ 'shine, be bright' (see also the derived nominal form נֹגַהּ 'light'), and תָּמַהּ 'be astounded'; three nouns נֹּהַּ 'eminency', אֱלוֹהַּ 'god; God', and יָהּ 'God'; and a few proper names containing the 3ʳᵈ sg.fm. suffix or the above-mentioned noun for deity: חֶפְצִי־בָהּ 'Hephzibah' lit. 'my delight is in her', אָהֳלִיבָה 'Aholibah' lit. 'the tent is in her', אָהֳלָה 'Aholah' lit. 'her own tent'), and יְדִידְיָהּ 'Jedidiah' lit. 'beloved of Yah'. Most cases in which ה *h* [h] is found in codas in a word-final position in Biblical Hebrew arise due to the suffixation of the 3ʳᵈ sg. fm. pronominal suffix to verbs and nouns, as well as, very sporadically, prepositions (Gesenius 1910, 56–57, 156–57, 265). In fact, "it is doubtful that every ה with mappîq is given a consonantal value [h]" (Lambdin 1971, xxv).

הוֹי *hôy*, אוֹי *ʾôy*, אֲבוֹי *ʾăbôy*, and אוֹיָה *ʾôyâ*; *ă* [a]—2x: אֲהָהּ *ʾăhấh* and אֲבוֹי *ʾăbôy*; *a* [a]—2x: twice in אַלְלַי *ʾaləlay*; and *î* [iː], *ɛ* [ɛ], *ə* [ə/a], each used once in אִי *ʾî*, הֶאָח *hɛʾấḥ*, and אַלְלַי *ʾaləlay*, respectively. The semivowel or glide י *y* [j] forming diphthongs is found in five instances: הוֹי *hôy*, אוֹי *ʾôy*, אוֹיָה *ʾôyâ*, אֲבוֹי *ʾăbôy*, and אַלְלַי *ʾaləlay*.

The number and, especially, the variety of consonants is lower. Six different consonants are used: א *ʾ* [ʔ], ה *h* [h], ח *ḥ* [ħ], ל *l* [l], נ [n], ב *b̲* [v]. Three of those consonants (א *ʾ* [ʔ], ה *h* [h], ח *ḥ* [ħ]) are gutturals. The remaining ones are: a lateral approximant, a nasal, and a fricative—all of them voiced. Out of all the consonants attested, only א *ʾ* [ʔ] and ה *h* [h] are common. The consonant א *ʾ* [ʔ] appears nine times. In eight cases, it is found in the onset, in a word-initial position: אוֹי *ʾôy*, אוֹיָה *ʾôyâ*, אִי *ʾî*, אֲהָהּ *ʾăhấh*, אָח *ʾấḥ*, אַלְלַי *ʾaləlay*, אבוי *ʾăbôy*, and אָנָּא/אָנָּה *ʾānnâ*. Once, it is found in a word-medial position: הֶאָח *hɛʾấḥ*. The consonant ה *h* [h] features seven times, mostly in the onset in a word-initial position: הוֹי *hôy*, הוֹ *hô*, הֶאָח *hɛʾấḥ* and הָהּ *hấh*. Once, it is found in a word-medial position: אֲהָהּ *ʾăhấh*. In two cases, it features in the coda in a word-final position: אֲהָהּ *ʾăhấh* and הָהּ *hấh*. The use of the other consonants is marginal. The consonant ח *ḥ* [ħ] (Edzard 2011, 482) appears in two interjections: הֶאָח *hɛʾấḥ* and אָח *ʾấḥ*. The consonant ל *l* [l] appears twice in a single lexeme: אַלְלַי *ʾaləlay*. The consonants ב *b̲* [v] and נ *n* [n] are found once each in אבוי *ʾăbôy* and אָנָּא/אָנָּה *ʾānnâ*—נ [n] being in fact part of the particle not a true interjection (see section 3.2 below). Overall, the widespread presence of gutturals is noticeable. Indeed, in three lexemes, two gutturals are used: אֲהָהּ *ʾăhấh* and הָהּ *hấh* (in both cases ה *h* [h] appears twice) and אָח *ʾấḥ*. הֶאָח *hɛʾấḥ* exhibits three gutturals.

The prevalence of א *ʾ* [ʔ] and ה *h* [h] is particularly evident in a word-initial position. That is, all BH interjections begin with either [ʔV-] or [hV-]. As mentioned above, the word-initial onset composed of א *ʾ* [ʔ] is found eight times: אֲבוֹי *ʾăbôy*, אֲהָהּ *ʾăhấh*, אָנָּא/אָנָּה *ʾānnâ*, אוֹי *ʾôy*, אוֹיָה *ʾôyâ*, אָח *ʾấḥ*, אִי *ʾî*, אַלְלַי *ʾaləlay*, and *ʾānnâ*. The word-initial onset composed of ה *h* [h] is found four times: הֶאָח *hɛʾấḥ*, הָהּ *hấh*, הוֹ *hô*, and הוֹי *hôy*. These two types of onsets further contribute to the vocalic nature of BH interjections. In the case of א *ʾ* [ʔ], one deals with a minimally "obstructive" consonant from the articulatory perspective of Semitic languages. In Biblical Hebrew and in other Semitic languages, such as Arabic, a syllable cannot usually begin with a pure vowel. It must begin "at least" with the glottal stop א *ʾ* [ʔ] (Procházka 2006, 425). Therefore, loanwords that in their donor languages start with a vowel, are regularly initiated by a glottal stop in recipient Semitic systems. Similarly, in interjections, which arguably represent vocal reflexes and are thus similar across languages, א *ʾ* may function as a mere vowel "releaser". Accordingly, these BH interjections would be fully equivalent to interjections found in languages that tolerate word-initial vowels in general lexicon and, thus, in interjections themselves (see Indo-European languages in Nübling 2001, 23; 2004, 25; and African languages in

Andrason and Dlali forthcoming).[19] The relationship between ה *h* [h] and vowels is also patent. Given that [h] generally has an unstable place of articulation, it is often described phonetically as a voiceless counterpart of an accompanying vowel. Indeed, [h] and prototypical voiceless vowels share the features of [+] sonorant, [-] constricted glottis, and [+] spread glottis (Blevins 2018, 31). The main difference is the absence of a [place] feature in the case of [h] contrary to vowels (whether voiced or voiceless), which regularly exhibit a [place] feature (ibid.). Therefore, from a phonetic perspective, BH interjections beginning with ה *h* [h] could equally be represented as [ɛ̥ɛ], [ɔ̥ɔ], or [o̥o].

In nearly all cases, BH interjections bear a full accent (see feature P-4) marked in the Biblical texts by an accentuation sign—either conjunctive or disjunctive (see section 3.3 dedicated to syntax). However, the presence of such accentuation signs does not allow us to infer whether BH interjections were actually pronounced in an exclamatory manner, i.e. with increased energy, louder volume, or greater intensity, as all such prosodic features are not encoded in the written text. In the case of two interjections, two accents may be present—the respective word being stressed twice. Five cases of this involve אָנָּא/אָנָּה *'ā̊nnâ* (out of 13x): אָנָּ֡א (Gen 50:17), אָֽנָּ֡א (Exod 32:31), אָֽנָּ֤א (Ps 118:25), אָנָּ֣א (Neh 1:5), אָנָּ֥ה (Ps 116:16). This usage most likely stems from the composite origin of this interjection (see section 3.2 below). Once, two accents are also hosted by הֶאָח *hɛ'ā̊ḥ* (out of 12x)— הֶ֫אָ֥ח (Ps 70:4). Contrary to this tendency, in a few instances, interjections lose their accentuation—the main accent being transferred onto the following element. Two cases involve the interjection אוֹי *'ôy* and the transfer of the accent onto the prepositional phrase לְךָ 'to you': אוֹי־לְךָ֣ (Num 21:29 and Jer 48:46). Another example involves the interjection הוֹ *hô*. In the sequence הוֹ־הָ֖וֹ where הוֹ is used, the first segment הוֹ loses its accent.

BH interjections exhibit a relatively simple phonetic structure, visibly simpler than structures found in other lexical classes (see feature P-5). Six interjections consist of one syllable: אִי *'î*, הוֹי *hôy*, אוֹי *'ôy*, הָהּ *hā̊h*, הוֹ *hô*, and אָח *'ā̊ḥ*. Five interjections consist of two syllables: הֶאָח *'ăḇ̱ôy*, אֲבוֹי *'ăhā̊h*, אֲהָהּ *'ăhā̊h*, אוֹיָה *'ôyâ*, *hɛ'ā̊ḥ*, and אָנָּא/אָנָּה *'ā̊nnâ*. Lastly, one interjection consists of three syllables: אַלְלַי *'aləlay* (with the movable *sheva*; cf. Jouön-Muraoka 2006, 47–48). This contrasts with the general BH lexicon (nouns, adjectives, participles, and verbs). To begin with, even though mono-syllabic lexemes are found (e.g. the 3rd sg.ms. *qatal* of hollow verbs or certain nouns), bi-syllabicity is prevalent at the basic-lexicon level due to the tri-consonantal structure of

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[19] See that, in many languages that allow for vowel-initial words (e.g. Spanish, Polish or Xhosa), word-initial vowels regularly are, or at least may be, pronounced with the glottal stop at the beginning of a phonological phrase. This type of [ʔ] is not phonemic, not represented in writing, and in fact not perceived by speakers as a genuine consonant. It merely releases the vowel that follows.

roots in Biblical Hebrew and Semitic languages in general. Fur-
thermore, because of the synthetic nature of Biblical Hebrew and
the extensive use of inflectional and derivational morphology,
most nouns, adjectives, participles, and verbs used in the lan-
guage are actually composed of three, four, and five syllables.[20]
As illustrated above, for interjections, a mono-syllabic structure
is the most common, while structures that would involve more
than two syllables are exceptional. Only one tri-syllable interjec-
tion is found, and no interjectional lexemes exhibiting four, five,
or five syllables are attested. As far as mono-vocalic interjections
are concerned, most of them exhibit the simplest structure avail-
able in Biblical Hebrew, i.e. CV: אִי *'î*, אוֹי *'ôy*, הוֹ *hô*, and הוֹי *hôy*.[21]
Two other mono-syllabic interjections have the structure CVC:
אָח *'āḥ* and הָהּ *hāh*.

