

## The Two First-Person Singular Pronouns in Ancient Hebrew: Distinct Pragmatic Signals

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[Numbers in brackets refer to the numbered entries in the handout that is appended to this paper.]

When speakers of ancient Hebrew felt the need to refer to themselves with a *first-person independent singular* pronoun, on which occasions did they choose the long form, אֲנִי, rather than the short form, אָנִי? These two pronouns (each with its pausal form) are the only ones that are in view in this paper, so we will simply refer to them as “the pronouns.”<sup>1</sup>

### Background

[1] Now, the fact that ancient Hebrew had *two* such pronouns seems to be anomalous even for Semitic languages. As far as we know, most of those languages have had only one or the other. Some employed only what corresponds to the Hebrew short form, while others used only what corresponds to the Hebrew long form (as did Egyptian, by the way). Ugaritic is the only other language known to have used both forms, although there the distinction seems to be a matter of *genre*: the short form is attested only in literary texts, but not in everyday correspondence.<sup>2</sup>

### Initial Question

The evolutionary question of how Hebrew came to employ two pronouns is beyond the scope of this paper, as is the evolutionary question of how the longer form fell out of use in Hebrew by the end of the biblical period. [2] Rather, our topic today is how these pronouns functioned as part of a meaningful reference system in ancient Hebrew, as attested in the Hebrew Bible.

### Previous Scholarship

[3] Many scholars have regarded the two forms simply as two different ways of saying the same thing—wherein the term אֲנִי was eventually displaced by its sleeker cousin, אָנִי.<sup>3</sup> This diachronically oriented view is clearly correct as an overall historical account, but it is an oversimplification

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<sup>1</sup> In their respective contributions to this paper, Charles Loder was primarily responsible for the Background and Previous Scholarship sections, while David Stein was primarily responsible for the remainder.

<sup>2</sup> See Loder 2016:5–19 for details regarding the known correlate pronoun(s) for the related and neighboring languages listed in [1], and others, as well. The claim that Phoenician employed both forms is sometimes asserted, but the evidence for a short form is doubtful (Loder 2019).

<sup>3</sup> E.g., “their function is identical” (Gzella 2013:855); “the two are used interchangeably in Standard Biblical Hebrew” (Morgenstern 2013); “there is no functional difference between them” (Waltke and O’Connor 1990:292).

with respect to individuals' attested language use. If usage were merely a matter of speakers' jettisoning an archaic form, i.e., of lexical diffusion, we would see marked differences in idiolects from one region or speaker to another—yet meanwhile the usage by any *particular* speaker or author would be internally consistent in any given speech context.<sup>4</sup> However, in the biblical corpus, numerous speakers employ *both* pronouns within the very same utterance—and this obtains across passages that are classified as reflecting all stages of Biblical Hebrew: Archaic, Standard, Transitional, and Late (Loder 2016:21–34).<sup>5</sup>

The usage patterns arguably suggest that the two pronouns co-existed for a thousand years as real options to help speakers to make their desired point in an efficient manner. This construal is consistent with a basic assumption in linguistics—championed especially in its structuralist and functionalist branches—that a difference in *form* corresponds to a difference in *meaning*. And if this seems to be true in languages generally, why should Biblical Hebrew be an exception?

In examining this question, the Israeli linguist Haiim Rosén observed (correctly),

There are of course cases where two formally different expressions are semantically 'the same' (i.e., stylistic distinctions), but such a state of affairs must be positively proven; without such proof, the presumption of a difference in semantic function remains in force. (Rosén [1975] 1984:263; our translation)

Rosén proposed a solution in terms of the structuralist notion of *markedness*: a binary opposition in which the use of one pronoun specifies a semantic feature that the other pronoun is agnostic about. Rosén's analysis of the Pentateuch's syntactic structures led him to conclude that in this opposed pair of pronouns, the *marked* one was אֲנִי, the short form. Yet in both pragmatics and information theory, the default or unmarked signal tends to be simpler than its corresponding marked signal (de Regt 2019:5). If markedness in the structuralist sense were operating with these two pronouns, we should expect the long form to be the marked one.

