# Hebrew Grammar in Contact with German Grammar during the Jewish Enlightenment: Pronouns as Case Study

1. Introduction[[1]](#footnote-1)

One of the best-known Maskilic endeavors during the early stage of their activity focused on the linguistic qualification of the Jewish community. On the explicit level,[[2]](#footnote-2) the aim was to expand and cultivate the Hebrew language as a suitable medium for any cultural, scientific, or artistic purpose.[[3]](#footnote-3) This was presented as a religious and cultural ideal, crucial for the preservation of Jewish heritage and development of the Jewish people as a modern, civilized nation.[[4]](#footnote-4) To this end, in addition to a large volume of new Hebrew writing in a variety of cultural and scientific fields, new Hebrew grammars and handbooks were published.

No less important in this respect is the position of the German language. Speaking or writing high-level German was not widely regarded as an explicit and idealistic aim, but rather, like any other vernacular language, as a practical need for financial and social connections.[[5]](#footnote-5) However, the special attitude of the Maskilim toward German is strongly evident.[[6]](#footnote-6) The creation of German translations of the Pentateuch and other Hebrew writings, as well as the deep Maskilic reliance on German literary, cultural, scientific, and philosophic sources in the early period of the Jewish Enlightenment, are prominent expressions of this attitude.[[7]](#footnote-7)

The Hebrew grammar in this period is no exception. Maskilic grammatical writings include frequent and numerous comparisons to German and translations of German terms, some of them written in German or in a bilingual Hebrew-German format.[[8]](#footnote-8) The connections with German linguistics enabled a substantial extension and development of Hebrew grammatical descriptions, particularly in the domain of syntax, which had been relatively neglected in earlier Hebrew grammars. The strong influence of German linguistics on Hebrew linguistics is therefore quite obvious.[[9]](#footnote-9) Nevertheless, it has never previously been systematically described, nor its German sources precisely revealed.[[10]](#footnote-10)

The first work of this period in which those foreign theories were applied to offer considerable innovations in grammatical descriptions is the pamphlet ʾ*Or Lintivah* (Berlin, 1783),[[11]](#footnote-11) authored by the famous Jewish philosopher Moses Mendelssohn (Dessau, 1729 – Berlin, 1786). This work was intended to serve as a Hebrew introduction to the *Targum* – his German translation of the Pentateuch.[[12]](#footnote-12) In the third part, Mendelssohn presented an organized, compendious introduction for the main principles and key-terms of the Hebrew syntax.[[13]](#footnote-13)In all probability, the aim of this section was to note some fundamental differences between Hebrew and German syntax, in order to provide the reader with an explanation for perceived discrepancies between the German translation and the original text.[[14]](#footnote-14) Although not intended as a grammatical description *per se*, it represents a considerable innovation in Hebrew linguistic tradition.[[15]](#footnote-15)

The next significant step was taken a few years later by Judah Leib Ben-Zeʾev (Lviv, 1764 – Vienna, 1811).[[16]](#footnote-16) In his comprehensive Hebrew grammar *Talmud Lashon* *ʿIvri* (Breslau, 1796),[[17]](#footnote-17) he devotes an entire section (the fourth out of five in the work) to a detailed presentation of Hebrew syntax.[[18]](#footnote-18) In this section, he expands upon Mendelssohn’s initial work, introducing an exhaustive biblical Hebrew syntactic analysis. The other sections of his book also include numerous valuable innovations. Ben-Zeʾev's work offers a solid methodological and theoretical basis for the grammatical descriptions in subsequent works.

The clearest element in which the German background is reflected in these works is technical Hebrew terminology.[[19]](#footnote-19) Almost every grammatical term is accompanied by a German translation, transliterated into Hebrew letters and placed in parentheses. This is the first time that Hebrew alternatives are introduced for many of these German terms (which, in turn, are often originally taken from the Latin). These Hebrew terms by no means reflect an automatic adoption of German terminology. A substantial effort is made to present a careful and selective adaptation, in which the Hebrew alternatives are employed only when they were considered appropriate terms, suitable for the Hebrew grammatical features. In other cases, the German term is rejected. Even when it is accepted, the selection of the Hebrew alternative is not a simple loan translation, but rather an attempt to find the best representative for the Hebrew linguistic element. The terminology employed in those works is, therefore, a good reflection or a "display window" for the essential attitude towards many linguistic issues and their underlying significance. However, at least in some cases, it seems that the German-modeled terminology does not represent the nature of Hebrew grammar in the most desirable or appropriate manner, instead creating a Hebrew grammatical perception shaped by German principles.

