

Redundancy in Discourse: Towards a Unified Understanding of Its Processing and Effects

Steven E. Runge

Dept. of Ancient Studies, University of Stellenbosch and Logos Bible Software

Abstract: This paper describes the role that semantically redundant discourse elements can have upon the assignment or construal of a usage as “emphatic”. In many cases, the redundant element has the secondary effect of creating or drawing attention to a discontinuity. These two factors form the basis of a cognitive processing framework which describes the process by which readers construe the various pragmatic effects of redundancy and discontinuity as “emphatic”. This framework will be applied to the redundant use of the prophetic formula in Jeremiah, clause-medial vocatives of address, mid-speech quotative frames where there has been no change of speakers, to illustrate the heuristic value of this framework.

Key words: Biblical Hebrew, Redundancy, Cognitive processing, Participant reference, Quotative frames, Masoretic accents.

It is not uncommon to find claims of emphasis associated with the use of various forms, particularly in older commentaries or grammars. The term most often functions as a catch-all for something that stands out and catches one’s attention rather than having a technical sense. Scholars have often conflated topicalization and marked focus as emphasis, assigning the significance to the constituent or the marked position itself as opposed to appreciating the pragmatics of information structure. Studies like Muraoka’s *Emphatic words and structures in Biblical Hebrew* have provided useful clarification regarding so-called emphatic pronouns or particles (1985); studies by Heimerdinger (1999), Holmstedt (2002)

and Floor (2004) have proposed heuristic models for understanding the syntactic and cognitive dynamics that bring about such claims.

There is another class of discourse devices that all operate on the principle of redundancy. In some contexts they are classified as markers of discourse boundaries, in other contexts as indicators of emphasis or prominence. Sometimes they do nothing special at all. This has led to competing claims about their function, “either-or” proposals rather than a unified explanation. This paper considers a few such devices in order to illustrate the heuristic value of a processing model that reconciles the claims and explains the discourse principles that bring about the various pragmatic effects. Rather than being mutually exclusive devices with unrelated effects, I contend that they are linked by a common reliance upon the cognitive processing of semantic redundancy to achieve two related effects.

Seemingly redundant, unnecessary elements are processed in many languages as marking some kind of discontinuity. The discontinuity may be motivated by processing considerations, i.e. to guide the reader/hearer in breaking larger units down into smaller ones to facilitate comprehension of the discourse (Paivio and Begg 1981:176, Dooley and Levinsohn 2001:18-19). Where the marking of discontinuity is either unneeded or more frequent than warranted by processing considerations, one sometimes finds claims of emphasis or prominence. This is

true in regard to participant reference, quotative frames, certain Masoretic accents, vocative expressions, and so-called prophetic formulas in Biblical Hebrew (BH).

The proposed processing model operates on the presupposition that readers and hearers assume meaning is associated with linguistic choice, even if the constituent in question is semantically redundant. When a semantically-based explanation cannot account for the usage the reader/hearer moves up a hierarchy in search of a suitable explanation. The constituent still fulfills a semantic function, but may also have a secondary or even tertiary function based on its redundancy in the context. The secondary explanation is that the semantically-redundant element serves to highlight a boundary in the discourse, segmenting the text into smaller chunks. If the segmentation occurs in a context of high continuity or in rapid succession, contrary to expected usage for processing considerations, a tertiary explanation of pragmatic highlighting is posited. This can be summarized by Figure 1, where the lower levels of the hierarchy are entailed within the higher ones.

Figure 1 Processing hierarchy

Discourse-pragmatic Function



Processing Function



Semantic Function

The balance of this paper will demonstrate this entailment hierarchy's value for explaining the discourse functions of representative devices in the Hebrew Bible that employ this processing strategy.

The first two levels of the hierarchy are empirically sound and well-attested in a variety of languages (Runge 2007:50-78). The discourse-pragmatic level is extrapolated from anecdotal claims made by linguists and grammarians on the basis of a neo-Gricean pragmatic scheme (Runge 2007:76-78). Subsequent analysis of discourse devices in the Greek New Testament has demonstrated that these principles are far more pervasive than participant reference alone (Runge 2010). Comparable devices are found to achieve similar effects in Koine Greek and English, all sharing one common denominator: redundancy.

1 Participant Reference

1.1 Semantic Function

Hebrew narrative tends to be very terse, and like most languages avoids unnecessary elements using conventions like anaphora or elision (Anderson 1994:109). This predilection for brevity is captured in the Gricean Maxim of Quantity, "Do not make your contribution more informative than is required" (Huang 2000:207). In terms of referential encoding in Biblical Hebrew narrative, activation of a new participant typically requires reference using a full noun phrase

(NP) along with some kind of anchoring relation that connects it to the discourse (Runge 2006:86-87). In Example 1, Hagar is introduced in the comment of a topic/comment clause, anchored to the discourse as Sarai's servant.

Example 1 Genesis 16:1

<p>וְשָׂרַי אִשְׁתֹּ אַבְרָם לֹא יָלְדָה לוֹ וְלֵאמֹר שָׂפָהָה מִצְרַיִת וְשִׁמְהָ הָגָר:</p>	<p>Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had not given birth to any children, but she had an Egyptian servant named Hagar.</p>
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Example 2 illustrates the introduction of participants in a presentational clause using a verb of being or motion. The entire clause conveys new information, with the participants introduced being the most salient part.

Example 2 Genesis 19:4

<p>טָרַם יִשְׁכְּבוּ וְאֲנָשֵׁי הָעִיר אֲנָשֵׁי סֹדֹם נִקְּבוּ עַל-הַבַּיִת מִנְּעַר וְעַד-זָקֵן כָּל-הָעָם מִקְּצֵה:</p>	<p>Before they could lie down to sleep, all the men – both young and old, from every part of the city of Sodom – surrounded the house.</p>
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Changes in the participant's role (e.g. from subject to non-subject), especially where more than two entities interact, typically requires full NP reference to avoid ambiguity. Reactivation of a participant after a period of inactivity also requires a full NP. If the inactivity is great enough, the anchoring expression may be included to ensure that the intended participant is properly connected to the discourse context (Runge 2007:120-159).

There are two basic contexts where minimal encoding of finite verbs is expected: in narrative proper where there is no change of subject, and in reported speeches where there is a predictable change of speaker and hearer.¹ Abraham is the subject of each clause in Example 3, so there is no semantic need for overt reference to him.