Meanwhile, a couple of *biblical* scholars had already endeavored to characterize the usage of אֲנִי and אֲנִי in terms of what Rosén would later call “stylistic distinctions.” S. R. Driver viewed the differential usage as a matter of *prosody*—pointing to the pronouns' respective impact on the spoken cadence (Driver 1881). Umberto Cassuto offered a solution in terms of syntactic position (Cassuto [1941] 1972). More recently, E. J. Revell focused instead on the *pragmatic* context—that

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<sup>4</sup> On lexical diffusion, see Naudé 2003.

<sup>5</sup> For both pronouns within the same *verse*, see Exod 34:10; Judg 19:18; 1 Sam 4:16; 2 Sam 3:13; 20:17; Isa 43:12; 45:12; Jer 24:7; 25:29; Hos 5:14; Jon 1:9; Job 13:2; 33:9; Ruth 4:4; Neh 1:6. (Cases with both pronouns within the same *utterance* that is longer than a single verse are more difficult to identify—and so are not catalogued in this paper, except to cite Gen 48:21–22, 50:19–21, and 1 Sam 1:26–28 as exemplars.) For the classification of biblical texts by historical periods, see Hornkohl 2013; Garr and Fassberg 2016.

is, the conditions of the speaker with regard to their addressee. He offered a solution in terms of the relative social status of the two interlocutors (Revell 1995; 1996:341–49).<sup>6</sup>

However, in 2016, I (Charles), in my master’s thesis, showed that the various rules offered by Driver, Cassuto, and Revell did not fit the actual usage data in a relatively homogeneous, well-preserved, and noncontroversial sample corpus of Standard Biblical Hebrew—namely the book of Judges.

### Refining the Question

[4] So let us now reframe my initial question in a way that already suggests an answer:

Given the presence of a short form, why would a Hebrew speaker ever go to the trouble to use the long form? Why bother?

### Participant Reference Tracking

[5] A key clue comes from a commonplace in pragmatics that is regularly applied in Biblical Studies to *participant reference tracking*. Lénart de Regt expresses it well in his article on the subject in the *Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics* (de Regt 2013:30):<sup>7</sup>

In a text, more predictable information is assigned less coding material, while less predictable information ... is assigned more coding material.

To evoke something relatively unexpected in the audience’s mind, the speaker needs to expend more effort, and use more linguistic resources—such as longer words rather than shorter ones. This consideration is widely viewed as relevant in determining whether a speaker should prefer a *noun* label over a *pronoun* label: a noun is better when the referent is not yet highly available in the audience’s mind, or when the situation is construed as evolving significantly.

### Hypothesis

[6] Our proposal is to similarly correlate the two pronoun forms with relative cognitive availability in the mind of the audience. In other words, when speakers employ the long-form pronoun, it is because they believe that the meaning that it evokes is *less predictable* for the audience than the meaning evoked by the short form.

It is worth recalling the basic fact that a speaker may not be known to, or properly understood by, an interlocutor. Hence the speaker may need to be situated into the discourse just like a participant who is spoken about in the third person.

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<sup>6</sup> See Loder 2016 for details and discussion of the treatments by Driver, Cassuto, and Revell.

<sup>7</sup> The cross-linguistic studies, performed in the early 1980s, are summarized in Givón 2018:40–60. Within Biblical Studies, see also, e.g., van Wolde 1997; Longacre 2003; Runge 2007; Polak 2017; de Regt 2019.

A speaker's own presence in the discourse is considered predictable when that speaker's *situatedness* as a participant can be taken by both parties as a *given*. The speaker's presence in the discourse is less predictable when they have not yet been properly *situated* in the mind of their audience as a participant in that discourse—or, when someone is making an issue of how that speaker is situated, including whether that speaker should even be considered a participant in the situation under discussion at all.<sup>8</sup>

In short, we boil down the difference in pronoun usage to the following.

- אָנִי means: “My participation (in the situation under discussion) is construed as a **given**.”
- אָנֹכִי means: “My participation (in the situation under discussion) is **at issue**.”

### Testing the Hypothesis

We will now present several types of evidence that suggest that the proposed distinction in pronouns is actually in play. (We have grouped them according to *the pragmatic context of the utterance*. For the sake of brevity, we give just a few typical examples for each category.)

As a baseline, we are showing the simple cases [7]: the speakers' own presence in the discourse is already a given, as they describe themselves—typically by focusing on one attribute that is germane. Such utterances employ the short form.

