Most of the papers in this volume originated as presentations at the conference "Biblical Hebrew and Rabbinic Hebrew: New Perspectives in Philology and Linguistics," which was held at the University of Cambridge, 8–10th July, 2019. The aim of the conference was to build bridges between various strands of research in the field of Hebrew language studies that rarely meet, namely philologists working on Biblical Hebrew, philologists working on Rabbinic Hebrew and theoretical linguists.

The volume is the published outcome of this initiative. It contains peer-reviewed papers in the fields of Biblical and Rabbinic Hebrew that advance the field by the philological investigation of primary sources and the application of cutting-edge linguistic theory. These include contributions by established scholars and by students and early career researchers.

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Cover image: Genizah fragment of the Hebrew Bible with Babylonian vocalization (Num. 18.27-28, Cambridge University Library T-S A38.12; courtesy of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library). Genizah fragment of the Mishnah (Ḥallah 1, Cambridge University Library MS Add.470.1; courtesy of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library). Linguistic analysis of Ps. 1.1 (Elizabeth Robar). Images selected by Estara Arrant.
1.0. Preliminary Remarks

Syntax and semantics vie for the attention of Hebraists. This means that pragmatics, while important, typically remains underappreciated and understudied.\(^1\) Pragmatics, broadly defined, “is the systematic study of meaning by virtue of, or dependent on, the use of language,” which includes “implicature, presupposition, speech acts, and deixis” (Huang 2015, 2). In Hebrew studies, most pragmatic research centres on information structure [IS].\(^2\) That is the “packaging of information that meets the immediate communicative needs of the interlocutors” (Féry and Krifka 2008, 123).

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\(^1\) Some well-known exceptions are Muraoka (1985) and Khan (1988).

\(^2\) See, for example, Shimasaki (2002); Holmstedt (2005; 2009; 2011); Van Hecke (2010); Hatav (2017); Hornkohl (2018); Khan (2019); Moshavi (2010).
Two important, though often debated, categories of IS are *topic* and *focus*. Though variously defined, *topic* generally has to do with what the communication is about (Mosahvi 2010).³

(1) וּבְעַז עָלָה הַשַעַר

‘No sooner had Boaz gone up to the gate…’ (Ruth 3.17)

In (1), Holmstedt (2009, 130) observes that the *topic* (Boaz) “orients the reader to which character is acting at a major transition in the book.”

*Focus*, on the other hand, denotes a choice from at least two options, as Hornkohl (2018, 34) illustrates in (2):⁴

(2) יְמֵאָמוּר אִישׁ אֶל־רֵעֲנוֹ מָיָה עָשָּׂה הַדָבִּר הַזֶּה וְיִדְרְשֵׁו וְיִבַּקְשֵׁו וְיַאֲמַרְו גֹּדְעַ֣ה בֶּן־יֹאֵ֔שׁ עָשָּׂ֖ה הַדָבִּר הַזֶֶּ֑ה׃

‘So they said to one another, “Who has done this?” After searching and inquiring, they were told, “Gideon son of Joash did it.”’ (Judg. 6.29)

Research on IS in Biblical Hebrew relies primarily on the establishment of *common ground* [CG] and syntax and not, for

³ Firbas (1992), on the other hand, frames *topic* in terms of *given* or *new* information, and not ‘aboutness’.

⁴ Buth (1999, 81) adds more detail to the contrastive feature of focus, writing, “It maybe contraexpected, that is, the speaker/writer assumes his or her audience maybe expecting something different and so marks it for Focus. It may also be *new* information that is specially marked to fill in, or to complete, assumed missing information. It may also be *old* information that needs special reinforcement, through repetition.” While scholars typically describe *focus* as contrastive, Hornkohl (2018) observes that *topic* can also be so.
example, on intonation, which is critical for the study of pragmatics in non-ancient languages.\textsuperscript{5} CG designates the shared information which “is continuously modified in the course of communication” and includes presuppositions, assertions, and discourse referents (Féry and Krifka 2008, 125). Speakers/authors manage CG in part through syntax. Thus, it is no surprise that much of the research on IS in Biblical Hebrew deals with word order.\textsuperscript{6}

Let us take (3) as an example.

\begin{enumerate}
\item[(3)] אֲרָה שָׁלַַ֤ח יְהוָה ּ֙ ל מְשָׁחֳךִּ֣֙ לְמֵֶ֔לֶךּ֙
\end{enumerate}

‘The LORD sent me to anoint you king.’ (1 Sam. 15.1)

The object (יהוה) in (3) begins the speech. Irrespective of one’s view of the basic word order in Biblical Hebrew,\textsuperscript{7} virtually everyone would agree that יהוה has been moved to the front of the sentence for some pragmatic purpose.\textsuperscript{8} However, scholars expend

\textsuperscript{5} Van Hecke (2010, 58) writes that intonation being “one of the most important clues to the informational structure of clauses is not available to us any longer, limiting the analytical detail of pragmatic research in Classical Hebrew.” For more on the role on intonation in IS see Lang and Pheby (2011) and Blühdorn (2011).

\textsuperscript{6} See especially Shimasaki (2002); Holmstedt (2005; 2009; 2011); Hatav (2017).

\textsuperscript{7} Be it Verb-Subject-Object (VSO) or Subject-Verb-Object (SVO). For the important terminological distinction of ‘dominant’ word order as opposed to ‘basic’ word order in Biblical Hebrew, see Khan and Van der Merwe (2020).

\textsuperscript{8} De Regt (2019, 63), for example, argues that “It is not just the participant reference device itself... but also its place at the beginning of the sentence which is determined by the context beyond the sentence.”
considerable energy on the specific reason why, for example, רַ֧פּאָה is fronted and how that relates to the default word order.