Example 3 Genesis 22:3

<p style="text-align: right;">וַיִּשְׁמַע אַבְרָהָם בְּבֹקֶר וַיִּחְבֹּשׁ אֶת-חֲמֹרֹו וַיִּקַּח אֶת-שְׁנֵי נְעָרָיו אִתּוֹ וְאֵת יִצְחָק בְּנוֹ וַיִּבְקַע עֵצִי עָלָהּ וַיִּקַּם וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל-הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר-אָמַר-לּוֹ הָאֱלֹהִים:</p>	<p>³ Early in the morning Abraham got up and saddled his donkey. He took two of his young servants with him, along with his son Isaac. When he had cut the wood for the burnt offering, he started out for the place God had spoken to him about.</p>
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Minimally encoding the participant has the effect of cohesively connecting the five clauses of v. 3, comparable to the cohesive effects achieved by an unbroken chain of *waw*-consecutive verb forms.

1.2 Processing Function

One often finds full NP reference to participants in contexts where minimal encoding would suffice in violation of the Gricean Maxim of Quantity. In the same

¹ There are instances in narrative where a change of subject and object can be achieved using zero anaphora, based on the semantics of the context. Such changes would fall under the same cognitive expectations as change within reported speeches, though judgments about over-encoding are far more tenuous. See Runge (2007:141-150).

way that a break in a sequential chain of *wayyiqtol* verbs can signal a change of some kind (Niccacci 1990:64-66, Heimerdinger 1999:236), the overencoding of active participants using full NPs can accomplish comparable effects. According to Gricean pragmatics, the choice to depart from the expected minimal encoding is construed as having significance. The M-principle states “Do not use a prolix, obscure or marked expression without reason” (Huang 2000:207). Hence, the principle that “choice implies meaning” leads readers to search for some other explanation to account for the overencoding.²

Anderson hypothesizes that “a seemingly redundant unnecessarily repeated subject noun serves to highlight the distinctiveness of an event, to mark that event as sequential in time more clearly, but not to the extent of giving that event episode status on the main storyline” (Anderson 1994:106-107). He demonstrates from the opening chapters of Genesis that the redundant NPs coincide with “distinct actions, successive in time” (Ibid., 107). Rather than drawing attention to the over-encoded subject, as one might conclude from conventional claims made about repetition for emphasis’ sake, the redundant NP functions at the level of clause-clause syntax,

² It is important to distinguish between overencoding (i.e. use of a NP versus zero anaphora) and overspecification (i.e. a simple NP “Abraham” versus a more descriptive “Abraham, her husband.” For a description of the pragmatic effects associated with overspecification, see Runge (2007).

signaling the presence of a minor boundary “on a level between the sentence and the paragraph” (Ibid.). Revell reaches a similar conclusion, stating that overencoding “often coincides with a new aspect of the character’s activity.” (Revell 1996:60).

Example 4 Genesis 2:2-3

<p>וַיְכַל אֱלֹהִים בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה וַיִּשְׁבֹּת בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי מִכָּל־מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה: ³ וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹהִים אֶת־יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי וַיְקַדֵּשׁ אֹתוֹ כִּי בּוֹ שָׁבַת מִכָּל־מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר־בְּרָא אֱלֹהִים לַעֲשׂוֹת: פ</p>	<p>² By the seventh day God finished the work that he had been doing, and he ceased on the seventh day all the work that he had been doing. ³ God blessed the seventh day and made it holy because on it he ceased all the work that he had been doing in creation.</p>
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The overencoding in v. 3 coincides with the transition from the creative work and Sabbath rest to God’s blessing of the Sabbath. The ceasing and blessing are distinct actions of themselves, but would not have been explicitly marked as such without the overencoding.

Judgments about segmentation are typically made on the basis of natural discontinuities in the context, changes of time, place, participants or kind-of-action (Givón 1990:245). Such discontinuities often fall at logical discourse boundaries and serve as heuristic indicators for where to segment the discourse for easier processing. Natural discontinuities can also be pragmatically highlighted using information-structuring devices like “contextualizing constituents” (Buth 1999:81). Prototypically, the more discontinuities found in a particular context, the higher the

level of the boundary within the discourse. Things become more complicated in contexts of relative continuity. The writer must balance the reader’s processing needs with the need for continuity and cohesion. I contend that overencoding is one of several processing devices attested in biblical Hebrew.

Levinsohn extends Anderson’s proposal from a cross-linguistic perspective, demonstrating that the overencoding of active participants in BH serves of a broader cross-linguistic processing function. “Many languages employ intersentential conjunctions to indicate whether or not the material concerned represents a new development. In other languages, the choice of verb form serves a similar purpose [e.g. switch-reference systems]. Neither of these options is exploited in Ancient Hebrew. Instead, full NP references to active participants help to identify those events that represent new developments in a narrative” (Levinsohn 2000b:1). He demonstrates that new developments within the relative continuity of Genesis 22 are signaled using the redundant NP references to Abraham. Recall from Example 3 that Abraham was the subject of each clause in Genesis 22:3. Example 5 illustrates way in which overencoding coincides with new developments within the discourse. Note that the translation supplies the temporal adverb “then” in v. 5 to achieve the same effect in English.

Example 5 Genesis 22:4-5

<p>בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי וַיִּשָּׂא אַבְרָהָם ⁵ אֶת־עֵינָיו וַיֵּרָא אֶת־הַמָּקוֹם מֵרָחֹק:</p>	<p>⁴ On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place far away. ⁵ Then Abraham</p>
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<p>וַיֹּאמֶר אֲבִרְהֵם אֶל־נְעָרָיו שְׁבוּ־לָכֶם פֹּה עִם־הַחֲמֹר וְאֲנִי וְהַנֶּגֶר גִּלְכָּה עַד־כָּה וְנִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה וְנָשׁוּבָה אֵלֵיכֶם:</p>	<p>said to his young men, “Stay here with the donkey; the boy and I will go over there; we will worship, and then we will come back to you.”</p>
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The overencoding coincides with three different transitions in the story: preparation for the journey in response to God’s command (v. 3, Example 3 above), nearing the place (v. 4), and instructing his servants (v. 5).