[8] Now let us look at where situatedness is *at issue*. We start with scenes where *the speaker is not yet situated* in the mind of their interlocutor. (As an expedient, we paraphrase the circumstances or the prior conversation in English, followed immediately by the utterance in question, as found on the handout. The entries are listed in a Jewish canonical order.)

- #1. “So what brings you here, Hagar?” The reply: “...” [*To fill in the ellipsis, see #1 in the handout; and similarly in the subsequent examples.*]
- #2. “Whose daughter are you?” The reply: “...”
- #3. After the Israelite elders had gathered at the foot of the fiery mountain, God spoke the following words: “...”
- #4. Then Balaam saw the angel standing in the way, who said, “Why have you beaten your donkey these three times?...”
- #5. Boaz wakes with a start and sees the silhouette of a woman. “Who are you?” he asks. The reply: “...”

Such utterances employ the long form.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> On the audience's mental situation model and the importance of situating participants in it, see Stein 2021; Stein in press.

<sup>9</sup> See also: Gen 3:10; 24:34; 37:16; Exod 3:6; 4:11; Judg 5:3 (twice); 17:9 (twice); 19:18; 1 Sam 30:13; 2 Sam 1:8; 20:19; Jon 1:9.

Next, let's look at cases where the speaker seeks to *correct their interlocutor's misperception of them* [9]. That is, the speaker wants to prompt the audience to *revise* how they have situated that speaker in their mind.

- #1. "You seem to think that I've been freely promiscuous. Well,..."
- #2. He looked down and shouted, "Why, if I had a sword, I'd kill you!" The reply: "..."
- #3. "You have accused me and my people of stealing your land..."
- #4. "You're accusing me of being a drunk?! No, sir,..."
- #5. "Excuse me, where is the seer's house located?" The reply: "..."
- #6. "Instead of fighting with weapons, you think you can fight me with sticks!?!..."
- #7. "How can we repay your kindness? Can we speak in your behalf to the king?" The reply...

Such utterances employ the long form.<sup>10</sup>

Next, let's look at cases where *the speaker denies or questions their own participation* in the situation under discussion [10].

- #1. God asks, "Where is your brother Abel?" The reply: "I don't know..."
- #2. God says, "I'm sending you to Pharaoh." The reply: "..."
- #3. "You're asking me to keep on leading this stiff-necked people. Why me?..."
- #4. "How can I possibly be the one to save Israel?..."
- #5. King David's general murders a rival. In response, the king issues the following public statement: "..."
- #6. God is going to ban false prophets, who will then deny ever having prophesied by saying, "..."

Such utterances employ the long form.<sup>11</sup>

Next, let's look at cases where *the speaker perceives the situation under discussion to be a precarious one for themselves—and therefore unpredictable* [11].

- #1. "I'm experiencing a difficult and disturbing pregnancy: ..."
- #2. "My having committed adultery will soon be obvious to everyone: ..."
- #3. "I am actually seeing my Sovereign God! Oh, no! I'm done for!..."

Likewise in ##4–9, each speaker is facing his mortality.<sup>12</sup>

Such utterances employ the long form.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>10</sup> See also: Judg 6:8; 1 Sam 17:45; 2 Sam 3:8; 1 Kgs 3:7; Amos 7:14; Ruth 3:12 (*Qere*).

<sup>11</sup> See also: Gen 21:26; 27:11; Exod 4:10 (twice); 1 Sam 9:21; 18:18, 23; Jer 1:6; Ruth 2:10.

<sup>12</sup> Also Gen 50:5, quoting Jacob's statement in 48:21. In contrast, in 49:21 Jacob uses the short form to construe himself as a *predictably* dying man—a state that is indeed a given in the discourse since v. 1.

<sup>13</sup> See also: Gen 16:5; 24:3, 13, 27; 29:33; 30:1; 32:12; Judg 11:35; 1 Sam 20:5; 2 Sam 3:39; Ps 39:13.

Now, many cases involve a proposed **bilateral agreement** between the speaker and their interlocutor [12]. Making sense of these is more complex, because there are two ways to offer or initiate such an arrangement. One is in a *decisive* manner. For example, one might say to one's spouse: "I know: You make dinner—and I'll clean up afterward!" This approach presupposes that the participants are *already involved* in the situation under discussion.