Out of the six interjections that are not mono-syllabic, three
exhibit some types of harmonious patterns (see feature P-6).
Such harmonious patterns arise due to the presence of vocalic
harmony: אָנָּא/אָנָּה *'ānnâ* [ʔɔːnːɔː]; consonantal harmony: אֲהָהּ
'ăhāh [ʔahɔːh]; and both (partial) vocalic and consonantal har-
mony: אַלְלַי *'aləlay* [ʔaləlaj]. If the *sheva* was pronounced as an
a-type vowel [a] (Khan 1997, 95; Edzard 2011, 484), אַלְלַי would
attest to an even more accurate harmonious patter, i.e. [ʔalalaj].
The mono-syllabic interjection הָהּ *hāh* may also be regarded as
exhibiting consonantal harmony, i.e. [hɔːh]. Nevertheless, the
three other bi-syllabic interjections (אֲבוֹי *'ăḇôy*, אוֹיָה *'ôyâ*, and
הֶאָח *heʾāḥ*) do not exploit any type of harmonious patterns. Har-
monious patterns are also visible at a syntactic level where a
given interjectional lexeme may be repeated (see section 3).

Several interjections expressing a similar range of emotions
exhibit striking phonological and morphological similarities.
This suggests that they may constitute graphic and thus phonetic
variants (see Jenni 1997b, 117; see feature P-7). For two tokens,
the relationship is evident. To be exact, הוֹ *hô* used in the expres-
sion הוֹ־הוֹ *hô-hô* is a shortened variant of הוֹי *hôy* (BDB 1906,
214; Slager and Zogbo 2014, 4), while אוֹיָה *'ôyâ* is a lengthened
variant of אוֹי *'ôy* (Jenni 1997, 483; for detail see section 3.2).[22]
Furthermore, it has been proposed that אֲהָהּ *'ăhāh* and הָהּ *hāh*
are related variants (Jenni 1997b, 117), as are הֶאָח *heʾāḥ* and אָח

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[20] For instance, three syllables are typically found in the *qatal* form
of the vast majority of verbs as well as in various types of feminine
nouns, being prevalent in the plural of most nouns, adjectives, and par-
ticiples due to the presence of endings. In certain derived stems such
as *hithpaʿel*, most *qatal* forms contain four syllables.

[21] As explained above, syllables in Biblical Hebrew cannot normally
start with a pure vowel.

[22] The interjection אָנָּא/אָנָּה *'ānnâ* also exhibits two almost equally
distributed spelling variants, i.e. with ה *h* (6x) or א *'* (7x) (BDB 1906,
58; Jenni 1997b, 117; Joüon-Muraoka 2006, 323). This interchangeable
use of ה *h* and א *'* to indicate vowel length in a word-final position is
however a common feature in Biblical Hebrew (and Biblical Aramaic)
in general. Therefore, its validity for phonological or graphic instability
of interjections is insignificant.

ʾā́ḥ (Jenni 1997a, 483). Certainly, phonological similarities between אֲהָהּ *ʾăhā́h* and הָהּ *hā́h* and between הֶאָח *hɛʾā́ḥ* and אָח *ʾā́ḥ* are noticeable. Nevertheless, the etymological link between them have not been demonstrated successfully. Note for instance that הֶאָח *hɛʾā́ḥ* and אָח *ʾā́ḥ* differ semantically.

3.2 MORPHOLOGY

Eight interjections, i.e. הֶאָח *ʾî*, אִי *ʾî*, אֲהָהּ *ʾăhā́h*, אוֹי *ʾôy*, אָח *ʾā́ḥ*, *hɛʾā́ḥ*, הָהּ *hā́h*, הוֹ *hô*, and הוֹי *hôy* exhibit a simple morphological structure (see feature M-1). They are mono-morphemic and, thus, indivisible into more fragmentary meaningful components. Similarly, they do not—in fact, given their mono-morphemicity, they cannot—participate in morphological processes available in Biblical Hebrew whether inflectional (see feature M-1(a)), derivational (see feature M-1(b)), or of a compounding nature (see feature M-1(c)).

Although apparently more complex, the interjections אֲבוֹי *ʾăbôy* and אַלְלַי *ʾaləlay* are also, most likely, morphologically simple, being devoid of inflectional and derivational affixes and failing to exploit the mechanism of compounding. The original morphology of אֲבוֹי *ʾăbôy* is uncertain. The interjection אֲבוֹי *ʾăbôy* may have emerged as an onomatopoeic imitation (BDB 1906, 5) or due to the interjectionalization of an expression that originally belonged to a non-interjectional lexical class. Two such non-interjectional origins have been hypothesized: the noun אֶבְיוֹן 'need, wish' derived from the root אָבָה 'want, desire' (Gesenius 1860, iv; BDB 1906, 5; Klein 1987, 2) and another noun, אָב 'father' accompanied by the 1st person possessive suffix, i.e. 'my father!' (Klein 1987, 2). Furthermore, it is possible that the form אֲבוֹי *ʾăbôy* was influenced by אוֹי *ʾôy*, which occurs at the beginning of the verse (Prov 23:29), through assonance (cf. Jenni 1997, 484), or by אוֹי *ʾôy* and הוֹי *hôy*, together, through analogy. Nevertheless, even if אֲבוֹי *ʾăbôy* was originally a secondary interjection and thus possibly pluri-morphemic, its grammaticalization into a primary interjection is completed. Any non-interjectional form and meaning are no longer transparent and accessible—אֲבוֹי *ʾăbôy* is synchronically indivisible into a root, on the one hand, and inflectional, derivational, or compounding-related segments on the other hand. The internal structure of אַלְלַי *ʾaləlay* is less problematic. As evidenced by the root ילל 'lament, wail' (pi'el *yəlēl*, hiphil *hêlîl*, and hithpa'el הִתְיַלֵּל) in Biblical Hebrew, the verb وَلْوَلَ *walwala* 'lament, wail' in Arabic, and the interjection *allû* 'woe' in Akkadian (cf. von Soden and Meissner 1965, 37), אַלְלַי *ʾaləlay* has most likely onomatopoeic origin, imitating the action of wailing (Klein 1987, 31; see also BDB 1906, 47). Accordingly, the reduplicative pattern exhibited would not be morphological but exclusively phonological—contrary to several reduplicative configurations used for derivative purposes in the nominal and verbal system of Semitic languages. Since אַלְלַי *ʾaləlay* also lacks any other inflectional and derivational affixes, as well as morphemes that could stem from compounding, it is overall indivisible into more basic units, being thus mono-morphemic.

Despite the above tendency, not all interjectional lexemes are morphologically simple in Biblical Hebrew. The two noticeable exceptions to the mono-morphemicity of interjections are אוֹיָה *ʾôyâ* and, even more visibly, אָנָּא/אָנָּה *ʾā̊nnâ*.

As mentioned in section 3.1, the interjection אוֹיָה *ʾôyâ* is a lengthened variant of אוֹי *ʾôy*, extended by ה *â* (Jenni 1997, 483; see also BDB 1906, 17; HALOT 1994-2000). It has been suggested that the extension ה present in אוֹיָה *ʾôyâ* is the so-called paragogic ה (Klein 1987, 11). Two types of the paragogic ה are found in Biblical Hebrew. One type is attested in nominal forms, where it usually expresses direction or motion towards a place (Joüon-Muraoka 2006, 256). However, it may sometimes be employed due to rhythmic and metrical necessity (ibid. 259) or broadly understood analogy (ibid. 257), with no directive nuances being involved. This "nominal" paragogic ה does not—with a few exceptions—bear the stress (ibid. 256). The other type of the paragogic ה appears with verbs, especially volitive forms such as the imperative and the cohortative (Lambdin 1971, 112, 118; Waltke and O'Connor 1990; Joüon-Muraoka 2006, 127, 131–32; Robar 2014, 163), as well as some other types of the prefix conjugation (Joüon-Muraoka 2006, 129–30). Irrespective of its debatable origin, this "verbal" paragogic ה encodes a number of functions: (a) it expresses an emphatic, honorific, or polite sense (ibid, 132); (b) it expresses the nuance of volitive or agent-oriented modality (Robar 2014, 168); (c) it functions as ventive and andative, expressing motion towards and the involvement of the speaker or "a named recipient/destination" (ibid. 165–67); and (d) it is used as a discourse (ibid. 165) and thematic (ibid. 170–71) marker. It has also been suggested that the verbal morpheme ה may sometimes fail to add any "discernible" nuance to the verb (ibid. 132), being instead used due to euphony (ibid. 132) or analogy (ibid. 129–30). In contrast, to the "nominal" type, the "verbal" paragogic ה tends to be stressed (Joüon-Muraoka 2006, 127). Klein (1987, 11) proposes that ה present in אוֹיָה *ʾôyâ* is related to the "nominal" paragogic ה that is found in שָׁמָּה (cf. the basic form שָׁם). This is, in principle, possible since ה (i.e. *â*) in אוֹיָה *ʾôyâ* is unstressed and ה in שָׁמָּה is merely analogical being devoid of a directional sense (Joüon-Muraoka 2006, 57). However, the absence of the accent on the extension *â* in אוֹיָה *ʾôyâ* may be due to the presence of the prepositional phrase to which the interjection is linked by the *maqqeph*, i.e. אוֹיָה־לִי. Indeed, this often occurs with the "verbal" paragogic ה—which as explained tends otherwise to bear stress—when it is followed by *lamed* and a pronominal suffix, e.g. נִבְנֶה־לָּנוּ 'let us build ourselves' (Robar 2014, 169). It is also found in two cases involving BH interjections, which were introduced in section 3.1 above. That is, in Num 21:29 and Jer 48:46, אוֹי *ʾôy* loses its accent which is transferred onto the subsequent prepositional phrase composed of *lamed* and a pronominal suffix אוֹי־לְךָ. It should be noted that verbal forms accompanied by the paragogic ה may themselves be grammaticalized into discourse markers or secondary interjections such as הָבָה 'come (on)!' or לְכָה 'come, go!' (Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 574; Robar 2014, 169). In such