In this paper, I examine one representative issue: the treatment and terminology of the Hebrew pronouns in Mendelssohn's and Ben-Ze'ev's works. This issue appears to offer a striking and distinctive example of the treatment and adaptation of German grammatical sources by Maskilic scholars, as well as German influence on the Hebrew grammatical conceptions and its subsequent traces in Hebrew grammar to the present day. Our subject will enable us to reveal the primary German sources that lay behind these two works[[20]](#footnote-20) and to trace the way German ideas were embraced by Jewish Hebrew grammars and the consequences of this adoption.

We begin our study with an inspection of this subject in the first of the two works – ʾ*Or Lintivah*.

1. The pronouns in ʾ*Or Lintivah*

Mendelssohn begins his discussion[[21]](#footnote-21) with a definition of the pronouns[[22]](#footnote-22) as a part of speech ("חלק מחלקי הדיבר") that is used in most cases when a noun should be "doubled," i.e. repeated after it has previously been mentioned, instead of the noun ("תחת השם ובמקומו"). This explanation is derived from the literal meanings of the relevant terms in European languages (Latin *promomina*, German *Fürwort*). He then provides several Hebrew examples of this notion, all of them personal pronouns: independent ("אני", I; , "אתה" you) or suffixed (such as "עבדו", his slave, representing the combination of the noun "עבד" and the possessive pronominal suffix "ו"). The suffixed pronouns, he explains, are used to indicate the relations between the word they combine with and another word, and it may appear with either verbs, nouns or particles.[[23]](#footnote-23) According to Mendelssohn, the traditional term used by Hebrew grammarians – הכנוים"" – refers solely to the suffixed pronouns.[[24]](#footnote-24) It is interpreted as a mnemonic whose letters form all the existing Hebrew suffixed pronouns.

Mendelssohn asserts that parallelism between this Hebrew term and the term *pronomina* is only partial. Unlike pronouns in other languages, the Hebrew suffixed pronouns indicate only three types of relations: the genitive ("מאמר המצטרף"), like "אבי" (< "אב" + pronominal suffix *i*, my father), "אשתך" (< "אשה" + "ךָ", your wife); the nominative and the accusative,[[25]](#footnote-25) such as "אהבתיך" (< "אהב"+"תי" + "ךָ", **I** loved **you**), "עשיתו" (< "עשי"+"ת" + "וֹ", **you** did **it**).

Mendelssohn continues his discussion by presenting the position of grammarians of other languages who include several other categories under the term *pronomina*. For the purposes of describing Hebrew, he claims it is not necessary to "mention them in particular and to study them in detail."[[26]](#footnote-26) However, he lists those categories and explains them briefly for the benefit of those who compare his German translation to the original Hebrew text, and would like to understand why the translator provided different German translations for the same Hebrew word in different instances.[[27]](#footnote-27)

His list contains six categories: personal pronouns (in which he includes independent and suffixed personal pronouns, as well as reciprocal pronouns), possessive pronouns,[[28]](#footnote-28) demonstrative pronouns, interrogative pronouns, relative pronouns, and indefinite pronouns. Every item in this list is accompanied by a German translation and examples, in addition to a Hebrew explanation and demonstration, .

Although not intended to serve as a Hebrew grammatical description, the mere presentation of the pronouns in Hebrew marks a considerable innovation. Except for the personal pronoun, which is traditionally described in Hebrew grammars (called כינויי גוף by Mendelssohn as well as by former grammarians), the other terms introduced include six[[29]](#footnote-29) new independent grammatical categories regarding Hebrew grammar: כנויים חוזרים (reciprocal), כנויי הקנין (possessive),[[30]](#footnote-30) כנויים רומזים (demonstrative),[[31]](#footnote-31) כנויי השאלה (interrogative),[[32]](#footnote-32) כנויים מצרפים (relative)[[33]](#footnote-33) and כנויים בלתי מיוחדים (indefinite)[[34]](#footnote-34). Although Mendelssohn maintains that these categories are not necessary for Hebrew description, four of them (reciprocal, possessive, demonstrative and relative pronouns) have remained an integral part of Hebrew grammar, and three of them are still referred to by the terms Mendelssohn coins (כנויים חוזרים, כנויי קניין, כנויים רומזים).[[35]](#footnote-35)

Mendelssohn’s list accurately parallels similar lists in contemporary German grammars.[[36]](#footnote-36) Mendelssohn bases his description on multiple sources. One of his direct sources is the most famous German grammar of his time, and one of the most successful grammars ever – *Vollständigere und Neuerläuterte Deutsche Sprachkunst* (Leipzig 1748), authored by Johann Christoph Gottsched (1700-1766), in which exactly the same list of pronouns is presented.[[37]](#footnote-37) One German term Mendelssohn mentions is *unbestimmte Fürwörter* (indefinite pronouns). This term had not been used by Gottsched, suggesting that Mendelssohn was familiar with the writings of Johann Jacob Hemmer (1733-1790),[[38]](#footnote-38) who was the first to introduce this term.[[39]](#footnote-39) The Latin term Mendelssohn offers for this category – *indefinita* – was probably not mentioned in contemporary or earlier German grammars[[40]](#footnote-40) and appears to hint at a direct acquaintance with Latin grammars.

