The Pragmatics of *waw* as a Discourse Marker in Biblical Hebrew Dialogue[1]

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1. Introduction

Few morphemes are as ubiquitous in Biblical Hebrew as the conjunction *waw*. While the uses of *waw* as a phrasal and clausal connector have long been documented by grammarians,[2] the uses of *waw* at a macrostructural level have received much less attention.[3] One of the most interesting, but hitherto ignored, macrostructural contexts in which *waw* occurs relates to dialogue, namely, *waw* at the beginning of a direct quotation.[4] An example of *waw* in this dialogic environment appears in (1):

(1) 2 Kgs 7:12-13

וַיָּקָם הַמֶּלֶךְ לַיְלָה

1A   וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־עֲבָדָיו אַגִּידָה־נָּא לָכֶם אֵת אֲשֶׁר־עָשׂוּ לָנוּ אֲרָם יָדְעוּ כִּי־רְעֵבִים אֲנַחְנוּ וַיֵּצְאוּ
מִן־הַמַּחֲנֶה לְהֵחָבֵה בַשָּׂדֶה (Q) לֵאמֹר כִּי־יֵצְאוּ מִן־הָעִיר וְנִתְפְּשֵׂם חַיִּים וְאֶל־הָעִיר נָבֹא׃

1B   וַיַּעַן אֶחָד מֵעֲבָדָיו וַיֹּאמֶר וְיִקְחוּ־נָא חֲמִשָּׁה מִן־הַסּוּסִים הַנִּשְׁאָרִים אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁאֲרוּ־בָהּ הִנָּם
כְּכָל־הֲמוֹן (Q) יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁאֲרוּ־בָהּ הִנָּם כְּכָל־הֲמוֹן יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר־תָּמּוּ וְנִשְׁלְחָה וְנִרְאֶה׃

The king arose by night

1A   and he said to his servants, „Let me tell you what Aram has done to us. They
know that we are starving. So they have gone out of the camp to hide
themselves in the countryside thinking, 'Indeed, they will go out from the city
and we will capture them alive and enter their city.'"

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[2]   As representative of the grammarians' treatment of conjunctive *waw* operating at the level of phrase
and clause, see GKC §§104d, 120, 154; IBHS §39.2; Blau 1976: §§104-105; Joüon-Muraoka: §§104,
176-77; and Gibson 1995:272-79.

[3]   Andersen is a notable exception to this generalization. He examines varieties of coordination based
in part on the level of the grammatical hierarchy where coordination occurs (Andersen 1974:§§4,
11). He does not, however, consider *waw* as a discourse marker, nor does he examine instances of
speech-initial *waw*. See also the discussion in IBHS §38.1.

[4]   The corpus considered includes the following narrative portions of the Hebrew Bible: Genesis to 2
Kings, Chronicles, Ezra-Nehemiah, Esther, Ruth. The examples were collected solely by reading
the biblical text. Because no electronic database was available for extracting the data, it is possible
that a few examples have been inadvertently omitted.

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1B One of his servants answered and said, „*And* let them take five of the horses which are left, since those who are left in it, behold they will be like the whole multitude of Israel which was finished off, so let us send and see.“[5]

In the second quotation (1B), the first word of the quotation begins with conjunctive *waw* - וְיִקְחוּ־נָא חֲמִשָּׁה מִן־הַסּוּסִים 'and let them take five of the horses.' A coordinating conjunction is ordinarily understood as joining two syntagms of the same type so as to form a syntagm which is also of the same type.[6] But to which preceding clause is this clause conjoined? The conjunction cannot be construed as linking the quotation to the preceding quotative frame (i.e., ... וְיִקְחוּ should not be understood as linked to the preceding clauses ... וַיֹּאמֶר ... וַיַּעַן).[7] The *waw* is clearly not functioning as a clausal conjunction to join the following clause to the preceding clause.[8] Nor is *waw* functioning as a „pleonastic *waw*“ or „epexegetical *waw*.“ These observations are important, for they suggest that speech-initial *waw* does not function solely as a coordinating conjunction on the syntactic level.[9]

Most grammarians implicitly recognize that speech-initial *waw* does not provide a link to an immediately preceding clause. Instead, they explain instances of speech-initial *waw* on the basis of the verbal form (or type of clause) that follows it. The grammar by Joüon-Muraoka, for example, suggests that in example (1), *waw* „appears to have no other purpose than to indicate the [following] jussive more clearly“ (§177*l*). Although speech-initial *waw* does sometimes bear a syntactic relation to the clause that it heads, no example of speech-initial *waw* bears only a clausal syntactic function.

Speech-initial *waw* as a descriptive category has been almost entirely ignored by Hebrew grammarians, though Gesenius notes that *waw copulativum* may appear „at the beginning of a speech in loose connexion with an act or speech of another person“ (§154*b*). He does not, however, consider the distribution or significance of *waw* in speech-initial position. More recently, Bandstra (1995:50) notes that *waw* appears at the beginning of direct discourse in Ps 2:6, but his discussion centers on the use of verse-initial *waw* in Hebrew poetry to mark thematic transition or discontinuity.

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5 The translation understands a dittography in (1B). Cf. the NJPS rendering without dittography: „Let a few of the remaining horses that are still here be taken – they are like those that are left here of the whole multitude of Israel, out of the whole multitude of Israel that have perished – and let us send and find out.“

6 Lehmann 1988:182. Not all coordination involves two identical syntagms and such instances have been much discussed in the linguistic literature. For one recent discussion of „unbalanced coordination,“ see Johannessen 1998.

7 The term „quotative frame“ refers to the clause that introduces direct or indirect speech.

8 Contrast the use of *waw* to connect an indirect quotation to the quotative frame which introduces it; see the example in (4) and the discussion there.

9 This is not to suggest, however, that speech-initial *waw* is completely independent of the syntactic structure of the sentence, as is sometimes argued for discourse markers in English (e.g., Murphy 1993:163-67). On the interaction of syntactic and discourse-pragmatic functions of *waw*, see the discussion in connection with (11) below.

The syntactic and pragmatic functions of speech-initial *waw* are important for at least two reasons. First, when *waw* appears at the beginning of direct discourse, it is clearly not functioning as simply a clausal conjunction, but rather on a macrostructural level. On the basis of the distribution of quotations introduced with *waw* within dialogue, it will become clear that speech-initial *waw* is connected to specifiable discourse-pragmatic functions. Speech-initial *waw* thus provides a relatively clear-cut case for the use of *waw* as a discourse marker; these uses of *waw* must not be neglected for a complete understanding of the syntax and pragmatics of this important conjunction.[10]

But speech-initial *waw* is important for a second reason. Given the centrality of dialogue to Biblical Hebrew narrative, it is important to understand what speech-initial *waw* contributes to the dialogue. To the extent that an understanding of *waw* as a discourse marker assists us in comprehending the locutions (and illocutions) of biblical dialogue, we will have made strides in solving some of the exegetical questions of biblical narrative.[11] One such exegetical difficulty, in 1 Sam 10:12, is examined in §6 below.

2. Preliminary considerations

2.1. Discourse markers

Linguists concerned with macrostructural features of language have identified a functional class of linguistic devices known as *discourse markers*.[12] Discourse markers serve to index „the contextual coordinates within which an utterance is produced and designed to be interpreted" (Schriffrin 1987:315). Although linguistic expressions that function as discourse markers are not entirely devoid of their own linguistic properties (in terms of morphology, syntax, or semantics), at the level of the discourse they mark the location of an utterance with respect to its emerging context. That is, discourse markers are pragmatic indicators whose primary function is connective – „they function as instructions from the speaker to the hearer on how to integrate the host unit into a coherent mental representation of the discourse" (Mosegaard Hansen 1998:75). Discourse markers, then, are discourse-pragmatic: they signal the pragmatic relationship of an utterance to its broader context. There are two dimensions in which language has been described as pragmatic, and both are important to the discussion. On the one hand, speech is pragmatic in that it is intentional, purposive, social behavior. On the other hand, speech is pragmatic in that it is indexical – the linguistic signal bears a relationship to its context of use

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[10] For a discussion of macrosyntactic markers in Biblical Hebrew generally (though speech-initial *waw* is not included), see Schneider 1993:§54. The grammar by van der Merwe, Naudé and Kroeze discusses discourse markers, but does not include *waw* among them; see §44 on discourse markers and §§21, 31, and 40.8 on uses of *waw*.

[11] The term „illocution" is from Austin 1962.

[12] There are a variety of views concerning the identification of discourse markers and their functions; see the overview in Jucker and Ziv 1998:1-12 and Mosegaard Hansen 1998:9-36.

(Silverstein 1987:17-38). Both types of discourse-pragmatic functions are relevant to an understanding of speech-initial *waw* (see §7 below).