cases, the accent is often not on the paragogic ה itself but rather elsewhere in the word, as illustrated by הָבָה in Gen 11:3-4 (Robar 2014, 169). Given the above, and due to semantic-pragmatic resemblance linking imperatives and cohortatives to interjections, the analysis of the extension ה found in אוֹיָה *ʼôyâ* as the "verbal" paragogic ה is, in our view, more plausible.

The pluri-morphemic origin is even more evident—and diachronically less challenging—in case of אָנָּא/אָנָּה *ʼā̊nnâ*. This interjectional lexeme most likely derives from the primary interjection אָה *ʼā̊h* and the postpositive precative particle נָא *nâ* (BDB 1906, 58; Gesenius 1910, 307; Jenni 1997b, 117; Joüon-Muraoka 2006, 323).[23] The particle נָא is highly common in Biblical Hebrew. It is used to convey entreaties (Joüon-Muraoka 2006, 322) and polite requests translatable by 'please' (Waltke and O'Connor 1990; van der Merwe and Naudé 2017, 485).[24] Additionally, it encodes broadly understood emphasis, accompanying verbs inflected in volitional forms, such as the imperative, cohortative, and jussive, as well as certain particles, discourse markers, and negators (Gesenius 1910; Lambdin 1971, 114, 116, 170; Waltke and O'Connor 1990). In Biblical Hebrew, the original construction composed of אָה *ʼā̊h* and נָא *nâ* is highly grammaticalized. First, the sequence is invariably written as a single word, i.e. never with אָה and נָא being fully separated or connected by the *maqqeph*. Second, the coda consonant of the first syllable is always assimilated to the onset consonant of the syllable that follows, i.e. *h* [h] + *n* [n] > [nː]. Inversely, the final consonant of the interjection אָה never surfaces as ה *h*. Third, the interjection אָה *ʼā̊h* is never attested on its own in Biblical Hebrew, being only found in the compound אָנָּא/אָנָּה *ʼā̊nnâ*. Fourth, even though in five instances, אָנָּא/אָנָּה *ʼā̊nnâ* hosts two accents, one for each component separately, in most cases (specifically eight times), only one accent is present. As a result, it is unlikely that the two original components of אָנָּא/אָנָּה *ʼā̊nnâ*, i.e. אָה *ʼā̊h* and נָא *nâ*, "were still felt as distinct" (Joüon-Muraoka 2006, 323). Rather, אָנָּא/אָנָּה *ʼā̊nnâ* has been fully grammaticalized as an interjectional lexeme, and the few cases of a two-segment accentuation are mere remnants of its diachronic origin, unavailable or, at least, very remotely available to BH speakers (*contra* Joüon-Muraoka ibid.).[25] From a functional perspective, the origin of אָנָּא/אָנָּה *ʼā̊nnâ* would be similar to that of אוֹיָה *ʼôyâ*. In both cases, an emphatic postpositive particle, otherwise typical of volitive verbal forms, has been incorporated into a primary interjection.

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[23] Klein (1987, 37) proposes that the interjection underlying אָנָּא/אָנָּה *ʼā̊nnâ* is אֲהָהּ rather than אָה *ʼā̊h*.

[24] Alternatively, it is viewed as a logical particle (Lambdin 1971, 119).

[25] An initial stage of this process may be observed in certain uses of the interjection אוֹי. In three examples (i.e. Jer 4:31; 45:3; Lam 5:16), אוֹי is connected to the particle נָא by the *maqqeph*, yielding the sequence אוֹי־נָא. In all such cases, the two lexemes maintain their respective accent (see section 3.3).

BH interjections are morphologically anomalous (see feature M-2). Contrary to many other word classes—e.g. nouns, adjectives, participles, and verbs (see Fox 2003; Edzard 2011, 491–94, 497–500) which have recognizable, class-specific patterns and/or affixes—interjections have no transparent morphological and lexical structure in Biblical Hebrew. Indeed, neither a particular morphological pattern nor affixes mark lexemes as interjections, profiling their emotive meaning and distinguishing them from the other lexical classes. Crucially, interjections do not exploit the word-formation built around roots and introflections, which is the dominant morphological mechanism in Semitic (Rubba 2001, 681–82; Watson 2006, 431). Overall, interjections are lexically opaque, which concords with their most likely origin as automatic reflexes or onomatopoeic imitations.

3.3 SYNTAX

BH interjections may function holophrastically (see feature S-1). In such instances, a sole interjectional lexeme constitutes an autonomous utterance equivalent to fully-fledged sentences. Biblical Hebrew does not use punctuation that would overtly distinguish between separate sentences and, thus, utterances. Verbal and/or verb-less clauses accompanied by peripheral components can often be interpreted as parts of larger sentences.[26] Therefore, the only unambiguous examples of holophrasticity emerge in cases where the interjection is the unique constituent of a turn in a dialogue or a narrative comment. Such isolated uses of interjections are found five times in the Hebrew Bible (slightly more than 4%). Four of those cases involve the lexeme הֶאָח (1.a-c); one involves the lexeme הוֹ (1.d). In three of the five instances, the interjection is reduplicated, yielding the sequences הֶאָח הֶאָח (1.a-b) and הוֹ־הוֹ (1.d).[27] In all such holophrastic uses, the utterances formed by interjections are non-elliptical. They do not constitute abbreviated versions of longer phrasal, clausal, or sentential structures. In other words, no elements are absent or understood implicitly. The interjectional utterance is complete.

(1)

a. Ps 40:16 (see also a similar use in Psalm 70:4)

יֵשֹׁמּוּ עַל־עֵקֶב בָּשְׁתָּם הָאֹמְרִים לִי הֶאָח הֶאָח:

May they turn back because of their shame, those saying to me: "**Aha, aha!**"

b. Job 39:25

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[26] This ambiguity is reflected in translations as a BH verse may often be rendered either as a complex sentence with a number of coordinated and subordinated clauses, or as two or more independent sentences. For instances, two consecutive *wayyiqtol* clauses may be understood as two clauses-sentences or two clauses forming a single coordinated sentence.

[27] These will be analyzed as one of the constructional types (see feature S-4 further below). From a syntactic perspective, reduplicated holophrastic interjections may constitute cases of coordination (see Corver 2015).

בְּדֵי שֹׁפָר יֹאמַר **הֶאָח** וּמֵרָחוֹק יָרִיחַ מִלְחָמָה רַעַם שָׂרִים וּתְרוּעָה:

Among the trumpets he says "**Ha, ha!**" and from a distance he smells [the] battle, [the] thunder of captains, and [the] shouting.

c. Ezek 25:3

וְאָמַרְתָּ לִבְנֵי עַמּוֹן שִׁמְעוּ דְּבַר־אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה כֹּה־אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה יַעַן אָמְרֵךְ **הֶאָח** אֶל־מִקְדָּשִׁי כִי־נִחָל

Say to the Ammonites: "Hear the word of the Lord God; Thus says the Lord God: 'Because you said "**Aha!**" over my sanctuary when it was profaned…'" (adapted from NRSV)

d. Amos 5:16

לָכֵן כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי צְבָאוֹת אֲדֹנָי בְּכָל־רְחֹבוֹת מִסְפֵּד וּבְכָל־חוּצוֹת יֹאמְרוּ **הוֹ־הוֹ** וְקָרְאוּ אִכָּר

Therefore, thus says the Lord, the God of hosts, the Lord: In all the squares there shall be wailing; and in all the streets they shall say, "**Alas, alas!**" They shall call the farmers to mourning, and those skilled in lamentation, to wailing. (NRSV)

Even though the holophrasticity of interjections is attested, their non-holophrasticity—i.e. functioning as parts of utterances—is significantly more common. In 115 cases, interjections occur non-holophrastically. This amounts to nearly 96% of all the instances. Two types of non-holophrastic uses are possible: non-sentential and sentential.

The non-sentential type refers to utterances which are entirely projected by the interjection. These utterances either fail to contain clauses or the clauses that they contain are relative clauses structurally subordinate to the dependent of the interjection and its phrase. In other words, interjections do not fall under the scope of larger sentences.[28] The non-sentential type is found in 20 instances, which amounts to nearly 17% of all the cases.[29] The dependent of an interjection may be a bare nominal, e.g. noun, adjective, pronoun, pronominal suffix, participle (2.a). This nominal may further be qualified by pronominal affixes (2.b), adjectives, and appositions (2.c). It may be even more complex, being elaborated on by prepositional phrases, arguments projected by the valency pattern inherent to the verbal stem in the case of active participles (2.d), or relative clauses. The dependents—shorter or longer—may also be coordinated, overtly and/or by juxtaposition (2.e).[30]

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[28] Hence the label used—non-sentential.

