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A Hebrew Portmanteau Morph

The Hebrew morph \{\text{?e9}\} marks a verb-object construction, while at the same time carrying a meaning of 'specific identification' or 'the'. But the picture is complicated in that its semantic value is redundant with the prefix ha- 'specific identification' or 'the', which is often attached to the object. The allomorphs of \{\text{?e9}\} are \text{?o\text{-}}, which occurs before bound pronouns beginning with a vowel, and \text{?e9}, which occurs everywhere else.

Thus we find it in such constructions as \text{gatal-?e9-yaho\text{-}sha\text{-}} 'He killed Joshua' (vs. \text{gatal yaho\text{-}sha\text{-}} 'Joshua killed'), where it points out Joshua and marks the construction; \text{gatal-?e9-ha\text{-}i\text{-}si\text{-}} 'he killed the man', where it is primarily a construction marker, sharing with ha- its semantic value (vs \text{gatal ha\text{-}i\text{-}si\text{-}} 'the man killed'); \text{gatal-?e9-kal-\text{?a\text{-}}ser al hamu\text{-}am') 'he killed all who were on the water (specifically identified)', where it has both its full semantic and construction marking value; or \text{gatal - ?e9 - o 'he killed him (specifically identified)'} (vs. \text{gatalo 'he killed him'}), where it has its full semantic value of identifying the person named more specifically but has very little construction marking value, as the o is its own construction marker. The construction marking value is generally most prominent in its use, but, as demonstrated above, there are two values present in the morph.

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