At a general level, Hebraists observe that a topic is typically given (or old) information and focus usually brings new information (Bandstra 1982). Holmstedt (2009), however, rightly separates two layers of pragmatics when analysing the Hebrew Bible. The first layer comprises given information (theme) and new information (rheme); the second includes topic and focus.9 While I shall strictly define given and new information in §2, it should be made quite clear the given/new layer is not one and the same as topic/focus (Gross 2001; Moshavi 2010).10 For example, while focus often correlates with new information, focus items “may either be brand new... identifiable or discourse active” (Van der Merwe and Talstra 2002–2003, 76). In fact, recent experimental

9 While I find it preferable to separate and analyse the two layers, it is worth noting that Erteschik-Shir (2007, 7) sees things differently, as she argues that “topic and focus are the only information structure primitives needed to account for all information structure phenomena.”

10 Féry and Krifka (2008, 126) note that “given expressions, like pronouns, can be focused.” See also Chen, Li, and Yang (2012). The separation of the two layers appears rather prominently in the work of Gómez-González (2001). A. Jones (2015, 70) writes that “Unlike theme and rheme, topic and focus have proven difficult to define with precision.” Whilst I may agree with his latter observation, the former is quite mistaken. One need only to survey Gómez-González (2001) to notice the complexities and lack of agreement in defining given (theme) with any precision.
research has verified that “focus and newness are different concepts and suggest[s] making a distinction between contrastive focus and new information” (Chen, Li, and Yang 2012, 6).

The two pragmatic layers are illustrated in (4):

(4) Abigail and Benjamin were drinking juice. **Abigail** wanted to drink another cup.

*Abigail* in the second sentence is old information or *theme* (Holmstedt 2009, 127). The rest of the second sentence, *wanted to drink another cup*, presents *new* information (*rHEME*). The status of *Abigail* in the second layer of pragmatics (*topic* or *focus*) depends on the rest of the context.

(5) And **Benjamin** wanted another one as well.

If (5) follows (4), then *Abigail* and *Benjamin* are the *topic* (Holmstedt 2009, 127). However, the second layer changes if (6) were to follow (4)–(5).

(6) But **Benjamin** wanted milk.

On account of (6), Holmstedt (2009, 127) finds that “the pragmatic context changes significantly, and accordingly, so does the

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11 Additional experimental research corroborates this claim. For example, Toepel and Alter (2013, 227–29) differentiate between *new* information and contrastive information. They develop a “tripartition of focus into broad, narrow new, and contrastive [focus]... to capture the interactions of semantic-pragmatic, phonological, and phonetic aspects of focus in discourse.”

12 *Topic* as described by Holmstedt is a clause-level rather than discourse-level notion.
total pragmatic information conveyed by both Abigail and Benjamin. The situation is now a contrastive one, with the entities Abigail and Benjamin set over against each other. This is Focus."\(^{13}\)

Hatav (2017, 216–17) adds that rhyme can stay in its syntactic place (Subject-Verb-Object, according to her), but focus is moved up (Verb-Subject-Object). Similarly, theme is not influenced by syntax, but a topic is moved to clause-initial position (cf. Abraham 2009).

In addition, Gross (2001) distinguishes the two pragmatic layers, though, like Holmstedt and Hatav, still majors on topic/focus. Nevertheless, Van Hecke (2010, 83) comments that Gross “adds to the descriptive fine-tuning needed for an accurate description of pragmatic function.” In his own research, Van Hecke (2010) consistently combines the two pragmatic layers with labels such as ‘New Topic’, ‘Given Topic’, and ‘Resumed Topic’.\(^{14}\)

As illustrated above, nearly all the scholarly attention has been on the second layer of pragmatics (topic/focus). When the first layer (given/new) does appear, it is (at best) a prerequisite to move on to an analysis of topic and focus. There is, however, at least one significant exception.

\(^{13}\) Holmstedt’s labelling of topic and focus in (4)–(6) is not my own. I simply wish to illustrate how a scholar distinguishes the layers of pragmatics, and especially the emphasis on the second layer, namely, topic and focus. For the more appropriate and fine-grained description of “contrastive topic” as it relates to “Benjamin” in (6), see Khan and Van der Merwe (2020, 371–72) and Hornkohl (2018, 34–38).

\(^{14}\) These categories are adapted from Dik (1989, 267). See also Lambrecht (1994, 77–114) for terms such as ‘active’, ‘accessible’, ‘unused’, and ‘brand new’.
In 1968, Ernst Jenni laid out his claim for the function of the pi’el binyan. His work has encouraged many responses, but his comments on pragmatics have gone mostly unnoticed. Nevertheless, Jenni has continued to develop his ideas. In 2007 (re-published in 2012), analysing *given/new* and the grammar of Biblical Hebrew, he attempted to confirm the relationship of pragmatics and grammar:

(7) хаַבְעַת תַּכְּנַמ אַחַת מְדַנַּל
   ‘You are indeed wiser than Daniel’ (Ezek. 28.3)\(^{16}\)

(8) והַכּלַמ מְכַל־חֹאַדְמ
   ‘He was wiser than anyone else’ (1 Kgs 5.11)

He claims the predicate adjective חָכָם in (7) conveys *new* information. Specifically, חָכָם “bringt einen originellen neuen Vergleich” (Jenni 2012, 80). Whereas והַכּלַמ in (8) “bringt nur die logische Fortsetzung zum vorangehenden” in v.10:

(7) והַכּלַמ מְכַל־חֹאַדְמ
   ‘Solomon’s wisdom surpassed the wisdom of all the people of the east, and all the wisdom of Egypt’ (Jenni 2012, 80). Put differently, an author/speaker of Biblical Hebrew would use the predicate adjective חָכָם instead of *wayyiqtol* (והַכּלַמ) or *qatal* (והַכּלַמ) for pragmatic reasons and not simply semantics. Thus, the difference between the two grammatical forms in (7) and (8) is not limited to ‘are

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\(^{15}\) See Joosten (1998) and Beckman (2015).