The other way is more *tentative*: "Well, if you'd be willing to make dinner, I'd be willing to clean up afterward..." This approach presupposes that the participants are *not yet situated* in their own minds, with respect to the arrangement in question.

Likewise, the second party has two corresponding ways to reply to an offer from the first party.

Let us give a few biblical examples of negotiating an agreement, starting with the speaker's making the decisive type of offer [13]:

*Exod 2:9*—At the Nile's edge, Pharaoh's daughter uses the short form as she offers a contractual arrangement: "Look after this child and nurse it for me," she says, "...". She treats the two parties as already situated—and ready to roll.

*1 Kgs 20:34*—The king of Israel *responds* to proposed concessions by his prisoner, the king of Aram: "...". He does so in a headstrong manner, consistent with the short form.

As for tentative offers and responses to them, they are exemplified by the following two pairs of cases [14].<sup>14</sup>

- #1. "If you will reinstate me to do battle against the Ammonites and Yahweh lets me win..."
- #2. "Come stay with me, and be for me a father and a priest...."
- #3. "Please swear to me, Abraham, that you will deal with me fairly." Abraham's response (before promptly reproving King Abimelech over the expropriation of wells): "..."<sup>15</sup>
- #4. "Please do not depart from this place until I come back to you with a gift that I'll present to you." The reply: "..."<sup>16</sup>

Such utterances employ the long form.

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<sup>14</sup> For tentatively couched offers, see also: Gen 23:4; 25:30; 38:17 (see below, n. 16); Exod 8:24; Num 23:15; Judg 6:36–37; 7:17; 7:18; 8:5; 11:37; 2 Sam 14:18; 24:12; 1 Kgs 2:16. For tentative responses, see also Gen 15:2; 19:19; 47:30; Num 11:21; 1 Kgs 2:18; Ruth 2:13.

<sup>15</sup> I.e., Abraham's agreement to the offer is tentative until he can find out how his interlocutor accounts for certain apparent bad-faith actions on his (Abimelech's) part. Construing the long form as a signal of merely tentative acceptance thus yields a more coherent dialogue in this passage.

<sup>16</sup> In my (David's) oral presentation, I cited Gen 38:17 at this point; but that instance is actually Judah's follow-up to his initial tentative offer—not his response to an offer.

## Using Both Forms in Concert with Each Other

[16] Now let's sample four of the passages in which the same speaker uses *both* pronouns. We will explain how can we make sense of the switch in an internally consistent way—even though in the first two examples, the *long* form is used first, whereas in the last two, the *short* form is uttered first.

#1. A battlefield runner is speaking to Eli the priest, to report on the battle's outcome. First, the messenger introduces himself using the long form: "...". Thus having been situated, he describes the action that he took: "...".

#2. Yahweh muses about the possibility of no longer being lenient toward the people of Israel—a development that of course would dramatically alter both parties' situation. The long form signals that such re-situating needs to be noticed: "...". And once that change occurs, Yahweh becomes a given in the new situation, as signaled by the short form: "...".

#3. This is the opening of a dialogue. David's general Joab, who has besieged a town, is summoned to parley with someone representing that town—someone who has heard of Joab but never seen him in person. She starts by asking: "...". In Joab's one-word reply, the short form acknowledges that she has construed his presence on the scene as a given: "...". The woman then respectfully insists that he hear her out: "...". With his long-form pronoun, Joab prompts her to situate him in her mind as being a willing *participant* in the parley: "...".

#4. In front of witnesses in the city gate, Boaz addresses a key relative. Being a given presence in the assembly that he himself has convened, Boaz employs the short form while explaining his actions: "...". Then, when Boaz notes that the prospect of his serving as a redeemer is contingent upon his relative's decision, the long form reflects that his own participation in *that* situation is pointedly at issue: "...".

## Minimal Pair: What's the Difference?

[17] Now, where pragmatic meaning is operating, what is *meant* is often different from what is *said*. Which means that we cannot go simply by the semantics of the words in the text. We need to consider what is actually being communicated. The following example compares two ostensibly similar cases (sometimes called a minimal pair).