In English, for example, the conjunction *and* functions as a discourse marker, especially in oral language. To function as a discourse marker, the conjunction must be syntactically detachable from the sentence (i.e., syntactically nonessential). Ordinarily, it is also in initial position in an utterance. An examination of the uses of *and* when it serves as a discourse marker reveals a variety of diverse, but specifiable functions: to introduce an utterance as part of an uncompleted interactional unit, to regain control of the conversation and forestall diversions, or to link a question in a pre-arranged set of questions.[13] These functions are not ordinarily described in grammars, but speakers of English routinely employ them, albeit without metalinguistic awareness that they do so.[14] The conjunction thus operates both at a local (syntactic) level and at a global (macrosyntactic) level within the discourse.

Speech-initial *waw* is similarly detachable from the sentence that it introduces and does not provide a syntactic link to a preceding sentence, as discussed in connection with (1). It is reasonable then to assume that speech-initial *waw* is functioning on the macrostructural level as a discourse marker.

2.2. Dialogic structure

The initial step of analysis must consider the distribution of speech-initial *waw* within dialogue, since ordinarily the individual locutions that comprise a dialogue cohere without being joined by *waw*. To specify precisely where speech-initial *waw* occurs, the structural components of dialogue must be elucidated.[15]

Dialogue is pragmatically structured in terms of contiguous, alternating turns of talk, which linguists call *adjacency pairs*.[16] The first part of an adjacency pair produces the expectation of a relevant rejoinder in the second part. For example, an offer by one speaker produces the expectation of the acceptance (or rejection) of the offer by the second speaker. Similarly, a question in the first part calls for an answer in the second part, as illustrated in (2):

(2) Gen 16:8

וַיֹּאמַר הָגָר שִׁפְחַת שָׂרַי אֵי־מִזֶּה בָאת וְאָנָה תֵלֵכִי	1A
וַתֹּאמֶר מִפְּנֵי שָׂרַי גְּבִרְתִּי אָנֹכִי בֹּרַחַת׃	1B

1A   He said, „Hagar, servant of Sarai, where have you come from? And where are you going?"

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13   Schriffrin 1986:41-66 and 1987:128-52. Many other analyses of *and* as a discourse marker have been offered; see, e.g., Heritage and Sorjonen 1994.

14   On the inability of native speakers to perceive their own use of discourse markers, see Watts 1989:203-37.

15   For a more detailed discussion of the structuring of dialogue in Biblical Hebrew narrative, see Miller 1996:233-97. Dialogue in Jonah is analyzed by Person 1996.

16   Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson 1974.

1B   She said, „From Sarai, my mistress, I am fleeing."

The adjacency pair is a pragmatic structure, not a syntactic structure, and usually has two parts – a first part (here, the question) which is labelled (1A) and the second part (here, the answer) which is labelled (1B). The central notion is that in cooperative conversation the paired halves of an adjacency pair cohere pragmatically depending upon the extent to which the second part provides an appropriate response to the first part. This generalization holds for the adjacency pair in (2) – no *waw* introduces the quotation of the second part in (1B).

First parts may be followed by a variety of „appropriate responses," some of which are preferred by the speaker of the first part, others of which are dispreferred. Second parts, then, can be typed according to the extent to which they provide a preferred or dispreferred response to the first speaker.[17] Second parts that disagree with or contradict the first part are, in most cases, strongly dispreferred.[18] For example, in (2), a response that does not provide the requested information would be a dispreferred answer.[19]

The notion of markedness will also figure prominently in the following analysis. Markedness describes the „relationship between the two poles of an opposition."[20] The nature of a markedness opposition may be *privative*, where the presence of a feature at one pole signals the absence of the feature at the opposite pole, or *equipollent*, where the presence of a feature at one pole signals the logical opposite of that feature at the other pole. In addition, the marked construction is usually morphologically or syntactically indicated; the unmarked construction is not.

The markedness opposition examined here is between direct quotations introduced with *waw* and quotations introduced without *waw*. Quotations introduced with *waw* comprise the marked member in that they are morphologically indicated, they have limited distribution, and they have specifiable discourse-pragmatic functions. Quotations without *waw* are the unmarked member of the opposition for a variety of reasons. They are the most frequent and have the broadest distribution; most importantly, speeches in adjacency pairs, generally, and dialogues, more particu-larly, normally cohere without *waw*. Furthermore, the markedness indicated by speech-initial *waw* is privative, rather than equipollent. That is, the marked construction bears specifiable discourse-pragmatic functions; the unmarked construction may or may not bear those same functions.

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17   Levinson 1983:307.

18   Not all disagreeing responses are dispreferred. As Pomerantz (1985:57-101) notes, after self-deprecations, disagreement is the preferred response. For example: Speaker A: *I'm really disorganized most of the time.* Speaker B: *It's not that you're disorganized, you're just a very busy person.*

19   For a dispreferred response to a question, see 2 Kgs 9:22: 'When Joram saw Jehu, he said, „Have you come in peace, Jehu?" He [Jehu] said, „How can there be peace as long as all the idolatry and witchcraft of your mother Jezebel abound?"'

20   Batistella 1990:1; see also Andrews 1990.

2.3. Dialogic contexts of speech-initial *waw*

Specification of precisely where speeches introduced with *waw* occur within dialogue requires a consideration of two relevant parameters. The first parameter examines the participants of the speech event. Is the speech introduced with *waw* connected to a previous speech by the *same* speaker, or a *different* speaker? The second parameter examines the placement of a speech introduced with *waw* within the structure of the dialogue. That is, is the speech introduced with *waw* connected to an immediately preceding (or proximal) speech, or to an earlier (or distal) speech? These two parameters yield four logical possibilities:

Distribution of speech-initial *waw* within dialogue

	Exchange structure – quotation is connected to:	
Participant structure:	proximal quotation (immediately precedes)	distal quotation (other speeches intervene)
different speaker	Category #1 – (usually second part)	[does not occur]
same speaker	Category #3 – (related to literary trope)	Category #2 – (usually first part)

Three of the four possibilities are attested; in no instance does speech-initial *waw* connect two non-adjacent speeches by different speech participants. Setting aside Category #3 as well, which is related to a literary trope, we can see that Categories #1 and #2 are maximally differentiated by the two parameters. Speech-initial *waw* does not occur indiscriminately within biblical dialogue, but rather within certain clearly defined positions.

Categories #1 and #2 are differentiated by an additional parameter, namely, the position of the quotation introduced with *waw* within the adjacency pair. In Category #1, *waw* joins utterances produced by two different speakers; the quotation introduced with *waw* appears in the second part of the adjacency pair. In Category #2, *waw* joins utterances produced by the same speaker; the quotation introduced with *waw* appears in the first part of the adjacency pair. The correlation of the three parameters – same/different speech participant, proximal/distal quotation, first/second part of adjacency pair – thus produces maximal redundancy, which results in maximal perceptibility of the discourse-pragmatic functions of *waw* in both categories.

2.4. Excluded data

Three kinds of quotations introduced with *waw* are excluded from the following discussion.[21] The first type involves instances such as (3):

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21 Also excluded are instances in which the *waw* is not immediately initial in the quotation, for

(3) 2 Kgs 5:6

וַיָּבֵא הַסֵּפֶר אֶל־מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר וְעַתָּה כְּבוֹא הַסֵּפֶר הַזֶּה אֵלֶיךָ ...

He brought the letter to the king of Israel which said, „*And now* when this letter comes to you....“

Comparison to epigraphic Hebrew letters demonstrates that ועתה reflects the epistolary convention for marking the transition from the *praescriptio* of a letter to its body.[22] Thus a portion of a letter (or its essential content) is represented conventionally as a direct quotation within biblical narrative; information concerning sender and addressee that would normally have been included in the *praescriptio* of the letter has been incorporated into the surrounding narrative.[23] The conjunction *waw* before ועתה thus functions on a macrostructural level within the abstracted letter, rather than within a dialogue.[24]

A second kind of quotation that will be excluded involves indirect speech. In a few instances of indirect speech, the quotation is introduced with *waw*:

(4) Exod 25:2

דַּבֵּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִקְחוּ־לִי תְּרוּמָה מֵאֵת כָּל־אִישׁ ...