\(^{16}\) Translations are mine unless otherwise noted.
wiser’ and ‘was wiser’, but includes the dimension of new versus given information.\footnote{Another distinction is that the former is a verbless clause and the latter a verbal clause. Jenni (1968 and especially 1977) makes the point that new versus given is a critical pragmatic difference between the two types of clauses.}

Yet Jenni goes further, arguing that pragmatics is built into the \textit{binyan} system:

\begin{quote}
(9) וַיִּתְחַבֵּא הָאָדָם וְאֵלֶּה אֱלֹהֵי מְצוֹאָר הָאָדָם
\end{quote}

‘and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of Yhwh God’ (Gen. 3.8)

\begin{quote}
(10) וָאִירָא כִּי עֵיר אָנָּכי וָאִחַבֵּא
\end{quote}

‘And I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.’ (Gen. 3.10)

Like the predicate adjective/stative verb pair in (7)–(8), the \textit{hitpaʿʿel} in (9) marks new pragmatic information. The \textit{nifʿal} in (10), however, “ist keine neue Information, sondern wird als logische Folge unter den gegebenen Umständen angesehen” (2012, 153). To be sure, these observations on the predicate adjective, stative verb, \textit{hitpaʿʿel}, and \textit{nifʿal} concern not merely the pragmatics of the particular cases in examples (7)–(10). Rather, there is a much more comprehensive claim: that the predicate adjective and the \textit{hitpaʿʿel always} bring new pragmatic information, whereas the stative verb and the \textit{nifʿal exclusively} denote given information.

While these arguments have not had scholarly engagement, I believe they deserve consideration for at least two reasons. First and most important, clarity is needed on whether grammatical
forms themselves mark pragmatic information in Biblical Hebrew. The relationship between grammar and pragmatics, as linguists have ably demonstrated (Ariel 2008; Deppermann 2011), should not be quickly dismissed. Second, the first layer of pragmatics (given and new) calls for more assiduity, lest it be deemed irrelevant or conflated with the second (topic and focus).

I wish to be quite plain that this article is not merely an analytical check on Jenni’s research. Rather, I hope to use it as a jumping off point for a scholarly conversation on pragmatics and grammar. The relationship between the two has not gone unnoticed by Hebraists.

It is not unusual, for example, to claim that in a verbless clause (i.e., null-copula) the subject is given information, whereas the predicate is new information (Zewi 1994, 145; Gross 2001, 44). What is more, scholars are certainly aware that a subject pronoun (e.g., הוה) is often given information as well as the pragmatic topic. That said, Revell (1999, 306) notes “The topic of a clause is... usually its subject; this is not necessarily the case.” In addition, Hornkohl (2018, 35) describes topic as the “marked point of reference for ensuing information,” which can apply to temporal setting (Exod. 16.13) and scene setting (Gen. 3.14–17) as well. Thus, topic and subject are not one in the same.

The comments above show that Hebraists are conscious of a relationship between pragmatics and grammar, but it arguably remains on the periphery. In what follows I centre my study on
pragmatics, especially given/new information, and the relation (or lack thereof) to the grammar of Biblical Hebrew.\textsuperscript{18}

2.0. On Method

In attempting to lay bare Jenni’s far-reaching pragmatic claims above, I shall analyse the core of his argument: predicate adjectives and stative verbs. Specifically, I wish to see if predicate adjectives always bring pragmatically new information to the context, and, in turn, if stative verbs always bear given information. To go about this study, I make use of the detailed guidelines for IS analysis formulated by Michael Götze et al. (2007). Regarding the first layer of pragmatics (which is the only layer we concern ourselves with), I categorise the information using given, accessible, and new. The first two have various sub-divisions that allow for specificity and have criteria for making decisions on IS.

\textit{Given} [GIV], for example, is divided into active [ACT] and inactive [INACT]. Active applies to information that has appeared explicitly in its exact form within the last or same sentence.\textsuperscript{19}

(11) John went home. John [GIV-ACT] drank coffee.\textsuperscript{20}

\textsuperscript{18} In this article, I will not touch on the pragmatics of the \textit{binyanim}. Rather, I will concentrate on the area of grammar on which Jenni bases his argument.

\textsuperscript{19} For an important study of differentiation within givenness, see Prince (1981). Much of what she discusses as \textit{given}—be it predictable, salient, or shared—is covered in Götze et al. (2007).

\textsuperscript{20} The following examples of IS guidelines are inspired by Götze et al. (2007) unless otherwise noted.
*Inactive* is similar, but does not occur within the immediate sentence. Typically, Götze et al. suggest looking backward for approximately five sentences.

(12) So John went into the kitchen. It was clean. John [GIV-INACT] was happy.

    Accessible information [ACC], which itself is a bridge between the most often used binary choices of *given* and *new*, has numerous sub-divisions. First is *situative* [SIT], which occurs within discourse.

(13) Could you hand me the salt [ACC-SIT], please?

    Second is *aggregation* [AGGRG]:

(14) John went shopping with Emily. They [ACC-AGGRG] bought a lot of gifts.

    Third is *inferable* [INF]. This involves bridging relations, such as *part-whole relation* (the garden... its entrance), *set-relation* (family... children), and *entity-attribute* (the garden... its scent).

    Fourth is *general* [GEN]. Here, the speaker understands that the hearer knows the referent from his or her world knowledge:

(15) The sun [ACC-GEN] set.\(^{21}\)

    The final broad category of IS is *new*. This, of course, is any participant that cannot be categorised as *given* or *accessible*.\(^{22}\)

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\(^{21}\) Taken explicitly from Götze et al. (2007).