The description presented by Mendelssohn, as mentioned, laid the basis for his immediate contemporary successors, especially Ben-Zeʾev, whose contribution will be discussed below.

1. The pronouns in *Talmud Lašon ʿIvri*

According to Mendelssohn's view, the detailing of all kinds of pronouns is necessary for comparison between Hebrew and German, not for learning or describing Hebrew *per se*. For his immediate successors who authored grammatical works on Hebrew, however, this aspect had already become an integral part of Hebrew grammar. Thus, Yoel Bril (1760-1802) in his textbook *ʿAmudei ha-Lašon* (1794)[[41]](#footnote-41) describes five pronouns: כנויי הגוף, כנויי הקניין , כנויים רומזים, כנוי מצטרף and כנוי השאלה.[[42]](#footnote-42) He is clearly following Mendelssohn's terminology, with only a slight change of form in the relative pronoun.

Ben-Zeʾev, whose book was published two years later, introduces a similar list of the Hebrew pronouns, with a few meaningful changes, accompanied with detailed discussions. Those changes, as will be clarified, reveal Ben-Zeʾev's independent approach to this matter, which combines insights from Mendelssohn's work with Ben Zeʾev’s own adaptation of German sources and independent and thorough comprehension of the linguistic nature of the Hebrew pronouns.

His independent view is already manifest in the first item – personal pronouns. He refers to these as מלות הגוף[[43]](#footnote-43) ('words of person'), omitting the word כינוי (*Talmud Lašon ʿIvri,* §152-155). This Hebrew term stands in contrast to the Latin gloss provided by Ben-Zeʾev – *pronomina personalia* – since Ben-Zeʾev, like his predecessors, consistently employs the term כינוי as a Hebrew alternative for *pronomina*. He deviates here from this custom due to semantic considerations: according to his view, the notion of “coming instead a noun”, which is expressed in the term כינוי and its alternatives (see above), is not suitable for this grammatical category.[[44]](#footnote-44) This is an innovative approach by comparison not only with former Jewish Hebrew grammarians, but also with German linguists of the day.[[45]](#footnote-45)

The other pronouns Ben-Zeʾev presents are as follows: כנוי הקניין (§15,6158),כנוי הרומז (§159), כינוי המיחד והמצרף (§160-161), כנוי השאלה (§162) and כנוי סתמי (§163). The striking difference, in comparison to Mendelssohn's list, is the name and location of the relative pronoun – כנוי המיחד והמצרף: It comes before the interrogative pronoun and appears in an expanded form, with another word added – המיחד. This will form the focus of our interest below, since this term clearly reveals Ben-Zeʾev's German source and provides an illuminating demonstration of the way Hebrew grammar was sometimes modeled by German grammar. Before we get into this matter, two comments on other pronouns presented by Ben-Zeʾev are to be made.

According to Ben-Zeʾev, the notion of the indefinite pronoun in Hebrew, כינוי סתמי, unlike in other languages,[[46]](#footnote-46) has no unique words designated for it and is referred to in different ways according to context (§163,§332). Accordingly, this kind of pronoun does not actually exist in Hebrew. It appears that this category is mentioned by Ben-Zeʾev only for the sake of differentiating Hebrew from European languages, thus demonstrating again his independence in adapting the German model to Hebrew grammar.

A different case is his treatment of the possessive pronoun. The Hebrew possessive pronoun is expressed by pronominal suffixes (see example above), but this is not the only function of this type filled by this morpheme. Morphologically, the Hebrew verbal suffixes function similarly, denoting the pronominal object, also traditionally referred to as כינויים. When describing the Hebrew pronouns, there are no grounds for excluding the pronominal object or for treating it differently than the possessive pronoun. Ben-Zeʾev thus mentions כנוי הדבק בפועל (verbal suffix) alongside the possessive pronoun (§157). However, he describes it only in the chapter dedicated to the verbs (§265-272). By contrast, he prefers to treat the nominal suffixes in detail along with all the other pronouns (§158). The background of this distinction – describing the nominal suffixes in the chapter devoted to the pronouns and the verbal suffixes only while describing the verbs – clearly lies in the description of pronouns in contemporary German grammars, in which the possessive pronoun is included while an independent category of object pronoun is irrelevant. Accordingly, we see here a slight external influence on Ben-Zeʾev's grammatical methodology. He presents his issue in a manner that would probably not be the first choice for an objective description of Hebrew. This type of foreign influence, which may be regarded here as a slight inadequacy, becomes prominent in Ben-Zeʾev's treatment of the relative pronoun.[[47]](#footnote-47)