Levinsohn claims that the overencoding serves as a *developmental marker* which “constrains the material with which it is associated to be interpreted as a new step or development in the author’s story or argument” (Levinsohn 2000a:293). He adds that developments reflect the writer’s judgments about the matter; the representation of the information in the discourse is based upon his or her conceptualization and communicative objectives. There is substantial support to be found in the linguistic literature for the processing use of participant reference. Descriptive studies have demonstrated the use of overencoding in English,³ Latin (Bolkestein 2000), Hebrew,⁴ and Japanese (Nariyama 2000:55-68, 2001:99-129). Stirling (2001:7-23) documents the comparable use in Austronesian

³ See Linde (1979:337-354), Downing (1980:89-126), Givón (1983:347-363), Fox (1987:157-174).

⁴ See Fox (1983:215-254), Revell (1996:60-66), Heimerdinger (1999:124), Levinsohn (2000b), and Runge (2007:160-190).

switch-reference languages of the “different subject” marker in same-subject contexts as a segmentation marker.

Besides the descriptive studies, quite a few empirical studies have measured the impact of overencoding on such things as speed-of-reading and conceptualization of the discourse content.⁵ These studies collectively point toward a cross-linguistic association of overencoding as one means of signaling new developments in discourse.

1.3 Discourse-Pragmatic function

Not all overencoding can be adequately explained by discourse processing. Overencoding is sometimes found in a series of clauses, or just before significant speeches or events. Based upon the Gricean Maxim of Quantity⁶ Levinsohn states, “The effect of violating this maxim by making a ‘redundant’ reference to the speaker is to throw the element (sentence) concerned into relief. In the case of [Genesis] 22:8a above, it is appropriate for the speech to be highlighted because its assertion ‘God will provide’ is the turning point of the story” (Levinsohn 2000b:5).

Example 6 Genesis 22:7-8

⁵ For English see Anderson et al. (1983:427-440), Tomlin (1987), Garrod and Sanford (1988:519-534), Vonk et al. (1992:301-333), Gordon et al. (1993:311-348). For Japanese see Clancy (1980:127-202). For Dutch see van Vliet (2002:187-198).

⁶ “Do not make your contribution more informative than is required” (Huang 2000:208).

<p>7 וַיֹּאמֶר יִצְחָק אֶל־אֲבִרְהָם אָבִי וַיֹּאמֶר אָבִי וַיֹּאמֶר הֲנִנִּי בְנִי וַיֹּאמֶר הֲנִנִּי הֲנִנִּי הֲנִנִּי וְהַעֲצִים וְאֵיךְ הִשָּׂה לְעֹלָה: 8 וַיֹּאמֶר אֲבִרְהָם אֶל־הַיְהוָה יְרֵאֵה־לֶן הִשָּׂה לְעֹלָה בְנִי וַיִּלְכוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם יַחְדָּו:</p>	<p>⁷ Isaac said to his father Abraham, “Father!” And he said, “Here I am, my son.” He said, “The fire and the wood are here, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?” ⁸ Abraham said, “God himself will provide the lamb for a burnt offering, my son.” So the two of them walked on together.</p>
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In terms of the proposed processing hierarchy, this consecutive overencoding cannot satisfactorily be explained by semantic clarification or discourse-processing.⁷ Levinsohn’s claim illustrates the move beyond the processing function up the hierarchy.

Others have made correlated the special patterns of reference in Biblical Hebrew with various pragmatic effects.⁸ De Regt (1999b:61) states “In general, devices of repetition often mark a peak, i.e., various devices are used to insure that the peak does not ‘go by too fast.’” His comments here are informative regarding the relation of increased segmentation with the slowing of the discourse flow. The discourse-pragmatic function of the processing hierarchy explains this relationship. Empirical studies of overencoding have consistently found that reading progress slows in proportion to the amount of overencoding. The excessive segmentation of

⁷ Longacre associates overencoding of participants with “peak-marking,” noting that the break from the expected encoding norms can be a signal of an approaching climax (2003:18).

⁸ See Heimerdinger (1999:155), de Regt (1999:55-94), Revell (1996:62-63), Longacre (2003:144-46).

the discourse naturally leads readers to expect some other meaning associated with the encoding. I contend such overencoding is best explained as cataphoric highlighting, as in Example 7.

Example 7 Ruth 2:20-22

<p>20 וַתֹּאמֶר נָעֲמִי לְכַלְתָּהּ בְּרוּךְ הוּא לַיהוָה אֲשֶׁר לֹא־עָזַב חַסְדּוֹ אֶת־הַחַיִּים וְאֶת־הַמֵּתִים וַתֹּאמֶר לָהּ נָעֲמִי קְרוֹב לָנוּ הָאִישׁ מִגְּאֻלָּנוּ הוּא:</p> <p>21 וַתֹּאמֶר רוּת הַמּוֹאֲבִיָּה גַם כִּי־אָמַר אֵלַי עַם־הַנְּעָרִים אֲשֶׁר־לִי תִדְבְּקִין עַד אִם־כָּלוּ אֶת כָּל־הַקְצִיר אֲשֶׁר־לִי:</p> <p>22 וַתֹּאמֶר נָעֲמִי אֶל־רוּת כַּלְתָּהּ טוֹב בְּתִי כִי תֵצְאִי עִם־נְעוּרוֹתָיו וְלֹא יִפְגְּעוּ־בָךְ בְּשָׂדֵה אַחֵר:</p>	<p>20 Then Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, “Blessed be he by the LORD, whose kindness has not forsaken the living or the dead!” Naomi also said to her, “The man is a relative of ours, one of our nearest kin.”²¹</p> <p>Then Ruth the Moabite said, “He even said to me, ‘Stay close by my servants, until they have finished all my harvest.’ ”²²</p> <p>Naomi said to Ruth, her daughter-in-law, “It is better, my daughter, that you go out with his young women, otherwise you might be bothered in another field.”</p>
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De Regt (Ibid.) claims that the overencoding here draws “attention to the material that is introduced by the repetition,” or “to indicate the importance of her words that follow.”⁹ Since the encoding here exceeds both semantic and processing requirements for the context, the repetition of information--in combination with the overencoding--creates a build-up toward the pivotal disclosure of the kinsman redeemer.