"Speak to the Israelites that they might take (lit. *and let them take*) for me a wave offering from each man....“

The instance of indirect speech is embedded within direct speech. The quotation of indirect speech is introduced with *waw* followed by a jussive. (It is impossible to understand the quotation as direct speech, on the basis of the deictic indicators, especially the personal pronouns.) Examples of this construction in Genesis through 2 Kings involve a volitive verb form at the beginning of the indirect quotation, whether jussive (Lev 16:2; 22:2; 24:2), perfect consecutive (Num 15:38), or imperative (Num 17:17).[25]

A third type of speech-initial *waw* that will not be discussed involves quotations without a quotative frame:

(5) 1 Sam 9:27

הֵמָּה יוֹרְדִים בִּקְצֵה הָעִיר
a   וּשְׁמוּאֵל אָמַר אֶל־שָׁאוּל אֱמֹר לַנַּעַר וְיַעֲבֹר לְפָנֵינוּ

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22   example, Gen 42:10 (where a negative particle and vocative precede the clause with *waw*) and Judg 6:13 (where a politeness particle and vocative precede).

22   Pardee 1982:149-50. See examples of this use in Arad 1:1-2, 2:1, 3:1, 5:1-2, 6:1, 7:1-2, 8:1, 10:1, 11:2, 16:3, 17:1, 18:3, 21:3, 40:4; Lachish 3:4, 4:2, 9:3. Müller (1994:163-64) notes that *waw* begins the body of the letter in KAI 50:2 and in the letter from Ḥorvat 'Uza (line 2).

23   See also the example of another letter in 2 Kgs 10:1-3, and the similar example of an orally transmitted message in 1 Sam 25:6-8.

24   Prijs (1964:106) incorrectly assumes that *waw* in these cases functions to strengthen and reinforce עתה.

25   See Joüon-Muraoka §177*l*.

b וַיַּעֲבֹר

c וְאַתָּה עֲמֹד כַּיּוֹם וְאַשְׁמִיעֲךָ אֶת־דְּבַר אֱלֹהִים:

They were going down to the edge of the town

a   and Samuel said to Saul, „Speak to the lad and let him pass over ahead of us.“

b   So he passed over.

c   „*And as for you*, stand today and I will proclaim to you the word of God.“

Samuel's initial command to Saul in (a) is introduced with a quotative frame – Saul is instructed to instruct his servant to go ahead of them. The narrative does not recount Saul's speech to the servant, but only the fact that the servant follows the command in (b). Samuel's speech continues in (c) with his instructions to Saul. The conjunction *waw* introduces the quotation in (c) solely because the quotative frame has been omitted. There are three such cases of an omitted quotative frame within the corpus; the other two examples are in Josh 24:23 and 2 Kgs 10:15. In each case, the MT reading is textually disputed.[26] If, however, the MT reading is accepted, the examples of speech-initial *waw* in Josh 24:23 and 2 Kgs 10:15 would fit into Category #1. The example in 1 Sam 9:27 would fit into Category #3.

3. Category #1

In the most frequent category, Category #1, speech-initial *waw* is used to connect a quotation by one speaker to an immediately preceding quotation by a different speaker, as in (6):[27]

(6) 1 Kgs 2:20-22

1A   וַתֹּאמֶר שְׁאֵלָה אַחַת קְטַנָּה אָנֹכִי שֹׁאֶלֶת מֵאִתָּךְ אַל־תָּשֵׁב אֶת־פָּנָי

1B   וַיֹּאמֶר־לָהּ הַמֶּלֶךְ שַׁאֲלִי אִמִּי כִּי לֹא־אָשִׁיב אֶת־פָּנָיִךְ:

2A   וַתֹּאמֶר יֻתַּן אֶת־אֲבִישַׁג הַשֻּׁנַמִּית לַאֲדֹנִיָּהוּ אָחִיךָ לְאִשָּׁה:

2B   וַיַּעַן הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה וַיֹּאמֶר לְאִמּוֹ וְלָמָה אַתְּ שֹׁאֶלֶת אֶת־אֲבִישַׁג הַשֻּׁנַמִּית לַאֲדֹנִיָּהוּ וְשַׁאֲלִי־לוֹ אֶת־הַמְּלוּכָה כִּי הוּא אָחִי הַגָּדוֹל מִמֶּנִּי וְלוֹ וּלְאֶבְיָתָר הַכֹּהֵן וּלְיוֹאָב בֶּן־צְרוּיָה:

1A   She [Bathsheba] said, „I am asking one little request from you. Don't refuse me.“

1B   The king said to her, „Ask, my mother, because I won't refuse you.“

2A   She said, „Let Abishag the Shunamite be given to Adonijah your brother as a wife.“

2B   King Solomon answered and said to his mother, „*And* why are you asking Abishag the Shunamite for Adonijah? Then ask for him the kingdom because

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26   In 1 Sam 9:27, the LXX and Syriac omit ויעבר, so that Samuel's quotation is unbroken. In Joshua 24:23, the LXX omits the previous quotation of the people (ויאמרו עדים), so that Joshua's quotation is unbroken. In 2 Kgs 10:15, the LXX adds a quotative frame.

27   In the citation of the data, textual critical notes concerning witnesses to *waw* will be made only when there is some uncertainty concerning its authenticity.

he is my elder brother - for him and for Abiathar the priest and for Joab the son of Zeruiah."

In this exchange there are two adjacency pairs. In the first adjacency pair (1A-1B), Bathsheba secures her son's agreement in principle to her as-yet-unspecified request. In the second adjacency pair (2A-2B), Bathsheba makes her request explicit and Solomon strongly objects to that request with a quotation beginning with *waw*.[28] When a request is followed by compliance (as in 1B), the preferred response, no *waw* joins the two halves of the adjacency pair. When, however, a request is followed by refusal (the dispreferred response), speech-initial *waw* may be present, as in (2B).

A similar example appears in (7):

(7) 1 Sam 22:12-14

1A   וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁאוּל שְׁמַע־נָא בֶּן־אֲחִיטוּב

1B   וַיֹּאמֶר הִנְנִי אֲדֹנִי:

2A   וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו (Q) שָׁאוּל לָמָּה קְשַׁרְתֶּם עָלַי אַתָּה וּבֶן־יִשַׁי בְּתִתְּךָ לוֹ לֶחֶם וְחֶרֶב
וְשָׁאוֹל לוֹ בֵּאלֹהִים לָקוּם אֵלַי לְאֹרֵב כַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה:

2B   וַיַּעַן אֲחִימֶלֶךְ אֶת־הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיֹּאמַר וּמִי בְכָל־עֲבָדֶיךָ כְּדָוִד נֶאֱמָן וַחֲתַן הַמֶּלֶךְ
וְסָר אֶל־מִשְׁמַעְתֶּךָ וְנִכְבָּד בְּבֵיתֶךָ:

1A   Saul said, "Listen, now, son of Ahituv."

1B   He said, "Here I am, my lord."

2A   Saul said to him, "Why have you conspired against me, you and the son of Jesse by giving him provisions and a sword and inquiring for him of God that he may rise against me in ambush, as it is this day."

2B   Ahimelek answered the king and said, "*And* who among all of your servants is like David – trusted, and the son-in-law of the king, and one who turns aside to your bidding, and honored in your house?"

In (2A) Saul accuses Ahimelek the priest of treason with David. In (2B) Ahimelek objects to Saul's accusation with a rhetorical question introduced with *waw* in which he proclaims David's loyalty and trustworthiness.[29]

Thus far, both of the examples have involved a response which is a rhetorical question. Indeed, instances of speech-initial *waw* in Category #1 frequently involve rhetorical questions, and rhetorical questions do not appear in the other two categories.[30] Other types of sentences, however, also appear in Category #1. Consider the example in (8):

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[28]   Müller (1994:164) explains *waw* in this instance as occurring at the dramatic beginning of a speech before a question.

[29]   Other examples where speech-initial *waw* introduces an objection to proposals or commands include Num 14:13-19; 2 Sam 24:3; 2 Kgs 1:10; and 2 Chr 25:9.

[30]   Joüon-Muraoka suggest that sometimes *waw* "expresses a nuance of emotion rather than a logical link" and that "this *waw* of emotion is particularly frequent in questions" (§177m).