1. The relative pronoun in *Talmud Lašon ʿIvri*

The expanded term כנוי המיחד והמצרף (literally: the specifying and joining pronoun) form one class in *Talmud Lašon ʿIvri* (§160). However, it immediately turns out to be a designation for two different particles that function jointly as a correlative conjunction. Ben-Zeʾev explains that these two pronouns function together to join two sentences (i.e. a main clause and a dependent clause in a complex sentence) that have one noun in common. The first pronoun – כנוי המיחד – indicates or emphasizes one noun in the first sentence (the main clause), while כינוי המצרף (אשר or (ש attaches a second sentence (the dependent clause), which serves as a modifier of this noun. He demonstrates this with one biblical verse: הוא אהרן ומשה אשר אמר ה' להם ('These are that Aaron and Moses, to whom the LORD said […]', Exodus 6:26). The word הוא, according to Ben-Zeʾev, is כנוי המיחד, thus "specifies"[[48]](#footnote-48) the names of Moses and Aaron.[[49]](#footnote-49) The word אשר (כנוי המצרף) joins the second sentence (אשר אמר ה' להם) to these names, modifying them more specifically.[[50]](#footnote-50) Thus, when presenting the function of this pronoun, Ben-Zeʾev prefers to introduce a term related to a specific, relatively rare syntactic construction. He actually ignores, at this stage, the common use of the relative word אשר without any parallel "specifying" component in the sentence.

This unprecedented approach by Ben-Zeʾev, as well as the Latin and German translations he attaches to the Hebrew terms (determinativa und relativa, bestimmendes und beziehendes Fürwort), reveal his source very clearly. Ben-Zeʾev reflects here the innovative description presented by the well-known German grammarian Johann Christoph Adelung. Adelung[[51]](#footnote-51) argues that there was another kind of pronoun that had not been distinguished by his predecessors, which he calls *Determinativa*. This class of pronouns comprises words such as *derjenige, derselbe, solcher* etc. Those words are used, as Adelung puts it, with the relative pronouns (*Relativa*, such as *welcher, der, was*), to connect two sentences, while the *Determinativa* specifies or marks ("bestimmen") the subject of the first sentence, and the *Relativa* relates the second sentence to this subject (of the first sentence).[[52]](#footnote-52) In order to emphasize the connection between these two categories, he even suggests a combined term for the former *Determinativorelativa*, even though he presents them as separate categories.

Accordingly, there can be no doubt that Ben-Zeʾev relies on Adelung on this issue. His terms are obviously translated from Adelung's, and his analysis of their function is almost identical.[[53]](#footnote-53) He makes only a slight change in categorization – presenting those two pronouns under one category.[[54]](#footnote-54) This is also fully understandable in light of Adelung's approach, which emphasizes the mutual connection between them.[[55]](#footnote-55)

The next discussion presented by Ben-Zeʾev (§161) focuses on the Hebrew relative pronoun. Although he notes its uniqueness and divergence from "all other languages" (שאר לשונות), his perception of its syntactic nature in light of German grammar is evident. The relative pronoun, according to Ben-Zeʾev, joins two sentences by one joint noun that serves in both. The syntactic function of this noun is described by Ben-Zeʾev in terms of the Latin cases (again introducing a foreign paradigm into Hebrew grammar):[[56]](#footnote-56) שם הישר (direct case), יחס הפעול (accusative), יחס שממנו (ablative) etc.[[57]](#footnote-57) This "case," he explains, may differ in each of the two joined sentences. He quotes the example, עד מות הכהן הגדול אשר משח אותו בשמן הקדש ("[…] until the death of the high priest, who was anointed with the holy oil;" Numbers 35:25). The "joint" noun (or, to be precise, noun phrase) is הכהן הגדול ("the high priest,"). In the first sentence – מות הכהן הגדול – is the subject (as Ben-Zeʾev analyses it). In the second sentence – משח אותו בשמן הקדש – it is represented by the word אותו – a construction of the accusative marker (את) and a personal pronoun.

