A. PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION OF ISSUES


In the previous chapter, it was demonstrated that the t-stem participles are the passive/reflexive counterparts to the active participles and appear to have the same range of temporal/aspectual functions as their active counterparts. Therefore, this chapter includes the few attested instances of t-stem participles with ידו together with the corresponding expressions with active participles. Also, as will be explained below, the combination of ידו and the passive participle does not yet constitute a complex verb phrase in the present corpus. Therefore the word “participle” in complex verb phrases, e.g., ידו + participle, is assumed to refer only to active or t-stem participles, but not passive participles, unless otherwise specified. For the sake of clarity, I should also explain that throughout this study, ידו + participle refers to the sequence where the verb “to be” precedes the participle, and that participle + ידו refers to the sequence where the participle precedes the verb “to be.”

There are 37 instances of active and t-stem participles that occur in connection with ידו.1 In at least 1 of these instances, the participle should be analyzed as the predicate of the verb “to be” (ידו שלח in

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1 The number includes 2 instances where the auxiliary function of the verb ידו is extended to a second participle (5:19; 6:27), i.e., they form a continuation of the complex verb phrase ידו + participle, and function not as independent participles but as part of that syntagm, and 1 instance with words intervening between the participle and ידו (6:3), introduced by the subordinating relative יד. Although there are no other examples of words intervening within a ידו + participle syntagm in Biblical Aramaic, it is not extraordinary, since such instances also occur in Biblical Hebrew (e.g., 2 Kings 17:41; 18:4).
The remaining instances consist of 19 occurrences of הוהי + participle (including 2 instances where הוהי combines with two participles) and 17 occurrences of participle + הוהי. Additionally, there are up to 4 instances of יד + participle that should be considered together with הוהי + participle for reasons that will be explained below. The “periphrastic imperative” attested in some other forms of Aramaic, consisting of an imperative of the verb הוהי in combination with the participle (Greenfield 1969), does not occur in the Aramaic of Daniel.

In passing, mention should be made of a study by Thacker (1963). Based on the assumption that Egyptian and Semitic finite verbs mark aspect rather than tense, he suggested that the verb “to be” acts as a marker of tense when combined with other finite verbs. Likewise, the verb “to be” is a “time-indicator” when combined with the Egyptian infinitive or with a Semitic active participle.

Below, I will argue that, although the addition of הוהי to the participle originally functioned as a tense marker, the expression became grammaticalized at the stage of the language attested in the corpus as a complex verb phrase consisting of the renewal of the imperfective. The variation in the order of constituents is due to the fact that the expression is in the early stages of grammaticalization.

B. The Complex Verb Phrase הוהי + Participle

1. Progressive

Instances of הוהי + participle occur in both subordinate and main clauses, as well as with a variety of verbs, both dynamic and stative, transitive and intransitive. They also have a broad range of functions. There is an instance in 6:4 of הוהי + participle that could be analyzed as either progressive or inceptive.

Dan. 6:4

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2 Perhaps also 2:43. See chapter 4, section C, subsection 3.

3 The number includes an instance where the auxiliary function of אם may be extended to a second participle (3:14a, b). Although the repetition of the negative particle לא before the second participle may call this interpretation into question, the absence of an explicit subject of the second participle suggests that the two participles may form a compound sentence.