(8) Num 12:13-14

1A וַיִּצְעַק מֹשֶׁה אֶל־יְהוָה לֵאמֹר אֵל נָא רְפָא נָא לָהּ׃

1B וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה וְאָבִיהָ יָרֹק יָרַק בְּפָנֶיהָ הֲלֹא תִכָּלֵם שִׁבְעַת יָמִים תִּסָּגֵר שִׁבְעַת יָמִים מִחוּץ לַמַּחֲנֶה וְאַחַר תֵּאָסֵף׃

1A Moses cried out to YHWH, „O God please heal her!“

1B YHWH said to Moses, „*And* had her father even spit in her face, would she not bear her shame seven days? Let her be shut outside of the camp for seven days and afterward she will be brought in.“

In this example, Moses asks God to heal Miriam (1A). God's response in (1B) begins with *waw* and contains an unmarked conditional sentence.[31] Many of the grammars cite this verse as an example in which *waw* introduces the protasis of a conditional sentence.[32] While *waw* may be used to introduce an otherwise unmarked protasis, there are two lines of argument to suggest that here *waw* also functions as a discourse marker.[33] First, whenever *waw* introduces the protasis of a conditional sentence which appears in initial position within a speech quotation, that speech always functions as an objection to the preceding speech within the dialogue. There are no examples of speech-initial *waw* introducing a conditional sentence in which the speech bears some other relationship within the dialogic exchange. A second line of argument is found in examples such as (9):

(9) 2 Kgs 1:9-10

וַיִּשְׁלַח אֵלָיו שַׂר־חֲמִשִּׁים וַחֲמִשָּׁיו וַיַּעַל אֵלָיו וְהִנֵּה יֹשֵׁב עַל־רֹאשׁ הָהָר

1A וַיְדַבֵּר אֵלָיו אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים הַמֶּלֶךְ דִּבֶּר רֵדָה׃

1B וַיַּעֲנֶה אֵלִיָּהוּ וַיְדַבֵּר אֶל־שַׂר הַחֲמִשִּׁים וְאִם־אִישׁ אֱלֹהִים אָנִי תֵּרֶד אֵשׁ מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם וְתֹאכַל אֹתְךָ וְאֶת־חֲמִשֶּׁיךָ

He [the king] sent to him [Elijah] a captain of fifty and his fifty men. So he went to him and behold he was sitting on the top of the mountain.

1A He spoke to him, „Man of God, the king says, 'Come down!'“

1B Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, „*And* if I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty!“

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31 The LXX translates the *waw* in this instance with εἰ.

32 Joüon-Muraoka §167b. Revell (1991:1288-89), however, suggests that such unmarked conditional sentences (which he calls „asyndeton conditional sentences“) may be translated in a variety of ways; they should thus be distinguished from grammatically indicated conditional sentences.

33 See also the implicit conditional with speech-initial *waw* in 1 Sam 9:7: וְהִנֵּה נֵלֵךְ וּמַה־נָּבִיא לָאִישׁ ('And if we go, then what will we bring to the man'). On this verse, Joüon-Muraoka suggests that „the virtual conditional sense is due to the double Waw (§b), and not to הנה (§167*l* n. 2). This instance of speech-initial *waw* is also significant in that both the LXX and Qumran attest to its presence.

In this example, the protasis of the conditional sentence (1B) is explicitly marked with אם.[34] Speech-initial *waw* appears as a discourse marker to introduce a refusal to comply with the order contained in the previous quotation.[35]

The stridency with which a quotation introduced with *waw* rejects or objects to the speech event of the previous quotation varies widely. Thus far we have seen refusals and objections, but *waw* may introduce the speeches of inferiors who seek to modify the proposals or commands enunciated by their superiors, as in (1) repeated here:

(1) 2 Kgs 7:12-13

וַיָּקׇם הַמֶּלֶךְ לַיְלָה

1A וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־עֲבָדָיו אַגִּידָה־נָּא לָכֶם אֵת אֲשֶׁר־עָשׂוּ לָנוּ אֲרָם יָדְעוּ כִּי־רְעֵבִים אֲנַחְנוּ וַיֵּצְאוּ מִן־הַמַּחֲנֶה לְהֵחָבֵה בַשָּׂדֶה (Q) לֵאמֹר כִּי־יֵצְאוּ מִן־הָעִיר וְנִתְפְּשֵׂם חַיִּים וְאֶל־הָעִיר נָבֹא:

1B וַיַּעַן אֶחָד מֵעֲבָדָיו וַיֹּאמֶר וְיִקְחוּ־נָא חֲמִשָּׁה מִן־הַסּוּסִים הַנִּשְׁאָרִים אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁאֲרוּ־בָהּ הִנָּם כְּכׇל־הֶהָמוֹן (Q) יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁאֲרוּ־בָהּ הִנָּם כְּכׇל־הֲמוֹן יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר־תָּמּוּ וְנִשְׁלְחָה וְנִרְאֶה:

The king arose by night

1A and he said to his servants, „Let me tell·you what Aram has done to us. They know that we are starving. So they have gone out of the camp to hide themselves in the countryside thinking, 'Indeed, they will go out from the city and we will capture them alive and enter their city.'"

1B One of his servants answered and said, „*And* let them take five of the horses which are left, since those who are left in it, behold they will be like the whole multitude of Israel which was finished off, so let us send and see."

In (1A), the king suggests that the absence of the Aramean army is a ruse to lure the people out of the besieged city into an ambush; implicitly the king expresses his inclination to remain safely within the city. In (1B), one of his servants suggests an alternative plan of action. The servant's counter-proposal is introduced with *waw*.[36]

We may summarize all of these instances by saying that a quotation within Category #1 functions within dialogue as a dispreferred response to the preceding quotation. In (6) and (9), the response is a refusal to honor a request. In (8), the response is a refusal to comply with a request immediately. In (7), the response denies the preceding accusation. In (1), the response presents a counter-proposal to a preceding proposal. Elsewhere, speech-initial *waw* in Category #1 may introduce the objection to a statement (1 Sam 15:14; 2 Sam 14:13; 2 Kgs 7:19).[37]

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34 The LXX also has both the conjunction and a conditional particle (καὶ εἰ).

35 See also Exod 4:1 where Moses' objection to God's command is introduced with speech-initial *waw* and an explicitly marked conditional sentence (... וְהֵן לֹא־יַאֲמִינוּ לִי 'And if they do not believe me...').

36 The LXX reads δή rather than καί for speech-initial *waw* in 2 Kgs 7:13. For an example where the objection is to a previous counter-proposal, see 1 Sam 9:7.

37 Speech-initial *waw* in Num 20:3 is exceptional in that the quotation of the people is presented as if it is the first part of the adjacency pair. However, it is likely that the quotation is intended to represent

The observation that speech-initial *waw* introduces a dispreferred response when it joins a quotation to an immediately preceding quotation by a different speaker provides insight into the enigmatic conversation in (10):

(10) 2 Kgs 2:9-10

1A וַיְהִי כְעָבְרָם וְאֵלִיָּהוּ אָמַר אֶל־אֱלִישָׁע שְׁאַל מָה אֶעֱשֶׂה־לָּךְ בְּטֶרֶם אֶלָּקַח מֵעִמָּךְ

1B וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלִישָׁע וִיהִי־נָא פִּי־שְׁנַיִם בְּרוּחֲךָ אֵלָי׃

2A וַיֹּאמֶר הִקְשִׁיתָ לִשְׁאוֹל אִם־תִּרְאֶה אֹתִי לֻקָּח מֵאִתָּךְ יְהִי־לְךָ כֵן וְאִם־אַיִן לֹא יִהְיֶה׃

1A When they passed over, Elijah said to Elisha, „Ask what I may do for you before I am taken from you.“

1B Elisha said, „*And* please let me have a double portion of your spirit.“

1C He [Elijah] said, „You have asked a difficult thing. If you see me taken from you, thus it will be granted to you. And if not, then it will not be.“

Elijah gives Elisha the opportunity to make one last request (1A). Elisha presents his request in (1B). Elijah's response in (1C) explicitly indicates that Elisha's request is a difficult one. The use of *waw* to introduce Elisha's request in (1B) probably indicates his own recognition that the request he makes, although elicited, goes beyond ordinary bounds, and is thus dispreferred.[38]

We might hypothesize that the use of speech-initial *waw* to introduce an objection is related to the social status of the speech participants involved.[39] But such does not seem to be the case. Instead, *waw* as a discourse marker introducing an objection/dispreferred response may be used when the speaker is of superior status: God (Num 12:14), a master (1 Sam 9:7), a prophet (1 Sam 15:14; 2 Kgs 1:10), or an army commander (2 Sam 18:11). Conversely, speech-initial *waw* may introduce a dispreferred response when the speaker is of inferior status: a servant (2 Kgs 7:13), a prophet speaking to God (Exod 4:1; Num 14:13), a priest to the king (1 Sam 22:14), a soldier to an army commander (2 Sam 18:12), an army commander to the king (2 Sam 24:3), or an army commander to a prophet (2 Kgs 7:19). Thus, the use of *waw* to indicate a dispreferred response does not seem to correlate with the social status of the speech participants.[40] Indeed, both superior and inferior may use speech-initial *waw* within the same dialogic exchange in (11):

(11) 2 Sam 18:10-12

וַיַּרְא אִישׁ אֶחָד

1A וַיַּגֵּד לְיוֹאָב וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה רָאִיתִי אֶת־אַבְשָׁלֹם תָּלוּי בָּאֵלָה׃

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the fragment of an exchange between Moses and the people; only the people's quotation is represented in order to focus on their complaint.