\(^{22}\) I agree with an anonymous reviewer that a graded category for *new* information would be beneficial. However, I have not found appropriate sub-categories for such. Therefore, I content myself with *new* as a category.
These categories as presented above may seem straightforward and unproblematic. However, in analysing Biblical Hebrew, the task is far from easy. Setting aside the well-known issues in researching the Hebrew Bible, one major difficulty for us is the extra-textual world of pragmatics. The criteria of information from Götze et al. primarily concerns the ‘internal’ (i.e., what is mentioned earlier in the narrative or speech). The ‘external’, however, is information that a narrator and reader share—though not made explicit (Revell 1999, 307). The intersection of the external and internal via pragmatic presupposition is significant (Van der Merwe and Talstra 2002–2003, 77; Moshavi 2010).

Van Hecke (2010, 107) rightly avers that the context for pragmatics involves not just “the immediate (narrative or discursive) textual context, but also includes the situation, physical context in which the communication takes place, and even the information which has not yet been referred to in the ongoing communication, but which is shared by the both interlocutors.” Speaking specifically on givenness, Floor (2004, 23) observes “Most theorists agree that... it is more than just activated by the preceding text leading up to it... cognitive and wider extra-textual assumptions and knowledge of the world determine how much of a topic is given.”

For our purposes, it needs to be remembered that “The interlocutors in written communication can either be a narrator and an audience or characters participating in a communicative event” (Khan and Van der Merwe 2020, 350).
“Who will go down with me to Saul, into the camp?”
Abishai said “I will go down with you.” (1 Sam. 26.6)

So in (16), for example, “the speaker assumes that the hearer presupposes that somebody will go down with him into the camp to Saul” (Khan and Van der Merwe 2020, 353).

The complexities of adducing the pragmatic relevance of the situational, physical, and yet-to-be revealed information in the Hebrew Bible are self-evident. Nonetheless, I shall attempt to categorise information of predicate adjectives and stative verbs. In doing so, however, I make note of how tentative my various linguistic conjectures might be.

Before moving to the analysis section, we should be aware of just how close the relationship of adjectives and stative verbs is. Joüon and Muraoka (2006, 331), for example, claim that the qatal of stative verbs “is originally a ‘conjugated adjective’.” Concerning cross-linguistics, Cook (2008, 10) argues that “the stative adjective in Biblical Hebrew presents a split-strategy between verbal and nominal encodings,” as evidenced by what he calls verbal strategy (17), zero copula (18), and verbal copula (19).

23 As Moshavi (2010, 124) observes, “The mental representation incorporates inferences based on the reader’s knowledge and experience; thus information not explicitly referred to in the text may nonetheless constitute activated information” (emphasis mine).

24 Translations for (16)–(18) are Cook’s (2008).
The hands of Moses (were) heavy’ (Exod. 17.12)

‘The camp was very great (lit. ‘heavy’)’ (Gen. 50.9)

To complicate matters further, some *qatal* and adjectival forms are identical (Pat-El 2013).

In general, adjectives “are highly complex and significantly less studied than other major lexical categories such as nouns or verbs” (McNally and Kennedy 2008, 1). Some of that difficulty is present in linguistic typology. Hofherr (2010, 1), for instance, notes that “[i]dentifying nouns, verbs and adjectives cross-linguistically is… a difficult enterprise, with *adjectives being particularly elusive.*” 25 Nevertheless, recent study by Naudé and Miller-Naudé (2016) demonstrates that the adjective in Biblical Hebrew is indeed a proper category and should not be indiscriminately lumped together with nouns in the broad category ‘substantives’. 26

In certain contexts, prototypical statives may be either stative or dynamic (Comrie 1976). 27 This cross-linguistic tendency holds true for Biblical Hebrew. For example, by way of “narrative

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25 Emphasis is mine. See also Dixon (2006); Wetzer (2013); Koller (2012).

26 That said, there may be valid reasons for considering adjectives a subcategory of substantives (Hornkohl, personal communication). For the debate to be advanced, we would need to touch on typology, taxonomy, and more in the fields of linguistics and philosophy of language (particular its history). Such discussion is beyond our purpose here.

27 Rothmayr (2009).
sequence and the presence of punctiliar frames” a stative may become dynamic (Dobbs-Allsopp 2000, 50). Thus, stative verbs are similar and at times even identical to predicate adjectives, but the two are distinct.

In my study, I analyse the following predicate adjective and qatal pairs: חכם | חכם | יומ | זולו | קס | זקן | גדו | קט. I have chosen these particular pairs because they feature prominently in Jenni’s research (1968; 1977; 1999; 2007; 2012). 28 I begin with חכם.

3.0. Analysis

3.1. Predicate Adjective (חכם)

The predicate adjective (חכם) brings new information (NEW) in every case. 29

לבושה סבב את שמו חכם תשובה עשה שבת יאמ עתיד(menu את חכמסע ואמ חכם חכם (20)

‘In order to change the course of affairs your servant Joab did this very thing. But my lord has wisdom like the wisdom of the angel of God to know all things that are on the earth.’

(2 Sam. 14.20)

28 It should be noted I do not include in this study nominalised adjectives (e.g., Lam. 5.14), since these are not predicative adjectives/statives.

29 Isa. 31.2; Jer. 4.22; 8.8; Ezek. 28.3 (notably with חכמה; Hos. 14.10 (while textually new, it is here part of a rhetorical question); Ps. 107.43 (cf. Hos. 14.10); Prov. 26.16; 28.11.
In (20) the speaker gives a compliment to the king. Her statement gives a description that is textually *new*, but would also be news to the addressee (at least his knowledge of her perception).

### 3.2. Stative Verb (חָכַם)

For the stative verb (חָכַם) the pragmatics vary.