The encoding of participants plays a crucial role in discourse. Not all encoding can be adequately explained as semantically motivated. The various claims of

⁹ De Regt treats the processing and discourse-pragmatic functions as mutually exclusive rather than entailed within one another.

segmentation and cataphoric highlighting can be reconciled by the processing hierarchy into a unified explanation. Just as semantic redundancy leads to an association of the encoding with discourse processing and segmentation, excessive overencoding that is unneeded for discourse processing is deemed to signal cataphoric highlighting. Cataphoric highlighting is a derivative pragmatic effect of “redundant” segmentation. The encoding still fulfills a semantic function, still segments the text, but is understood to do something more in the absence of a satisfactory explanation.

2 Quotative Frames

2.1 Semantic function

Quotative frames appear to be another grammatical means by which biblical Hebrew writers could accomplish the effects described by the processing hierarchy. The primary semantic function of quotative frames is to signal the transition from narrative proper to reported speech of some kind, be it direct or indirect. The verb(s) of speaking, in combination with the encoding of the speaker and addressee, serves to orient the reader to the dialogue that follows. After the initial quotative frame, minimal referential encoding of participants is construed to signal switch of speaker and addressee, as in the following example.

Example 8 Genesis 32:26-28

<p>27 וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁלַחְנִי כִּי עָלָה הַשָּׁחַר וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא אֲשַׁלְּחֶךָּ כִּי אִם-בֵּרַכְתָּנִי: 28 וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו מִה-שְּׂמֹךְ וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב: 29 וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא יַעֲקֹב יֵאמָר עוֹד שְׂמֹךְ כִּי אִם-יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי-שָׁרִיתָ עִם-אֱלֹהִים וְעִם-אָנָשִׁים וַתִּבֹּכַל:</p>	<p>26 Then he said, “Let me go, for the day is breaking.” But Jacob said, “I will not let you go, unless you bless me.” 27 So he said to him, “What is your name?” And he said, “Jacob.” 28 Then the man said, “You shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with humans, and have prevailed.</p>
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Each וַיֹּאמֶר in the midst of the speech is construed as signaling a switch of speaker and hearer, opposite of how the same minimal encoding would prototypically be construed outside of a quotative context.

Multiple-verb quotative frames in BH take several different forms, ranging from those combining a verb of speaking with יסף or שוב to those using two or more verbs of speaking (Miller 1996:159-60). Sometimes the frame is complex enough that the second speaking-verb helps mark the transition from the frame to the speech it introduces. The asterisk indicates that the NRSV translation has been modified.

Example 9 Leviticus 16:1-2

<p>1 וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה אַחֲרֵי מוֹת שְׁנֵי בְּנֵי אַהֲרֹן בְּקִרְבָּתָם לִפְנֵי-יְהוָה וַיָּמָתוּ: 2 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה...*</p>	<p>The Lord spoke to Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they drew near before the Lord and died, 2 and the Lord said to Moses:*</p>
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There are many instances where the initial frame of v. 1 serves as a complete quotative frame, e.g. Leviticus 14:1; 15:1; and 17:1. The additional descriptive information could potentially cause confusion about exactly where the speech

begins and the frame ends. The second verb of speaking in v. 3 makes the transition explicit.

In other instances, the additional verb more specifically characterizes the following speech compared to using a simple *אמר* frame. Miller notes that when there are multiple verbs of speaking: “the first metapragmatic verb of the frame is more semantically specific than the second (usually the generic verb *אמר* ‘to say’; occasionally *דבר* ‘to speak’)” (Ibid., 152).

Example 10 Genesis 27:34

<p>כְּשִׁמְעַ עֵשָׂו אֶת־דְּבָרֵי אָבִיו וַיִּצְעַק צָעָקָה גְדֹלָה וּמְרָה עַד־מְאֹד וַיֹּאמֶר לְאָבִיו בְּרַכְנִי גַם־אֲנִי אָבִי:</p>	<p>When Esau heard his father’s words, he cried out with an exceedingly great and bitter cry, and said to his father, “Bless me, me also, father!”</p>
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The content of the speech alone communicates Esau’s anguish, but the characterization of *צעק* makes this more explicit.

Quotative frames can accomplish pragmatic functions in at least two different ways: using a form of *ענה* where there is no preceding interrogative, or interrupting a single-speaker’s speech with an unnecessary mid-speech quotative frame (i.e. a reintroduction). Both methods rely upon redundancy to achieve the effect as described in the processing hierarchy.

2.2 Multiple-verb frames

2.2.1 Processing Function

There are some anomalies in the usage of ענה. First, this verb is not always used to introduce the answer to a question, instead אמר is quite often used, as in Example 11.¹⁰

Example 11 Ruth 3:9

וַיֹּאמֶר מִי־אַתָּה וַתֹּאמֶר אֲנֹכִי רוּת אֲמָתְךָ וּפְרִשְׁתָּ כְנָפֶיךָ עַל־אֲמָתְךָ כִּי גֹאֵל אֶתְּהָה׃	He said, “Who are you?” And she answered , “I am Ruth, your servant; spread your cloak over your servant, for you are next-of-kin.”
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Such usage indicates there is latitude in semantic specificity needed to clearly introduce an answer.

Conversely, ענה is regularly used to introduce speeches which do *not* answer questions. This latter usage is often found in contexts introducing what Dooley and Levinsohn (2001:5) call a countering move, whereby the new speaker counters the intentions of the preceding speaker by redirecting the course of the dialogue.

Levinsohn (2008:108) notes that countering moves are marked by devices such as overencoding of participants, development markers, or a “specific orienter verb or expression,” citing Koine Greek, Bantu A, Iten (Nigeria), Karai Karai (Nigeria)

¹⁰ Miller (Ibid., 312) comments, “It is also significant that although אמר does not explicitly index features of the speech event such as ‘to answer’ or ‘to call’ or ‘to ask’, it may be used in contexts where it implicitly has such a pragmatic sense.”

and Mambila (Cameroon) as examples. The usage in the following example illustrates a comparable usage of ענה in BH to mark a countering move.