38 The LXX represents the conjunction with δή rather than καί in this verse.

39 On the representation of social status in biblical narrative, see Miller 1996:269-81; Revell 1996:267-322; and Wilt 1996:237-55.

40 In some cases, the social status of the speech participants cannot be determined, e.g., 1 Sam 10:12. In other cases, it is difficult to know how to rank the social status of participants. For example, how are Solomon and Bathsheba ranked in 1 Kgs 2:22 – superior (king) to inferior (subject) or inferior (son) to superior (mother)?

1B וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹאָב לָאִישׁ הַמַּגִּיד לוֹ וְהִנֵּה רָאִיתָ וּמַדּוּעַ לֹא־הִכִּיתוֹ שָׁם אָרְצָה וְעָלַי
לָתֶת לְךָ עֲשָׂרָה כֶסֶף וַחֲגֹרָה אֶחָת:

1C וַיֹּאמֶר הָאִישׁ אֶל־יוֹאָב וְלֹא (K) וְלוֹ (Q) אָנֹכִי שֹׁקֵל עַל־כַּפַּי אֶלֶף כֶּסֶף
לֹא־אֶשְׁלַח יָדִי אֶל־בֶּן־הַמֶּלֶךְ ...

A certain man saw [it]

1A and he told Joab, „Behold, I saw Absalom hanging in an oak tree.“

1B Joab said to the man who told him, „*And* behold, you saw [him], so why did
you not strike him there to the ground? Then I would have given you 10 pieces
of silver and a belt!“

1C The man said to Joab, „*And* even if I was weighing in my hands a thousand
shekels of silver, I would not touch the son of the king....“

In (1B) Joab rebukes the man for his reticence to kill Absalom. In (1C) the man
responds with an objection to Joab's rebuke. Both responses are dispreferred, and
both are introduced with *waw*.

In summary, the use of *waw* in Category #1 signals to the hearer that the following
quotation bears an appropriate and logical connection to the preceding quotation,
even though the response is dispreferred. As noted above, speech-initial *waw* is a
marked construction and there is a cross-linguistic tendency for dispreferred
responses to be marked syntactically. Speech-initial *waw* introduces a dispreferred
response precisely because adjacent speeches within an adjacency pair normally
cohere in cooperative conversation by virtue of their semantics and pragmatics. The
ordinary pragmatic connection between speeches in an adjacency pair does not
require syntactic marking with a conjunction and, indeed, there are no examples in
biblical narrative of speech-initial *waw* before a preferred response.

Because speech-initial *waw* is the marked member of a privative opposition,
quotations without *waw* may or may not be dispreferred. In (2), the response to the
question is preferred. In (12), the response to the request is dispreferred. Neither
response is introduced with *waw*.

(12) Gen 24:54-55

1A וַיֹּאמֶר שַׁלְּחֻנִי לַאדֹנִי:

1B וַיֹּאמֶר אָחִיהָ וְאִמָּהּ תֵּשֵׁב הַנַּעֲרָ אִתָּנוּ יָמִים אוֹ עָשׂוֹר אַחַר תֵּלֵךְ:

1A He [Abraham's servant] said, „Send me back to my master.“

1B Her brother and her mother said, „Let the girl remain with us about ten days.
Afterwards you may go.“

All preferred responses in biblical narrative lack *waw*. Dispreferred responses are
optionally marked with *waw*. When a dispreferred response is marked with speech-
initial *waw*, the author has chosen to indicate explicitly the discourse-pragmatic
function of the speech within the conversation.

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4. Category #2

In the second category, speech-initial *waw* connects two speeches by the same speaker that are not contiguous within the dialogic exchange. An example appears in (13):

(13) 2 Sam 16:2-3

1A	וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶל־צִיבָא מָה־אֵלֶּה לָּךְ
1B	וַיֹּאמֶר צִיבָא הַחֲמוֹרִים לְבֵית־הַמֶּלֶךְ לִרְכֹּב וְהַלֶּחֶם (Q) וְהַקַּיִץ לֶאֱכוֹל הַנְּעָרִים וְהַיַּיִן לִשְׁתּוֹת הַיָּעֵף בַּמִּדְבָּר׃
2A	וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ וְאַיֵּה בֶּן־אֲדֹנֶיךָ
2B	וַיֹּאמֶר צִיבָא אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ הִנֵּה יוֹשֵׁב בִּירוּשָׁלַ͏ִם כִּי אָמַר הַיּוֹם יָשִׁיבוּ לִי בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל אֵת מַמְלְכוּת אָבִי׃

1A   The king said to Ziba, „What are you doing with these?"

1B   Ziba said, „The donkeys are for the king's household to ride, and the bread and the figs are for the young men to eat, and the wine is for anyone to drink who grows faint in the wilderness."

2A   The king said, „*And* where is your master's son?"

2B   Ziba said to the king, „He is staying in Jerusalem because he said, 'Today the house of Israel will return my father's kingdom to me.'"

Two question-answer adjacency pairs appear in this dialogue. In the first (1A-B), David questions Ziba concerning the provisions which he has brought. In the second (2A-B), David asks him about his master. David's second question in (2A) is linked to his first question in (1A) with speech-initial *waw*.

Conjunctions on the phrasal or clausal level ordinarily join constituents of the same syntactic category. Speech-initial *waw* in Category #2 joins two speeches of the same pragmatic category, thus extending the syntactic use of *waw* at the level of phrase or clause. As a discourse marker conjoining two speeches by the same participant, speech-initial *waw* in Category #2 is used when the two speeches pragmatically perform the same type of speech event (e.g., request, question). Thus, *waw* signals to the hearer (or reader) that a connection should be made between the speech event at hand and a previous speech event of the same type by the same speaker.[41]

In some instances, both discourse functions of speech-initial *waw* that we have described may be present, as in (14):

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[41]   See also the instances in 1 Sam 21:9 (where speech-initial *waw* links David's request for a weapon to his previous request for provisions in vv. 3-4) and 2 Kgs 4:14 (where speech-initial *waw* links Elisha's question concerning the Shunamite woman with his previous question in v. 13).

(14) 2 Sam 13:24-27

וַיָּבֹא אַבְשָׁלוֹם אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ

1A וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה־נָא גֹזְזִים לְעַבְדֶּךָ יֵלֶךְ־נָא הַמֶּלֶךְ וַעֲבָדָיו עִם־עַבְדֶּךָ:

1B וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶל־אַבְשָׁלוֹם אַל־בְּנִי אַל־נָא נֵלֵךְ כֻּלָּנוּ וְלֹא נִכְבַּד עָלֶיךָ
וַיִּפְרָץ־בּוֹ וְלֹא־אָבָה לָלֶכֶת וַיְבָרֲכֵהוּ:

2A וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְשָׁלוֹם וָלֹא יֵלֶךְ־נָא אִתָּנוּ אַמְנוֹן אָחִי

2B וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ הַמֶּלֶךְ לָמָּה יֵלֵךְ עִמָּךְ:
וַיִּפְרָץ־בּוֹ אַבְשָׁלוֹם וַיִּשְׁלַח אִתּוֹ אֶת־אַמְנוֹן וְאֵת כָּל־בְּנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ:

Absalom came to the king.

1A He said, „Look, your servant has shearers. May the king and his servants go with your servant.“

1B 1B The king said to Absalom, „No, my son. Let us not all go with you, so that we will not burden you.“

He [Absalom] pressed him, but he [David] was not willing to go, but he blessed him.

2A Absalom said, „And [if] not, let Amnon my brother go with us.“

2B The king said to him, „Why should he go with you?“

Absalom pressed him, so he sent Amnon with him and all of the king's sons.

In this dialogue between David and Absalom, Absalom's initial request is given in (1A); but David refuses in (1B).[42] Absalom's speech in (2A) begins with *waw*. The quotation begins with an elliptical, unmarked condition ('and if not') which may be used to introduce an objection to the previous speech.[43] However, his speech also contains a reiteration of his original request which syntactically parallels the first request. In this instance, then, *waw* as a discourse marker operates on three levels: (1) to introduce the protasis of a conditional sentence, (2) to index a dispreferred response by reiterating a request which has already been strongly refused, and (3) to connect the present request to the initial request. The first function is syntactic; the latter two pragmatic.

A similar example is found in (15):[44]

(15) Exod 2:18-20

וַתָּבֹאנָה אֶל־רְעוּאֵל אֲבִיהֶן

1A וַיֹּאמֶר מַדּוּעַ מִהַרְתֶּן בֹּא הַיּוֹם:

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42 A few Hebrew mss. read וְלֹא. The LXX reads καὶ εἰ μή.