#### 3.2.1. GIV-ACT

חָכַםּ מֶּּּאָֽלֶּ֖וֹמּ הָֹֽאָ֔דָּמּ מֵאֵיתִָ֣ןּ֙ הַּאַ֣זְּרָ֔חּ יִוְהֵ֔י מֵאֵֽלֶּ֖וֹדּ מַלְכִּ֐ּלֵֵ֔בּ הַּמַּחַֽוֹל (21)

He was wiser than anyone else, wiser than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, Calcol, and Darda, children of Mahol (1 Kgs 5.11)

It is quite clear that (21) is given [GIV-ACT] because of the two previous verses:

וַיֶּּאַלְּוֹהָּ הָכַּּמּ לְשָלוֹּמּ הָכַּּמּ לְחָכַּמּ מְאַּדּוֹרֵּבּ כַּּחַּלַּבּ מְאַּכַּל־בֵּנַי־קַּדִּּש (1 Kgs 5.11)

“God gave Solomon very great wisdom, discernment, and breadth of understanding as vast as the sand on the seashore, so that Solomon’s wisdom exceeded the wisdom of all the people of the east, and all the wisdom of Egypt” (1 Kgs 5.9–10).

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30 Prov. 9.9 (the A line reads כּ הָכָּמּ ‘give to the wise’, making the B line given [GIV-ACT], though the yiqtol [חָכַם] may well be inchoative); 9.12 (the second qatal is given [GIV-ACT]: כּ אָסִּיר הָכָּמּ כּ לְּסַלְּנַהַפּ אִם־חָכַּמּ לָ). Prov. 20.1 (cf. 9.9).
3.2.2. ACC-SIT\(^{31}\)

‘Then I said to myself, “What happens to the fool will happen to me also; why then have I been so very wise?” And I said to myself that this also is vanity.’ (Eccl. 2.15)

Qohelet understands well his past experience of being ‘very wise’ and thus the *qatal* cannot be *new* information. Since he is speaking to himself, it is reasonable to consider *חָכַָ֛מְת י* _situationally_ (**ACC-SIT**).

3.2.3. ACC-INF\(^{32}\)

‘Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is _not_ wise.’ (Prov. 20.1)

\(^{31}\) Prov. 23.15; Ecc. 2.15; 7.23. It seems appropriate to understand the imperative use of *חָכַָ֛מְת י* in Proverbs as situationally bound [**ACC-SIT**]: Prov. 6.6; 8.33; 13.20; 23.15; 23.19; 27.11. However, there are other possible categories for these imperatives.

\(^{32}\) Deut. 32.29 (with *וַי* ‘if’); Job 32.9 (though the predicate moves the communication, the information still seems inferable from v. 8וַיַּ֖שֵׁכֶָּ֑רּוְכָל־שֵׁכֶָּ֑רּוְכָל־שׁ ִ֥גֶהּ֙בּ֝וֹ ּ֙ל ִ֣אּ֙יֶחְכָֹּֽם׃’ ‘and the breath of the Almighty makes them discern’ [cf. Prince 1981]); Prov. 19.20 (the B line is inferable from the A: וְנִשְׁמַַ֖ת שַדַָ֣י תְבִינ ֵֽם ’Listen to advice and accept instruction, that you may gain wisdom for the future’); Eccl. 7.23 (it seems possible to consider the B line as inferable from the A: כָל־ז ַ֖ה נִסִָ֣יתִי בֵַֽחָכְמֶָ֑ה ’All this I have tested by wisdom’).
The inference (ACC-INF) comes from the A line, twice over. Two kinds of drinks are but a fool. Therefore, whoever consumes such drink would inevitably be a fool, or לִא יֵהָב ‘not wise’.

3.2.4. NEW

There is one example of the stative verb that could perhaps be new information.

(24) וְגַם־חֲמָָׂ֖ת גְבָל־בֶָּ֑הּּ֙צ ִ֣רּ֙וְצ ידֵ֔וֹןּ֙כ ִ֥יּ֙חָֹּֽכְמָָׂ֖הּ֙מְא ֹּֽד׃

‘Hamath also, which borders on it, Tyre and Sidon, though they are very wise.’ (Zech. 9.2)

In Zech. 9 the information that Tyre and Sidon are ‘very wise’ is certainly textually new. However, it may be better to understand the stative verb in (24) as accessible [ACC-GEN], considering Tyre’s reputation was possibly part of general knowledge of the world (cf. Isa. 23.8; Ezek. 26.15–17; 27.3).

3.3. Predicate Adjective (זָקֵן)

All unambiguous instances of the predicate adjective זָקֵן bring new information (NEW)—as Jenni claims.

(25) וְאַבְרָהָ֤ם וְשָרָה֙ זְק נִ֔ים בָאִַ֖ים בַיָּֽמִים חָדַל֙ לִהְיָ֣וֹת לְשָרָֹ֔ה א ַ֖רַח כנָשִֵֽים׃

‘Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; it had ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women.’ (Gen. 18.11)

This comment by the narrator in (25) provides new information for the reader that proves important for the remainder of the

33 Cf. also Job 32.4.
larger narrative (Gen. 12–22). We should keep in mind, however, that the syntactic structure of *waw* + subject + predicate in the midst of a *wayyiqtol* chain could itself be the device for signalling new information, irrespective of whether the predicate is an adjective or not (cf. Moshavi 2010, 14).  

3.4. Stative Verb (זָָּקַֹּֽנְת י́)

3.4.1. GIV-ACT

The stative verb *זָָּקַֹּֽנְת י́* contains information that not only is known, but has been stated explicitly in v. 11 (cf. [25] above). Though, as Hornkohl (personal communication) observes, the information is *given*, it is embedded in direct speech. Therefore, it is not necessarily *given* from the perspective of the characters. Like our analysis above, Holmstedt (2009, 132) toggles between discourse and narrative. In Ruth 3.17, for example, he considers the fronted object (שֵׁשׁ־הַשְעִירִים, ‘six measures of barley’) *given* information, though the characters themselves have not yet shared

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34 In addition, we might consider (25) a thetic sentence in which a “unitary situation (‘The situation was...’)” is expressed (Khan and Van der Merwe 2020, 358).

