

**Theme:** Comparative and internal reconstruction, especially with respect to Hebrew.

**1. Internal reconstruction: Begad-kefat allophony**

		'to learn'	'to write'	'to ride'	'to want'	'to read'
Infinitive		<i>lilmod</i>	<i>lixtov</i>	<i>lirkov</i>	<i>lirtsot</i>	<i>likro</i>
Past	Sg. 3. masc.	<i>lamad</i>	<i>katav</i>	<i>raxav</i>	<i>ratsa</i>	<i>kara</i>
	Sg. 3. fem.	<i>lamda</i>	<i>katva</i>	<i>raxva</i>	<i>ratsta</i>	<i>kar'a</i>
	Sg. 2. masc.	<i>lamadta</i>	<i>katavta</i>	<i>raxavta</i>	<i>ratsita</i>	<i>karata</i>
Future	Sg. 3. masc.	<i>yilmad</i>	<i>yixtov</i>	<i>yirkov</i>	<i>yirtse</i>	<i>yikra</i>
	Sg. 2. fem.	<i>tilmedi</i>	<i>tixtevi</i>	<i>tirkevi</i>	<i>tirtsi</i>	<i>tikri</i>
Imperative	Sg. 2. masc.	<i>Imad!</i>	<i>ktov!</i>	<i>rexov!</i>	<i>retse!</i>	<i>kra!</i>

**Sources of data:** Spoken modern (Israeli) Hebrew pronunciation (with great variability)  
Descriptive-prescriptive grammars of (modern) Hebrew

Biblical Hebrew, or rather **Tiberian Hebrew:**

Medieval manuscripts with vocalization :

Masorah: Ben Asher and Ben Naphtali families in Tiberias; Aleppo Codex, Leningrad Codex.

Other masoretic traditions: Babylonian masorah and Palestinian masorah.

Samaritan tradition.

Oral traditions of pronunciation (Ashkenazi, Sephardi, Yemenite, Samaritan... incl. many subgroups).

Greek, Latin, etc. transcriptions of words in antique translations (Septuagint: LXX).

Transliteration to Greek ("Secunda") in Origen's *Hexapla*.

*Etc. etc. etc.*

Critical question: to what degree are these sources reliable for the pronunciation of the Hebrew verbal paradigm in (1) late antiquities ; (2) at the time when those texts were written (which was what?).

**a. Approach of the structural linguist:**

**allomorphy and/or allophony**

	<u>meaning</u>	<u>form</u>	<u>allomorph(s)</u>
Morpheme 1:	'learn'	/l.m.d/	[l.m.d]
Morpheme 2:	'write'	/?.t.v/	[k.t.v]      [x.t.v]
Morpheme 3:	'ride'	/r.?.v/	[r.k.v]      [r.x.v]
Morpheme 4:	Past Sg.3.m.	_ a _ a _	(or: ending in null morpheme?)
Morpheme 5:	Past Sg.3.f.	_ a _ _ a	(or: -a suffix is separate morpheme?)
Morpheme 6:	Past Sg.2.m.	_ a _ a _ ta	(or: -ta suffix is separate morpheme?)
Morpheme 7:	Fut. Sg. 3. m.	/yi __ T _ /	[yi __ o _]      [yi __ a _]
	Observe <b>non-concatenative</b> pattern matching.		Which allomorph to use in what context?

Allomorphy of Morpheme 7 (a.k.a. choice of the *theme vowel*) depends on root.

Allomorphy of Morphemes 2 and 3 is in fact a consequence of **allophony**.

Two allophones of /ʔ/ (a.k.a. /K/ or /k/ or /x/ or /Ph22/) are

- [k] when following a consonant (or a break between words)
- [x] when following a vowel (and not geminated)

**b. Approach of the generative linguist: rewrite rule**

Working hypothesis: roots, affixes and patterns have a single<sup>1</sup> representation in the mental lexicon, which are combined in a logical way, but then phonological rules introduce complications.

- Underlying segment: /k/
- Spirantization rule: /k/ → [x] / V \_\_

**c. Approach of the historical linguist: internal reconstruction**

Working hypothesis: paradigms used to be “simple”, while current complications, irregularities are the result of *sound laws* (sound changes) affecting certain points of the paradigms.

- Postulated form in an early stage of the language: \*k.
- Sound change (spirantization) after a V: \*k > x / V \_\_
- When did it happen? Probably late antiquity, early middle ages, under Aramaic influence.

**2. External reconstruction: coronals in Semitic languages**

p	θ	t	s	š	š	k	x	ħ	h
b	ð	d	z	l		g	ɣ	ʕ	ʔ
	θ	t	s	š		q			
		r							
m		n							
							y	w	

Proto-Semitic phoneme system:

Biblical Hebrew phoneme system:

p/f	š	t/θ	s	š	š	k/x	ħ	ħ	h
b/β	z	d/ð	z	l		g/ɣ	ʕ	ʕ	ʔ
	š	t	s	š		q			
		r							
m		n							
							y	w	

  

p/f	t/θ	s	š	k/x	ħ	h
b/β	d/ð	z		g/ɣ	ʕ	ʔ
	t	s		q		
	l					
	r					
m	n					
			y	w		

  

i/ī	u/ū
ē	ō
a/ā	

  

i/ē	a, ā, e	u, ō, o	ī	ā/ō	ū	ayi, ē	awe, ō
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**Reading:** Hetzron et al. on Semitic languages, in Comrie, *The Major Languages of ...* Routledge, 1987.

**Homework for Tuesday, October 15:** Collect words of Hebrew origin (possibly via Yiddish) in English. We shall try to uncover their history from Hebrew to English by analyzing their phonological forms.

<sup>1</sup> The exception is **suppletion**: e.g., *lehaqid* ‘to say’: past *amar, amra, amarta*, future *yagid, tagidi*, etc. in Mod Hbr.