2 Sam 2:20 recounts what takes place during a battle between Saul's forces and David's forces. Saul's general, Abner, is being hotly pursued by someone who has clearly targeted him. It suddenly occurs to him who it might be. So without looking back, Abner shouts a question: "...". The reply: "...".

In Kings 18:7–8, the prophet Elijah suddenly appears before Obadiah. They haven't seen each other in years. The astonished Obadiah says: "...". The reply: "...".

So, Asa'el said אַנְכִי—whereas Elijah said אֲנִי. How do we account for this?

In the Samuel case, Asa’el’s *participation in the situation* is at issue: Is it Asa’el or not? Asa’el wants to be firmly *situated* in Abner’s mind, so he uses what might be called the *situating pronoun*, אֲנִי. This response amounts to saying, “Yes, I’m the discourse participant in question”—or in more colloquial English: “Yyyyup—get used to it!”

In contrast, in the Kings case, even though Obadiah seems to be questioning Elijah’s presence, in light of their prior relationship and in the context of their meeting his question actually presupposes an awareness that this really is Elijah. The prophet’s short-form response recognizes that presupposition and amounts to saying something like: “Yes, indeed—you know it!—without a doubt.”

### Distribution of the Long Form in the Corpus

[18] Before summing up, let us say a few words about the distribution of the long form among the Bible’s books, because it affects diachronic analysis and the ongoing attempts to date the texts. Scholars have offered accounts as to why the long form is absent, or nearly absent, in certain biblical books (e.g., Hornkohl 2014:108; 2016:37). We wish to point out a methodological issue. If a given book does not happen to include any of the pragmatic circumstances that would classically call for the *use* of the long-form pronoun, then that book provides *zero* evidence about the diachronic shift away from speakers’ use of that form.

The exemplar is the book of Leviticus, in which the short form appears 71 times—but the long form not at all. Does this statistic support a late date for the composition of Leviticus? No, because in all 71 instances, Yahweh is the speaker—and Yahweh is also a given in the discourse context throughout the entire book. (Likewise the Sinai covenant between Yahweh and the people of Israel is presupposed in Leviticus.) So there is no reason to expect that book to contain any long-form pronouns!

The same applies to many of the books that tend to be classified as Transitional Biblical Hebrew or Late Biblical Hebrew: In Kings, Ezekiel, Lamentations, Haggai, and Zechariah, there simply is no occasion in which the short form is used that would have classically called for use of the long form.<sup>17</sup> Those books thus make no case for the diachronic shift. As the saying goes, “absence of evidence is not evidence of absence.” The only valid evidence for such a shift exists where a short-form pronoun is being employed in a communicative setting in which the long form would formerly have been invoked.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> In my (David’s) oral presentation, I did not mention Ezekiel—which contains one instance of the long form versus 169 instances of the short form—because I was at the time unsure about a couple of the latter instances.

<sup>18</sup> Exemplars of such evidence are the four well-known instances in Chronicles wherein the short form is used in lieu of the long form in the parallel accounts in Samuel and Kings. See Loder 2016:28–30.

## Summary

[19] To sum up, in the literature on participant-reference tracking, it is a commonplace that when a referent's presence is less predictable, the speaker provides more coding because the audience needs extra help to promptly adjust its mental situation model. Taking that commonplace into account enables us to answer the question: *Given the presence of a short form, why would Hebrew speakers ever go to the trouble to use the long form?* The answer is: They would do so because in the discourse context, the speaker's participation is somehow at issue; and the invocation of a more weighty pronoun prompts the audience to properly situate (or re-situate) the speaker as a participant.

This hypothesis accounts extremely well for the usage data in the hundreds of instances that have been checked so far. In short, the two pronoun forms are *not* equivalent or interchangeable.

When we recognize this distinction as a *linguistic reference device*, it occasionally affects our exegesis significantly. Since the differential use of these pronouns is a feature of the language, then it applies to the reported speech of every biblical character—including the Deity.

Finally, when tracing language use and changes over time, there is a methodological need to control for the pragmatics involved in the utterance contexts.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> On how an audience's need to situate a participant within the discourse can similarly illuminate the choice of noun labels in Biblical Hebrew, see Stein 2021.