Example 12 Genesis 40:16-18

<p>וַיֵּרָא שְׂרֵה־הָאֲפִים כִּי טוֹב פְּתָר וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־יֹסֵף אֶף־אֲנִי בְּחִלּוּמֵי וְהִנֵּה שְׁלֹשָׁה סִלֵּי חֲרִי עַל־רֹאשִׁי: ¹⁷ וּבִסֵּל הָעֲלִיּוֹן מִכָּל מִאֲכָל פְּרִעָה מַעֲשֶׂה אֲפָה וְהָעוֹף אֵכֵל אֹתָם מִן־הַסֵּל מֵעַל רֹאשִׁי: וַיַּעַן יֹסֵף וַיֹּאמֶר זֶה פְּתָרְנִי שְׁלֹשֶׁת הַסֵּלִים שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים הֵם:</p>	<p>¹⁶ When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was favorable, he said to Joseph, “I also had a dream: there were three cake baskets on my head, ¹⁷ and in the uppermost basket there were all sorts of baked food for Pharaoh, but the birds were eating it out of the basket on my head.” ¹⁸ And Joseph answered, “This is its interpretation: the three baskets are three days;</p>
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Such changes in direction represent a discontinuity in the discourse flow, so it is not surprising to find writers marking them to facilitate the processing by readers. As was the case with overencoding, such marking is not a requirement. Instead it is based upon the writer’s conceptualization of the discourse and communicative intentions.

Complex quotative frames are often combined with overencoding to mark countering moves. Longacre notes that overencoding of one or both participants in such countering contexts “signals that the utterance thus introduced *redirects* the dialogue so that it takes a sudden and important turn, much like a fresh beginning” (2003:163, emphasis his). Longacre’s terminology is consistent with the processing

function described in the hierarchy.¹¹ Overencoding and redundant quotative frames simply add prominence to an already existing discontinuity. The pragmatic effect of the redundant information, be it the extra ענה or overencoding, is to highlight a new segment in the text. The combined use of these devices typically leads to judgments of pragmatic highlighting, and will be discussed in the next section.

2.2.2 *Discourse-Pragmatic Function*

Miller (1996:321) states “Within a conversation, a multiple-verb frame with ענה is used once or at most twice; other responses in second pair-parts are commonly introduced simply with אמר in a single frame. The use of ענה in a multiple-verb frame thus seems to signal the most salient or important response in the conversation.”¹² She cites Wenham’s (1994:272) comments along the same lines that “this apparently tautological collocation [answered and said] often seems to

¹¹ De Regt (1999:20) associates the use of overencoding with redirection within reported speeches.

¹² Earlier she notes that 4QSam^a reads complex frames including ענה instead of a simple אמר frame in 1 Sa 2:16 and 2Sa 15:2; “and in each case the response is salient in that the point of the narrative hinges on them” (Ibid., 320n).

precede a significant remark.” Example 13 illustrates this usage, where the salience of the countering move suggests cataphoric highlighting is the intended function.

Example 13 Numbers 23:25-27

<p>²⁵ וַיֹּאמֶר בָּלַק אֶל־בְּלָעַם גַּם־קִבֹּל לֹא תִקְבְּנֵנוּ גַם־בְּרַדְדֵּךְ לֹא תִבְרַכְנֵנוּ: ²⁶ וַיַּעַן בְּלָעַם וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־בָּלַק הֲלֹא דִבַּרְתִּי אֵלֶיךָ לֵאמֹר כֹּל אֲשֶׁר־יִדְבֹר יְהוָה אֶתֶּן אֲעֲשֶׂה: ²⁷ וַיֹּאמֶר בָּלַק אֶל־בְּלָעַם לְכֶ־נָּא אֶקְחֶךָ אֶל־מְקוֹם אַחֵר אוּלַי יִישַׁר בְּעֵינַי הָאֱלֹהִים וְקִבַּתוּ לִי מִשָּׁם:</p>	<p>²⁵ Then Balak said to Balaam, “Do not curse them at all, and do not bless them at all.” ²⁶ But Balaam answered Balak, “Did I not tell you, ‘Whatever the Lord says, that is what I must do’?” ²⁷ So Balak said to Balaam, “Come now, I will take you to another place; perhaps it will please God that you may curse them for me from there.”</p>
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At each turn both speaker and addressee are overencoded, but Balaam’s disavowal of responsibility in v. 26 includes a redundant form of ענה. This rebuttal seems moves Balak to try a change of venue rather than giving up the entire venture as v. 25 seems to indicate. Rather than understanding ענה to have divergent meanings, the distribution is consistent with cross-linguistic use of certain speech verbs for pragmatic purposes. The presence of other devices like overencoding further corroborates this view.

2.3 Mid-speech quotative frames

2.3.1 Processing Function

The second type of redundant quotative frame is used to reintroduce the same speaker midway through a single speech. Since there has been no change of

speaker, there is no semantic need for the quotative frame. Revell (1997:102) states that “the repetition of an introduction to speech within the words of a single speaker presents those words as two speeches,” functioning as an explicit segmentation marker.¹³ Mid-speech quotative frames serve a structuring role in the books of Leviticus and Numbers, segmenting the Lord’s otherwise extended speech into smaller chunks. Meier (1992:74) questions the legitimacy of including this in the broader discussion of redundant frames, but Revell (1997:97) counters that the same linguistic principles govern both, so long as there is no semantic requirement for its presence, e.g. a change in addressee or an intervening narrative comment.¹⁴

Revell (1996:60) also claims that mid-speech quotative frames are “used to draw attention to the introduction of a new topic,” as in Example 14.

Example 14 Judges 8:23-24

¹³ He adds that the redundant quotative frame “is usually accompanied by a repeated designation of the speaker” (Ibid., 97). The NP encoding is semantically required in most contexts to counter the default expectation that zero-encoded, non-initial quotative frames signal a switch of speaker and hearer as described in Section 2.1.

¹⁴ He states, “If the speech of God in Leviticus and Numbers, and other categories excluded from Meier’s list were taken into consideration, the proportion of repeated introductions to speech used for text-structuring would be much more similar to that of overspecific designations used for this purpose” (Ibid., 105).

<p>23 וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם גְּדֻעוֹן לֹא־אֶמְשֵׁל אֲנִי בְּכֶם וְלֹא־יִמְשֵׁל בְּנִי בְּכֶם יְהוָה יִמְשֵׁל בְּכֶם: 24 וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם גְּדֻעוֹן אֲשַׂאֲלֶה מִכֶּם שְׂאֵלָה וְתַנּוּ־לִי אֵישׁ גִּזָּם שְׂלָלוּ... </p>	<p>23 Gideon said to them, “I will not rule over you, and my son will not rule over you; the Lord will rule over you.” 24 Then Gideon said to them, “Let me make a request of you; each of you give me an earring he has taken as booty...”</p>
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In this example the mid-speech frame falls at a natural transition in Gideon’s speech. The first segment is a refusal of their request, one which is modified into a request for earrings in the second segment.