For Ben-Zeʾev, in this common situation, in which the antecedent noun is represented in the main clause differently than the way it is represented in the relative clause, it is desirable that the relative pronoun, unlike the Hebrew usage, would reflect this difference. He makes thus a surprising statement, atypical for him. He asserts that it would also have been appropriate for the Hebrew relative pronoun אשר, as it is in other languages, to mark the "case" of the antecedent noun in the relative clause. It would have been appropriate for אשר to be "changed," i.e. inflected, by number and gender. But the Hebrew language "diverted" in this matter from "all other languages," as אשר denotes only joining two sentences.[[58]](#footnote-58)

The obvious model for Ben-Zeʾev's view of the relative clause, which serves for translating all his Hebrew examples, is the German *welche*.[[59]](#footnote-59) He not only views Hebrew here through the prism of German grammar, but actually expects Hebrew to act as German. Such an explicit expectation is uncommon in Ben-Zeʾev's grammatical writing. It thus represents a rare and extreme instance, but one that demonstrates one aspect of Ben-Zeʾev's basic attitude; he admires the German language and regards it as an ultimate linguistic model. It is probable to assume that this normative comment made by Ben-Zeʾevwas inspired by theintensive normative activity in German-speaking areas at the time, and the wide discussions on the shape of High German and its relations to local dialects.[[60]](#footnote-60)

Ben-Zeʾev therefore makes the distinction that the Hebrew relative word אשר (as well as ש' and other Hebrew relative markers) is inflexible, marking only conjoining two clauses. Following this, the conclusion is inevitable: the word אשר and the other Hebrew relative markers, according to Ben-Zeʾev, actually do not function as pronouns at all, thus serving only as conjunctive relative marker. The term "pronoun" denotes a word or grammatical component that is used instead of a specific noun (or noun phrase), usually explicitly mentioned before. This term is used in this sense due to its basic meaning of substituting one word with another word. But this is not, as Ben-Zeʾev describes it, the situation with אשר. Given that it is only a "joining word," or a conjunction, without any mark of its antecedent noun, it should not be classified in the category of pronouns, nor should the term כינוי (literally "appellation," which represents the concept of substituting a noun) be used to denote it.[[61]](#footnote-61) Regarding the Hebrew relative markers as pronouns in *Talmud Lashon ʾIvri* is, therefore, not an expression of Ben-Zeʾev's perception of their grammatical nature, but rather a result of his adhesion to the German model.

1. Conclusion

The contact between German linguistics and Hebrew grammar, led by scholars at the beginning of the Jewish Enlightenment, yielded a substantial development of Hebrew grammar. The descriptions of the pronouns are a good example of this development, in which the Hebrew possessive, demonstrative, relative and interrogative pronouns were distinguished, classified and described for the first time.

However, the adaptation of any foreign model requires careful adaptation to the target material, and both Moses Mendelssohn and Judah Leib Ben-Zeʾev appear to have been well aware of this challenge. While introducing a pioneering work in Hebrew grammar, each made a strenuous effort to be loyal to the nature of the Hebrew language. This effort is also reflected in their treatment of the pronouns and their choices of Hebrew terms. However, the term and explanation presented by Ben-Zeʾev for the relative pronoun suggest that he prefers to embrace the German model rather than coin a term more adequate to the nature of Hebrew. He even expects the Hebrew relative marker to behave like its German counterpart, expressing a normative comment regarding the Biblical Hebrew features.

The normative stance expressed by Ben-Zeʾev reflects a sharp observation, shared by Mendelssohn, on the nature of the Hebrew relative word, which serves as a conjunction and not as a pronoun. As we pointed out, the conclusion one should draw on the basis of this observation is that the Hebrew relative markers should not be considered as pronouns at all. Accordingly the term כנוי is unsuitable for this category.

This observation should also be taken into account in light of modern studies. Biblical Hebrew researchers have not reached agreement on the question of whether and to what extent אשר should be considered as a pronoun.[[62]](#footnote-62) They do all agree, however, that it is used differently than the European relative pronouns, and that there are cases in Biblical Hebrew in which it serves as a conjunction rather than a pronoun. As for scholars who describe later Hebrew layers, it seems that at least some of them share the opinion that אשר and ש are not pronouns. They prefer more general terms such as "מילה" over "כינוי" [[63]](#footnote-63) or "relative marker" over "relative pronoun."[[64]](#footnote-64) The term "כינוי", therefore, is an inadequate term, according to some scholars, and all would agree that it does not reflect the whole variety of its use in Hebrew.

Nevertheless, the term כינוי for the Hebrew relative markers remains in use to this day. Although the old construction phrase had changed, when the nomen regens מצרף or מייחד ומצרף was replaced by the modern term זיקה – the nomen rectum remained unchanged, forming the phrase כינוי זיקה. The latter was set as the standard term by the Academy for Hebrew Language.[[65]](#footnote-65) Despite its problematic adequacy for Hebrew, the tendency of reflecting the foreign terminology[[66]](#footnote-66) that began in Mendelssohn and Ben-Zeʾev's works proved stronger.