[29] See 2.a-e. The remaining instances are Isa 5:22; 10:1; 18:1; Jer 22:18 (x4); 23:1; 34:5; Ezek 6:1; Hos 9:12; Hab 2:9; 2:15; Zeph 3:1; Ps 35:25.

[30] The dependent of the interjection may either be introduced directly (see 2.b) or it may be headed by a preposition (2.a). The different phrases governed by interjections will be analyzed in more detail when

(2)
a. Ezek 30:2

בֶּן־אָדָם הִנָּבֵא וְאָמַרְתָּ כֹּה אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה הֵילִילוּ **הָהּ** לַיּֽוֹם׃

Son(s) of man, prophesy and say: "Thus says the Lord God: 'Wail "**Alas**" for the day!'" (adapted from NRSV)

b. 1 Kgs 13:30

וַיַּנַּח אֶת־נִבְלָתוֹ בְּקִבְרוֹ וַיִּסְפְּדוּ עָלָיו **הוֹי** אָחִֽי׃

He laid the body in his own grave, and they mourned over him, saying: "**Alas**, my brother!" (NRSV)

c. Dan 9:4

וָאֶתְפַּלְלָה לַיהוָה אֱלֹהַי וָאֶתְוַדֶּה וָאֹמְרָה **אָנָּא** אֲדֹנָי הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל וְהַנּוֹרָא שֹׁמֵר הַבְּרִית וְהַחֶסֶד לְאֹהֲבָיו וּלְשֹׁמְרֵי מִצְוֺתָֽיו׃

I prayed to the Lord my God and made confession: "**Ah**, Lord – the great and fearsome God keeping covenant and love with those who love you (lit. him) and who keep your (lit. his) commandments." (adapted from NRSV)

d. Isa 5:21

הוֹי חֲכָמִים בְּעֵינֵיהֶם וְנֶגֶד פְּנֵיהֶם נְבֹנִֽים׃

Ah wise ones in their [own] eyes and cunning ones before their [own] sight!

e. Isa 5:20

הוֹי הָאֹמְרִים לָרַע טוֹב וְלַטּוֹב רָע שָׂמִים חֹשֶׁךְ לְאוֹר וְאוֹר לְחֹשֶׁךְ שָׂמִים מַר לְמָתוֹק וּמָתוֹק לְמָֽר׃ ס

Ah, you who refer to (lit. calling) evil as good, and to good as evil, to light as darkness, and to darkness as light, to sweet as bitter, and to bitter as sweet!

The other non-holophrastic type—the sentential type—emerges in cases where interjections form part of larger sentences. They co-occur with clauses that do not fall under the scope of the phrases which they (i.e. these interjections) govern.[31] This is by

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dealing with constructional properties of BH interjections, further below in this section.

[31] The distinction between sentential and non-sentential interjections is important. The sentential type has a structural representation in sentence grammar and may, at least potentially, enter into relation with the core clause. These cases of non-holophrasticity can be viewed as canonical. In the non-sentential type, an interjection acts as a structural head that together with its dependents and/or modifiers forms the entire utterance. It cannot therefore have a structural representation in the grammar of a sentence under the scope of which it would fall. Nor can it enter into relation with a core clause (as this is simply absent). These cases of non-holophrasticity could be viewed as semi-canonical since everything in the utterance is structurally subordinate to or dependent on the interjection. Similar to genuine holophrastic uses,

far the most common use of interjections in Biblical Hebrew. It is found in 95 cases, which equate to nearly 79%.[32] In their sentential uses, interjections may occur on their own, simply appearing together with the adjacent clause (3.a). They may also project dependent elements (e.g. אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה 'Lord God' in 3.b or לָנוּ 'to us' in 3.c) as was the case with the non-sentential type described in the previous paragraph—the interjection and its dependent(s) co-occurring with an adjacent clause (3.b). The adjacent clause may be verbal (3.a-c) or nominal (see וְהוּא שָׁאוּל 'it [was] borrowed' in 3.d).

(3)
a. Zech 2:10

הֹוֹי הֹוֹי וְנֻסוּ מֵאֶרֶץ צָפוֹן נְאֻם־יְהוָה כִּי כְּאַרְבַּע רוּחוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם פֵּרַשְׂתִּי אֶתְכֶם נְאֻם־יְהוָה:

Ho, ho, flee from the land of the north, says the Lord; for I have spread you abroad like the four winds of heaven, says the Lord. (adapted from NRSV)

b. Judg 6:22

וַיַּרְא גִּדְעוֹן כִּי־מַלְאַךְ יְהוָה הוּא ס וַיֹּאמֶר גִּדְעוֹן **אֲהָהּ** אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה כִּי־עַל־כֵּן רָאִיתִי מַלְאַךְ יְהוָה פָּנִים אֶל־פָּנִים:

Gideon saw that it was the angel of the Lord; and Gideon said: "**Oh** Lord God, for [because] I have seen the angel of the Lord face to face." (adapted from RSV)

c. 1 Sam 4:7

וַיִּרְאוּ הַפְּלִשְׁתִּים כִּי אָמְרוּ בָּא אֱלֹהִים אֶל־הַמַּחֲנֶה וַיֹּאמְרוּ **אוֹי** לָנוּ כִּי לֹא הָיְתָה כָּזֹאת אֶתְמוֹל שִׁלְשֹׁם:

The Philistines were afraid for they said: "God has come into the camp". They said: "**Woe** to us for nothing like this has happened before." (adapted from RSV)

d. 2 Kgs 6:5

וַיְהִי הָאֶחָד מַפִּיל הַקּוֹרָה וְאֶת־הַבַּרְזֶל נָפַל אֶל־הַמָּיִם וַיִּצְעַק וַיֹּאמֶר **אֲהָהּ** אֲדֹנִי וְהוּא שָׁאוּל:

And [as] one [was] felling a beam, his ax head fell into the water and he cried: "**Alas** master, it [was] borrowed."

When falling under the scope of a larger sentence, interjections generally do not constitute an integral part of any of its clauses. On the contrary, the relationship between interjections and the

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the utterance only consists of an interjectional phrase (IP). The distinction between non-sentential non-holophrastic uses and holophrastic uses would thus consist of the overt presence (semi-holophrastic) or the absence (holophrastic) of dependents and modifiers in the IP.

[32] See for instance Gen 50:17; Exod 32:31; Num 24:23; Josh 7:7; Judg 6:22; 1 Sam 4:8; 2 Kgs 20:3; Isa 1:4; 24:16; Jer 6:4; 15:10; 30:7; Ezek 21:20; 34:2; Hos 7:13; Amos 5:18; Micah 2:1; Ps 35:21; 120:5; Neh 1:11.

clause(s) is loose (see feature S-2). First, interjections are not projected by the clause's verb and its valency. Second, they do not complement the verb as its adjunct in terms of manner, means, instrument, or modality. Third, they neither modify nor determine the verb's arguments or adjuncts in the manner in which for instance, adjectives and adverbs do. This loose integration in the clausal structure is visible in that fact that interjections are often placed outside the structural boundaries of the clause. Accordingly, they appear before elements that mark the beginning of a clause. Such elements are: the connector וֹ 'and (even); but' (4.a; see also examples 3.a and 3.d above); the presentative particle הִנֵּה 'look; truly' (4.b.; see also 5.b below); the connector and assertive particle כִּי 'for, because; certainly' (see example 4.c); the elements introducing interrogative clauses such as the particle הֲ 'whether' (4.d), the adverbs אֵיכָה 'how' (4.e), לָמָה 'why' (see 6.a below), עַד־אָנָה 'until when' (see example 7.b below), and the pronoun מִי 'who' (4.f); as well as and the negator לֹא 'not' (4.g; see also 5.a below).

(4)

a. Ezek 36:2

כֹּה אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהֹוִה יַעַן אָמַר הָאוֹיֵב עֲלֵיכֶם **הֶאָח** וּבָמוֹת עוֹלָם לְמוֹרָשָׁה הָיְתָה לָּנוּ׃

Thus says the Lord God: "Because the enemy said of you '**Aha**, even the ancient heights have become our possession'." (adapted from NRSV)

b. Jer 14:13

וָאֹמַר **אֲהָהּ**׀ אֲדֹנָי יְהֹוִה הִנֵּה הַנְּבִאִים אֹמְרִים לָהֶם

And I said: "**Ah** Lord God, here are the prophets [who are] saying to them: . . . "

c. Jer 30:7

הוֹי כִּי גָדוֹל הַיּוֹם הַהוּא מֵאַיִן כָּמֹהוּ וְעֵת־צָרָה הִיא לְיַעֲקֹב וּמִמֶּנָּה יִוָּשֵׁעַ׃

Alas, for that day is so great, there is none like it; it is a time of distress for Jacob; yet he shall be rescued from it. (adapted from NRSV)

d. Jonah 4:2

וַיִּתְפַּלֵּל אֶל־יְהֹוָה וַיֹּאמַר **אָנָּה** יְהֹוָה הֲלוֹא־זֶה דְבָרִי עַד־הֱיוֹתִי עַל־אַדְמָתִי עַל־כֵּן קִדַּמְתִּי לִבְרֹחַ תַּרְשִׁישָׁה כִּי יָדַעְתִּי כִּי אַתָּה אֵל־חַנּוּן וְרַחוּם אֶרֶךְ אַפַּיִם וְרַב־חֶסֶד וְנִחָם עַל־הָרָעָה׃