Despite the contextual semantics, one often finds overencoding utilized in mid-speech frames. The mid-speech quotative frames in Example 15 fall at logical boundaries in the speech’s content, explicitly segmenting it.

Example 15 Genesis 16:9-11

<p>9 וַיֹּאמֶר לָהּ מַלְאָךְ יְהוָה שׁוּבִי אֶל־גְּבִרְתְּךָ וְהִתְעַנִּי תַחַת יְדֶיהָ: 10 וַיֹּאמֶר לָהּ מַלְאָךְ יְהוָה הֲרַבָּה אֲרַבָּה אֶת־זַרְעֲךָ וְלֹא יִסְפָּר מֵרַב: 11 וַיֹּאמֶר לָהּ מַלְאָךְ יְהוָה הִנֵּנִי הָרָה... </p>	<p>9 The angel of the Lord said to her, “Return to your mistress, and submit to her.” 10 The angel of the Lord also said to her, “I will so greatly multiply your offspring that they cannot be counted for multitude.” 11 And the angel of the Lord said to her, “Now you have conceived...”</p>
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The morphological distinction in gender between Hagar and the angel of the LORD clearly disambiguates the speaker’s identity, making the full NP unnecessary. Based on the conclusions from Section 1.3, it is reasonable to view the NP references to the speaker as pragmatically motivated, contributing additional prominence to each subsequent segment.

2.3.2 Discourse-Pragmatic Function

Revell (1997:105) notes that mid-speech frames “may show that those words of that speaker deserve particular attention for other reasons.” Miller notes several instances where the segmentation of a single speech draws attention to the final speech because of its salience, as in Example 16.

Example 16 Genesis 38:25

<p>הוא מוצאת והיא שלחה אל-חמיה לאמר לאיש אשר-אלה לו אנכי הרה ותאמר הפר-נא למי החתמת והפתילים והמטה האלה:</p>	<p>As she was being brought out, she sent word to her father-in-law [saying], “It was the owner of these who made me pregnant.” And she said, “Take note, please, whose these are, the signet and the cord and the staff.”*</p>
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Miller (1996:241n) states, “By representing Tamar’s message in two parts, the narrator draws attention to the locution that provides the climax of the story.”

Although the redundant frame achieves a processing function by dividing the speech into smaller parts, the use in a context of relatively high continuity serves to highlight the most salient part of her speech. A similar mid-speech frame separates Naomi’s response to Ruth from her disclosure that Boaz is a kinsman-redeemer.

Example 17 Ruth 2:20

<p>ותאמר נעמי לכלתה ברוך הוא ליהוה אשר לא-עזב חסדו את-החיים ואת-המתים ותאמר לה נעמי קרוב לנו האיש מגאלנו הוא:</p>	<p>Then Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, “Blessed be he by the Lord, whose kindness has not forsaken the living or the dead!” Naomi also said to her, “The man is a relative of ours, one of our nearest kin.”</p>
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Other significant examples include the LORD's speech to Noah (Gen 9:8, 12, 17) and to Abraham (Gen 17:9), where the redundant frame is combined with overencoding of the addressee.

Quotative frames play an important semantic function signaling the transition from narrative proper to direct or indirect speech. It has been shown that the occurrence and complexity of quotative frames cannot be explained by semantic constraints alone. Complex *נה* frames and mid-speech frames are observed in discourse contexts where one might expect pragmatic marking, e.g. before countering moves or salient speeches. Marked use of quotative frames also regularly coincides with overencoding of participants. The claims of segmenting and pragmatic highlighting associated with such frames are consistent with the response to redundant elements described in the processing hierarchy.

3 Areas for further research

3.1 Masoretic Accents

The Masoretic accent system of the Hebrew Bible offers insight into how the text may have been read by earlier communities. The most utilized aspect of the system within the verse is the *atnach* division. Revell notes that where two clauses occur within a single verse, the *atnach* accent characteristically occurs at the

boundary between the clauses, thus respecting the syntactic units. He notes that the placement in Genesis 22:10 represents a departure from the norm.

Example 18 Genesis 22:10

וַיִּשְׁלַח אַבְרָהָם אֶת־יָדוֹ וַיִּקַּח אֶת־הַמַּאֲכָלֶת לְשַׁחֵט אֶת־בְּנוֹ:	Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to kill his son.
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The accent falls in the middle of the second clause rather than at the boundary between the clauses. “The first half of the verse presents Abraham’s actions; the second, his intention. This much seems clear. It is always tempting to see a further purpose in such unexpected division. In my opinion, its usual intention is to isolate, and so concentrate the hearer’s attention on, the words following the division, here the words presenting the horrifying result entailed by Abraham’s devoted obedience to the Lord” (2007:70). This unexpected use of a discontinuity marker in a context of relative continuity is construed by Revell as accomplishing something other than its processing function. He describes what sounds like a cataphoric highlighting function, drawing attention to the infinitival phrase by virtue of its placement. This is not an isolated incident within the accenting system of the apparent misplacement of a discontinuity marker in a context of relative continuity. The same kind of off-balanced placement of *atnach* is found not just before

statements of purpose (E.g. Gen 34:6), but also before salient details placed at the end of the verse.¹⁵

The *parashiyyot* markers are generally regarded as segmenting the text into *sense divisions* on the basis of some scribe’s exegesis of the passage (Tov 2001:50-51). The nature of this exegesis is at times unclear, leading Tov (2000:314) to characterize it as being “subjective,” “impressionistic,” and “*ad hoc*.” The *parashiyyot* are considered to operate at a level of discourse above the verse, marking sense units something akin to paragraphs or pericopes. This predominant pattern makes their use in contexts of relative continuity stand out, perhaps influencing Tov’s comments about their patterning. The question remains though whether the inclusion of a discontinuity marker is always a result of whimsy, or whether there is some intentionality behind it.

Consider the inclusion of *parashiyyot* markers just before significant speeches in the midst of sense units, as in Example 19.