35 Josh. 13.1b; 23.2; 1 Sam. 8.5.
that information with each other. The audience, however, is already privy to such information via the narrator. In such a case, we should recall that the study of IS involves that “management of the common ground,” which for the Hebrew Bible would mean that the interlocutors “can either be a narrator and an audience or characters participating in a communicative” (Khan and Van der Merwe 2020, 350).

(27)

‘He said, “See, I am old.”’ (Gen. 27.2)

As in (26), the stative verb in (27) refers back to the information given (GIV-ACT) in the previous verse: ‘when Isaac was old’ (Gen. 27.1).

3.4.2. GIV-INACT

(28)

‘and said to him, “You are old.”’ (1 Sam. 8.5)

Here, the verb harks back to the narrator’s statement that Samuel was old’ (1 Sam. 8.1).36

(29)

‘I am old and grey, but my sons are with you. I have walked before you from my youth until this day.’ (1 Sam. 12.2)

36 While 1 Sam. 8.1 is admittedly ambiguous as to whether it is a stative verb or predicate adjective, the pragmatic analysis of (28) still holds. For further discussion of the grammatically opaque cases, such as 1 Sam. 8.1, see §3.5 (especially §3.5.2).
3.4.3. ACC-INF

משבעת בתותא של חכמים מקורות לאistros (30)

'Turn back, my daughters, go, for I am too old to have a husband.' (Ruth 1.12)

The previous verse (Ruth 1.11) lays the premise that Naomi is past child-bearing years: ‘Do I still have sons in my womb that they may become your husbands?’ Thus, in (30) is an inference [ACC-INF]—though rhetorically, the repetition is important for Naomi’s argument.

3.4.4. NEW

ירושלים היאודי והשביע ישם ימה (31)

But Jehoiada grew old and full of days, and died. (2 Chron. 24.15)

Though problematic for Jenni’s comprehensive claim for the stative verb bringing given information, the wayyiqtol does not seem to be given or accessible. Therefore, (31) should be considered new information.

Ps. 37.25 (if is present stative ‘am old’ or inchoative ‘am becoming old’ [i.e., not preterite ‘became old’ or past perfective ‘have become old’], then it is an inference from the past time qatal קָּטַל in the previous clause: ‘I was a boy’; the focus particle prior to our stative verb פָּקַט makes contrast, even if that contrast is inferable).
3.5. Predicate Adjective or Stative Verb (זָקֵן)?

The form זָקֵן is ambiguous. It can be construed as a ms predicate adjective or as a 3ms stative verb. As such, I do not make a decision on the grammar of the form, but categorise the pragmatics of each occurrence.

3.5.1. GIV-ACT

(32) וַת צְחִַ֥ק שָרָָׂ֖הּ בְק רְבִָ֣הּ לֵאמ ֶּ֑ר אַחֲרֵ֤י בְלֹת י ּ֙ הָֹֽויְתָה־ל ִ֣י עֶדְנֵָ֔ה וַֹֽאד נ ָׂ֖י זָָקֵֹּֽן׃

‘So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, “After I have grown old, and my husband is old, shall I have pleasure?”’ (Gen. 18.12)

זָקֵן gives us information that is known in the verse prior: וְאַבְרָהַ֤ם וְשָרָה זְקֵנ ֵ֔ים ‘Now Abraham and Sarah were old’ (Gen. 18.11).

3.5.2. GIV-INACT

(33) וַתָב ֵ֨אּ בַבַשֶּׁ֨בֶעּ אֵל הַמֵֶּ֨לֶך ּ֙וְהַמֶָׂ֖לֶךּ זָָקִֵ֣ן מְא ֶּ֑ד וַֹֽאֲב ישַׁג הַשִ֣ונַמ ֵ֔ית מְשָׁרַָׂ֖ת אֶת־הַמֶֹּֽולֶך׃

‘So Bathsheba went to the king in his room. The king was very old; Abishag the Shunammite was attending the king.’ (1 Kgs 1.15)

It is unlikely that זָקֵן marks new information, because the book of Kings begins by stating וְהַמֶַ֤לֶךּ דָו ד זָקֵֵ֔ן ‘Now the king, David, was old’ (1 Kgs 1.1). Jenni (1977, 68), however, argues that (33) is “parenthetischer Umstandssatz, der zur Begründung der Zurückgezogenheit des Königs die Information von v. 1 wiederholt, ohne

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38 Josh. 23.1; 1 Sam. 4.18; 8.1.
darauf als etwas Bekanntes zurückzugreifen.” This analysis appears incorrect, as both vv. 1 and 15 are descriptions of David by the narrator.

‘Now Abraham was old, well advanced in years; and the LORD had blessed Abraham in all things.’ (Gen. 24.1)

Based on Gen. 18.11–13 (cf. examples (25) and (32), above), הָֽזָקֵֵ֔ן in (34) is best understood as given information (GIV-INACT). Jenni, on the other hand, calls (34) “neueinsetzende Exposition” and thus understands the predicate to denote new information (1977, 68). Abraham’s age in (34) is already part of the common ground between the narrator and audience, however. The narrator’s repetition of הָֽזָקֵֵ֔ן here has to do with its relevance for the episode.39

3.5.3. ACC-GEN

‘And the firstborn said to the younger, “Our father is old, and there is not a man on earth to come in to us after the manner of all the world.”’ (Gen. 19.31)

The older sister describes Lot as old—a fact well-known to both sisters [ACC-GEN]. This information is used to issue a directive in v. 32: ‘Come, let’s make our father drink wine and we will lie with him.’

39 I am grateful to the anonymous reviewer for pointing this out more clearly.
3.5.4. NEW

The king David was old and advanced in years. They covered him with clothes, but he could not get warm. (1 Kgs 1.1)

Introducing the narrative, זָקֵֵ֔ן is new information.