He prayed to the Lord and said: "**O** Lord! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and ready to relent from punishing." (adapted from NRSV)

e. Num 24:23

וַיִּשָּׂ֥א מְשָׁל֖וֹ וַיֹּאמַ֑ר **א֕וֹי** מִ֥י יִחְיֶ֖ה מִשֻּׂמ֥וֹ אֵֽל׃

And he took up his oracle, saying: "**Alas**, who shall live when God does this?" (adapted from NRSV)

f. 2 Kgs 6:15

וַ֠יַּשְׁכֵּם מְשָׁרֵ֨ת אִ֤ישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים֙ לָק֔וּם וַיֵּצֵ֕א וְהִנֵּה־חַ֛יִל סוֹבֵ֥ב אֶת־
הָעִ֖יר וְס֣וּס וָרָ֑כֶב וַיֹּ֨אמֶר נַעֲר֥וֹ אֵלָ֛יו **אֲהָ֥הּ** אֲדֹנִ֖י אֵיכָ֥ה נַעֲשֶֽׂה׃

And when the servant of the man of God was risen early and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him: "**Alas**, my master! how shall we do?" (adapted from NRSV)

g. Jer 1:6

וָאֹמַ֗ר **אֲהָהּ֙** אֲדֹנָ֣י יְהֹוִ֔ה הִנֵּ֥ה לֹא־יָדַ֖עְתִּי דַּבֵּ֑ר כִּי־נַ֖עַר אָנֹֽכִי׃ פ

Then I said: "**Ah** Lord God, truly I cannot speak, for I am a boy."

BH interjections do not participate in the syntactic operation of negation (see feature S-3). Certainly, non-holophrastic interjections may accompany negative clauses and are thus compatible with negative contexts, even though this occurs infrequently (5.a-b; see also examples 4.f and 7.b). However, in such cases, the interjection itself is not negated. Instead, it carries its own affirmative value, merely expressing a given feeling. Due to the likely ungrammaticality of negative interjections, non-holophrastic interjections never appear in negative environments.

(5)
a. Isa 33:1

ה֣וֹי שׁוֹדֵ֔ד וְאַתָּ֖ה לֹ֣א שָׁד֑וּד

Ah destroyer, you have not been destroyed . . .

b. Ezek 4:14

וָאֹמַ֗ר **אֲהָהּ֙** אֲדֹנָ֣י יְהֹוִ֔ה הִנֵּ֥ה נַפְשִׁ֖י לֹ֣א מְטֻמָּאָ֑ה

And I said: "**Ah** Lord God, I have not defiled myself (lit. my soul [is] not polluted) . . . "

Interjections are slightly more compatible with interrogation. Although not particularly common, interjections may form parts of interrogative sentences. In such cases, they typically head the actual question and preserve their own non-interrogative illocutionary force (6.a) (see also 4.d-f above). More significantly however, phrases projected by interjections—and hence interjections containing dependents—may be reformulated into questions. This occurs in two instances found in the same verse (see example 6.b). Complying with the rules of BH syntax, the question word in (6.a) appears first—together with the preposition governing it—while the interjection occupies the second position: אֲב֣וֹי לְמִ֥י and לְמִ֖י א֑וֹי. This contrast with affirmative constructions

where the word order of the constituents is inverse: the interjection occupies the first position while its complementary PP occupies the second position (see 2.b and 3.c above). Cases in which holophrastic interjections would be questioned are unattested.

(6)
a. Josh 7:7

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹשֻׁעַ **אֲהָהּ**׀ אֲדֹנָי יְהוִֹה לָמָה הֵעֲבַרְתָּ הַעֲבִיר אֶת־הָעָם הַזֶּה אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן לָתֵת אֹתָנוּ בְּיַד הָאֱמֹרִי לְהַאֲבִידֵנוּ וְלוּ הוֹאַלְנוּ וַנֵּשֶׁב בְּעֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן:

Joshua said: "**Ah** Lord God, why have you brought this people across the Jordan at all, to hand us over to the Amorites so as to destroy us? Would that we had been content to settle beyond the Jordan!" (adapted from NRSV)

b. Prov 23:29

לְמִי **אוֹי** לְמִי **אֲבוֹי** לְמִי מִדְיָנִים לְמִי שִׂיחַ לְמִי פְּצָעִים חִנָּם לְמִי חַכְלִלוּת עֵינָיִם:

To whom **woe**? To whom **alas** (sorrow)? To whom strife? To whom complains? To whom wounds without cause? To whom redness of eyes? (adapted from NRSV and LEB)

BH interjections can form constructions (see feature S-4). Three constructional types can be identified: (a) interjections governing phrases; (b) interjections falling under the scope of a particle; (c) interjections forming chains with interjections. The three types are not mutually exclusive. All interjections restricted by particles govern a phrase, which is also the case of an interjectional chain on one occasion. Constructional uses of interjections are overall far more common (107x) than non-constructional ones (13x).[33]

As has been mentioned several times in this section, BH interjections are able to govern dependent elements. This occurs in 102 cases, thus being the most prevalent among all constructional syntactic types in which BH interjections may participate. Interjections project two types of dependent phrases: noun phrases (NP) and prepositional phrases (PP). NPs are projected by interjections in 69 instances. The head of the NP is typically a noun (43x)[34] (see example 7.a-b) or a participle (25x)[35] (7.c). In one case, it is an adjective (albeit coordinated with a subsequent participle) (7.d).

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[33] Examples of non-constructional uses are found in Gen 50:17; Exod 32:31; Num 24:23; 2 Kgs 3:10; Isa 1:24; 44:16; Ezek 21:20; 26:2; 36:2; Jer 30:7; Zech 2:10; 2:11; Ps 35:21.

[34] Josh 7:7; Judg 6:22; 11:35; 1 Kgs 13:30; 2 Kgs 6:5; 6:15; 20:3; Isa 1:4; 10:5; 17:12; 18:1; 28:1; 29:1; 30:1; 38:3; 55:1; Jer 1:6; 4:10; 14:13; 22:18; 32:17; 34:5; 47:6; Ezek 4:14; 9:8; 11:13; 21:5; 24:6; 24:9; Jonah 4:2; Nah 3:1; Ps 35:25; 114:10; 116:4; 118:25; Dan 9:4; Neh 1:5; 1:11.

[35] Isa 5:8; 5:11; 5:18; 5:20; 5:21; 5:22; 10:1; 29:15; 31:1; 33:1; 45:9; 45:10; Jer 22:13; 23:1; Ezek 34:2; Amos 5:18; Mic 2:1; Hab 2:6; 2:9; 2:12; 2:15; 2:19; Zeph 2:5; 3:1; Zech 11:17.

(7)

a. Jdgs 11:35

> וַיְהִי֩ כִרְאוֹת֨וֹ אוֹתָ֜הּ וַיִּקְרַ֣ע אֶת־בְּגָדָ֗יו וַיֹּ֙אמֶר֙ **אֲהָ֣הּ** בִּתִּ֗י הַכְרֵ֤עַ הִכְרַעְתִּ֙נִי֙

When he saw her, he tore his clothes, and said: "**Alas** my daughter! You have brought me very low . . . " (adapted from NRSV)

b. Jer 47:6

> **ה֗וֹי** חֶ֚רֶב לַֽיהֹוָ֔ה עַד־אָ֖נָה לֹ֣א תִשְׁקֹ֑טִי הֵאָֽסְפִי֙ אַל־תַּעְרֵ֔ךְ הֵרָגְעִ֖י וָדֹֽמִּי׃

Ah sword of the Lord! How long until you are quiet? Put yourself into your scabbard, rest and be still! (adapted from NRSV)

c. Jer 22:13

> **ה֣וֹי** בֹּנֶ֤ה בֵיתוֹ֙ בְּלֹא־צֶ֔דֶק וַעֲלִיּוֹתָ֖יו בְּלֹ֣א מִשְׁפָּ֑ט

Woe to the one building his house by unrighteousness and his upper rooms by injustice; he makes his neighbors work for nothing, and does not give them their wages. (adapted from NRSV)

d. Amos 6:1

> **ה֛וֹי** הַשַּׁאֲנַנִּ֥ים בְּצִיּ֖וֹן וְהַבֹּטְחִ֣ים בְּהַ֣ר שֹׁמְר֑וֹן נְקֻבֵי֙ רֵאשִׁ֣ית הַגּוֹיִ֔ם וּבָ֥אוּ לָהֶ֖ם בֵּ֥ית יִשְׂרָאֵֽל׃

Alas for those who are at ease in Zion and feeling secure on Mount Samaria, those named chiefs of the nations; the house of Israel comes to them!

The nominal dependent may be addressed directly thus functioning as a canonical vocative (8.a; see also 7.a-b), or it may be referred to indirectly (8b; see also 7.c-d):

(8)

a. Isa 29:1

> **ה֣וֹי** אֲרִיאֵ֣ל אֲרִיאֵ֔ל קִרְיַ֖ת חָנָ֣ה דָוִ֑ד סְפ֥וּ שָׁנָ֛ה עַל־שָׁנָ֖ה חַגִּ֥ים יִנְקֹֽפוּ׃

Ah Ariel, Ariel, the city where David encamped! Add year to year; let the festivals run their round. (NRSV)

b. Isa 10:1

> הֹ֥וֹי הַחֹֽקְקִ֖ים חִקְקֵי־אָ֑וֶן וּֽמְכַתְּבִ֥ים עָמָ֖ל כִּתֵּֽבוּ׃

Ah those who make iniquitous decrees, who write oppressive statutes. (adapted from NRSV)

Prepositional phrases are projected by interjections in 32 instances.[36] The most typical preposition used is לְ (28x) (9.a). The

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[36] See Num 21:29; 1 Sam 4:8; Isa 3:11; 4:31; Jer 6:4; 13:27; 45:3;

occurrence of the two other prepositions, i.e. עַל (9.b) and אֶל (9.c), is significantly lower, each occurring twice.