Example 19 Genesis 3:15, 16

<p>15 וְאִיבָהּ אֲשִׁית בֵּינְךָ וּבֵין הָאִשָּׁה וּבֵין זָרְעֶךָ וּבֵין זָרְעָהּ הוּא יְשׁוּפְךָ רֹאשׁ וְאַתָּה תְּשׁוּפֶנּוּ עֲקֵב: 16 אֶל-הָאִשָּׁה אָמַר הַרְבָּה אַרְבָּה עֲצָבוֹנְךָ וְהִרְגִיד בְּעֵצָב תִּלְדִּי בְּנִים וְאֶל-אִשְׁךָ תְּשׁוּקָתְךָ וְהוּא יִמְשַׁל-בְּךָ: 16</p>	<p>¹⁵ I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will strike your head, and you will strike his heel.” ¹⁶ To the woman he said, “I will greatly increase your pangs in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children, yet</p>
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¹⁵ E.g. Gen 10:5, 20; 11:10; 13:14; 41:37; Exod 14:23; 18:2.

	your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.”
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The *setuma* markers fall at a natural discontinuity in the transition between speakers. Rather than marking transitions between pericopes or such higher-level sense units, they separate individual sentences. The apparent result is to draw attention to the new unit that follows by slowing the flow of the discourse. In this example they mark the transition from the LORD God addressing the serpent to addressing Eve and Adam respectively. A similar usage is found just before Judah’s dramatic speech at the end of Genesis 44:17. Based upon prototypical usage, Revell’s comments regarding placement of the *atnach* in 22:10 may well describe a more pervasive function of the accents to highlight discontinuities to achieve the pragmatic effects described in the processing hierarchy.

Even more fascinating is the occurrence of the *parashiyyot* within a verse, immediately following the *atnach*. There are 60 instances of *setuma* immediately following *atnach* in the Hebrew Bible. Of the five occurrences in Torah, three of the five occur in the disputed Decalogue accounts.¹⁶ Of the 22 occurring in the Former Prophets, all but six of them immediately precede a quotative frame.¹⁷ The coincidence of *petucha* and *atnach* is far more limited and more consistent. There is only one instance in the 11 where the clause that follows the *atnach* does not

¹⁶ Exod 20:14; Deut 2:8; 5:18, 21; 23:8.

¹⁷ The exceptions are 2 Sam 16:13; 20:10, 14; 23:29, 34, 37.

report speech of some kind: Genesis 35:22, describing Israel hearing that Reuben slept with his father’s concubine Bilhah. In the other ten instances, a significant speech or call of a prophet follows. Consider the placement just before Jonathan’s speech to his armor bearer in 1 Sam 14:12 after the agreed-upon sign for victory is confirmed.

Example 20 1 Samuel 14:12

<p style="text-align: center;">וַיַּעֲנוּ אַנְשֵׁי הַמִּצְבָּה אֶת־יֹנָתָן וְאֶת־נֹשֵׂא כֶלִיו וַיֹּאמְרוּ עָלֵינוּ אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְנֹדִיעָה אֶתְכֶם דְּבַר פּ וַיֹּאמֶר יֹנָתָן אֶל־נֹשֵׂא כֶלִיו עָלֵה אַחֲרַי כִּי־נִתְּנָם יְהוָה בְּיַד יִשְׂרָאֵל:</p>	<p>The men of the garrison hailed Jonathan and his armor-bearer, saying, “Come up to us, and we will show you something.” Jonathan said to his armor-bearer, “Come up after me; for the Lord has given them into the hand of Israel.”</p>
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Other examples are found before the LORD’s command to anoint David in 1 Sam 16:12, the call for Gad the seer to inform David of the consequences for ordering the census in 2 Sam 24:11, and the calls of Ezekiel (Ezek 3:16) and Hosea (Hos 1:2).¹⁸ In each instance, the speech that follows represents a significant turning point in the discourse.

These examples suggest that there may indeed be intentionality in the placement of disjunctive accents. The prototypical placement of disjunctive accents like *atnach* and the *parashiyyot* set the stage for pragmatic usage in contexts of relative continuity where they are judged out of place. The distribution of these examples is consistent with the principles outlined in the processing

¹⁸ See also Num 25:19; Josh 4:1; Judg 2:1; 1 Sam 14:19; 1 Kgs 13:20.

hierarchy. It is impossible to know the motivation behind such usage.

Nevertheless, the apparent exploitation of the redundant discontinuity markers to achieve pragmatic effects suggests that more satisfactory explanations may be gleaned from better understanding the discourse function of discontinuity.

3.2 Vocatives of address

Generally speaking, vocatives of address are expected to serve a semantic function, identifying the addressee of a speech. Vocatives represent a third-person reference to the addressee, and often disclose the speaker’s view of the addressee.¹⁹

Example 21 Genesis 16:8

וַיֹּאמֶר הָגָר שְׁפָחַת שָׂרַי אֵי-מִזָּה בָּאת וְאַנָּה תֵלְכִי וְתֹאמְרִי מִפְּנֵי שָׂרַי גְּבוּרָתִי אֲנִי בֹרַחַת:	And he said, “ Hagar, slave-girl of Sarai, where have you come from and where are you going?” She said, “I am running away from my mistress Sarai.”
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In most cases, such forms of address that are semantically motivated occur in the initial position of the clause clearly identifying the intended addressee, e.g. Gen 49:3, 8.

However, one regularly finds vocatives that are not semantically required, and that do not occur clause-initially. Consider the effects of interrupting the clause

¹⁹ The angel of the LORD addresses Hagar as “handmaid of Sarai” apparently for thematic reasons, based on the following speech. The anchoring expression could have been omitted altogether, or other possible relations could have been used, e.g. “wife of Abram” or simply “the Egyptian” (Runge 2007:206-212).

flow with the vocative in the following examples. Vocatives separate the interrogative from the predicate that completes the question, creating something of a dramatic pause that adds prominence to the segment that follows.

Example 22 Exodus 5:4

<p>וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם מֶלֶךְ מִצְרַיִם לָמָּה מְשַׁח מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן תִּפְרִיעוּ אֶת־הָעָם מִמַּעֲשֵׂיוֹ לָכוּ לִסְבֹּלֵתֵיכֶם:</p>	<p>But the king of Egypt said to them, “Why, Moses and Aaron, are you taking the people away from their work? Get to your labors!”*</p>
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This usage is found more commonly in poetry than in prose.²⁰

There are also instances where the vocative occurs at boundaries between subordinate element and the main clause within a complex clause. Such element are often topicalized to create an explicit frame of reference for the clause that follows.²¹ Consider the case of Isaiah 62:6, where the fronted prepositional phrase sets that stage for a comment about what is placed upon those walls.