43 The only other instance of the pointing וְלֹא is found in 2 Kgs 5:17, where it also begins a dispreferred quotation. On the form, see GKC §104g.

44 For additional examples of speech-initial *waw* operating on two levels, see 1 Sam 28:16 (where Samuel's accusation is connected to his previous accusation [v. 15a] while simultaneously objecting to Saul's feeble response in v. 15b); 2 Sam 18:22 (where Ahimaaz re-iterates his previous request to run [v. 19] and objects to Joab's refusal to allow him to run [v. 20]); and 2 Kgs 5:17 (where Naaman's revised request is connected to his previous offer [v. 15] and objects to Elisha's refusal of the offer [v. 16]).

1B   וַתֹּאמַרְןָ אִישׁ מִצְרִי הִצִּילָנוּ מִיַּד הָרֹעִים וְגַם־דָּלֹה דָלָה לָנוּ וַיַּשְׁקְ אֶת־הַצֹּאן:

2A   וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־בְּנֹתָיו וְאַיּוֹ לָמָּה זֶּה עֲזַבְתֶּן אֶת־הָאִישׁ קִרְאֶן לוֹ וְיֹאכַל לָחֶם:

So they came to Reuel their father,

1A   and he said to them, „Why have you hurried to come today?"

1B   They said, „An Egyptian saved us from the control of the shepherds, and in fact he rolled away the stone for us and he watered the flock."

2A   He said to his daughters, „*And* where is he? Why is it that you abandoned the man? Call him and let him eat food."

Reuel's question to his daughters in (2A) is connected to his previous question in (1A). But the question in (2A) secondarily serves as an objection to his daughters' failure to exercise hospitality to their benefactor.[45]

Categories #1 and #2 of speech-initial *waw* are clearly distinguished, in spite of a few dialogues in which the structural and pragmatic features of both categories are present. Structurally, Category #1 occurs in the second part of an adjacency pair, whereas Category #2 occurs in the first part of an adjacency pair. In terms of discourse-pragmatics, speech-initial *waw* in Category #1 signals to the hearer/reader to connect the following speech to the preceding speech as a dispreferred response, whereas Category #2 signals to the hearer/reader to examine the preceding dialogue for a similar speech event by the same speaker.

5. Category #3

In the third category of speech-initial *waw*, the quotation with *waw* occurs in a string of quotations attributed to the same speaker:

(16) Gen 17:1-16 (excerpts)[46]

    וַיְהִי אַבְרָם בֶּן־תִּשְׁעִים שָׁנָה וְתֵשַׁע שָׁנִים וַיֵּרָא יְהוָה אֶל־אַבְרָם

1   וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אֲנִי־אֵל שַׁדַּי הִתְהַלֵּךְ לְפָנַי וֶהְיֵה תָמִים: וְאֶתְּנָה בְרִיתִי בֵּינִי וּבֵינֶךָ וְאַרְבֶּה
    אוֹתְךָ בִּמְאֹד מְאֹד:
    וַיִּפֹּל אַבְרָם עַל־פָּנָיו

2   וַיְדַבֵּר אִתּוֹ אֱלֹהִים לֵאמֹר: אֲנִי הִנֵּה בְרִיתִי אִתָּךְ וְהָיִיתָ לְאַב הֲמוֹן גּוֹיִם: ...

3   וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־אַבְרָהָם וְאַתָּה אֶת־בְּרִיתִי תִשְׁמֹר אַתָּה וְזַרְעֲךָ אַחֲרֶיךָ לְדֹרֹתָם: ...

4   וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־אַבְרָהָם שָׂרַי אִשְׁתְּךָ לֹא־תִקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמָהּ שָׂרָי כִּי שָׂרָה שְׁמָהּ: ...

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45   DCH (2:597) translates the quotation in this verse with „So where is he?", thus giving implicit attention to the pragmatics of the dialogue. Similarly, HALOT notes that *waw* in this verse introduces a „consequence or question (oral style)" (I:259, §26) and cites three other instances where the speech introduced with *waw* falls into Category #1 (2 Sam 24:3; 1 Kgs 2:22; 2 Kgs 4:41).

46   The LXX translates the conjunction with δέ in 17:9. In 17:19, the LXX reads ναί. Because Hebrew does not have a precise equivalent for „yes", the septuagintal translators must have been translating *ad sensum*. For a discussion of the strategies for stating a positive response in Biblical Hebrew, see Greenstein 1989:51-59.

When Abram was 99 years old, YHWH appeared to him
1   (17:1-2) and said to him, „I am El Shaddai. Walk before me and be perfect. And I will establish my covenant between me and between you and I will cause you to be very numerous."
Abram fell on his face.
2   (17:3-8) God spoke with him (saying), *„As for me*, behold, my covenant is with you and I will make you the father of many nations...."
3   (17:9-14) God said to Abraham, *„And as for you*, you will keep my covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations...."
4   (17:15-16) God said to Abraham, *„As for Sarai*, your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah will be her name...."

In this example there are four consecutive quotations attributed to the deity; the third quotation begins with *waw*.

Understanding the use of speech-initial *waw* in this context requires attention first to an unusual feature of biblical narrative – successive speeches attributed to a single individual, or put differently, the segmentation of a single individual's speech by multiple quotative frames. Each „speech" attributed to the speaker serves a separate function within the dialogue, particularly, or the narrative, generally. We can illustrate the use of this trope in dialogue with the following adjacency pair:
(17) Gen 47:3-4

וַיֹּאמֶר פַּרְעֹה אֶל־אֶחָיו מַה־מַּעֲשֵׂיכֶם	1A
וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֶל־פַּרְעֹה רֹעֵה צֹאן עֲבָדֶיךָ גַּם־אֲנַחְנוּ גַּם־אֲבוֹתֵינוּ:	1B-1
וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֶל־פַּרְעֹה לָגוּר בָּאָרֶץ בָּאנוּ כִּי־אֵין מִרְעֶה לַצֹּאן אֲשֶׁר לַעֲבָדֶיךָ כִּי־כָבֵד הָרָעָב בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן וְעַתָּה יֵשְׁבוּ־נָא עֲבָדֶיךָ בְּאֶרֶץ גֹּשֶׁן:	1B-2

1A   Pharaoh said to his [Joseph's] brothers, „What is your occupation?"
1B-1   They said to Pharaoh, „Your servants are shepherds, both we and our fathers."
1B-2   They said to Pharaoh, „We have come to sojourn in the land because there is no pasture for your servants' herds because the famine in the land of Canaan is severe. So now please allow your servants to settle in the land of Goshen."

The adjacency pair begins with Pharaoh's question. The answer given by the brothers (1B-1) responds directly to his query. They continue, however, with an explanation for their presence in Egypt and a request to be allowed to settle there (1B-2). The use of the quotative frame in (1B-2) thus serves to segment their locution into the two salient speech acts that it performs.[47] Ordinarily, a character's speech is introduced with only one quotative frame, even when it includes multiple speech acts.[48] The narrator has chosen to introduce both parts of a character's single turn of

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[47] Another way to describe this phenomenon draws upon Goffman's analogy of parts of dialogue to „moves" in a language game (1981:24, 70-73). The brothers' turn of talk is, thus, divided into two „moves."

[48] As two examples among many, see Gen 19:18-20 (containing a refusal and a counter-proposal) and Judg 20:4-7 (containing an answer to a question and a request).

talk with separate quotative frames.[49] The additional quotative frames are entirely redundant to the narrative in terms of introducing which character is speaking to whom.[50]

God's speech in (16) is similarly divided by quotative frames into four successive speeches. The first quotation (17:1-2) introduces the overreaching topic of the conversation - God tells Abram that he is making his covenant with him. In the second quotation (17:3-8), God indicates his own responsibilities in the covenant. In the third quotation (17:9-14), God enumerates Abram's responsibilities in the covenant; this is the only quotation beginning with *waw*. In the fourth quotation (17:15-16), God enumerates Sarai's responsibilities in the covenant. The quotative frames thus segment God's speech topically. The topical divisions are also indicated within the quotations themselves by word order. In each case, the quotation begins with an extraposed element in initial position – the personal pronouns אני (17:3) and ואתה (17:9), and the personal name with epithet שרי אשתך (17:15).

An examination of lengthy speeches that are not segmented with quotative frames reveals that topics within them are also indicated largely through word order. A change of topic (or discourse focus) is regularly indicated by placing the topical elements in initial position.[51] The change in topic may be, but is not necessarily, introduced with *waw*:

(18) Gen 17:18-20

<div dir="rtl">

1A   וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָהָם אֶל־הָאֱלֹהִים לוּ יִשְׁמָעֵאל יִחְיֶה לְפָנֶיךָ:

2A   וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֲבָל שָׂרָה אִשְׁתְּךָ יֹלֶדֶת לְךָ בֵּן וְקָרָאתָ אֶת־שְׁמוֹ יִצְחָק וַהֲקִמֹתִי אֶת־בְּרִיתִי
     אִתּוֹ לִבְרִית עוֹלָם לְזַרְעוֹ אַחֲרָיו: וּלְיִשְׁמָעֵאל שְׁמַעְתִּיךָ ...