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## 1 Background

אֲנִי versus אָנֹכִי

'anā	'anāku
Eblaite	Akkadian
Ge'ez	Canaanite
Arabic	Phoenician
Aramaic	Moabite
(Ugaritic)	
Ancient Hebrew	

## 2 Initial Question

Exactly how did this pair of pronouns function as part of a meaningful reference system?

## 3 Previous Scholarship

Driver 1882 • Cassuto 1941 •  
Rosén 1975 • Revell 1995

## 4 Refined Question

Given the presence of a *short form*, why would a Hebrew speaker ever go to the trouble to use the *long form*?

## 5 Participant Reference Tracking

“In a text, more predictable information is assigned less coding material, while less predictable information ... is assigned more coding material.”

—Lénart de Regt

## 6 Hypothesis

“My participation in the situation under discussion...

- ...is construed as *a given*.” = אֲנִי
- ...is *at issue*.” = אָנֹכִי

## 7 When speakers regard their presence as a given

#1	Exod 22:26	כִּי־חֲנוּן אָנִי:
#2	Lev 11:44, 45	כִּי קָדוֹשׁ אָנִי
#3	Judg 9:2	כִּי־עֲצַמְכֶם וּבְשָׂרְכֶם אָנִי:
#4	2 Sam 14:5	אִשָּׁה־אֶלְמָנָה אָנִי
#5	2 Kgs 16:7	עַבְדְּךָ וּבְנֶךָ אָנִי
#6	Isa 44:5	לִיהוָה אָנִי
#7	Joel 4:10	גְּבוֹר אָנִי:
#8	Mal 1:14	כִּי מְלֶךְ גָּדוֹל אָנִי
#9	Ps 86:2	כִּי־חֲסִיד אָנִי
#10	Song 2:5	כִּי־חֹלֶת אֶהְיֶה אָנִי:

## 8 As an interlocutor needs to situate the speaker

#1	Gen 16:8	מִפְּנֵי שָׂרִי גְבֻרָתִי אָנֹכִי בְרַחַת:
#2	Gen 24:24	בֶּת־בְּתוּאֵל אָנֹכִי
#3	Exod 20:2	אָנֹכִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ
#4	Num 22:32	הִנֵּה אָנֹכִי יֵצְאָתִי לְשֹׁטֶן
#5	Ruth 3:9	אָנֹכִי רוֹת אֶמְתָּךְ

## 9 When the speaker is correcting a misperception

#1	Gen 38:25	לְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר־אָלָה לֹא אָנֹכִי הָרָה
#2	Num 22:30	הֲלוֹא אָנֹכִי אֲחִינֹךְ אֲשֶׁר־רִכַּבְתָּ עָלַי מֵעוֹדֶךָ עַד־הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה
#3	Judg 11:27	וְאָנֹכִי לֹא־חָטָאתִי לָךְ
#4	1 Sam 1:15	אִשָּׁה קִשְׁת־רוּחַ אָנֹכִי
#5	1 Sam 9:19	אָנֹכִי הָרָאָה
#6	1 Sam 17:43	הַכֶּלֶב אָנֹכִי
#7	2 Kgs 4:13	בְּתוֹךְ עַמִּי אָנֹכִי יֹשֶׁבֶת:

## 10 When the speaker denies or questions their participation in the situation under discussion

#1	Gen 4:9	הַשְׁמֵר אָחִי אֲנֹכִי:
#2	Exod 3:11	מִי אֲנֹכִי כִי אֵלֶּךְ אֶל־פְּרַעֲהַ
#3	Num 11:12	הָאֲנֹכִי הָרִיתִי אֶת כָּל־הָעַם הַזֶּה
#4	Judg 6:15	וְאֲנֹכִי הַצֵּעִיר בְּבֵית אָבִי:
#5	2 Sam 3:28	נָקִי אֲנֹכִי וּמַמְלַכְתִּי
#6	Zech 13:5	לֹא נָבִיא אֲנֹכִי