(9)

a. 1 Sam 4:8

אֹ֣וי לָ֔נוּ מִ֣י יַצִּילֵ֔נוּ מִיַּ֛ד הָאֱלֹהִ֥ים הָאַדִּירִ֖ים הָאֵ֑לֶּה אֵ֣לֶּה הֵ֗ם הָאֱלֹהִ֞ים הַמַּכִּ֧ים אֶת־מִצְרַ֛יִם בְּכָל־מַכָּ֖ה בַּמִּדְבָּֽר׃

Woe to us! Who can deliver us from the power of these mighty gods? These are the gods who struck the Egyptians with every sort of plague in the wilderness. (NRSV)

b. Jer 50:27

חִרְבוּ֙ כָּל־פָּרֶ֔יהָ יֵרְד֖וּ לַטָּ֑בַח ה֣וֹי עֲלֵיהֶ֔ם כִּֽי־בָ֥א יוֹמָ֖ם עֵ֥ת פְּקֻדָּתָֽם׃ ס

Kill all her bulls, let them go down to the slaughter. **Alas** for them, their day has come, the time of their punishment! (NRSV)

c. Ezek 6:11

כֹּֽה־אָמַ֞ר אֲדֹנָ֣י יְהוִ֗ה הַכֵּ֨ה בְכַפְּךָ֜ וּרְקַ֣ע בְּרַגְלְךָ� וֶאֱמָר־**אָ֛ח** אֶל כָּל־תּוֹעֲב֛וֹת רָע֥וֹת בֵּֽית־יִשְׂרָאֵ֑ל אֲשֶׁ֗ר בַּחֶ֛רֶב בָּרָעָ֥ב וּבַדֶּ֖בֶר יִפֹּֽלוּ׃

Thus says the Lord God: Clap your hands and stamp your foot, and say: "**Alas** for all the vile abominations of the house of Israel! For they shall fall by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence." (NRSV)

The dependent of the preposition is typically a pronominal suffix (23x) (10.a). Other types of constituents are less common: a noun (6x) (10.b), an interrogative pronoun (2x; see example 6.b above), and a participle (1x) (10.c).

(10)

a. Ps 120:5

אֽוֹיָה־לִ֭י כִּי־גַ֣רְתִּי מֶ֑שֶׁךְ שָׁ֝כַ֗נְתִּי עִֽם־אָהֳלֵ֥י קֵדָֽר׃

Woe to me for I am an alien in Meshech, for I must live among the tents of Kedar. (adapted from NRSV)

b. Joel 1:15

אֲהָ֖הּ לַיּ֑וֹם כִּ֤י קָרוֹב֙ י֣וֹם יְהוָ֔ה וּכְשֹׁ֖ד מִשַּׁדַּ֥י יָבֽוֹא׃

Alas for the day! For the day of the Lord is near, and as destruction from the Almighty it comes. (NRSV)

c. Ezek 13:18

וְאָמַרְתָּ֞ כֹּֽה־אָמַ֣ר׀ אֲדֹנָ֣י יְהוִ֗ה ה֡וֹי לִֽמְתַפְּרוֹת֩ כְּסָת֨וֹת עַ֣ל׀ כָּל־אַצִּילֵ֣י יָדַ֗י וְעֹשׂ֛וֹת הַמִּסְפָּח֖וֹת עַל־רֹ֣אשׁ כָּל־קוֹמָ֑ה לְצוֹדֵ֖ד נְפָשֽׁוֹת

50:27; Ezek 6:11; 13:3; 30:2; Hos 7:13; 9:12; Mic 7:1; Joel 1:15; Ps 120:5; Prov 23:29 (x2); Eccl 4:10; 10:16; Lam 5:16.

הַנְּפָשׁוֹת תְּצוֹדֵדְנָה לְעַמִּי וּנְפָשׁוֹת לָכֵנָה תְחַיֶּינָה׃

And you will say: "Thus says the Lord God: '**Woe** to the women who sew bands on all wrists and make veils for the heads of persons of every height, in the hunt for human lives! Will you hunt down lives among my people, and maintain your own lives?' " (adapted from NRSV)

Additionally, there is one instance in which the interjection governing a PP (לִי 'to me' see in 11) also governs an additional non-appositional NP (אִמִּי 'my mother'):

(11)
Jer 15:10

אוֹי־לִי אִמִּי כִּי יְלִדְתִּנִי אִישׁ רִיב וְאִישׁ מָדוֹן לְכָל־הָאָרֶץ לֹא־נָשִׁיתִי וְלֹא־נָשׁוּ־בִי כֻּלֹּה מְקַלְלַונִי׃ ס

Woe to me, my mother, that you ever bore me, a man of strife and contention to the whole land! I have not lent, nor have I borrowed, yet all of them curse me. (adapted from NRSV)

BH interjections enter in constructions with particles. The particles that operate over interjections are כִּי, גַּם, and נָא. The first two, i.e. כִּי and גַּם, occur in the same instance with the interjection אוֹי (12.a). The use with the particle נָא is more common, being attested three times. In all three instances, נָא intervenes between the interjection (to which it is linked by a *maqqeph*) and a dependent prepositional phrase (12.b).[37]

(12)
a. Hos 9:12

כִּי אִם־יְגַדְּלוּ אֶת־בְּנֵיהֶם וְשִׁכַּלְתִּים מֵאָדָם כִּי־גַם־**אוֹי**־לָהֶם בְּשׂוּרִי מֵהֶם׃

Even if they bring up children, I will bereave them until no one is left. **Woe** to them indeed when I depart from them! (NRSV)

b. Jer 4:31

כִּי קוֹל כְּחוֹלָה שָׁמַעְתִּי צָרָה כְּמַבְכִּירָה קוֹל בַּת־צִיּוֹן תִּתְיַפֵּחַ תְּפָרֵשׂ כַּפֶּיהָ **אוֹי**־נָא לִי כִּי־עָיְפָה נַפְשִׁי לְהֹרְגִים׃ פ

For I heard a cry as of a woman in labor, anguish as of one bringing forth her first child, the cry of daughter Zion gasping for breath, stretching out her hands, "**Woe** to me! I am fainting before killers!" (adapted from NRSV)

Lastly, Biblical Hebrew allows for interjectional chains, i.e. the combination of interjections into sequences. This phenomenon is attested six times. In all such cases, however, the combination involves the reduplication of an interjectional lexeme rather than

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[37] See also Jer 45:3 and Lam 5:16.

grouping of different interjections. The reduplicated interjec-
tions are: אוֹי (13.a), הֶאָח (13.b; see also 1.a), הוֹי (see example 3.a),
and הוֹ (see example 1.d). In other words, constructional se-
quences composed of different interjections are unattested.

(13)
a. Ezek 16:23

וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי כָּל־רָעָתֵךְ **אוֹי אוֹי** לָךְ נְאֻם אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה:

After all your wickedness (**woe, woe** to you! says the
Lord God). (NRSV)

b. Ps 35:21

וַיַּרְחִיבוּ עָלַי פִּיהֶם אָמְרוּ **הֶאָח| הֶאָח** רָאֲתָה עֵינֵינוּ:

They open wide their mouths against me; they say: "**Aha,
aha**, our eyes have seen it." (NRSV)

Non-holophrastic interjections, which function as words and
parts of utterances, are typically found at the margins of an ut-
terance (see feature S-5). Most commonly, they occupy an initial
position, being thus located in the utterance's left periphery.
Overall, an utterance-initial position is attested in 100 cases,
while a non-initial position, invariably an utterance-internal one,
is found in 15 cases. To be exact, interjections that form sen-
tences with other clauses occur utterance-initially in 81 instances
out of 95 possible (14.a).[38] In only 14 instances of this structural
type, interjections occupy an utterance-internal position (14.b).[39]
For interjections that do not form sentences with other clauses
but project their own phrase (either simple or elaborated on by
relative clauses), the preference for an utterance-initial position
is even more evident. In 19 instances out of 20 possible, such
interjections occur at the beginning of an utterance (14.c).[40] Only
in one case, an utterance-internal position is attested (see exam-
ple 12.a above).

(14)
a. Nah 3:1

הוֹי עִיר דָּמִים כֻּלָּהּ כַּחַשׁ פֶּרֶק מְלֵאָה לֹא יָמִישׁ טָרֶף

Ah, city of bloodshed, utterly deceitful, full of booty—no
end to the plunder! (NRSV)

b. Job 10:15

אִם־רָשַׁעְתִּי **אַלְלַי** לִי וְצָדַקְתִּי לֹא־אֶשָּׂא רֹאשִׁי שְׂבַע קָלוֹן וּרְאֵה
עָנְיִי:

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[38] For instance, Num 21:29; 24:23; 1 Sam 4:7, 8; 2 Kgs 3:10; Isa 5:8;
5:18; Jer 30:7; Ezek 26:2; 36:2; Amos 5:18; Mic 7:1; Zeph 2:5; Zech
2:10; 11:17; Ps 35:21; 116:16; 120:5; Eccl 10:16; Neh 1:5.