</div>

1A   Abraham said to God, „If only Ishmael might live before you!"

2A   God said, „Instead Sarah your wife will bear a son to you, and you shall call his name Isaac and I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for a remembrance after him. *And concerning Ishmael*, I have heard you...."

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[49] In 2 Kgs 22:9-10, the two utterances attributed to Shaphan perform different purposes: the first recounts his compliance with the king's directives, the second informs the king of the discovery of the Book of the Law. Similarly, the two instances of reported speech attributed to Tamar in Gen 38:25 accomplish two purposes. The first relates that she is pregnant by the man who owns the items; the second requests an identification of the owner of the items. The first is introduced with a quotative frame that explicitly identifies that the reported utterance was transmitted by a messenger (והיא שלחה אל־חמיה לאמר 'she sent [a message/messenger] to her father-in-law [saying]'); the same is probably true of the second as well, though it is introduced only with ותאמר 'and she said'. By representing Tamar's message in two parts, the narrator draws attention to the locution that provides the climax of the story. See also the example in Gen 24:23-25.

[50] A slightly different formulation of the narrative function of successive speeches by the same individual is given in Revell 1997:91-110. For other explanations, see Shiloah 1963:251-67; Cassuto 1983[1951]:38; Conroy 1978:130; Bar-Efrat 1989:43; and Meier (1992:73-81).

[51] van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 1999:§47.

God's response to Abraham begins with a re-iteration that Sarah will bear the son of the covenant. The change of topic to Ishmael is indicated by word order and coordination.[52]

It is now possible to specify more clearly the use of *waw* at the beginning of the third quotation in (16). As already noted, the first quotation sets up the general premise of the conversation (God's covenant with Abram), whereas the following three quotations enumerate the responsibilities of the various individuals connected with the covenant. The *waw* at the beginning of the third quotation serves to link Abram's responsibilities with the previous quotation that enumerates God's responsibilities. In other words, the two linked quotations describe the obligations of the speaker (God) and the addressee (Abram). What is interesting is that the fourth quotation, which gives the responsibilities of Sarai, is not introduced with *waw*. In that quotation, the topic is indicated solely by the occurrence of שָׂרַי אִשְׁתְּךָ in initial position. There is a contrast, then, between the quotations referring to the obligations of the speech participants, which are linked with *waw*, and that of the non-speech participant, which is not introduced with *waw*.

A similar use of speech-initial *waw* occurs in Gen 9:1-17, where God's blessing and covenant on the post-flood world are segmented by direct speech quotations. In 9:1-7, God blesses humanity and states humans' responsibilities. In 9:8-11, God describes his covenantal actions; the quotation is linked with *waw* to the previous quotation. In 9:12-16, God enumerates the sign of the covenant. In the closing quotation in 9:17, God summarizes the covenant. The latter two quotations are not introduced with *waw*.

In these two passages (Genesis 9 and 17), speech-initial *waw* is redundant in terms of segmenting the topics of the speech (a function performed both by the quotative frames and by the word order of each quotation); rather, *waw* serves primarily as a discourse marker to link the salient quotations involving the speech participants.

In pentateuchal passages where legislation is framed as divine speech, speech-initial *waw* is also found:

(19) Num 3:5-15, (excerpts)

1 וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵּאמֹר: הַקְרֵב אֶת־מַטֵּה לֵוִי וְהַעֲמַדְתָּ אֹתוֹ לִפְנֵי אַהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֵן וְשֵׁרְתוּ אֹתוֹ: ...

2 וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵּאמֹר: וַאֲנִי הִנֵּה לָקַחְתִּי אֶת־הַלְוִיִּם מִתּוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל תַּחַת כָּל־בְּכוֹר ...

3 וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה בְּמִדְבַּר סִינַי לֵאמֹר: פְּקֹד אֶת־בְּנֵי לֵוִי לְבֵית אֲבֹתָם לְמִשְׁפְּחֹתָם ...

1 (3:5-10) YHWH spoke to Moses (saying), „Bring the tribe of Levi near, and set them before Aaron the priest, so that they may assist him..."

2 (3:11-13) And YHWH spoke to Moses (saying), „*I myself* accept (lit. and I behold I accept) the Levites from the midst of the Israelites in place of every firstborn..."

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52   As another example, see Gen 6:13-21.

3   (3:14-15) And YHWH spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai (saying),
„Enroll the Levites by the house of their fathers and by their families...“

The use of speech-initial *waw* in such passages is much less clear, although it does appear to be similarly connected to the notion of a change of topic involving one of the speech participants, either the speaker (Exod 30:18; Num 3:12; 18:8) or the addressee (Exod 30:23; 31:13; Lev 20:2). In two instances, speech-initial *waw* seems to function on the clausal level to introduce a „consecutive“ perfect form (Exod 30:18; Josh 22:28);[53] these examples suggest that, at least in these cases, the interposition of quotative frames may be a secondary addition to the text.

Speech-initial *waw* in Category #3 occurs in connection with a narrative trope involving the use of multiple quotative frames to segment a lengthy speech. The discourse-pragmatic function of *waw* in such cases intersects with the use of word order to highlight a change of topic relating to one of the speech participants.

6. The crux in 1 Sam 10:12

Understanding the discourse-pragmatic features of speech-initial *waw* provides an additional perspective from which to examine longstanding exegetical difficulties in the biblical text. The example in (20) contains many problematic features, but the interpretation of the second part of the adjacency pair is particularly enigmatic:
(20) 1 Sam 10:11-12

וַיְהִי כָּל־יוֹדְעוֹ מֵאִתְּמוֹל שִׁלְשׁוֹם וַיִּרְאוּ וְהִנֵּה עִם־נְבִאִים נִבָּא
1A   וַיֹּאמֶר הָעָם אִישׁ אֶל־רֵעֵהוּ מַה־זֶּה הָיָה לְבֶן־קִישׁ הֲגַם שָׁאוּל בַּנְּבִיאִים:
1B   וַיַּעַן אִישׁ מִשָּׁם וַיֹּאמֶר וּמִי אֲבִיהֶם

When all those who knew him [Saul] previously saw that he prophesied with the prophets,
1A   the people said to one another, „What has happened to the son of Kish? Is even Saul among the prophets?“
1B   A man from there answered and said, „*And* who is their father?“

It is not possible here to examine the various viewpoints concerning prophetism in ancient Israel, nor all of the complexities of this passage. What can be noted is that the narrative presents two direct quotations that are structured as if they are parts of an adjacency pair, even though the first part (1A) represents the sentiments of a group rather than an individual. The relationship between the two halves of the adjacency pair is complicated, however, by uncertainty concerning the interrogative sentences present within them.

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53   In Exod 30:18, the perfect consecutive is וְעָשִׂיתָ; in this and 88 other cases the form is consecutive in spite of the stress pattern (Joüon-Muraoka §43b). In Josh 22:28, the LXX reads ἐάν instead of the conjunction. The latter passage is also exceptional in that speech-initial *waw* does not introduce a quotation relating directly to any speech participant.

In the first half of the adjacency pair, is the second interrogative sentence a real question („Is Saul really among the prophets or not?" i.e., there is some uncertainty about his inclusion in the group),[54] or is the question rhetorical? As a rhetorical question, interpretations range from simple amazement that Saul should be included among the prophets (though he in fact is included)[55] to denial that Saul is really one of the prophets.[56]

The interrogative sentence in the second half of the adjacency pair is open to similar debates. As a real question, the sentence presents a procedure for determining Saul's legitimacy with the prophets – find out who their prophetic father is and he will be able to interpret their gibberish;[57] or alternatively, locate their prophetic father and then it will be obvious why Saul is among the prophets.[58] As a rhetorical question, the sentence may be arguing that determining the prophets' physical father is unnecessary since prophetism is not determined by genealogy;[59] or, the rhetorical question may mean that the prophets are of obscure and lowly origin.[60]

Rather than evaluating the interpretation of each sentence atomistically, we can look instead at the ways in which the various interpretations view the relationship between the paired halves of the adjacency pair. The central questions in interpretation, then, are these: Do both quotations present similar evaluations of Saul's inclusion among the prophets, or does the second quotation contradict the evaluation offered in the first?