Example 23 Isaiah 62:6

<p>עַל־חוֹמֹתַיִךְ יְרוּשָׁלַם הַפְּקֻדָּתַי שְׂמָרִים כָּל־הַיּוֹם וְכָל־הַלַּיְלָה תִּמְיֵד לֹא יִחְשׂוּ הַמְּזַכְּרִים אֶת־יְהוָה אֶל־דָּמִי לָכֶם:</p>	<p>Upon your walls, O Jerusalem, I have posted sentinels; all day and all night they shall never be silent. You who remind the Lord, take no rest,</p>
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²⁰ See Exod 32:11; Jdg 21:3; Jer 50:31; Pss 10:1; 13:2; 74:10; 88:15; 89:47; 143:11; Prov 1:22; 6:9.

²¹ E.g. 1 Sam 25:24; 2 Sam 1:19; Isa 26:8; 62:6; Ezek 12:25; 27:8; Pss 48:11; 51:19; 73:20.

Vocatives are also found at the boundary between the main clause and a following subordinate clause, creating the same kind of dramatic pause described above.²²

Consider the use in Micah 6:8.

Example 24 Micah 6:8

<p>הִגִּיד לְךָ אָדָם מִה־טוֹב וּמִה־יְהוָה דוֹרֵשׁ מִמֶּךָ כִּי אִם־עֲשׂוֹת מִשְׁפָּט וְאַהֲבַת חֶסֶד וְהִצְנַע לֶכֶת עִם־אֱלֹהֶיךָ: פ</p>	<p>He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?</p>
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In other cases the segmentation separates the main clause from a single constituent of it, such as the complement.²³

These examples demonstrate that the varied placement of vocative forms of address follows the principles described in the processing hierarchy. In each case the vocative is not semantically required, leading readers to construe them minimally as processing aids but more likely as pragmatically highlighting some salient element in the context. In most cases, this element follows rather than precedes the redundant vocative.

3.3 Prophetic formulas

The so-called “prophetic formulas” כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה and נְאֻם־יהוה, while being quotative frames are often regarded more as stylized forms. The expression כֹּה אָמַר

²² E.g. 2 Sam 16:10; 19:23; 1 Kgs 8:28; Jer 32:25; 34:4; 42:19; 50:31.

²³ E.g. Neh 5:19; 13:14, 29, 31.

יהוה precedes the speech, based on the cataphoric reference of נאם־יהוה. בַּה is found in both clause-medial and clause-final positions. Use in the final position likely serves a processing function to signal the transition from divine speech to that of the prophet. However, there are instances where the clause-final formula is preceded by redundant vocatives, suggesting something more than a processing function may be intended.²⁴

Example 25 Amos 6:14

כִּי הִנְנִי מְקִים עֲלֵיכֶם בַּיַּת יִשְׂרָאֵל נֹאֲם־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי הַעֲבָאוֹת גְּוֵי וְלַחֲצוֹ אֲתַבְּבֶם מִלְּבוֹא חַמַּת עַד־נַחַל הָעֲרָבָה: ס	Indeed, I am raising up against you a nation, O house of Israel, says the Lord, the God of hosts , and they shall oppress you from Lebo-hamath to the Wadi Arabah.
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What is most interesting is the pragmatic effect of clause-medial usage of the formula. The insertion of the formula creates a dramatic pause by interrupting the flow of the clause. The salient element may precede the formula, but in most cases will follow it. The following example illustrates the placement that separates the predication of a future time from what exactly will come about at that time.²⁵

Example 26 Isaiah 22:25

בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא נֹאֲם יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת תְּמוֹשׁ הַיֵּתֶד הַתְּקוּעָה בְּמִקְוֹם נֹאֲמָן וְנִגְדָּעָה	On that day, says the Lord of hosts , the peg that was fastened in a secure place will
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²⁴ See also Jer 3:20; 5:15; 18:6; 48:43; 49:30; Ezek 18:30; 20:44; Amos 6:14; 9:7.

²⁵ E.g. Jer 5:18; 8:1; 21:7; 30:8; 31:1; 50:4; 50:20; Ezek 38:18; Hos 2:18; Joel 2:12; Obad 8; Mic 4:6; 5:9; Zeph 1:10; Hag 2:23; Zech 3:10; 12:4; 13:2.

<p>וְנִפְלָה וְנִכְרַת הַמֶּשָׂא אֲשֶׁר־עָלֶיהָ כִּי יְהוָה דִּבֶּר: ס</p>	<p>give way; it will be cut down and fall, and the load that was on it will perish, for the Lord has spoken.</p>
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In other cases, a topicalized subordinate clause that establishes a condition or comparison is separated from the main predication.²⁶

Example 27 Jeremiah 22:5

<p>וְאִם לֹא תִשְׁמָעוּ אֶת־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה כִּי נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי נְאֻם־יְהוָה כִּי־לְחָרְבָה יִהְיֶה הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה: ס</p>	<p>But if you will not heed these words, I swear by myself, says the Lord, that this house shall become a desolation.</p>
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The medial formulas are also found separating the main clause from its complement or subordinate clauses which follow.²⁷

These examples illustrate that the pragmatic usage of the prophetic formula is remarkably similar to that of the vocatives, both in terms of the locations in which they are found and the pragmatic effects achieved. Use of the formula where it is not semantically needed creates a break in the discourse, often resulting in a dramatic pause. In most cases the usage adds prominence to the element that follows. The co-occurrence of other redundant elements (i.e. vocatives, interjections, oaths) further supports the notion that the redundant formulas perform a highlighting function.

4 Conclusions

²⁶ E.g. Isa 66:22; Jer 17:24; 22:5; 50:40; Ezek 14:16, 18, 20

²⁷ E.g. Jer 48:30; 49:5; Ezek 36:23.

I have surveyed a diverse range of grammatical devices to illustrate what I contend is a common reliance upon redundancy. Various claims have been made about pragmatic usage of these devices, but they lacked a unified account of how the effects come about that could reconcile the seemingly contradictory claims. The processing hierarchy that was introduced demonstrated the common reliance upon redundancy. Depending upon the contextual constraints, it was demonstrated that the processing of the redundancy could bring about predictable, describable effects. Understanding the priority of these constraints enables exegetes to differentiate the potential pragmatic functions in a given context. The proposed hierarchy efficiently describes the process by which readers seek to make sense of discourse elements, and provides a heuristic framework for determining the pragmatic function of what at first blush appears to be anomalous usage.

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