## 11 When the speaker perceives the situation under discussion to be precarious

#1	Gen 25:22	לָמָּה זֶה אֲנֹכִי
#2	2 Sam 11:5	הָרָה אֲנֹכִי:
#3	Isa 6:5	כִּי אִישׁ טָמֵא־שִׁפְתַיִם אֲנֹכִי
#4	Gen 25:32	אֲנֹכִי הוֹלֵךְ לָמוֹת
#5	Gen 48:21	אֲנֹכִי מֵת
#6	Gen 50:24	אֲנֹכִי מֵת
#7	Deut 4:22	כִּי אֲנֹכִי מֵת בְּאֶרֶץ הַזֹּאת
#8	Josh 23:14	אֲנֹכִי הוֹלֵךְ הַיּוֹם בְּדֶרֶךְ כָּל־הָאָרֶץ
#9	1 Kgs 2:2	אֲנֹכִי הֹלֵךְ בְּדֶרֶךְ כָּל־הָאָרֶץ

## 12 Proposed Bilateral Agreement

*Offer, Negotiation, Acceptance*



## 13 When the speaker negotiates decisively

Exodus 2:9

וְאֲנִי אֶתֵּן אֶת־שִׂכְרְךָ  
 "...and I will give you your wages."

1 Kgs 20:34

וְאֲנִי בְּבִרְיַת אֲשַׁלְּחֶךָ  
 "For my part, under those [proposed] terms,  
 I will let you go [back home]."

## 14 When the speaker makes a tentative offer

#1	Judg 11:9	אֲנֹכִי אֶהְיֶה לָכֶם לְרֹאשׁ:
#2	Judg 17:10	וְאֲנֹכִי אֶתֶּן־לְךָ עֲשֻׁרַת כֶּסֶף לַיָּמִים

## 15 When the speaker responds tentatively

#3	Gen 21:24	אֲנֹכִי אֲשַׁבֵּעַ:
#4	Judg 6:18	אֲנֹכִי אֲשַׁב עַד שׁוֹבֵד

## 16 Using Both Forms in Concert with Each Other

#1 1 Samuel 4:16

אֲנֹכִי הֵבֵא מִן־הַמַּעֲרָכָה  
 "I am the one who came from the battlefield."

וְאֲנִי מִן־הַמַּעֲרָכָה נִסְתִּי הַיּוֹם  
 "I have just fled from the battlefield."

#2 Hosea 5:14

כִּי אֲנֹכִי כַשְׁחַל לְאֶפְרַיִם  
 "No, I will be like a lion to Ephraim..."

אֲנִי אֲנִי אֶטְרֹף וְאֵלֶּךְ  
 "I, I will attack and stride away."

#3 2 Samuel 20:17

הֲאִתָּה יוֹאָב  
 "Are you Joab?"

אֲנִי  
 "I am."

שִׁמַע דְּבַרִי אִמָּתְךָ  
 "Listen to what your handmaid has to say."

שִׁמַע אֲנֹכִי:  
 "I'm listening."

#4 Ruth 4:4

וְאֲנִי אֶמְרָתִי אֶגְלֶה אֶזְנְךָ  
 "I thought I should disclose [the matter] to you."

אֵין זוֹלָתְךָ לְגֹאֹל וְאֲנֹכִי אֶחֱרִיךָ  
 "...there is no one to redeem but you; and I come after you."

## 17 Minimal pair: What's the difference?

2 Samuel 2:20

הֲאֵתָהּ זֶה עֲשָׂה אֵל  
וַיֹּאמֶר אֲנִי He said: “[It is] I.”

1 Kings 18:7–8

הֲאֵתָהּ זֶה אֲדֹנָי אֱלֹהֶיךָ  
וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אָנִי He said to him: “[It is] I.”

## 18 Distribution of the Long Form in the Corpus

*What does it mean* that there are no instances at all in Leviticus, Joel, Obadiah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Ezra, and 2 Chronicles?

## 19 Summary

- When a referent's presence is *less predictable*, the speaker provides *more coding*—because the audience needs extra help to promptly adjust its mental situation model.
- Hebrew speakers go to the trouble to use the long form because:
  - >> in the discourse context, the speaker's participation is somehow *at issue*, and
  - >> a more weighty pronoun prompts the audience to properly *situate* the speaker as a participant.
- This hypothesis accounts for the usage data (so far).
- *Conclusion*: אָנִי and אֲנִי are *not* equivalent or interchangeable.
- Recognizing this *linguistic reference device* can affect exegesis.
- *Implications for diachrony*: Data analysis must control for the pragmatics involved in each utterance context.

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