[39] Isa 3:9; 24:16; Jer 4:13; 6:4; 13:27; 50:27; Ezek 16:23; 21:20; Job
10:15; Prov 23:29 (2x); Eccl 4:10; Lam 5:16.

[40] 1 Kgs 13:30; Isa 5:20, 21, 22; 10:1; 18:1; Jer 22:18 (4x); 23:1; 34:5;
Ezek 6:11; 30:2; Hab 2:9; 2:15; Zeph 3:1; Ps 35:25; Dan 9:4.

If I am wicked, **woe** to me! If I am righteous, I cannot lift up my head, for I am filled with disgrace and look upon my affliction. (NRSV)

c. Hab 2:15

הֹ֣וֹי מַשְׁקֶ֤ה רֵעֵ֙הוּ֙ מְסַפֵּ֣חַ חֲמָתְךָ֔ וְאַ֖ף שַׁכֵּ֑ר לְמַ֥עַן הַבִּ֖יט עַל־מְעוֹרֵיהֶֽם׃

Alas for you who make your neighbors drink, pouring out your wrath until they are drunk, in order to gaze on their nakedness! (NRSV)

Non-holophrastic interjections also tend to occupy a peripheral position in their own phrase—that is, in relation the interjection's dependents. This position is, again, typically initial. In 112 cases out of 115 possible, interjections feature at the beginning of the phrase (15).[41] In two cases—found in the same verse—the interjections appear phrase-finally (see example 6.b). As has been explained above, this phrase-final position is due to their use in an interrogative context. In one example, the interjection occupies a phrase-internal position, occurring between an affirmative particle and a prepositional phrase (see 14.d above).

(15)
Jonah 1:14

וַיִּקְרְא֨וּ אֶל־יְהוָ֜ה וַיֹּאמְר֗וּ **אָנָּ֤ה** יְהוָה֙ אַל־נָ֣א נֹאבְדָ֗ה בְּנֶ֙פֶשׁ֙ הָאִ֣ישׁ הַזֶּ֔ה וְאַל־תִּתֵּ֥ן עָלֵ֖ינוּ דָּ֣ם נָקִ֑יא כִּֽי־אַתָּ֣ה יְהוָ֔ה כַּאֲשֶׁ֥ר חָפַ֖צְתָּ עָשִֽׂיתָ׃

Then they cried out to the Lord: "**Please O** Lord, we pray, do not let us perish on account of this man's life. Do not make us guilty of innocent blood; for you, O Lord, have done as it pleased you." (NRSV)

Peripherality and an utterance-initial placement are equally patent if one considers the mutual position of the interjection accompanied by its nominal dependent—either headed directly or via a preposition, and thus, the structure [I + NP/PP]—and the rest of the utterance. Indeed, such structures appear utterance-initially in 101 instances out of 115 possible (16.a).[42] Only in 14 instances, they occupy an utterance-internal position (16.b).[43]

(16)
a. Ps 35:25

אַל־יֹאמְר֣וּ בְ֭לִבָּם **הֶאָ֣ח** נַפְשֵׁ֑נוּ אַל־יֹ֝אמְר֗וּ בִּֽלַּעֲנֽוּהוּ׃

Do not let them say to themselves: "**Aha**, we have our heart's desire." Do not let them say: "We have swallowed you up." (NRSV)

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[41] For instance, Num 21:29; 24:23; 1 Sam 4:7, 8; 1 Kgs 13:30; ; Isa 1:4; 1:24; 3:9,11; 6:5; 24:16; Jer 4:13; 4:31; 6:4; 10:19; 13:27; 15:10; 45:3; 48:46; Ezek 16:23; 24:6; 24:9; Hos 7:13; Lam 5:16.

[42] For other examples, see footnote 38 above.

[43] Isa 3:9; 24:16; Jer 4:13; 6:4; 13:27; 50:27; Ezek 16:23; 21:20; Job 10:15; Prov 23:29 (2x); Eccl 4:10; Lam 5:16.

b. Lam 5:16

נָפְלָה עֲטֶרֶת רֹאשֵׁנוּ **אֽוֹי־נָא** לָנוּ כִּי חָטָֽאנוּ׃

The crown has fallen from our head, **woe** to us, for we have sinned! (NRSV)

Extrametrum—or a phonological separation—is not a pervasive feature of BH interjections (see future S-6). Overall, interjections bear a conjunctive accent in 66 cases (out of 115 possible), while a disjunctive accent is used in 49 cases. Thus, the absence of extrametrum is, at least moderately, more common (57%) than its presence (43%). More specifically, out of 82 instances in which interjections occur in a sentence and have an NP, a PP, or a combination of both as their dependent, they exhibit a conjunctive accent 50 times (17.a). Inversely, in 32 of these instances, the interjection bears a disjunctive accent (17.b). Extrametrum is more evident in cases in which the interjection forms part of a sentence, but lacks a dependent. Only 1 instance out of a total of 13 attests to a conjunctive accent (3.a), while the remaining cases bear a disjunctive accent (17.c). Interjections that do not form part of sentences (i.e. non-holophrastic non-sentential interjections) also tend to bear a conjunctive accent (15x) (17.d) rather than a disjunctive accent (5x) (17.e).

(17)

a. Jer 6:4

קַדְּשׁוּ עָלֶיהָ מִלְחָמָה קוּמוּ וְנַעֲלֶה בַֽצׇּהֳרָיִם **אֹוֹי** לָנוּ כִּי־פָנָה הַיּוֹם כִּי יִנָּטוּ צִלְלֵי־עָֽרֶב׃

"Prepare war against her; up, and let us attack at noon!" "**Woe** to us, for the day declines, the shadows of evening lengthen!" (NRSV)

b. Ezek 13:3

כֹּה אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהֹוִה **הֹוי** עַל־הַנְּבִיאִים הַנְּבָלִים אֲשֶׁר הֹלְכִים אַחַר רוּחָם וּלְבִלְתִּי רָאֽוּ׃

Thus says the Lord God: "**Alas** for the senseless prophets who follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing!" (NRSV)

c. Gen 50:17

כֹּה־תֹאמְרוּ לְיוֹסֵף **אָנָּא** שָׂא נָא פֶּשַׁע אַחֶיךָ וְחַטָּאתָם כִּי־רָעָה גְמָלוּךָ

Say to Joseph: "**O please**, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you." (adapted from NRSV)

d. Jer 23:1

הֹוי רֹעִים מְאַבְּדִים וּמְפִצִים אֶת־צֹאן מַרְעִיתִי נְאֻם־יְהֹוָה׃

"**Woe** to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture!" – says the Lord. (adapted from NRSV)

e. Hab 2:9

הֹוֹי בֹּצֵעַ בֶּצַע רָע לְבֵיתֹו לָשֹׂום בַּמָּרֹום קִנֹּו לְהִנָּצֵל מִכַּף־רָע׃

"**Alas** for you who get evil gain for your house, setting your nest on high to be safe from the reach of harm!" (NRSV)

The extrametrum of interjections can be assessed differently. Again, one may consider the phonological link that exists between the interjection projecting its NP or PP, on the one hand, and the remaining parts of the utterance, on the other hand. When analysed from that perspective, extrametrum is more evident. That is, the structure [I + NP/PP] tends to be phonologically separated from the rest of the utterance: out of 102 cases, 97 bear a disjunctive accent,[44] while only 5 bear a conjunctive accent.[45] This type of extrametrum is equally patent for the sentential and non-sentential types. In sentential uses, the analysed structures are marked by a disjunctive accent 77 times (18.a), while a conjunctive accent is only used 5 times (18.b). In non-sentential uses, all 20 cases are separated from the rest of the utterance by a disjunctive accent (see example 17.f above).

(18)
a. Ezek 9:8

וַיְהִי כְּהַכֹּותָם וְנֵאשֵׁאַר אָנִי וָאֶפְּלָה עַל־פָּנַי וָאֶזְעַק וָאֹמַר **אֲהָהּ** אֲדֹנָי יְהֹוִה הֲמַשְׁחִית אַתָּה אֵת כָּל־שְׁאֵרִית יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּשָׁפְכְּךָ אֶת־חֲמָתְךָ עַל־יְרוּשָׁלָ͏ִם׃

While they were killing, and I was left alone, I fell prostrate on my face and cried out: "**Ah** Lord God! will you destroy all who remain of Israel as you pour out your wrath upon Jerusalem?" (NRSV)

b. Isa 6:5

וָאֹמַר **אֹוי**־לִי כִי־נִדְמֵיתִי כִּי אִישׁ טְמֵא־שְׂפָתַיִם אָנֹכִי וּבְתֹוךְ עַם־טְמֵא שְׂפָתַיִם אָנֹכִי יֹושֵׁב כִּי אֶת־הַמֶּלֶךְ יְהֹוָה צְבָאֹות רָאוּ עֵינָי׃

And I said: "**Woe** to me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; yet my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!" (adapted from NRSV)

4. DISCUSSION

The study of the formal profile of interjections shows that the canonicity and extra-systematicity of BH interjections is distinct in the different modules of language—or when analyzed locally.

In phonology, three features postulated for the interjectional prototype are met (nearly) entirely (P-3, P-4, P-5); two features are met to a certain extent only (P-6 largely and P-7 only

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[44] See, for instance, Judg 6:22; 11:35; 2 Kgs 6:5; 6:15; 20:3; Isa 38:3; Jer 1:6; 4:10; 14:13; 32:17; Ezek 4:14; 6:11; 9:8; 11:13; 21:5; 30:2; Jonah 1:14; 4:2; Joel 1:15; Ps 116:4.

