

Adjectival passives in Hebrew: evidence for parallelism between the adjectival and verbal systems

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Abstract This article focuses on Hebrew adjectival passives, showing that, as was claimed for other languages, the class of adjectival passives in Hebrew is not homogenous, but rather consists of two sub-classes. Former attempts to capture the non-homogenous nature of the class of adjectival passives in different languages relied mainly on the existence versus absence of an event in their interpretation. In contrast, I argue that the criterion distinguishing the two sub-classes of adjectival passives in Hebrew is the presence versus absence of an implicit Agent or Cause argument. Thus, the split parallels a very well-known split in the verbal system—that between passive and unaccusative verbs. Once this parallelism between the adjectival and the verbal systems is recognized, it is possible to claim that the same valence-changing processes (namely, *saturation* and *decausativization*) are operative in both systems. This assumption can predict the syntactic and semantic behavior of the two sub-classes of adjectives, as well as their composition, without resorting to operations unique to adjectival passive formation.

Keywords Adjectival passives · Adjectival decausatives · Hebrew · Saturation · Decausativization

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