3.6. Predicate Adjective קָטָן

The only clear use of the predicate adjective is accessible [ACC-SIT].

‘Samuel said, “Though you are small in your own eyes, are you not the head of the tribes of Israel? Yhwh anointed you king over Israel.”’ (1 Sam. 15.17)

3.7. Stative Verb קָטָן

For the stative verb there is no given information proper (GIV-ACT or GIV-INACT).

3.7.1. ACC-SIT

‘And this was a small thing in your eyes, O Lord Yhwh; you have spoken also of your servant’s house for a great while to come.’ (2 Sam. 7.19 || 1 Chron. 17.17)

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40 Gen. 27.1; Josh. 13.1a; 1 Sam. 2.22; 17.12; 2 Sam. 19.33; 2 Kgs 4.14.

3.7.2. NEW

קָטַנְתִי מִכֶּל הַחֲסָדִים וּמִכָּל־הָאֱמֶות (39)

‘I am not worthy of the least of all the steadfast love and all the faithfulness.’ (Gen. 32.11)

Since there is no clear information that is given or accessible in the surrounding context of (39), the verb קָטַנְתִי would seem to express new information. Jacob appears to use קָטַנְתִי along with עַבְדֶךָ ‘your servant’ for purposes of deference. This politeness strategy lays the foundation for the request יִנָּא ‘please deliver me’ (Gen. 32.12; cf. Bridge 2019, 576–77). We should note that (39) poses a rather significant problem for the argument that stative verbs always bring given information.

3.8. Predicate Adjective גָדוֹל

Unlike the predicate adjectives זָקֵן and קָטַן, גָדוֹל does not present new information exclusively.

3.8.1. ACC-GEN

כֵּל גָדוֹל יְהֹוָה וְמִכָּל־הָאֱלֹהִים יָמַר הָוָא עַל־כָּל־אֱלֹהִים: (40)

‘For great is Yhwh, and greatly to be praised; he is to be revered above all gods.’ (1 Chron. 16.25)

41 The possibility of inference or general [ACC] categories here should not be dismissed, however. In any case, the stative verb does not convey given information.

42 Cf. 2 Chron. 2.4b.
Based on the description of Götze et al. (2007), gadol in (40) would seem to be generalised information in which the speaker and addressee readily understand the predicate as something as obvious from general world knowledge (e.g., the setting of the sun).

3.8.2. NEW

In (41) would be fronted. In particular, the predicate adjective is focused. It is not surprising that the fronted, focused predicate adjective also relates new information. Nevertheless, we should not conflate focus with new information (Moshavi 2010). Nor should word order be seen as corresponding directly to the status of information (Gross 2001).

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43 Gen. 39.9 (with comparative מִן); Exod. 18.11 (with comparative מִן); Deut. 1.28 (with comparative מִן); 9.1 (with comparative מִן); 11.23 (with comparative מִן, cf. Holmstedt [2016, 306–7] for analysis of zero-relatives); Josh. 10.2; Judg. 5.16 (though possibly accessible [ACC], לִפְלַגָ֣וֹת רְאוּבָּנָהּֽ גְדוֹלִִים חִקֲרִיָּלַּב ‘Among the clans of Reuben the searchings of heart were great’ may best be understood as part of the general knowledge of the speaker and addressee); 2 Sam. 13.15; Ps. 135.5 (the psalmist seems to raise the CG so that the addressees will know יַָ֭דַעְתָּ י that Yhwh is great); 2 Chron. 2.4a.
3.9. Stative Verb (גָּדַל)

3.9.1. GIV-ACT

וַיִּלֶֽדָּהְּ֙וַיָּלְֽליָּ֙וַיֵּלְֽלְֽלַֽמּ֙וַי הָּ֣לְלַֽמּ֙וַיֵָֽלְֽלִֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽلְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽלַֽלְֽl
Therefore you are great, O Yhwh God; for there is no one like you, and there is no God besides you, according to all that we have heard with our ears.’ (2 Sam. 7.22)

The previous verse (2 Sam. 7.21) does not give the exact information as (44) per se, but the inference is not difficult to discern: because of your promise, and according to your own heart, you have wrought all this greatness, so that your servant may know it.’ Of course, the inference is made clearer because of עַל־כִּ֥ן ‘therefore’ (cf. Van der Merwe et al. 2017, 450–51).

46 Gen. 24.35 (inference coming from the previous verb ‘[and Yhwh] blessed’); 26.13; 1 Sam. 26.24a; 2 Sam. 7.22, 26 || 1 Chron. 17.24; 1 Kgs 10.23 || 2 Chron. 9.22; Zech. 12.7 (the first clause יָדֶָּ֣יךָ אֲרַנ ֵֵּֽֽן ‘for you Yhwh have made me glad by your work; at the works of your hands I sing for joy’); Job 2.13; Lam. 4.6; Ezra 9.6 (the qatal clause ‘our guilt is great/high (גָּדְלַָ֖ה) as the heavens’ is inferable from the previous clause: שָׁמַָ֖עְנוּּ֙֙ לֵא־ ֵֽא־ ֹּֽכְל בְךֵּ֔֙עָש ֕יתָּ֙אִֵ֥תּ֙כָל־הַגְּדֹלָָׂ֖הּ֙הַז ֶּ֑אתּ֙לְהוֹד ָׂ֖יעַּ֙אֶת־עַבְדֶֹּֽֽךְ ‘Yhwh will deliver the tents of Judah first’ allows לָא־ יָוִַ֧יעַ יְהוָָ֛ה אֶּֽת־ אוֹר הַיָּהֵ֞נָה בָּרִֵֽאש נֶָ֑ה ‘will not surpass’ to be an inference; moreover, the negated yiqtol suggests that the yiqtol itself was already presupposed); Mal. 1.5; Ps. 92.6 (inference from previous verse יָדֶָּ֣יךָ אֲרַנ ֵֵּֽֽן ‘for you Yhwh have made me glad by your work; at the works of your hands I sing for joy’); Job 2.13; Lam. 4.6; Ezra 9.6 (the qatal clause ‘our guilt is great/high (גָּדְלַָ֖ה) as the heavens’ is inferable from the previous clause: שָׁמַָ֖עְנוּּ֙֙ לֵא־ ֵֽא־ ֹּֽכְל בְךֵּ֔֙עָש ֕יתָּ֙אִֵ֥תּ֙כָל־הַגְּדֹלָָׂ֖הּ֙הַז ֶּ֑אתּ֙לְהוֹד ָׂ֖יעַּ֙אֶת־עַבְדֶֹּֽֽךְ ‘Yhwh will deliver the tents of Judah first’ allows לָא־ יָוִַ֧יעַ יְהוָָ֛ה אֶּֽת־ אוֹר הַיָּהֵ֞נָה בָּרִֵֽאש נֶָ֑ה ‘will not surpass’ to be an inference; moreover, the negated yiqtol suggests that the yiqtol itself was already presupposed); Mal. 1.5; Ps. 92.6 (inference from previous verse יָדֶָּ֣יךָ אֲרַנ ֵֵּֽֽן ‘for you Yhwh have made me glad by your work; at the works of your hands I sing for joy’).
3.9.4. ACC-GEN