1. I would like to express my deep thanks to Prof. Irene E. Zwiep for her pleasant and inspiring collaboration in this study and for her valuable comments on an earlier draft of this paper. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. For a discussion of the implicit and subtle motives of this activity, see: Kutsher 1981, pp. 183-184; Shavit 1993. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Cf. Schatz 2009, pp. 177. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Haramati 1988, pp. 6-11; Schorch 1992, pp. 69-78; Shoham 1996, pp. 25-29; Feiner 2002, pp. 222-223; Schatz 2009, pp. 191-194; Eldar 2014, pp. 53-57. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Yizchaki 1971, pp.146-147; Katz 1973, pp. 64-65; Breuer 1996, pp. 77-78. One expression of this approach is presented in Hartwig Wesssly's famous and controversial pamphlet *Divre Šalom ve-ʾEmet*. Cf. Shoham 1996, p. 29. Cf. also Schorch 1992, pp. 46-51; Eldar 2014, pp. 59-61. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. See Shmueli 1986, pp. 135-141; Shavit 1993, pp. 120,125; Werses 1997-1998, pp. 33-48; Eldar 2014. pp. 99-102. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Shoham 1996, pp. 30-40; Breuer 1996, pp. 20-26. Not long after the beginning of the Jewish Enlightenment movement, the position of German in Maskilic society became even stronger, effectively replacing Hebrew as the central language of culture (Shavit 1993, p. 114; Eldar 2014, pp. 62,99). [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. For a comprehensive survey of some of those writings, see Zwiep 2003, p. 94 ff. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. See idem, p. 80. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. See idem, pp. 101-111, for initial remarks on the German sources of several Hebrew grammar textbooks. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. On the content of this pamphlet, see Sendler 1941, pp. 33-44. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. On this enterprise. see Klausner 1930, pp. 64-75; Sendler 1941, pp. 11-15; Altmann 1973, pp. 368-420; Graetz 2000, pp. 270-277. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Mendelssohn also discussed syntactical issues, mainly from a philosophical angle, in *Beʾur Millot ha-Higayon* (Frankfurt, 1762), his commentary to Maimonides' philosophic treatise. According to Sendler (1941, pp. 41-42), the syntactic section in ʾ*Or Lintivah* constitutes an expanded presentation of the material from *Beʾur Millot ha-Higayon*. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. See Sendler 1941, pp. 41-42. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Sendler 1941, p. 41. Before Mendelssohn, only one Jewish Hebrew grammarian devoted a separate chapter providing a systematic description of the Hebrew syntax – the 16th century Italian scholar Rabbi Abraham de Balmes, in his grammar *Miqneh Avram* (Venice 1523). This Latin-influenced chapter was very difficult to understand and had no impact on later grammatical works. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. It is worth noting that Ben-Zeʾev moved to Berlin in 1787 and lived there for some three years, joining the local scholarly group that developed around Mendelssohn and continued its activities after his death (on the Berlin scholarly group, see Altmann 1973, pp. 346-368; Graetz 2000, pp. 262-263,287). For further details about Ben-Zeʾev and the role he played in the development of the Jewish Enlightenment see Breuer 1996b, pp. 161-164 and references. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. On this book and its influence, see Fahn 1919, pp. 39-40; Klausner 1930, pp. 180-181. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Zwiep 2003, pp. 111-112. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. The current study was undertaken as a part of a wider research project examining the development of grammatical Hebrew terminology during the early-modern and modern periods. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. This initial study of the Maskilic grammars somewhat resembles to the studies presented by Prof. Dan Becker on the medieval grammarians Jonah ibn Jana@h the @ is here on purpose, due to the journal instructions for representing *ḥ* and Isaac ibn Barun, in which he revealed their Arabic linguistic sources (Cf. Dan Becker, "Linguistic Rules and Definitions in Ibn Janā@h's 'Kitab Al-Lumaʿ (Sefer Ha-Riqmah) Copied from the Arab Grammarians", *Jewish Quarterly Review* 86 (1996), 275-298; idem, Arabic Sources of R. *Jonah ibn Jana@h's Grammar* (Hebrew, Tel Aviv 1998); idem, *Arabic Sources of Isaac ibn Barun's Book of Comparison between the Hebrew and the Arabic Languages* (Tel Aviv 2005). [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Pages of all references to ʾ*Or Lintivah* are not indicated, since this work is unpaged. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. In *Beʾur Millot ha-Higayon* he mentions the pronouns very shortly (26a). [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. These three notions form the threefold medieval classification of the parts of speech – the common classification in medieval Hebrew grammar. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Actually, it is not the situation with all former grammarians: while some of them, like Rabbi Abraham de Balmes (see Ben-Arié 2010, p. 301) and Rabbi Zalman Hanau (Yesod ha-Nikkud, p. 55a), use the term "כינוי" only in this sense, others use it to denote independent personal pronoun as well (as Rabbi Jonah ibn Janaḥ, ha-Rikmah, p. 213; Rabbi Šĕmuʾel Archevolti, p. 66b). [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Two of those three Latin-originated terms – "genitive" and "accusative" – are mentioned by Mendelssohn himself. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. "ואף שאין צורך בלשון הקודש לזכרם ביחוד ולדרוש על פרטיהם". Mendelssohn did not explain the reason for his statement, and I can only offer a possible explanation. Perhaps Mendelssohn meant that all the other pronouns are not part of the Hebrew grammar, but rather lexical items, without any distinct grammatical behavior. The rationale for this is that the Hebrew pronouns, unlike most pronouns in German and other European languages, have no inflection for gender, number or case, but rather have fixed forms, or, as with the demonstrative pronouns, a different word for each masculine, feminine and plural demonstrative. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. An example of such an ambiguity is included in his explanation of the indefinite pronoun: The word "איש", whose direct literal translation to German is "Mann," should in some occurrences be translated "einer," "jemand" or "niemand." Conversely, there are many cases in which "Mann" in the German translation is equivalent to a passive Hebrew verb, even when there the word "איש" does not appear in the Hebrew. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. The three above-mentioned syntactical relations expressed by suffixed pronouns, as introduced by Mendelssohn, are included in the first and second categories in this list (nominative and accusative in personal pronoun, genitive in possessive pronoun). [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Mendelssohn does not consider the reciprocal pronoun as an independent category. Instead, he includes it as a personal pronoun, since it is expressed in the same manner – by a suffixed pronoun added to the preposition "אֶת". Essentially, however, it is another category, with its own function and meaning. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Such as the example of "עבדו" mentioned above. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Such as "זה","זאת" (this), "ההוא","ההיא" (that). [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Such as "מי" (who), "מה" (what). [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. The word "אשר" usually serves this function in Biblical Hebrew. Mendelssohn gives the example "בנך יחידך אשר אהבת" ('your only son, whom you love') [Genesis 22:2]. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. See the example in note 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Cf. Schwarzwald and Sokoloff 1992, pp. 263-264. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. See Jellinek 1914, pp. 273-274; Leser 1914, pp. 46-48. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. See pp. 277-293 in Leipzig 1776 edition. Schatz (2009, pp. 204-214) examines Mendelssohn's possible manuals for German learning and sources of inspiration for his views on the Hebrew as national language amongst contemporary German grammars. Besides Gottsched's grammar, she mentions also the works of Jutus Georg Schottelius (1612-1676) and Johann Bödicker (1641-1695). But in this issue, there is no doubt that their works had not served as Mendelssohn's sources (compare: J. G. Schottelius, *Ausführlische Arbeit Von der Teutschen Haubt-Sprache*, Braunschweig 1663, pp. 533-535; J. Bödicker, *Grundsätze der Deutschen Spraschen*, Berlin 1746, pp. 169-186). [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. He employs this term at least in two of his works: *Deutsche Sprachlehre*, Mannheim 1775, p. 217; *Kern der deütschen Sprachkunst und Rechtschreibung*, Mannheim 1780, p. 36. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Jellinek 1914, p. 273. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Cf. Leser 1914, p.48. The Latin terms for other pronouns employed by Mendelssohn where mentioned by Gottsched as well. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. *ʿAmudei ha-Lašon* is written in German in Hebrew characters, but grammatical terms are presented in Hebrew. For more details see Zwiep 2003, pp. 105-111. For Bril's relying on Mendelssohn's work see idem, p. 105 n. 62. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. pp. 28-32, 68-70. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. And sometimes he calls it שם הגוף as he proposed in (§152). [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. One cannot regard, according to Ben-Zeʾev, the first and second personal pronouns as substitutes of a proper name, because it is necessary to mention them in any possible context. For example, Abraham may say to Isaac either "I am your father" or "I, Abraham, am your father" – in both cases the pronoun "I" is mentioned. But he cannot omit the pronoun and just say "Abraham is your father". See *Talmud Lašon ʿIvri*, §152. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Cf. Jellinek 1914, p. 273; Leser 1914, p. 47. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. He mentions the German examples "Mann," "jemand," "es." [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. It is worth noting here the comparison to contemporary German Hebraists' works, which shows that they were not the source for Ben-Zeʾev's treatment of this issue. The German Hebraists did not include the possessive pronoun as an independent category among the other pronouns, but rather described it with the verbal suffixes, mostly in a separate chapter, regarding it as variants of the personal pronouns. Moreover, they did not even mention the indefinite pronoun. See Michaelis, pp. 266-292; Johann Gottfried Hasse, *Praktischer* *Unterricht über die gesammten orientalischen Sprachen*, Jena 1786; Lebrecht Heinrich Samuel Jehne*, Hebräische Grammatik*, Altona 1790, p. 175; Johann Christian Steinersdorff, *Hebräische Grammatik,* Halle 1790, pp. 91-94. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. This term מיחד "specifies" is a calque from the German "bestimmend." See below. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Ben-Zeʾev supplies here a German gloss: "Der jenige אהרן – ist es." [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. On this syntactic construction, cf. König 1897, pp. 15-16. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. *Versuch eine Vollständigen grammatisch-kritischen Wörterbuch*,Leipzig 1774, p. 1322; idem, *Deutche Sprachlehre für Schulen,* Berlin 1781, §384; Adelung 1782,§368. cf. Jellinek 1914, pp. 274-275. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Here is one example provided by Adelung: "Ich verzeihe es denjenigen, welche schuld daran sind." [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Even though Adelung, speaking on the function of these pronouns, mentions only the subject, while Ben-Zeʾev described their function with nouns in various syntactic positions – the examples cited by Adelung himself include cases in which the related noun is not the subject of the sentence (Jellinek 1914, p. 274). [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. This categorization might be fallible. While reading this passage, in which Ben-Zeʾev had not presented the relative pronoun as an independent category, one might conclude that the Hebrew relative pronouns appear only in such a correlative system with the *Determinativa*. But it is clear that Ben-Zeʾev didn’t mean that, as proven by the following discussion (see below) in which he deals only with the relative pronoun and in his examples no *Determinativa* appears. The only reason for him to join these two pronouns into one category is his effort to maintain the pattern of pronouns categorization of his German sources (see the following note). [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Joining these two categories is probably a result of his desire to maintain the framework of six pronouns. It is evident in Adelung's work, where he added the *Determinativa* and omitted the indefinite pronoun, thus maintaining the six pronouns division as presented by his predecessors (Jellinek 1914, p. 275). Ben-Zeʾev, in contrast, included the indefinite pronoun, so unified Adelung's *Determinativa* and *Relativa* under one category. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Cf. Zwiep 2003, p. 115. The terms of the Latin cases had already been translated and employed by Mendelssohn. Here again they follow the German linguistics, in which those terms were very common in 18th century (Jellinek 1914, pp. 190-192). This matter requires an independent discussion, into which I would not be able to get here. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. cf. *Talmud Lašon ʿIvri* (§141-142). [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. "והיה ראוי אם כן שיסומן במלת אשר סמן יחס השם במשפט המצורף, וכן היה ראוי שישתנה לפי המין והמספר, כאשר הוא בשאר לשונות, אך הלשון נטתה בענין הזה משאר לשונות, כי אין במלה ההוא כי אם הוראת הצרוף לבד." (§161). This difference between Hebrew and other languages was already pointed out by Mendelssohn, but without taking a normative stance. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. According to Adelung (1782, §785), *welche* is "das vollstandingste Relativum" compared to the other German relative pronouns. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. To mention just a few of the many studies that describe this issue: Nerius 1967; Polenz 1994, pp. 144-193; Kilian 2001. For the influence of this trend on contemporary Jewish attitude towards language, see Shavit 1993, p. 121. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Amongst German Hebraists, Michaelis' attitude to this point – which did not include relative pronouns among the pronouns and did not mention this term when discussing אשר and ש (Michaelis, pp. 290-292, 296), appears to be in line with the stance expressed above. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. According to Joüon-Muraoka (1996, §145), for example, אשר is originally a relative **conjunction** (but see);onlyafter a further development does it sometimes acquire the sense of a **pronoun**. However, see the opposing opinion of Waltke and O'Connor 1990, p. 340, n. 10. For further discussion of this issue, see: Baumann 1894, pp. 7-14; König 1897, pp. 17-22; Gesenius-Kautzsch (§138); Barth 1913, pp. 151-152; Polzin 1976, p. 128. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. See, for example, the distinction in terms that Y. Peretz employs between אשר and ש, which he calls מילות זיקה (relative words), and the pronoun commonly used in relative clauses, which he calls כינוי (Peretz 1967, pp. 86-87; 127-133). [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. See Glinert 2004, p. 359. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. This term appears in the formal list of linguistic terms presented in the Academy's official website (<https://terms.hebrew-academy.org.il/Millonim/ShowMillon>). The same is with another much authoritative source – the dictionary of Rodrigue-Schwarzwald and Sokoloff (1992, p. 192). [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. The connection of the modern term to European terminology is probably intentional, in order to facilitate its use in general linguistic studies relating to various languages. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)