[45] See Num 21:29; Isa 6:5; Jer 48:46; Prov 23:29; Eccl 10:16.

residually); lastly, two features are not met (P-1 and P-2). The combination of those different "scores" into a single value is not an easy task—perhaps unachievable. Nevertheless, approximately, BH interjections seem to exhibit a semi-canonical phonological profile, which means that their asystematicity is moderate.

P-1 [-]	asystematic sounds are unattested;
P-2 [-]	asystematic clusters are unattested;
P-3 [+]	BH interjections have a marked vocalic character;
P-4 [+]	with marginal exceptions, BH interjections bear the stress;
P-5 [+]	with marginal exceptions, BH interjections exhibit a simple phonetic structure;
P-6 [+/-]	some BH interjections exhibit harmonious patterns;
P-7 [(+)/-]	a few BH interjections exhibit alternative variants.

As far as morphology is concerned, BH interjections comply fully with one feature (M-2). The feature M-1 (composite of three sub-features) is met to a large extent. As a result, the morphological canonicity of BH interjections and their asystematicity are relatively high.

M-1 [+/(-)]	BH interjections tend to exhibit a simple mono-morphemic structure. With the exception of two lexemes, interjections lack inflections (M-1.a), derivations (M-1.b), and compounding (M-1.c);
M-2 [+]	BH interjections are morphologically anomalous and lexically opaque.

In syntax, two features are met fully (S-1 and S-2);[46] three features are met partially (S-5 to a large extent, while S-3 and S-6 to a limited degree); and one feature is violated (S-4). Overall, the canonicity of BH interjections in syntax and their syntactic extra-systematicity are moderate:[47]

S-1 [+]	BH interjections may be used holophrastically as autonomous, complete, non-elliptical utterances;
S-2 [+]	when used in sentences, BH interjections are associated with the adjacent clause(s) in a loose manner;

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[46] Concerning S-1 see, however, further below.

[47] The approximate values of the canonicity/extra-systematicity of interjections in the three language modules that are presented above in an approximate and narrative fashion, coincide with more numeral calculations. The allocation of a number reflecting high or low compliance (1 for +; 0,75 for +/(-); 0,5 for +/-; 0,25 for (+)/-; and 0 for -) to each feature-related score yields the following averaged values: phonology – 0,53; morphology – 0,85; syntax – 0,54.

S-3 [+/-]   BH interjections generally do not participate in syntactic operations of negation and interrogation. However, interjectional phrases exhibiting the structure [I+PP] may be questioned;

S-4 [-]   BH interjections can form constructions with other elements by governing phrases (NPs and PPs), falling under the scope of particles, and yielding interjectional sequences;

S-5 [+/(-)]   BH interjections often (albeit not always) occupy a peripheral, typically left, position in the utterance. The same holds true for the placement of interjections in their own phrases, as well as for the placement of the structures [I + NP/PP];

S-6 [+/-]   BH interjections are often linked to adjacent elements by conjunctive accent, thus failing to function as separate prosodic or intonational entities—even though disjunction is also widely attested. The extrametrum of [I+NP/PP] is significantly more evident.

The different values that BH interjections exhibit locally in phonology, morphology, and syntax, can in turn be combined into a global canonicity/extra-systematicity range. Although similar to the local summations, this total value should be viewed as approximate, we conclude that globally, BH interjections are semi-canonical and thus semi-extra-systematic.

Apart from determining the extent of canonicity and extra-systematicity of BH interjections—and thus apart from positioning them in the typological categorial network—our research reveals certain significant properties of BH interjectional lexemes; even though most of these properties are not directly associated with the prototype. First, BH interjections make a common use of gutturals consonants (א ' [ʔ], ה *h* [h], ח *ḥ* [ħ]). Second, all BH interjections exhibit mono-consonantal, [ʔ] or [h] onsets in a word-initial position. Third, onomatopoeic interjections are uncommon. Four, reduplication occurring within a single lexeme is a phonological process rather than a morphological one. Five, the only morphemes incorporated into or combinable with interjections are "emphatic" particles typical of imperative and volitive forms. Six, holophrastic uses of interjections are far less common than non-holophrastic uses. The first five properties, related to phonology and morphology, coincide with observations made in research on interjections in other language families, e.g. in Xhosa (Andrason and Dlali forthcoming), which suggests their wider cross-linguistic status. The sixth property demonstrates that the compliance with a feature does not imply that that particular feature—and not its opposite—is the prevalent situation in a given language. This perhaps lowers even further the extent of canonicity and extra-systematicity of interjections in Biblical Hebrew.

The pervasiveness of interjectional non-holophrasticity in Biblical Hebrew suggests that interjections may have both an internal representation and syntagmatic role(s). First, we propose

that an interjection may govern constituents within its own phrase—the Interjectional Phrase (IP) (see a similar proposal in Nordgren 2015, 48, 51–52). In Biblical Hebrew, the dependent constituents may be an NP or a PP. However, the dependent position may also be non-filled with the interjection being the only constituent of the IP. Accordingly, interjections are the head of their IP (Nordgren 2015, 52), projecting other dependent constituents (see Figure 1 below). Arguably, the interjection would also project the case to its dependent phrases—either vocative (with a NP) or prepositional (with a PP). This is consistent with certain violations of the interjectional prototype observed in typological studies, in particular: a close link to vocatives through parataxis and the ability to project determined valency patterns (Ameka and Wilkins 2006, 67; Nordgren 2015).
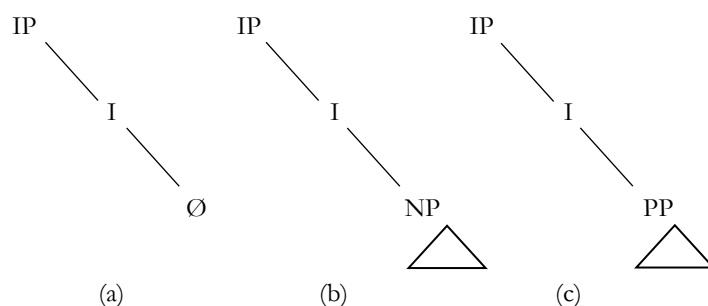

Figure 1: Structural representation of non-holophrastic interjections

Second, we propose that in their sentential uses, interjections entertain a syntagmatic role in the sentence structure, fully comparable to that attributed to various extra-clausal constituents such as vocatives, left-dislocands,[48] and pragmatic/discourse markers (see Kaltenböck, Keizer and Lohmann 2016, 1). Although unable to "to enter into syntactic relations with other structures" (ibid.), vocatives, left-dislocands, and pragmatic/discourse markers form syntagmatic parts of a sentence (see for instance the syntagmatic role of left-dislocands in Westbury 2014; Andrason, Westbury and van der Merwe 2016). They are also structurally represented in the sentence model, as nodes placed beyond the core clause or complementizer phrase (CP). Accordingly, interjections could occupy a syntagmatic beyond-clause/CP position parallel to a left-dislocand (LD), a vocative phrase (VP), or a topic phrase (TP). At this time, where research on the formal syntax of interjections is in its preliminary stage, we are unable to provide a more precise structural interpretation.

The results of our research enable us to correct or nuance several statements and assumptions formulated previously in BH scholarship (see section 2.2). The claim of the phonetic extra-systematicity of BH interjections (Waltke and O'Connor 1990,

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[48] The term 'left-dislocand' refers to a phrase that is dislocated to the left in left-dislocation constructions. It is the element that is located outside the core clause (Westbury 2014; Andrason, Westbury and van der Merwe 2016).

683) is unsupported. Our study suggests the opposite. Crucially, no "odd" sounds (ibid.) are attested—all sounds are fully systematic. Similarly, the alleged syntactic extra-systematicity of BH interjections (ibid.) is much less patent. Contrary to Gesenius (1910, 470–71), interjections do not form "incomplete" sentences. In their holophrastic uses, such sentences are complete and non-elliptical. Our data also invalidate the claim whereby BH interjections are unable to enter into constructions with other grammatical elements (Richter 1980, 158). The opposite is true. Interjections form tied constructions with prepositional phrases and noun phrases, with particles, and with interjections themselves. Furthermore, although loosely related to core clauses, BH interjections do entertain a syntagmatic role in sentences, comparable to that of vocatives, left-dislocands, and discourse markers (*contra* Richter 1980, 158). Lastly, while failing to be discussed in scholarship, the highest extent of extra-systematicity of BH interjections pertains to morphology. Our study also provides validity to certain statements that have thus far been merely assumed and never supported by empirical evidence. First, as hypothesized by van der Merwe and Naudé (2017, 483), BH interjections "do not form part of […] a clause." Our data demonstrate that they are indeed extra-clausal. Second, further corroborating van der Merwe and Naudé (ibid.), interjections do not modify and complement constituents. However, interjections may govern constituents—an observation that has been unnoticed by those two authors.

5. CONCLUSION

This paper demonstrates that when envisaged globally, the lexical class of interjections in Biblical Hebrew exhibits a semi-canonical and thus semi-extra-systematic profile as far as its form is concerned. Locally, the levels of canonicity and extra-systematicity of BH interjections are uneven. The highest level is attested in morphology, while the levels found in phonology and syntax are only moderate.

We propose furthermore that BH interjections have a structural representation and syntagmatic role. They govern dependents within their own interjectional phrases, either a PP or an NP, and form part of a sentence structure to a comparable extent as other extra-clausal phrases such as vocative, left-dislocand, and topic phrases.

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