Though וַיְגַדְּלֵי is new textually, I find the wayyiqtol in (45) to be generalised, as this is simply the process of human life, similar to the sun setting (Götze et al. 2007).

(45) תֵּלֶדָתָּה וְתָלָּדָתָּה וַיְגַדְּלֵהֶם גָּדוֹלָה בְּעָלָּמַה וּמְרַחֶם גָּדוֹלָה לֹא לַאֵּשֶׁתָּ גָּדוֹלָה בְּעָלָּמַה וּמְרַחֶם גָּדוֹלָה לֹא לַאֵּשֶׁתָּ גָּדוֹלָה בְּעָלָּמַה וּמְרַחֶם גָּדוֹלָה לֹא לַאֵּשֶׁתָּ גָּדוֹלָה בְּעָלָּמַה וּמְרַחֶם גָּדוֹלָה לֹא לַאֵּשֶׁתָּ גָּדוֹלָה בְּעָלָּמַה וּמְרַחֶם גָּדוֹלָה לֹא לַאֵּשֶׁתָּ גָּדוֹלָה בְּעָלָּמַה וּמְרַחֶם גָּדוֹלָה לֹא לַאֵּשֶׁתָּ גָּדוֹלָה בְּעָלָּמַה וּמְרַחֶם גָּדוֹלָה לֹא לַאֵּשֶׁתָּ גָּדוֹלָה בְּעָלָּמַה וּמְרַחֶם גָּדוֹלָה לֹא לַאֵּשֶׁתָּ גָּדוֹלָה בְּעָלָּמַה וּמְרַחֶם גָּדוֹלָה L

‘Gilead’s wife also bore him sons; and when his wife’s sons grew up, they drove Jephthah away, saying to him, “You shall not inherit anything in our father’s house; for you are the son of another woman.”’ (Judg. 11.2)

Because several occurrences are inchoative ‘become great’ or ‘grow’, we could understand the information as new. However, the majority has to do with children growing up. This is, of course, expected from general knowledge of the world: Gen. 21.8, 20; 25.27; 38.11, 14; Exod. 2.10; Judg. 13.24; 1 Sam. 2.21; 2 Kgs 4.18; Ezek. 16.7; Ruth 1.13. A similar assessment of horns in Daniel appears; they ‘grow’—as horns do: Dan. 8.9, 10. At least one has to do with prominence (of the first-born): Gen. 48.19a. However, there are a few texts which speak to Yhwh’s greatness. In such cases, it appears that CG is shared in a general knowledge that Yhwh is גָּדוֹל: Ps. 35.27; 40.17; 70.5; 104.1.
3.9.5. NEW

Nevertheless, his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his offspring shall become a multitude of nations.’

(Gen. 48.19)

Contra Jenni’s expectations of pragmatic information, I do not see any basis for the categories of given or accessible in (46). In the biblical narrative it is much to Joseph’s chagrin that the new information is that the younger brother will be greater than the older. His stated expectation was for the first-born:

Joseph said to his father, “Not so, my father! Since this one is the firstborn, put your right hand on his head” (Gen. 48.18).

4.0. Conclusions

My study allows for several conclusions—some certain and others tentative. First, Jenni is often correct that predicate adjectives denote new information, while stative verbs bring given information. However, that is not always the case. A stative verb at times denotes new information (§§3.2.4; 3.4.4; 3.7.2; 3.9.5), and predicate adjectives do not always indicate new information (§§3.6; 3.8.1). Second, the analysis of IS using three categories (given, accessible, new) provides clarity and specificity in a way

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48 Num. 14.17; 1 Sam. 26.24b; 1 Kgs 12.8 || 2 Chron. 10.8; Mic. 5.3 (new textually and it seems that the scope of greatness was not common ground: ‘for now he will be great to the ends of the earth’); Zech. 12.11.
that the typical *given-new* dichotomy does not. Third, examination of the first layer of pragmatics (*theme/rheme* as some call it) should be a more prominent and explicit part of pragmatic research on Biblical Hebrew, even if the layer is more banal than the second layer (*topic/focus*). Fourth, and perhaps most importantly, more work is needed on the intersection of grammar and pragmatics in Biblical Hebrew.

The above research demonstrates that Jenni’s study is ultimately unsuccessful. That is not to say, however, that his supposition of grammar marking pragmatics is fallacious. As pragmatics gains more attention from Hebraists, study of the relationship of grammar and pragmatics will hopefully follow. It is my hope that this article may help, at least in some small way, to advance the conversation on how grammar and pragmatics relate to one another.

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