The preceding analysis of speech-initial *waw* suggests that the second quotation (1B) belongs to Category #1: the quotation is in the second half of the adjacency pair, and the quotation is linked to an immediately preceding quotation by a different speaker. In addition to these factors, two other features of the quotation correlate with Category #1 examples: (1) rhetorical questions appear only in Category #1 and, (2) Category #1 quotations are often introduced by ... ויאמר ... ויען in the quotative frame (see Exod 4:1; 1 Sam 22:14-15; 1 Kgs 2:22; 2 Kgs 7:13; 7:19). As a member of Category #1, the quotation in (1B) should be interpreted in such a way that it presents a pragmatically dispreferred response. That is, regardless of the proposition that is expressed in the first part of the adjacency pair, the second part should be understood as expressing a point of view in opposition to, or at variance with, that of the first.

A brief survey of exegetical treatments of the passage reveals that most interpreters view the two parts of the adjacency pair as expressing similar sentiments. For example, Hertzberg (1964:86) interprets (1A) as a statement that a reasonable, well-placed young man such as Saul the son of Kish does not belong among a band of eccentric prophets. The question in (1B) is a „contemptuous aside" that reinforces the first statement by suggesting that the prophets „had no father," that is, they were

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54 Phillips 1968:190-91.
55 Lindblom 1973:33; Ackroyd 1971:84-85; and Klein 1983:92-93.
56 Sturdy 1970:206-13; Baldwin 1988:91-92; and McCarter 1980:183-84.
57 Phillips 1968:191 and Ackroyd 1971:85.
58 Williams 1966:344-48; McCarter 1980:184; and Fokkelman 1993:428-29.
59 Driver 1960:83.
60 Hertzberg 1964:86 and Mauchline 1971:99-100.

of obscure origin. Similarly, Ackroyd (1971:85) suggests that the first quotation expresses surprise at the divine power in Saul, and the second quotation inquires concerning the leader or interpreter of the ecstatics and thus the meaning of their behavior and Saul's place among them. In his view, both quotations reinforce the perspective that Saul's behaviour is incongruous and unusual. A variation of this understanding of the adjacency pair suggests that the first question is a real question, which inquires concerning Saul's position with the prophetic band; the second question furthers the inquiry by inquiring concerning the prophetic authority figure of the band (Phillips 1968:190-92). In all of these interpretations, both of the quotations in (1A) and (1B) express similar evaluations of Saul and his relationship to the ecstatic prophets. Although these interpreters disagree on many relevant aspects of the passage, they agree that the second half of the adjacency pair does not present an objection or dispute to the first half.

A second understanding of the relationship of the parts of the adjacency pair is represented by McCarter's suggestion (1980:183-84) that the first quotation expresses surprise that the prophetic group has absorbed such an unlikely person as Saul. The second quotation objects to this assessment; the rhetorical question („Who is their father [i.e., prophetic leader]?") contradicts the previous quotation by implicitly claiming that Saul, in fact, is their leader and thus has a place among the prophets.[61] Rashi and Driver (1960:83) similarly see the second quotation as an objection to the proposition that Saul does not belong among the prophets. Their understanding of the rhetorical question differs from McCarter, however, in that they interpret the father as the genealogical father of the prophets. Prophecy, then, is by divine inspiration and not by human genealogy. Regardless of their divergence in their understandings of the lexical components of the verse (especially the sense of אב as metaphorical or literal), these interpreters have correctly understood the pragmatics of the reported speech within the adjacency pair.

Although an understanding of the pragmatics of speech-initial *waw* does not solve all of the issues involved in untangling this passage, it does assist in narrowing the range of interpretive possibilities to those in which the second half of the adjacency pair is pragmatically dispreferred as a response to the first. Interpretations in which the two halves of the adjacency pair express opposing positions are to be preferred over those that do not. Thus, the presence of *waw* at the beginning of the second quotation provides an important means for deciphering the pragmatic connection of one quotation to another. As an indicator of the contextual coordinates of the discourse, *waw* clearly functions as a discourse marker.

Within the broader narrative, the discourse-pragmatic function of *waw* in this passage is also significant. Because the quotations of this adjacency pair do not purport to represent any single conversation, and indeed, the first quotation represents the combined sentiments of a group, the speeches represent instead the reception of Saul and his kingship in ancient Israel (so also Fokkelman 1993:427). The fact that the quotations exhibit the syntactic features of two pragmatically

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61   Similarly Williams (1966:347), who sees the objection in the second quotation as meaning „If one knows who the leader of the group is, then one knows why Saul is with the prophets"; that is, Samuel is their leader.

opposed quotations suggests that the adjacency pair has been exploited as a narrative trope to highlight the profound uncertainty in ancient Israel concerning the nature and legitimacy of Saul's leadership.

7. Conclusions

In closing, two related matters must be considered, the first historical, the second sociolinguistic. The historical issue involves the distribution of speech-initial *waw* within the narrative portions of the Hebrew Bible. The sociolinguistic issue relates to the possibility that this construction reflects a feature of spoken Hebrew.

Evidence for diachronic change is reflected in the distribution of speech-initial *waw* within the biblical text. Category #3 appears only in the Pentateuch and only in P. As noted above, this category is connected to a literary trope in which multiple quotative frames introduce the speech of a single speaker. Categories #1 and #2 appear primarily in early Biblical Hebrew prose and are entirely absent in the narratives of Ezra-Nehemiah, Esther, and Daniel. The single example of speech-initial *waw* in Chronicles appears in 2 Chr 25:9; there is no parallel passage in the deuteronomistic history.[62] Where speech-initial *waw* does occur in the deuteronomistic history; the Chronicles parallel does not have *waw* (see 2 Sam 24:3//1 Chr 21:3). Within the Pentateuch, Categories #1 and #2 appear only in J apart from one anomalous example in P.[63]

Because there are no audio recordings (or written transcriptions) of speech from the biblical era, the sociolinguistic issue can be approached only obliquely by comparison to the use of discourse markers in oral and written versions of spoken languages. The evidence from those languages suggests that there is a higher percentage of sentence-initial coordinators in oral language as opposed to written language (Mithun 1988:356). Discourse markers are also more prevalent in oral language than in written language (Mosegaard Hansen 1998:91-111). The distribution of speech-initial *waw* in the biblical text thus suggests that its use as represented in Categories #1 and #2 was probably a feature of the somewhat earlier spoken language which fell out of use in the post-exilic period. Speech-initial *waw* in Category #3 is attested only in P and was a literary construct (perhaps based upon the oral use of *waw* as a discourse marker).

In conclusion, speech-initial *waw*, which at first glance might appear inconsequential, actually indexes significant discourse-pragmatic functions within dialogue. Recognizing these discourse-pragmatic functions of speech-initial *waw* crucially depends upon a recognition of the relevant pragmatic features of the dialogue in order to group examples into three categories. The first two categories are maximally differentiated on the basis of the speech participants, their connection to a proximal

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[62] Kropat (1909:§§6, 23) describes the various ways in which the uses of phrasal and clausal *waw* differ in early Biblical Hebrew and Late Biblical Hebrew, but does not discuss the examples of speech-initial *waw*.

[63] The only example in P is Num 20:3-5; see the discussion in n. 37.

or distal quotation, and their position within the adjacency pair. The third category relates to a narrative trope.

In Category #1, speech-initial *waw* is discourse-pragmatic in the sense that it indexes the purposive, social intention of the speaker – the quotation is dispreferred within the adjacency pair. In Categories #2 and #3, speech-initial *waw* is discourse-pragmatic in the sense that it indexes the relationship of the quotation to its context of use. In Category #2, the context of use relates to a previous speech of the same type by the same speaker; in Category #3, the context of use relates primarily to the participants of the speech event. Critically, however, speech-initial *waw* indicates a *marked* pragmatic connection between speeches within dialogue. Where *waw* is absent, no claim can be made for or against similar discourse-pragmatic functions; the absence of *waw* before a quotation is the unmarked member of the opposition. Where speech-initial *waw* is present, an appreciation of the ways in which it serves as a contextual coordinate within dialogue helps us to unlock the subtleties of reported speech in the biblical text and thus offers an important resource for biblical exegesis.

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Abstract:

When the conjunction *waw* appears at the beginning of a direct speech quotation, it does not function as a phrasal or clausal coordinator. Instead, speech-initial *waw* functions on a macrostructural level as a discourse marker, a pragmatic indicator of the contextual coordinates of discourse. Attention to the structural features of dialogue reveals three contexts within which speech-initial *waw* occurs, each with its distinct discourse-pragmatic function. In the first category, speech-initial *waw* introduces a dispreferred response to a previous quotation. In the second category, speech-initial *waw* links two non-adjacent speeches by the same speaker. In the third category, speech-initial *waw* functions within a narrative trope.

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